



TELEGRAM CHANNEL: <https://t.me/patrioticIAS>
YOUTUBE CHANNEL: <https://www.youtube.com/@PatrioticIAS>
CONTACT: 9971932488



PATRIOTIC IAS

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

THE HINDU NEWSPAPER

18 JUNE 2026

YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/@PatrioticIAS>

Telegram Channel: <https://t.me/patrioticIAS>

PCS Special:	18 June 2026
18J6	Manpreet scales a new peak मनप्रीत ने नई ऊँचाई हासिल की



Manpreet scales a new peak

Press Trust of India

PCS

Manpreet Singh, with his 413th appearance, became India's most-capped hockey player during the FIH Pro League match against Germany here on Wednesday.

The 33-year-old midfield star surpassed former captain and current Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey, who represented the country 412 times. In recognition of his achievement, Hockey India announced a cash reward of ₹10 lakh for Manpreet.

The day was made more special as India defeated Germany 3-1 through goals from Mandeep Singh (seventh minute), Shilpanand Lakra (13th) and Nilakanta Sharma (35th).

Raphael Hartkopf (45th) scored for Germany.

18J6. Manpreet scales a new peak

मनप्रीत ने नई ऊँचाई हासिल की

• **Manpreet Singh**, with his **413th appearance**, became India's most-capped hockey player during the **FIH Pro League** match against **Germany** here on Wednesday.

मनप्रीत सिंह ने अपने 413वें मैच के साथ बुधवार को जर्मनी के खिलाफ **FIH प्रो लीग** मुकाबले के दौरान भारत के लिए सर्वाधिक मैच खेलने वाले हॉकी खिलाड़ी बनने का गौरव हासिल किया।

• The **33-year-old midfield star** surpassed former captain and current **Hockey India** president **Dilip Tirkey**, who represented the country **412 times**.

33 वर्षीय मिडफील्ड स्टार ने पूर्व कप्तान और वर्तमान हॉकी इंडिया अध्यक्ष **दिलीप तिरकी** को पीछे छोड़ दिया, जिन्होंने भारत का प्रतिनिधित्व **412 बार** किया था।

GS Paper 1: Society		18 June 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
18J6	Step forward एक सकारात्मक कदम	
18J6	Why A.P.'s incentive for having more children is misplaced आध प्रदेश में अधिक बच्चे पैदा करने हेतु प्रोत्साहन योजना क्यों अनुचित है	



GS I: Society

Step forward

The top court has given an economic value to unpaid domestic work

The Supreme Court's judgment in *Shishupal @ Shish Ram vs Surjeet* by a Division Bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and N.K. Singh, is likely a landmark. The ruling originated as the Court revised compensation granted by the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) for a road accident in 2001. The first MACT awarded the family of Reshma, the accident victim, ₹2.42 lakh, which the Punjab and Haryana High Court revised in 2024 to ₹8.43 lakh. But in its order, the Court revised it to ₹62.78 lakh after attaching a sum of ₹30,000 a month to Ms. Reshma's 'economic value', for the service she rendered as a homemaker. The ruling is not surprising. In *Lata Wadhwa* (2001), the Court valued a homemaker's services at a modest ₹3,000. In *Kirti vs Oriental Insurance* (2021), it said the economic value of a homemaker's work cannot be discounted simply because it is unpaid or performed by women. However, the 'official' value attached to that work has suffered from inconsistent quantification. The Bench's value of ₹30,000 a month is itself notional and a floor; it added that the floor must be hiked by 10% every three years and a woman's salary, where applicable, has to be added to the floor, in the context of MACT's claims. The judgment does not create a salary, wage entitlement, pension scheme or employment relationship for homemakers, and applies to compensation calculations in MACT cases only. That said, the now-normalised societal tendency to undervalue women's work means that any advance is valuable and will likely have ripple effects.

The connection between unpaid domestic labour and suppressed female labour force participation is a major theme in contemporary Indian labour economics. Now, for example, homemakers seeking maintenance under the Hindu Marriage Act, say, have judicial reasoning supporting the economic value of their domestic work. Rural women who "assist in sowing, harvesting, and cattle-tending", as the Court noted, can now invoke the Court's reasoning to pitch to have their labour, which is often treated as being incidental to household work, valued higher. The additive rule may encourage litigants to invoke similar reasoning in employment disputes *vis-à-vis* 'work from home' arrangements and domestic responsibilities. Future litigation may test whether male homemakers can claim equivalent treatment. Motor insurance is already a low-margin segment for many insurers, and a large increase in the average claim size – likely applied retrospectively as well – may force companies to reassess their risk models and render them more inclined to settle claims quickly in Lok Adalats. All said, the *Shishupal* judgment is a vital corrective to decades of economic erasure.

कीर्ति बनाम ओरिएंटल बीमा (2021) मामले में न्यायालय ने कहा था कि गृहिणी के कार्य के आर्थिक मूल्य को केवल इसलिए कम नहीं आँका जा सकता क्योंकि वह अवैतनिक है अथवा महिलाओं द्वारा किया जाता है।

- It added that the floor must be hiked by 10% every three years and a woman's salary, where applicable, has to be added to the floor, in the context of MACT's claims. पीठ ने यह भी कहा कि इस न्यूनतम मानक में प्रत्येक तीन वर्ष पर 10 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि की जानी चाहिए तथा जहाँ लागू हो, महिला की वास्तविक आय को भी इसमें जोड़ा जाना चाहिए।
- The judgment does not create a salary, wage entitlement, pension scheme or employment relationship for homemakers, and applies to compensation calculations in MACT cases only.

18J6. Step forward

एक सकारात्मक कदम

- The top court has given an economic value to unpaid domestic work

सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने अवैतनिक घरेलू कार्य को आर्थिक मूल्य प्रदान किया है

- The Supreme Court's judgment in *Shishupal @ Shish Ram vs Surjeet* by a Division Bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and N.K. Singh, is likely a landmark.

न्यायमूर्ति संजय करोल और एन.के. सिंह की खंडपीठ द्वारा दिए गए शिशुपाल @ शिश राम बनाम सुरजीत मामले में उच्चतम न्यायालय का निर्णय एक ऐतिहासिक निर्णय सिद्ध हो सकता है।

- The ruling originated as the Court revised compensation granted by the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) for a road accident in 2001.

यह निर्णय वर्ष 2001 में हुई एक सड़क दुर्घटना के लिए मोटर दुर्घटना दावा अधिकरण द्वारा प्रदान किए गए मुआवजे में न्यायालय द्वारा संशोधन किए जाने के संदर्भ में उत्पन्न हुआ।

- The first MACT awarded the family of Reshma, the accident victim, ₹2.42 lakh, which the Punjab and Haryana High Court revised in 2024 to ₹8.43 lakh.

प्रारंभिक रूप से अधिकरण ने दुर्घटना पीड़िता रेशमा के परिवार को 2.42 लाख रुपये का मुआवजा प्रदान किया था, जिसे पंजाब एवं हरियाणा उच्च न्यायालय ने वर्ष 2024 में बढ़ाकर 8.43 लाख रुपये कर दिया।

- But in its order, the Court revised it to ₹62.78 lakh after attaching a sum of ₹30,000 a month to Ms. Reshma's economic value, for the service she rendered as a homemaker.

किन्तु न्यायालय ने अपने आदेश में रेशमा द्वारा गृहिणी के रूप में प्रदान की गई सेवाओं के आर्थिक मूल्य को प्रतिमाह 30,000 रुपये मानते हुए मुआवजे की राशि बढ़ाकर 62.78 लाख रुपये कर दी।

- In *Lata Wadhwa* (2001), the Court valued a homemaker's services at a modest ₹3,000.

लता वाधवा (2001) मामले में न्यायालय ने गृहिणी की सेवाओं का मूल्य मात्र 3,000 रुपये निर्धारित किया था।

- In *Kirti vs Oriental Insurance* (2021), it said the economic value of a homemaker's work cannot be discounted simply because it is unpaid or performed by women.

यह निर्णय गृहिणियों के लिए वेतन, मजदूरी अधिकार, पेंशन योजना अथवा रोजगार संबंध स्थापित नहीं करता है और इसका प्रयोग केवल मुआवज़े की गणना से संबंधित मामलों में होगा।

- The connection between **unpaid domestic labour** and suppressed **female labour force participation** is a major theme in contemporary Indian labour economics.

अवैतनिक घरेलू श्रम और महिलाओं की कम श्रमबल भागीदारी के बीच संबंध समकालीन भारतीय श्रम अर्थशास्त्र का एक प्रमुख विषय है।

- Now, for example, homemakers seeking maintenance under the **Hindu Marriage Act**, say, have judicial reasoning supporting the economic value of their domestic work.

अब उदाहरण के लिए, **हिन्दू विवाह अधिनियम** के अंतर्गत भरण-पोषण की मांग करने वाली गृहिणियों के पास अपने घरेलू कार्य के आर्थिक मूल्य के समर्थन में न्यायिक तर्क उपलब्ध हैं।

- Rural women who “assist in sowing, harvesting, and cattle-tending”, as the Court noted, can now invoke the Court’s reasoning to pitch to have their labour, which is often treated as being incidental to household work, valued higher.

जैसा कि न्यायालय ने उल्लेख किया है, ग्रामीण महिलाएँ जो बुआई, कटाई तथा पशुपालन में योगदान देती हैं, अब न्यायालय के तर्क का उपयोग करते हुए अपने श्रम का अधिक मूल्यांकन कराने की मांग कर सकती हैं, जबकि अब तक इसे प्रायः घरेलू कार्य का सहायक हिस्सा माना जाता रहा है।

- The additive rule may encourage litigants to invoke similar reasoning in employment disputes vis-à-vis ‘work from home’ arrangements and domestic responsibilities.

यह अतिरिक्त मूल्यांकन का सिद्धांत रोजगार संबंधी विवादों में भी ऐसे तर्कों के उपयोग को प्रोत्साहित कर सकता है, विशेषकर घर से कार्य करने की व्यवस्था तथा घरेलू दायित्वों के संदर्भ में।

- Future litigation may test whether **male homemakers** can claim equivalent treatment.

भविष्य में न्यायिक विवाद यह भी परख सकते हैं कि क्या **पुरुष गृहस्थ प्रबंधक** समान व्यवहार का दावा कर सकते हैं।

- Motor insurance** is already a low-margin segment for many insurers, and a large increase in the average claim size — likely applied retrospectively as well — may force companies to reassess their risk models and render them more inclined to settle claims quickly in **Lok Adalats**.

मोटर बीमा पहले से ही अनेक बीमा कंपनियों के लिए कम लाभ वाला क्षेत्र है, और औसत दावा राशि में बड़ी वृद्धि — जो संभवतः पूर्व प्रभाव से भी लागू हो सकती है — कंपनियों को अपने जोखिम आकलन मॉडल का पुनर्मूल्यांकन करने के लिए बाध्य कर सकती है तथा उन्हें **लोक अदालतों** में दावों का शीघ्र निपटारा करने के लिए अधिक प्रेरित कर सकती है।

Why A.P.'s incentive for having more children is misplaced

The recently announced cash incentives in Andhra Pradesh cannot offset the economic barriers faced by people to have larger families

GS I: Society

DATA POINT

Sambavi Parthasarathy

On May 16, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu announced a one-time incentive of ₹30,000 for the third child and ₹40,000 for the fourth. He said that these incentives were a part of the State's new population management policy to encourage population growth.

On the surface, the incentives to have bigger families may sound sensible with the latest National Family Health Survey (NFHS-6) report for the year 2023-24 placing the State's fertility level at 1.8, which is below the replacement level of 2.1. However, a closer look warrants questions on at least three fronts: whether such an incentive is adequate for families to have more children; what the key reasons are for the dropping fertility rate; and whether such an intervention is necessary now.

A comparison of this one-time cash incentive against basic expenditures shows that it cannot offset the childcare costs, a concern that is prompting families to rethink having more children (Chart 1).

The government's incentive is about twice the average cost of hospitalisation for childbirth in India, and a far smaller multiple of the cost in Andhra Pradesh. In fact, it is almost the same as the cost of hospitalisation for childbirth in the State's urban area. In a State where more than 50% of births happen in private hospitals and about 52% of all deliveries happen through Caesarean sections, this incentive will just offset the hospitalisation cost in rural areas (Chart 2). It is also inadequate to cover the cost of C-sections in private hospitals in urban areas.

For a family of five (assuming there are two adults and three children), this incentive is about 1.5 times their Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE) in rural areas and almost similar to the MPCE in

urban areas, as per the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey for 2023-24. This means that the incentive could just help the families meet their consumption needs for one month, provided the same was not already spent in hospital during childbirth.

Cannot afford children

Moreover, the question around family planning has moved from whether families 'should' have more children to whether they can afford to. The United Nations Population Fund's (UNFPA) 'State of World Population Report 2025' shows that financial limitations are the prime barrier to having children (Chart 3).

Other barriers included housing limitations, followed by unemployment (or job insecurity), and the lack of quality and affordable childcare options. In many of these indicators, the share of Indians pointing to these concerns was much higher than the average share across the 14 countries that were surveyed for the report.

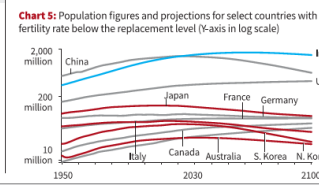
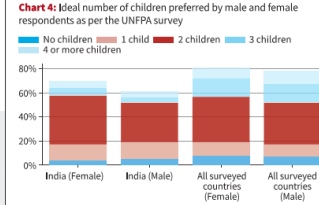
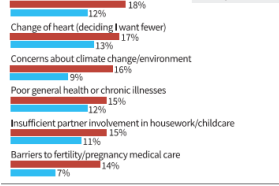
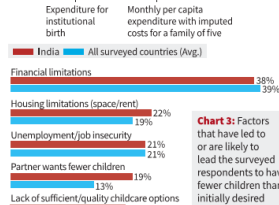
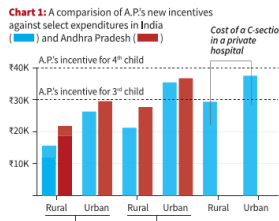
The survey further pointed out that a larger share of Indian men and women preferred having either one or two children (Chart 4). Less than 10% of Indian respondents said they would prefer to have three, four or more children, which is almost on a par with the share of Indians who preferred having no children.

It is noteworthy that the below-replacement fertility rate in Andhra Pradesh and across India does not mean that the population decline is imminent. The population will continue to increase, then stabilise and eventually begin to decline, which, for India, is likely to happen only in 2063 as per estimates (Chart 5).

For instance, although Japan and South Korea's fertility rates dropped below the replacement level in the late 1970s and the early 1980s respectively, their populations – which are less than 10% of India's – began to decline only around 2010 and 2020.

Wrong incentives

The data for the charts were sourced from the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2023-24, Household Social Consumption: Health 2025, NFHS-6, Our World in Data and the UNFPA



18J6. Why A.P.'s incentive for having more children is misplaced

आंध्र प्रदेश में अधिक बच्चे पैदा करने हेतु प्रोत्साहन योजना क्यों अनुचित है

Population Incentives and Fertility Trends

जनसंख्या प्रोत्साहन और प्रजनन दर की प्रवृत्तियाँ

- On May 16, **Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu** announced a one-time incentive of **₹30,000 for the third child** and **₹40,000 for the fourth**.

16 मई को आंध्र प्रदेश के मुख्यमंत्री एन. चंद्रबाबू नायडू ने तीसरे बच्चे के लिए 30,000 रुपये तथा चौथे बच्चे के लिए 40,000 रुपये की एकमुश्त प्रोत्साहन राशि की घोषणा की।

- On the surface, the incentives to have bigger families may sound sensible with the latest **National Family Health Survey** report for the year **2023-24** placing the **State's fertility level at 1.8**, which is below the **replacement level of 2.1**.

प्रथम दृष्टया बड़े परिवारों को प्रोत्साहित करने वाली यह योजना उचित प्रतीत हो सकती है, क्योंकि वर्ष 2023-24 के नवीनतम राष्ट्रीय परिवार स्वास्थ्य सर्वेक्षण के अनुसार राज्य की प्रजनन दर 1.8 है, जो 2.1 के प्रतिस्थापन स्तर से कम है।

- In a State where **more than 50% of births happen in private hospitals** and about **52% of all deliveries happen through Caesarean sections**, this incentive will just offset the hospitalisation cost in rural areas.

ऐसे राज्य में जहाँ 50 प्रतिशत से अधिक प्रसव निजी अस्पतालों में होते हैं और लगभग 52 प्रतिशत प्रसव



शल्यक्रिया द्वारा संपन्न होते हैं, यह प्रोत्साहन राशि केवल ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों के अस्पताल व्यय की भरपाई कर पाएगी।

- For a family of five (assuming there are two adults and three children), this incentive is about **1.5 times their Monthly Per Capita Expenditure** in rural areas and almost similar to the monthly expenditure in urban areas, as per the **Household Consumption Expenditure Survey for 2023-24**.

वर्ष 2023-24 के घरेलू उपभोग व्यय सर्वेक्षण के अनुसार पाँच सदस्यीय परिवार (दो वयस्क और तीन बच्चों वाला) के लिए यह प्रोत्साहन राशि ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में उनके मासिक प्रति व्यक्ति उपभोग व्यय की लगभग डेढ़ गुना तथा शहरी क्षेत्रों में लगभग समान है।

- Moreover, the question around family planning has moved from whether families 'should' have more children to whether they can **afford to**.

इसके अतिरिक्त परिवार नियोजन से जुड़ा प्रश्न अब इस बात से आगे बढ़ चुका है कि परिवारों को अधिक बच्चे पैदा करने चाहिए या नहीं; अब मुख्य प्रश्न यह है कि क्या वे ऐसा करने का **सामर्थ्य** रखते हैं।

- The **United Nations Population Fund's State of World Population Report 2025** shows that **financial limitations** are the prime barrier to having children.

संयुक्त राष्ट्र जनसंख्या कोष की विश्व जनसंख्या स्थिति रिपोर्ट 2025 दर्शाती है कि आर्थिक सीमाएँ बच्चों के जन्म में सबसे बड़ी बाधा हैं।

- Other barriers included **housing limitations**, followed by **unemployment or job insecurity**, and the lack of **quality and affordable childcare options**.

अन्य प्रमुख बाधाओं में आवास संबंधी सीमाएँ, बेरोजगारी अथवा रोजगार असुरक्षा, तथा गुणवत्तापूर्ण और सुलभ बाल देखभाल सुविधाओं की कमी शामिल हैं।

- The survey further pointed out that a larger share of Indian men and women preferred having either **one or two children**.

सर्वेक्षण ने यह भी बताया कि भारतीय पुरुषों और महिलाओं का बड़ा वर्ग **एक या दो बच्चे** ही पसंद करता है।

- Less than 10% of Indian respondents** said they would prefer to have three, four or more children, which is almost on a par with the share of Indians who preferred having no children.

10 प्रतिशत से भी कम भारतीय उत्तरदाताओं ने कहा कि वे तीन, चार या उससे अधिक बच्चे पसंद करेंगे, जो लगभग उन लोगों के बराबर है जो कोई बच्चा नहीं चाहते।

- The population will continue to increase, then stabilise and eventually begin to decline, which, for India, is likely to happen only in **2063** as per estimates.

अनुमानों के अनुसार जनसंख्या पहले बढ़ेगी, फिर स्थिर होगी और अंततः घटनी शुरू होगी, तथा भारत में यह स्थिति संभवतः **2063** के आसपास उत्पन्न होगी।

- For instance, although **Japan and South Korea's** fertility rates dropped below the replacement level in the late 1970s and the early 1980s respectively, their populations — which are less than **10% of India's** — began to decline only around **2010 and 2020**.

उदाहरण के लिए, यद्यपि **जापान और दक्षिण कोरिया** की प्रजनन दर क्रमशः 1970 के दशक के उत्तरार्ध और 1980 के दशक के प्रारंभ में प्रतिस्थापन स्तर से नीचे चली गई थी, फिर भी उनकी जनसंख्या — जो भारत की जनसंख्या के **10 प्रतिशत से भी कम** है — में गिरावट क्रमशः **2010 और 2020** के आसपास ही प्रारंभ हुई।

GS Paper 1: Geography		18 June 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
18J6	QUIZ	
18J6	South Korea to ease civilian curbs along border with North Korea दक्षिण कोरिया उत्तर कोरिया की सीमा के पास नागरिकों पर लगे प्रतिबंधों में ढील देगा	



Moving to safety



Water world: Villagers lead their buffaloes across the Brahmaputra in Assam's Majuli district on Wednesday to safer areas amid heavy rain and rising water levels. **RITU RAJ KONWAR**

Water world: Villagers lead their buffaloes across the Brahmaputra in **Assam's Majuli district** on Wednesday to safer areas amid heavy rain and rising water levels.

Business as usual



Striking it rich: Artisanal miners use shovels to extract gold-bearing sand from an open pit in Mongbwalu, Ituri province, on Wednesday. The latest Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, declared on May 15, has mainly affected the remote, conflict-weary northeastern province of Ituri. **AFP**

Striking it rich: Artisanal miners use shovels to extract gold-bearing sand from an open pit in Mongbwalu, **Ituri province**, on Wednesday. The latest Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, declared on May 15, has mainly affected the remote, conflict-weary northeastern province of Ituri.

18J6. South Korea to ease civilian curbs along border with North Korea

South Korea to ease civilian curbs along border with North Korea



GS I: Geography

REUTERS

Civilians in South Korea will be able to get several kilometres nearer North Korea under new rules broadening public access to the highly militarised border zone, Seoul's Defence Ministry said on Wednesday. The Civilian Control Line will be shrunk to an average of six km starting 2027, Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back said. **AFP**

दक्षिण कोरिया उत्तर कोरिया की सीमा के पास नागरिकों पर लगे प्रतिबंधों में ढील देगा

- **38 Degree Parallele divide North Korea from South Korea.**

GS Paper II: Polity	18 June 2026
TOPICS COVERED	
18J6	Nicobarese tribal councils oppose draft election rules निकोबारी जनजातीय परिषदों ने मसौदा निर्वाचन नियमों का विरोध किया

Nicobarese tribal councils oppose draft election rules

GS II: Polity
Abhinav Lakshman
NEW DELHI

Nicobarese tribal councils from three different island groups have written to the local administration turning down the idea of Election Commission-conducted polls to their self-governance system, saying it could introduce "election rivalry, division, and conflict" in their society. The councils said the existing forms of self-governance "more closely align with democratic values", and said a new system would interfere with their existing ways which have been "traditional, time-tested, and consensus-based" and in practice for thousands of years.

This comes even as the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (A&NI) administration on Wednesday notified a public meeting on June 30 in Sri Vijaya Puram to discuss the draft rules for elections to Nicobarese tribal councils.

The tribal councils in Little and Great Nicobar, Kamorta (Nancowry), and Katchal Island have written objections to the draft rules published by the A&NI administration in May. They have sought the

The councils said the existing forms of self-governance align more closely with democratic values

withdrawal of this draft.

The draft rules aimed to reorganise Nicobarese villages into constituencies that would be represented by elected leaders, who would then constitute a larger tribal council. It would involve delimitation, preparation of voter rolls, and reservation of leadership positions for women. The draft also prescribes five-yearly elections. They outlined the polling process, the structure of the new representative system, the delimitation method, the rules for candidature, nomination, and withdrawal, their duties and responsibilities, and the administrative setup for conducting these elections.

The draft rules were notified on May 15. The 30-day window for objections and suggestions closed this week. The administration has received letters of objection from the Congress party in the islands and the tribal councils.

18J6. Nicobarese tribal councils oppose draft election rules

निकोबारी जनजातीय परिषदों ने मसौदा निर्वाचन नियमों का विरोध किया

• Nicobarese tribal councils from three different island groups have written to the local administration turning down the idea of **Election Commission-conducted polls to their self-governance system**, saying it could introduce "election rivalry, division, and conflict" in their society.

तीन अलग-अलग द्वीप समूहों की निकोबारी जनजातीय परिषदों ने स्थानीय प्रशासन को पत्र लिखकर अपनी स्वशासन व्यवस्था के लिए निर्वाचन आयोग द्वारा संचालित चुनावों के प्रस्ताव को अस्वीकार कर दिया है। उनका कहना है कि इससे समाज में "चुनावी प्रतिस्पर्धा, विभाजन और संघर्ष" उत्पन्न हो सकता है।

• The councils said the existing forms of self-governance "more closely align with democratic values", and said a new system would interfere with their existing ways which have been "traditional, time-tested, and consensus-based" and in practice for thousands of years.

परिषदों ने कहा कि वर्तमान स्वशासन व्यवस्था "लोकतांत्रिक मूल्यों के अधिक निकट" है। उन्होंने यह भी कहा कि नई व्यवस्था उनकी उन परंपरागत, समय की कसौटी पर खरी उतरी और सर्वसम्मति आधारित प्रणालियों में हस्तक्षेप करेगी, जो हजारों वर्षों से प्रचलित हैं।

• This comes even as the **Andaman and Nicobar Islands administration** on Wednesday notified a public meeting on **June 30** in **Sri Vijaya Puram** to discuss the draft rules for elections to Nicobarese tribal councils.

यह घटनाक्रम ऐसे समय में सामने आया है जब **अंडमान और निकोबार द्वीप प्रशासन** ने बुधवार को **30 जून** को **श्री विजयापुरम** में निकोबारी जनजातीय परिषदों के चुनाव संबंधी मसौदा नियमों पर चर्चा हेतु एक सार्वजनिक बैठक की अधिसूचना जारी की है।

- The tribal councils in **Little Nicobar, Great Nicobar, Kamorta (Nancowry), and Katchal Island** have written objections to the draft rules published by the administration in May.

लिटिल निकोबार, ग्रेट निकोबार, कमोर्टा (नानकोवरी) और कच्छल द्वीप की जनजातीय परिषदों ने मई में प्रशासन द्वारा प्रकाशित मसौदा नियमों पर आपत्तियाँ दर्ज कराई हैं।

- The draft rules aimed to reorganise Nicobarese villages into constituencies that would be represented by elected leaders, who would then constitute a larger tribal council.

मसौदा नियमों का उद्देश्य निकोबारी गाँवों को निर्वाचन क्षेत्रों में पुनर्गठित करना था, जिनका प्रतिनिधित्व निर्वाचित प्रतिनिधि करेंगे और वे मिलकर एक व्यापक जनजातीय परिषद का गठन करेंगे।

- It would involve **delimitation**, preparation of **voter rolls**, and reservation of leadership positions for **women**.

इस व्यवस्था में निर्वाचन क्षेत्र परिसीमन, मतदाता सूची तैयार करना, तथा नेतृत्व पदों में महिलाओं के लिए आरक्षण शामिल होगा।

- The draft also prescribes **five-yearly elections**.

मसौदे में प्रत्येक पाँच वर्ष में चुनाव कराने का प्रावधान भी किया गया है।

- They outlined the polling process, the structure of the new representative system, the delimitation method, the rules for candidature, nomination, and withdrawal, their duties and responsibilities, and the administrative setup for conducting these elections.



इन नियमों में मतदान प्रक्रिया, नई प्रतिनिधिक व्यवस्था की संरचना, परिसीमन की पद्धति, उम्मीदवारों के नामांकन और नाम वापसी के नियम, उनके कर्तव्य और उत्तरदायित्व तथा चुनावों के संचालन हेतु प्रशासनिक व्यवस्था का विस्तृत विवरण दिया गया है।

GS Paper II: Governance	18 June 2026
TOPICS COVERED	
18J6	Water security is central for a Viksit Bharat विकसित भारत के लिए जल सुरक्षा केंद्रीय महत्व रखती है

Water security is central for a Viksit Bharat

GS II: Governance

Did you know that the Jal Jeevan Mission is the world's largest rural drinking water supply programme? Or that the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) is the most significant rural sanitation movement in the world? Together, these initiatives represent not merely government schemes, but a re-imagining of how a nation of 1.45 billion people is building a water-secure future.

Few sectors shape human dignity, economic growth, public health, agriculture and environmental sustainability as profoundly as water. Yet, for decades, India's water challenges were addressed in fragmented ways. What has changed in recent years is the focus and integrated nature of the response led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The scale of investment and execution in the water sector in the last 12 years has been unparalleled. Water is now viewed as a shared national priority, cutting across departments, States, and communities. While earlier water was relegated to the side, under Prime Minister Modi, the Government of India has assumed responsibility for filling the long-standing gaps in planning, management, and delivery in the water sector.

A complete turnaround

The most prominent example of this transformation is the Jal Jeevan Mission. When the programme was launched, only about 3.23 crore rural households, roughly 17% of rural Indian households, had tap water connections. Today, more than 15.8 crore rural households, covering over 81% of rural India, have access to tap water at home. The government is moving towards achieving 100% coverage by 2028. For millions of families, this is not merely a utility service; it is a change in their way of life.

Studies indicate that earlier, rural women in India spent billions of hours each year fetching water. The expansion of



C. R. Patil

Union Minister of Jal Shakti

Access to drinking water, sanitation, river conservation, groundwater recharge, wastewater reuse and climate resilience must all be viewed as parts of a connected ecosystem

household tap water supply has helped save more than 5.5 crore person-hours daily; that time is now being invested in education, livelihoods, childcare and economic activity. Across households, access to safe drinking water has also reduced out-of-pocket health expenditure arising from water-borne diseases.

Equally transformative is the SBM. India's sanitation movement demonstrated that behavioural change, public participation and political commitment can work together at scale. According to the World Health Organisation's assessment of health gains, SBM-Grameen is estimated to have averted more than 3 lakh diarrhoea deaths between 2014 and October 2019. The construction of household toilets also brought dignity, privacy and safety to millions of rural women. Beyond making villages open defecation-free, the country has moved towards sustainable solid and liquid waste management under SBM-Grameen 2.0.

India has also undertaken one of the largest water conservation and groundwater recharge initiatives anywhere in the world. Under the 'Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari' initiative, more than 1.55 crore rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge structures have been created across the country by May 31, 2026. The impact of these efforts is visible in groundwater trends as well. Recent assessments indicate improvement in groundwater recharge and a reduction in the number of over-exploited assessment units in several parts of the country. It also showcases that sustained conservation efforts, when combined with community participation, can reverse environmental stress.

Parallely, India has advanced long-pending national water projects. The Ken-Betwa River Linking Project, the country's first major river interlinking initiative to bring water to the arid region of Bundelkhand, is moving ahead at an accelerated pace.

Under the guidance of Prime Minister Modi, the Namami Gange programme has demonstrated that environmental restoration and development can advance together. Over the past decade, the government has created 4,260 million litres per day (MLD) of sewage treatment capacity; reduced the Biochemical Oxygen Demand from 26 tonnes per day (TPD) in 2017 to 10.75 TPD in 2024; and brought down effluent discharge from 349 MLD to 265.56 MLD. Today, monitoring shows that pH and dissolved oxygen levels in the Ganga meet bathing criteria at all monitored locations.

India's water journey over these years offers an important global lesson. Water challenges in the 21st century cannot be addressed through isolated interventions. Drinking water, sanitation, river conservation, irrigation efficiency, groundwater recharge, wastewater reuse and climate resilience must all be viewed as parts of a connected ecosystem.

The road ahead

This integrated approach becomes even more critical in the face of climate change. For India, the challenge is unique. The country is home to nearly 18% of the world's population, but has access to only about 4% of global freshwater resources. Rapid urbanisation and changing weather patterns will place increasing pressure on these resources in the coming decades.

Today's investments, therefore, are not merely developmental expenditures; they are long-term investments in national resilience. The progress achieved over the past decade demonstrates the immense potential unlocked when selfless leadership, responsive governance, and active public participation come together in pursuit of a shared national vision.

The road ahead requires sustained effort. The government will strive to improve water-use efficiency, promote recycling, strengthen water governance, and encourage citizen participation.

18J6. Water security is central for a Viksit Bharat विकसित भारत के लिए जल सुरक्षा केंद्रीय महत्व रखती है

- Did you know that the **Jal Jeevan Mission** is the world's largest rural drinking water supply programme?
क्या आप जानते हैं कि **जल जीवन मिशन** विश्व का सबसे बड़ा ग्रामीण पेयजल आपूर्ति कार्यक्रम है?
- Or that the **Swachh Bharat Mission** is the most significant rural sanitation movement in the world?
क्या आप जानते हैं कि **स्वच्छ भारत मिशन** विश्व का सबसे बड़ा ग्रामीण स्वच्छता अभियान है?
- Few sectors shape **human dignity, economic growth, public health, agriculture and environmental sustainability** as profoundly as water.
बहुत कम क्षेत्र ऐसे हैं जो **मानवीय गरिमा, आर्थिक विकास, सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य, कृषि तथा पर्यावरणीय सततता** को जल जितनी गहराई से प्रभावित करते हैं।

A complete turnaround एक व्यापक परिवर्तन

- The most prominent example of this transformation is the **Jal Jeevan Mission**.
इस परिवर्तन का सबसे प्रमुख उदाहरण **जल जीवन मिशन** है।
- When the programme was launched, only about **3.23 crore rural households**, roughly **17% of rural Indian households**, had tap water connections.
जब यह कार्यक्रम प्रारम्भ किया गया था, तब केवल लगभग **3.23 करोड़ ग्रामीण परिवारों**, अर्थात् ग्रामीण भारत के लगभग **17 प्रतिशत परिवारों**, के पास नल जल कनेक्शन उपलब्ध था।
- Today, more than **15.8 crore rural households**, covering over **81% of rural India**, have access to tap water at home.
आज **15.8 करोड़ से अधिक ग्रामीण परिवारों**, अर्थात् ग्रामीण भारत के **81 प्रतिशत से अधिक परिवारों**, को घर पर नल से जल उपलब्ध है।
- The government is moving towards achieving **100% coverage by 2028**.
सरकार वर्ष **2028 तक शत-प्रतिशत कवरेज** प्राप्त करने की दिशा में अग्रसर है।
- Across households, **access to safe drinking water has also reduced out-of-pocket health expenditure** arising from water-borne diseases.
परिवारों को सुरक्षित पेयजल उपलब्ध होने से जलजनित रोगों के कारण होने वाले व्यक्तिगत स्वास्थ्य व्यय में भी कमी आई है।
- India's sanitation movement demonstrated that **behavioural change, public participation and political commitment** can work together at scale.
भारत के स्वच्छता अभियान ने यह प्रदर्शित किया कि **व्यवहार परिवर्तन, जनभागीदारी और राजनीतिक प्रतिबद्धता** बड़े पैमाने पर मिलकर प्रभावी परिणाम दे सकते हैं।
- According to the **World Health Organization's** assessment of health gains, **स्वच्छ भारत मिशन-ग्रामीण** is estimated to have averted more than **3 lakh diarrhoea deaths** between 2014 and October 2019.
विश्व स्वास्थ्य संगठन के स्वास्थ्य लाभ संबंधी आकलन के अनुसार, **स्वच्छ भारत मिशन-ग्रामीण** ने वर्ष 2014 से अक्टूबर 2019 के बीच **दस्त से होने वाली 3 लाख से अधिक मौतों** को रोकने में योगदान दिया।
- The construction of household toilets also brought **dignity, privacy and safety** to millions of rural women.
घरेलू शौचालयों के निर्माण ने लाखों ग्रामीण महिलाओं को **गरिमा, निजता और सुरक्षा** प्रदान की।
- Beyond making villages **open defecation-free**, the country has moved towards sustainable **solid and liquid waste management** under **Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen 2.0**.

गाँवों को खुले में शौच से मुक्त बनाने से आगे बढ़ते हुए देश स्वच्छ भारत मिशन-ग्रामीण 2.0 के अंतर्गत ठोस एवं तरल अपशिष्ट प्रबंधन की सतत व्यवस्था की दिशा में अग्रसर हुआ है।

- Under the **Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari** initiative, more than **1.55 crore rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge structures** have been created across the country by May 31, 2026.

जल संचय जन भागीदारी पहल के अंतर्गत 31 मई 2026 तक देशभर में 1.55 करोड़ से अधिक वर्षा जल संचयन एवं भूजल पुनर्भरण संरचनाओं का निर्माण किया गया है।

- The **Ken-Betwa River Linking Project**, the country's first major river interlinking initiative to bring water to the arid region of **Bundelkhand**, is moving ahead at an accelerated pace. केन-बेतवा नदी जोड़ो परियोजना, जो बुंदेलखंड के शुष्क क्षेत्र तक जल पहुँचाने की देश की पहली प्रमुख नदी जोड़ो पहल है, तीव्र गति से आगे बढ़ रही है।

- Under the guidance of **Prime Minister Modi**, the **Namami Gange programme** has demonstrated that environmental restoration and development can advance together. प्रधानमंत्री मोदी के मार्गदर्शन में नमामि गंगे कार्यक्रम ने यह प्रदर्शित किया है कि पर्यावरणीय पुनर्स्थापन और विकास एक साथ आगे बढ़ सकते हैं।

- Over the past decade, the government has created **4,260 million litres per day of sewage treatment capacity**.

पिछले एक दशक में सरकार ने 4,260 मिलियन लीटर प्रतिदिन मलजल शोधन क्षमता का सृजन किया है।

- It has reduced the **Biochemical Oxygen Demand** from 26 tonnes per day in 2017 to 10.75 tonnes per day in 2024.

इसने जैव-रासायनिक ऑक्सीजन मांग को 2017 में 26 टन प्रतिदिन से घटाकर 2024 में 10.75 टन प्रतिदिन कर दिया है।

- Today, monitoring shows that **pH and dissolved oxygen levels in the Ganga meet bathing criteria** at all monitored locations.

वर्तमान निगरानी से यह ज्ञात होता है कि गंगा में अम्ल-क्षार स्तर तथा घुलित ऑक्सीजन का स्तर सभी निगरानी स्थलों पर स्नान योग्य मानकों को पूरा करता है।

- Drinking water, sanitation, river conservation, irrigation efficiency, groundwater recharge, wastewater reuse and climate resilience** must all be viewed as parts of a **connected ecosystem**.

पेयजल, स्वच्छता, नदी संरक्षण, सिंचाई दक्षता, भूजल पुनर्भरण, अपशिष्ट जल का पुनः उपयोग तथा जलवायु सहनशीलता को एक परस्पर जुड़े पारितंत्र के अंग के रूप में देखा जाना चाहिए।

The road ahead

आगे की राह

- The country is home to nearly **18% of the world's population**, but has access to only about **4% of global freshwater resources**.

देश विश्व की लगभग 18 प्रतिशत जनसंख्या का निवास स्थान है, किन्तु इसके पास वैश्विक मीठे जल संसाधनों का केवल लगभग 4 प्रतिशत ही उपलब्ध है।

GS Paper II: International Relations		18 June 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
18J6	Framework deal outlines Tehran's pledge on nuclear weapons, \$300-bn U.S. relief रूपरेखा समझौते में परमाणु हथियारों पर तेहरान की प्रतिबद्धता तथा 300 अरब डॉलर की अमेरिकी राहत का उल्लेख	
18J6	Dhaka's new Padma barrage will reshape water power in the region	



	ढाका का नया पद्म बैराज क्षेत्रीय जल शक्ति संतुलन को पुनर्परिभाषित करेगा
18J6	What does the India-Russia logistics agreement allow? भारत-रूस लॉजिस्टिक्स समझौता क्या अनुमति प्रदान करता है?
18J6	Oil prices tumble on likely U.S.-Iran deal संभावित अमेरिका-ईरान समझौते से तेल कीमतों में गिरावट
18J6	Putin hosts ASEAN leaders as West mounts pressure on Ukraine war यूक्रेन युद्ध पर पश्चिमी दबाव बढ़ने के बीच पुतिन ने आसियान नेताओं की मेजबानी की
18J6	U.S. drops 'Indo' from name of its military's Pacific Command अमेरिका ने अपनी सैन्य 'इंडो-पैसिफिक कमांड' के नाम से 'इंडो' शब्द हटाया

Framework deal outlines Tehran's pledge on nuclear weapons, \$300-bn U.S. relief

ISS: IR
Stanly Johny

The United States has agreed to facilitate the release of frozen Iranian assets, contingent on progress in negotiations towards a final agreement, and create a plan for Iran's economic development, involving \$300 billion, according to a leaked text of the 14-point framework agreement reached between Tehran and Washington.

The draft, published by Saudi Arabia's *Al Arabiya* network and the Bloomberg news agency, states that Iran has pledged never to produce nuclear weapons. On its part, the U.S. will lift sanctions on the sale of Iranian crude oil, petrochemical products, and financial services, including banking, during the negotiation period.

The memorandum of understanding is expected to be signed in Geneva on Friday. The draft stated that Iran has pledged never to produce nuclear weapons and, pending a final agreement, maintain a status quo on its nuclear programme. However, the AP reported later that unnamed U.S. officials read out the draft to presspersons, according to which Iran has agreed to downblend (dilute) its highly enriched uranium under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The draft, which has not been released officially, calls for an "immediate and permanent end to the war on all fronts, including Lebanon" – a key Iranian demand.

While the U.S. and Iran announced a ceasefire on April 8 after 40 days of bombing, Lebanon, where Israel occupies parts of the

Peace process

The 14-point framework is expected to be signed in Geneva tomorrow

U.S. PLEDGES

- Lifting sanctions on Iran's products and services, including crude and banking
- Immediate lifting of naval blockade
- Withdrawing forces from 'surrounding areas'

IRAN PLEDGES

- Restoring pre-war traffic through Strait of Hormuz
- Never produce nuclear weapons

country, has remained a flashpoint. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said that his troops would not withdraw from Lebanon. Hezbollah, a Lebanese Shia group that has close ties with Iran, has also said it will continue to resist Israel's military occupation.

Under the agreement, the U.S. and Iran have pledged to "respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to refrain from interfering in each other's internal affairs".

The U.S. also commits itself to lifting all sanctions against Iran, both primary and secondary, as part of a final agreement.

After launching the war on February 28, U.S. President Donald Trump had indirectly called for regime change in Tehran, asking Iranians to take over their institutions and telling them that they had a "once-in-a-generation opportunity" on their hands. After announcing the MoU on June 15, Mr. Trump said he did not believe in regime change. But on Wednesday, Mr. Trump said that the MoU is only a preliminary agreement, adding that if Iran did not honour its obligations, he would resume the war.

Once the MoU is signed, Iran and the U.S. will start negotiations on core issues.

Strait to reopen

The U.S. will immediately lift its naval blockade and Iran will allow traffic through the Strait of Hormuz to reach pre-war volumes within 30 days, "taking into account the need for the removal of technical obstacles and the neutralization of mines by Iran".

Mr. Trump has said that traffic through the Strait will be toll-free. According to Iran's Foreign Ministry, however, Tehran will not impose a toll but ships will have to pay a fee to Iran's newly created Persian Gulf Strait Authority, for environmental upkeep and other services.

"Iran reiterates that it will never produce nuclear weapons. Iran and the U.S. have agreed that the fate of enriched material and the fate of all other mutually agreed nuclear-related issues, including Iran's nuclear needs, will be adequately addressed in a final agreement," the leaked text says.

Iran has hundreds of kilograms of highly enriched uranium, which the U.S. and Israel want to take out of the country and dilute or destroy. Tehran has also maintained that nuclear enrichment is a right which it will not surrender, while Mr. Trump has called for zero enrichment on Iranian soil. These contentious issues will be discussed in the next phase.

MORE REPORTS

» PAGES 14, 15

18J6. Framework deal outlines Tehran's pledge on nuclear weapons, \$300-bn U.S. relief रूपरेखा समझौते में परमाणु हथियारों पर तेहरान की प्रतिबद्धता तथा 300 अरब डॉलर की अमेरिकी राहत का उल्लेख

The **United States** has agreed to facilitate the release of **frozen Iranian assets**, contingent on progress in negotiations towards a final agreement, and create a plan for Iran's economic development, involving **300 billion dollars**, according to a leaked text of the **14-point framework agreement** reached between **Tehran** and **Washington**.

संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका ने ईरान की अवरुद्ध परिसंपत्तियों को मुक्त कराने में सहयोग करने तथा ईरान के आर्थिक विकास के लिए 300 अरब डॉलर की योजना तैयार करने पर सहमति व्यक्त की है। यह व्यवस्था तेहरान और वाशिंगटन के बीच हुए 14 सूत्रीय रूपरेखा समझौते के लीक हुए मसौदे में उल्लिखित है और अंतिम समझौते की दिशा में वार्ताओं की प्रगति पर निर्भर करेगी।

The draft, published by **Saudi Arabia's Al Arabiya network** and the **Bloomberg news agency**, states that **Iran has pledged never to produce nuclear weapons**.

सऊदी अरब के अल अरबीया नेटवर्क और ब्लूमबर्ग समाचार एजेंसी द्वारा प्रकाशित मसौदे के अनुसार ईरान ने कभी भी परमाणु हथियार विकसित न करने का वचन दिया है।

On its part, the U.S. will lift sanctions on the sale of **Iranian crude oil, petrochemical products, and financial services**, including banking, during the negotiation period.

इसके बदले अमेरिका वार्ता अवधि के दौरान **ईरानी कच्चे तेल, पेट्रो-रासायनिक उत्पादों तथा वित्तीय सेवाओं**, जिनमें बैंकिंग सेवाएँ भी शामिल हैं, पर लगे प्रतिबंधों को हटाएगा।

- Iran has agreed to **downblend its highly enriched uranium** under the supervision of the **International Atomic Energy Agency**.

हालाँकि बाद में **एसोसिएटेड प्रेस** ने बताया कि अमेरिकी अधिकारियों ने पत्रकारों को मसौदे की जानकारी देते हुए कहा कि ईरान **अंतरराष्ट्रीय परमाणु ऊर्जा एजेंसी** की निगरानी में अपने उच्च संवर्धित यूरेनियम को कम संवर्धित रूप में परिवर्तित करने पर सहमत हुआ है।

- The draft, which has not been released officially, calls for an **immediate and permanent end to the war on all fronts, including Lebanon** — a key Iranian demand.
यह मसौदा, जिसे आधिकारिक रूप से जारी नहीं किया गया है, **लेबनान सहित सभी मोर्चों पर युद्ध की तत्काल और स्थायी समाप्ति** की मांग करता है, जो ईरान की प्रमुख मांगों में से एक है।
- According to Iran's Foreign Ministry, however, **Tehran will not impose a toll but ships will have to pay a fee to Iran's newly created Persian Gulf Strait Authority** for environmental upkeep and other services.
हालाँकि ईरान के विदेश मंत्रालय के अनुसार कोई मार्ग शुल्क नहीं लगाया जाएगा, लेकिन जहाजों को पर्यावरण संरक्षण और अन्य सेवाओं के लिए ईरान की नवगठित **फारस की खाड़ी जलडमरूमध्य प्राधिकरण** को शुल्क देना होगा।
- "Iran reiterates that it will never produce nuclear weapons. Iran and the U.S. have agreed that the fate of enriched material and all other mutually agreed nuclear-related issues, including Iran's nuclear needs, will be adequately addressed in a final agreement," the leaked text says.
लीक हुए मसौदे में कहा गया है कि "ईरान पुनः दोहराता है कि वह कभी परमाणु हथियार नहीं बनाएगा। ईरान और अमेरिका इस बात पर सहमत हैं कि संवर्धित सामग्री तथा परमाणु कार्यक्रम से जुड़े अन्य सभी सहमत विषयों, जिनमें ईरान की परमाणु आवश्यकताएँ भी शामिल हैं, का समाधान अंतिम समझौते में किया जाएगा।"
- **Iran has hundreds of kilograms of highly enriched uranium, which the U.S. and Israel want to remove from the country and dilute or destroy.**
ईरान के पास **सैकड़ों किलोग्राम उच्च संवर्धित यूरेनियम** है, जिसे अमेरिका और इज़राइल देश से बाहर ले जाकर कम संवर्धित या नष्ट करना चाहते हैं।



Dhaka's new Padma barrage will reshape water power in the region

The new barrage will lie just 180 km downstream of the Farakka barrage in Bengal — which Bangladesh has blamed for its periodic water scarcity; the Farakka, one of India's largest with a feeder canal, was built to divert water from the Ganga to the Bhagirathi-Hoogly, and flush the Kolkata Port

ISS II IR
Sankha Dasgupta
CHENNAI

Bangladesh recently signed off on the new Padma barrage to control the Padma river, which is the Ganga in Bangladesh, and abate the country's seasonal water scarcity.

The 2.1-km-long structure will store 2,900 million cu. m of water to serve 6.5 crore people across southwestern and northern Bangladesh. It is estimated to cost Tk 50,443 crore (Rs 39,170 crore) over seven years.

The barrage will lie just 180 km downstream of the Farakka barrage in West Bengal — which Bangladesh has increasingly viewed as an impediment. The Farakka barrage is one of India's largest with a feeder canal and was built to divert water from the Ganga to the Bhagirathi-Hoogly and flush the Kolkata Port.

Under the 1996 Ganges Water Treaty, Bangladesh will receive half the water from the Farakka barrage when the flow is under 70,000 cusecs. But during the dry season between March and May, each country has to receive at least 35,000 cusecs of water in three alternating 10-day periods.

Treaties past and future

A 2019 review by a team of experts in *Water Policy* found that there were "repeated occurrences of low flow at Farakka during the drier years in the post-Treaty period," including in 1997, 2008, 2010 and 2016. They concluded that the 1996 Treaty couldn't account for rising unpredictability in the flows.

The agreement is set to expire in December 2026.

But Dhaka has also said the Farakka barrage is responsible for the country's periodic water scarcity. To add to the anxiety, several river-sharing agreements between India and Bangladesh also remain unsigned, including the Teesta River Treaty.

According to S. Janakarajan, president of the South Asia Consortium for Interdisciplinary Water Resources Studies, "All transboundary water issues centre around the lack of timely flow of water," implying the barrage will be a way for the lower riparian state to exert some control over its water resources.

But this equity will come at a considerable environmental cost.

Effects of Farakka barrage

The Farakka barrage has altered the Ganga river's character and ecology in Bangladesh. About a third of the country's population relies on the Ganga basin, mostly to irrigate crops. But by redirecting the river and reducing flow, the barrage has diminished groundwater recharge, reduced the extent of waterways for navigation, increased salinity, eroded riverbanks, and has left less freshwater flowing to the Sundarbans.

According to Mr. Janakarajan, "a substantial part of Bangladesh" is less than 10 m above sea level.

"In the near future, sea-level rise will lead to the disappearance of 17% of the territory of Bangladesh," researchers wrote in the *Journal of Marine Science and Engineering* in 2022.

This, they added, will "create 20 million refugees, and 2,20,000 km² of land will be submerged following a projected sea-level rise of 1,500 mm to



A view of the Padma river from space in 2016. NASA

take place within 150 years."

Bangladesh also drew around 520 litres of groundwater per person per day in 2008 (the latest year for which the UN FAO Aquastat database provides national figures for withdrawals by source). While this is not particularly high, the country's dependence on groundwater is a matter of concern.

Because the Farakka barrage also reduces flow in the Padma, the Padma is less able to transport silt, which sinks to the riverbed and piles up. When the monsoons arrive, the river overflows quickly and floods.

The sediments are also crucial to maintaining ecosystems and the livelihoods that depend on them.

For example, the Sundarbans region hosts the world's largest contiguous mangrove forest and depends on water from the Ganga, Brahmaputra, and Meghna rivers. Mr. Janakarajan said less sediment and freshwater flowing from these barrages will cause water in the Sundarbans to become saline whereas the ecosystem requires brackish water, which is less salty.

These changes will also lead to fewer fish, affecting the lives and livelihoods of fisherfolk in the area.

Fondness for concrete

South Asia is currently on a dam-building spree. There are more than 160 hydroelectric power projects underway in the region, per a 2023 review in *Water*. China is also building what will be the world's largest dam over the upper course of the Brahmaputra, just before the river enters India. In response, India has

initiated a Rs 6.4 lakh crore hydroelectric power project, including building over 200 dams in its Northeast.

Dams — of which barrages are a type — are generally designed to operate for a century. Climate change is breaking this guarantee.

To ensure a barrage doesn't overflow under heavy bursts of rain, for instance, engineers have to drain water from behind it using canals, Omair Ahmad, former South Asia managing editor at *Dialogue Earth*, said. However, this will require building extensive water diversion infrastructure that would likely be made of cement.

"Creating greater pondage here in a cement thing means water is not going into your groundwater. It cannot," Mr. Ahmad said. "It is robbing a much larger area around that barrage of the regular flow of water that would seep in from a river basin."

Given the adverse environmental consequences, experts said building another barrage is not the most rational choice.

"We think big projects will actually manage [water] despite historical evidence that they do not," Mr. Ahmad said. "It is rare for big projects to be able to manage this because ecosystems are a bit too complex."

Mr. Ahmad and Mr. Janakarajan also suggested that instead of one large barrage, Bangladesh should consider building a series of smaller check-dams, which don't dramatically alter a river's flow.

But this has the downside of requiring cross-country planning and maintenance,

whereas a barrage will be 'confined' to a specific area.

"Water sharing is always going to be a political issue," Sreeratha Datta, an international affairs professor at O.P. Jindal Global University, said. "The more we try to tame the river, the more we fall into other issues [with] long-term consequences which we cannot see now. But in the immediate context, it looks beneficial, and we are always pandering to the constituency."

The Daily Star has reported Bangladeshi officials saying the government will build the Padma barrage with its own money. Experts, however, said the country lacks the engineering resources for a project of this scale and likely has help from China.

Working on a project so close to the border alongside India's scepticism towards Bangladesh's new Tarique Rahman administration could make India uncomfortable, Prof. Datta added.

"China gets to be seen more and more as a dominant water manager in South Asia, as it has already become in the Mekong," Mr. Ahmad said. "India becomes a less relevant actor within its own neighbourhood."

So far, India has not directly commented on the Padma barrage. Dhaka has said its relationship with India depends on what they agree about sharing the Ganga's waters — and New Delhi that all river-sharing issues will be handled within the existing bilateral framework.

The treaty's renewal process is underway.

sonikka.l@thehindu.co.in

18J6. Dhaka's new Padma barrage will reshape water power in the region

ढाका का नया पद्मा बैराज क्षेत्रीय जल शक्ति संतुलन को पुनर्परिभाषित करेगा

- The new barrage will lie just 180 km downstream of the Farakka barrage in Bengal — which Bangladesh has blamed for its periodic water scarcity; the Farakka, one of India's



largest with a **feeder canal**, was built to divert water from the **Ganga** to the **Bhagirathi-Hoogly**, and flush the **Kolkata Port**.

- नया बैराज बंगाल स्थित फरक्का बैराज से मात्र 180 किमी डाउनस्ट्रीम स्थित होगा — जिसके लिए बांग्लादेश समय-समय पर उत्पन्न होने वाली जल कमी को जिम्मेदार ठहराता रहा है; फरक्का, जो भारत के सबसे बड़े बैराजों में से एक है तथा जिसमें एक फीडर नहर है, का निर्माण गंगा के जल को भागीरथी-हुगली की ओर मोड़ने तथा कोलकाता बंदरगाह की सफाई (फ्लशिंग) हेतु किया गया था।
- **Bangladesh recently signed off on the new Padma barrage to control the Padma river, which is the Ganga in Bangladesh, and abate the country's seasonal water scarcity.** बांग्लादेश ने हाल ही में पद्मा बैराज को स्वीकृति प्रदान की है, जिसका उद्देश्य पद्मा नदी (जो बांग्लादेश में गंगा कहलाती है) को नियंत्रित करना तथा देश में होने वाली मौसमी जल-संकट की समस्या को कम करना है।
- The **2.1-km-long structure will store 2,900 million cu. m of water to serve 6.5 crore people across southwestern and northern Bangladesh.** यह 2.1 किमी लंबी संरचना 2,900 मिलियन घन मीटर जल का भंडारण करेगी, जिससे दक्षिण-पश्चिमी और उत्तरी बांग्लादेश के 6.5 करोड़ लोगों को लाभ मिलेगा।
- Under the **1996 Ganges Water Treaty**, Bangladesh will receive half the water from the Farakka barrage when the flow is under **70,000 cusecs.** 1996 गंगा जल संधि के अंतर्गत, जब जलप्रवाह 70,000 क्यूसेक से कम होता है, तब बांग्लादेश को फरक्का बैराज से उपलब्ध जल का आधा भाग प्राप्त होगा।
- **But during the dry season between March and May, each country has to receive at least 35,000 cusecs of water in three alternating 10-day periods.** किन्तु मार्च से मई के मध्य आने वाले शुष्क मौसम में, दोनों देशों को तीन वैकल्पिक 10-दिवसीय अवधियों में कम-से-कम 35,000 क्यूसेक जल प्राप्त होना अनिवार्य है।
- The **agreement is set to expire in December 2026.** यह समझौता दिसम्बर 2026 में समाप्त होने वाला है।
- But **Dhaka** has also said the **Farakka barrage** is responsible for the country's periodic water scarcity. किन्तु ढाका ने यह भी कहा है कि देश में समय-समय पर उत्पन्न होने वाली जल कमी के लिए फरक्का बैराज उत्तरदायी है।
- To add to the anxiety, **several river-sharing agreements between India and Bangladesh also remain unsigned, including the Teesta River Treaty.** चिंता को और बढ़ाते हुए, भारत और बांग्लादेश के बीच कई नदी-जल साझाकरण समझौते अब भी हस्ताक्षरित नहीं हुए हैं, जिनमें तीस्ता नदी संधि भी शामिल है।
- The **Farakka barrage** has altered the **Ganga river's character and ecology** in Bangladesh. फरक्का बैराज ने बांग्लादेश में गंगा नदी के स्वरूप और पारिस्थितिकी को परिवर्तित कर दिया है।
- **About a third of the country's population relies on the Ganga basin, mostly to irrigate crops.** देश की लगभग एक-तिहाई जनसंख्या गंगा बेसिन पर निर्भर है, मुख्यतः फसलों की सिंचाई के लिए।
- **But by redirecting the river and reducing flow, the barrage has diminished groundwater recharge, reduced the extent of waterways for navigation, increased salinity, eroded riverbanks, and has left less freshwater flowing to the Sundarbans.** किन्तु नदी की धारा को मोड़ने और प्रवाह कम करने के कारण इस बैराज ने भूजल पुनर्भरण को घटाया है, नौवहन हेतु जलमार्गों के विस्तार को कम किया है, लवणता बढ़ाई है, नदी तटों का कटाव बढ़ाया है तथा सुंदरबन तक पहुँचने वाले मीठे जल की मात्रा कम कर दी है।
- **"In the near future, sea-level rise will lead to the disappearance of 17% of the territory of Bangladesh,"** researchers wrote in the **Journal of Marine Science and Engineering** in 2022.



2022 में जर्नल ऑफ मरीन साइंस एंड इंजीनियरिंग में प्रकाशित शोधकर्ताओं ने लिखा कि निकट भविष्य में समुद्र-स्तर में वृद्धि के कारण बांग्लादेश के 17% भूभाग के लुप्त होने की संभावना है।

- This, they added, will “create 20 million refugees, and 2,20,000 km² of land will be submerged following a projected sea-level rise of 1,500 mm to take place within 150 years.”

उन्होंने आगे कहा कि इससे 2 करोड़ शरणार्थी उत्पन्न होंगे तथा आगामी 150 वर्षों में अनुमानित 1,500 मिमी समुद्र-स्तर वृद्धि के परिणामस्वरूप 2,20,000 वर्ग किमी भूमि जलमग्न हो जाएगी।

- Bangladesh also drew around 520 litres of groundwater per person per day in 2008 (the latest year for which the UN FAO Aquastat database provides national figures for withdrawals by source).

बांग्लादेश ने वर्ष 2008 में प्रति व्यक्ति प्रतिदिन लगभग 520 लीटर भूजल का उपयोग किया था (यह नवीनतम वर्ष है जिसके लिए यूएन एफएओ एक्वास्टेट डेटाबेस स्रोतवार राष्ट्रीय आँकड़े उपलब्ध कराता है)।

- Because the Farakka barrage also reduces flow in the Padma, the Padma is less able to transport silt, which sinks to the riverbed and piles up.

चूँकि फरक्का बैराज पद्मा नदी में भी प्रवाह को कम करता है, इसलिए पद्मा गाद (सिल्ट) को पर्याप्त मात्रा में बहाकर नहीं ले जा पाती, जिससे वह नदी तल में जमा होने लगती है।

- The sediments are also crucial to maintaining ecosystems and the livelihoods that depend on them.

अवसाद (सेडिमेंट) पारिस्थितिक तंत्रों तथा उन पर निर्भर आजीविकाओं को बनाए रखने के लिए भी अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण हैं।

- For example, the Sundarbans region hosts the world's largest contiguous mangrove forest and depends on water from the Ganga, Brahmaputra, and Meghna rivers.

उदाहरण के लिए, सुंदरबन क्षेत्र विश्व के सबसे बड़े सतत मैंग्रोव वन का निवास स्थान है और यह गंगा, ब्रह्मपुत्र तथा मेघना नदियों के जल पर निर्भर करता है।

- Mr. Janakarajan said less sediment and freshwater flowing from these barrages will cause water in the Sundarbans to become saline whereas the ecosystem requires brackish water, which is less salty.

श्री जनकराजन ने कहा कि इन बैराजों से कम अवसाद और मीठा जल पहुँचने के कारण सुंदरबन का जल अधिक लवणीय हो जाएगा, जबकि वहाँ के पारिस्थितिक तंत्र को खारा-मिश्रित जल (Brackish Water) की आवश्यकता होती है, जो अपेक्षाकृत कम लवणीय होता है।

- These changes will also lead to fewer fish, affecting the lives and livelihoods of fisherfolk in the area.

इन परिवर्तनों के कारण मछलियों की संख्या भी घटेगी, जिससे क्षेत्र के मछुआरा समुदायों के जीवन और आजीविका पर प्रतिकूल प्रभाव पड़ेगा।

Fondness for concrete

कंक्रीट संरचनाओं के प्रति बढ़ती रुचि

- There are more than 160 hydroelectric power projects underway in the region, per a 2023 review in Water.

Water में प्रकाशित 2023 की समीक्षा के अनुसार, इस क्षेत्र में 160 से अधिक जलविद्युत परियोजनाएँ निर्माणाधीन हैं।

- China is also building what will be the world's largest dam over the upper course of the Brahmaputra, just before the river enters India.

चीन भी ब्रह्मपुत्र नदी के ऊपरी प्रवाह पर विश्व के सबसे बड़े बांध का निर्माण कर रहा है, ठीक उस स्थान से पहले जहाँ यह नदी भारत में प्रवेश करती है।

- In response, India has initiated a Rs 6.4 lakh crore hydroelectric power project, including building over 200 dams in its Northeast.



इसके प्रत्युत्तर में भारत ने 6.4 लाख करोड़ रुपये की जलविद्युत परियोजना आरम्भ की है, जिसमें पूर्वोत्तर क्षेत्र में 200 से अधिक बांधों का निर्माण शामिल है।

- **Dams** — of which **barrages** are a type — are generally designed to operate for a **century**. बांध, जिनमें बैराज भी एक प्रकार हैं, सामान्यतः एक शताब्दी तक संचालन हेतु डिज़ाइन किए जाते हैं।
- “Creating greater pondage here in a cement thing means water is not going into your **groundwater**. It cannot,” Mr. Ahmad said.
श्री अहमद ने कहा, “सीमेंट आधारित संरचना में अधिक जल भंडारण का अर्थ है कि जल भूजल में नहीं जा रहा है। यह संभव नहीं है।”
- “It is robbing a much larger area around that barrage of the regular flow of water that would seep in from a **river basin**.”
“यह उस बैराज के आसपास के एक बहुत बड़े क्षेत्र को उस नियमित जल प्रवाह से वंचित कर रहा है, जो सामान्यतः **नदी बेसिन** से रिसकर पहुँचता।”
- Mr. Ahmad and Mr. Janakarajan also suggested that **instead of one large barrage, Bangladesh should consider building a series of smaller check-dams, which don't dramatically alter a river's flow**.
श्री अहमद और श्री जनकराजन ने सुझाव दिया कि एक बड़े बैराज के स्थान पर बांग्लादेश को छोटे-छोटे **चेक डैमों** की श्रृंखला के निर्माण पर विचार करना चाहिए, जो नदी के प्रवाह को अत्यधिक प्रभावित नहीं करते।
- **Dhaka** has said its relationship with India depends on what they agree about sharing the **Ganga's waters** — and **New Delhi** that all river-sharing issues will be handled within the existing bilateral framework.
ढाका ने कहा है कि भारत के साथ उसके संबंध गंगा के जल बंटवारे पर सहमति पर निर्भर करते हैं, जबकि नई दिल्ली का कहना है कि सभी नदी-जल साझाकरण मुद्दों का समाधान वर्तमान द्विपक्षीय ढाँचे के अंतर्गत किया जाएगा।



Rubio's remarks and the limits of strategic empathy

CS II: IR

A day after the United States and Iran struck an interim deal on June 14, 2026, to end the war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz, it remains unclear whether the agreement will be implemented at all. Not only have details not been made public, but negotiators have, by all accounts, pushed the difficult issues down the road. There is no mention in the interim agreement of Iran's nuclear programme, its missile programme, or even ending Tehran's support for regional groups. Iran's top officials maintain that a final deal for a lasting truce is yet to take shape.

Washington's troubling response

These developments, though significant, are unlikely to make headlines in India, where policymakers and the public are still smarting over the deaths of three Indian sailors in a U.S. strike in the Strait of Hormuz on June 10.

Particularly galling are the remarks by the U.S. Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, who told External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar last week that "violations of the American blockade and the illicit transport of Iranian oil would not be tolerated and that commercial vessels must immediately comply with US forces". There was reportedly no expression of condolence for the deaths of the sailors, nor any indication that the incident would prompt a broader reassessment of the risks now confronting civilian shipping in the Gulf.

The implication was unmistakable: Washington does not view the episode principally as a humanitarian tragedy requiring accountability, but as a compliance problem arising from the failure of merchant vessels to obey American directives.

That framing has implications for New Delhi. It suggests that for Washington, the safety of neutral shipping and the interests of partner countries during a conflict are secondary to the enforcement of U.S. strategic objectives.



Abhijit Singh
Retired naval officer and former Head of the Maritime Policy Initiative at the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), New Delhi

The U.S. Secretary of State's comments reveal the human cost of American strategic objectives

Merchant vessels are expected simply to comply with American instructions; should they become collateral victims of the increasingly militarised environment in the Strait of Hormuz, the costs are expected to be borne by the countries that own the ships and by the sailors who crew them.

Indian sailors stand alone

For a nation such as India, whose economic interests are deeply tied to the free flow of commerce through the Strait of Hormuz and whose citizens make up a significant share of the global maritime workforce, this should be unacceptable. Great power competition inevitably imposes costs on third parties with little say in the decisions that create or sustain crises. But those costs cannot simply be externalised onto partner countries and civilian mariners in the expectation that they will quietly acquiesce.

India's predicament is particularly stark because it supplies roughly a fifth of the world's maritime workforce but possesses few realistic means of ensuring the safety of its seafarers. The Indian Navy's escort operations in the Gulf are valuable but necessarily limited. They cannot protect the more than 18,000 Indian sailors in the region, many of whom serve aboard vessels registered under flags of convenience such as Palau, Guinea-Bissau and the Marshall Islands. Such flags offer little meaningful diplomatic protection in times of crisis. When things go wrong, Indian sailors are often left effectively stateless from a protection standpoint. The three deaths aboard the *MT Settebello* have exposed a structural vulnerability that New Delhi has long recognised but never adequately addressed.

Whether or not this will fundamentally alter the trajectory of India-U.S. relations is hard to say. The bilateral relationship possesses too many load-bearing elements – defence cooperation, critical technologies, the Indo-Pacific and the Quad (Australia, India, Japan, U.S.) – for one

incident to trigger a rupture. Even so, Mr. Rubio's remarks seem to have done real damage at the level of trust and political optics. New Delhi's summoning of the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires twice within three days last week signals genuine anger. Many in India view Washington's response not as an aberration but as evidence of a deeper pattern: when the interests of partner states conflict with American strategic objectives, the U.S. invariably chooses itself.

Seeking accountability and answers

From an Indian standpoint, accountability for the incident has yet to be established. India must push for a credible, independent fact-finding investigation into the circumstances surrounding the strike. Beyond bilateral protest, New Delhi should consider taking the issue to multilateral forums, including the International Maritime Organization and consultations with other crewing and flag states. A lone démarche simply does not carry the weight of a coordinated international position. Importantly, Indian officials must articulate a principled and consistent position on maritime norms, one that applies irrespective of how powerful the state violating them may be.

For the Narendra Modi government, this episode is about more than the tragic deaths of three Indian sailors. Mr. Rubio's remarks have inadvertently laid bare an uncomfortable truth about great-power partnerships: strategic empathy has limits. The United States may regard India as an indispensable partner in the Indo-Pacific, but it will not subordinate its priorities in the Gulf to Indian sensitivities. That is not a reason for New Delhi to distance itself from Washington. It is, however, a reminder that close partnerships do not eliminate divergences of interest. India must continue to engage the U.S. with clear eyes and defend its maritime interests without assuming that others will do so on its behalf.

18J6. Rubio's remarks and the limits of strategic empathy

रुबियो की टिप्पणियाँ और रणनीतिक सहानुभूति की सीमाएँ

- India's predicament is particularly stark because it supplies roughly a **fifth of the world's maritime workforce** but possesses few realistic means of ensuring the safety of its seafarers.

भारत की स्थिति विशेष रूप से गंभीर है क्योंकि वह विश्व के समुद्री श्रमबल का लगभग पाँचवाँ भाग उपलब्ध कराता है, किन्तु अपने नाविकों की सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करने के लिए उसके पास सीमित व्यावहारिक साधन हैं।

- They cannot protect the more than **18,000 Indian sailors** in the region, many of whom serve aboard vessels registered under **flags of convenience** such as **Palau, Guinea-Bissau and the Marshall Islands**.

वे क्षेत्र में कार्यरत 18,000 से अधिक भारतीय नाविकों की सुरक्षा नहीं कर सकते, जिनमें से अनेक ऐसे जहाज़ों पर कार्यरत हैं जो पलाऊ, गिनी-बिसाउ और मार्शल द्वीपसमूह जैसे देशों के तथाकथित सुविधा-आधारित ध्वज पंजीकरण के अंतर्गत पंजीकृत हैं।

- The **three deaths aboard the MT Settebello** have exposed a structural vulnerability that New Delhi has long recognised but never adequately addressed.

एमटी सेट्टेबेलो जहाज़ पर हुई तीन मौतों ने उस संरचनात्मक कमजोरी को उजागर कर दिया है जिसे नई दिल्ली लंबे समय से पहचानती रही है, किन्तु जिसका पर्याप्त समाधान नहीं किया गया।

- The **bilateral relationship possesses too many load-bearing elements — defence cooperation, critical technologies, the Indo-Pacific and the Quad** — for one incident to trigger a rupture.

द्विपक्षीय संबंधों में रक्षा सहयोग, महत्वपूर्ण प्रौद्योगिकियाँ, हिंद-प्रशांत क्षेत्र तथा चतुष्पक्षीय समूह जैसे अनेक महत्वपूर्ण स्तंभ हैं, इसलिए किसी एक घटना से संबंधों में गंभीर टूटन की संभावना कम है।

- Beyond bilateral protest, New Delhi should consider taking the issue to multilateral forums, including the **International Maritime Organization** and consultations with other crewing and flag states.



द्विपक्षीय विरोध से आगे बढ़ते हुए नई दिल्ली को इस मुद्दे को अंतरराष्ट्रीय समुद्री संगठन सहित बहुपक्षीय मंचों तथा अन्य नाविक-आपूर्ति और ध्वजधारी देशों के साथ विचार-विमर्श में उठाने पर विचार करना चाहिए।

What does the India-Russia logistics agreement allow?

What is RELOS, and does it allow India and Russia to station troops on each other's territory?

GS II IR
Dinakar Peri

The story so far:
The India-Russia bilateral Logistics Support Agreement (LSA), termed the Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS), which had been dragging on for several years, was operationalised in January this year. There was a flutter on social media recently with claims that it allows the stationing of 3,000 Russian troops on Indian soil or vice versa, painting it as a military alliance. However, it is like any LSA, the likes of which India has signed with other countries.

What are Logistics Support Agreements?

A logistics agreement is a foundational military cooperation agreement between

countries for administrative purposes that enables the reciprocal use of each other's bases and ports for supplies, repair, and fuel. The agreement also stipulates the occasions on which this can be utilised, generally for exercises, joint training, port calls, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief situations. As defence cooperation and military-to-military engagement become vital in international relations, the agreement simplifies essential administrative procedures and reduces bureaucracy.

For instance, the agreement with the U.S., Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) signed in 2016, the first such, provides a framework for reciprocal provision of logistic support, supplies and services for activities such as joint exercises, training, or humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. "It does not provide for the establishment of any

bases or basing arrangements." Minister of State for Defence Subhash Bhamre said in a written reply in the Parliament in February 2017.

If the hyperbole is to be believed, India and Russia can station troops on each other's territory, then by convention, it also means that India and the U.S. can do the same under the LEMOA. But that is grossly incorrect, as clarified by the Minister, and is so for any LSA.

What are the existing agreements?

India has signed a series of logistics support agreements since the LEMOA in 2016. Currently, India has similar agreements with nine countries – the U.S., the U.K., France, Vietnam, Japan, Australia, Singapore, and Russia – concluded on similar lines, which provide logistics support and technical aid. The basic template and purpose for all these

remain the same. There is also one with Oman covered under the overarching defence cooperation agreement.

What is the agreement with Russia?

Like other agreements, RELOS defines procedures for supporting military formations, port calls of warships, and the use of airspace and airfield facilities by military aircraft of both countries and the organisation of logistics and technical support of military formations of warships, military aircraft, and other equipment.

The agreement was signed in Moscow on February 18, 2025, and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed the federal law ratifying it on December 15, 2025. According to the Kremlin, the purpose of the agreement is to define the procedures for the deployment of military formations, port calls by warships, and the use of airspace and airfield infrastructure by military aircraft of the two countries.

Broadly, RELOS covers joint military exercises, training, HADR missions, port and repair services, medical support, as well as delivery of food and technical resources and reciprocal access to military facilities, including airbases and ports, to support ship and aircraft personnel.

The agreement stipulates a maximum

of 3,000 troops, representing a broad upper limit that takes into account the size of contingents and the number of ships or aircraft that may visit during engagements mutually agreed upon by both sides. It is valid for a period of five years, allowing for revisions later to reflect changing circumstances and requirements. The time frame for positioning of assets and personnel would be subject to the visit mutually agreed upon by both parties, one official said.

In fact, the scale of bilateral and multilateral relations between India and other countries is much larger. Indian armed forces exercise with the U.S. now.

Also, the agreement does not confer any provision for permanent basing of assets, and the agreement shall be exercised during joint exercises, port calls, or visits mutually agreed by both nations based on provisions of the agreement, officials clarified. "No permanent or long-term stationing has been agreed upon as part of the Agreement."

One important aspect is that RELOS gives access to Russian military facilities in the Arctic as both countries expand cooperation there, as new navigation routes open up, a fallout of global warming. (Dinakar Peri is Fellow, Security Studies at Carnegie India)

18J6. What does the India-Russia logistics agreement allow? भारत-रूस लॉजिस्टिक्स समझौता क्या अनुमति प्रदान करता है?

India-Russia Logistics Support Agreement (RELOS)

भारत-रूस रसद सहयोग समझौता (रेलोस)

- **The India-Russia bilateral Logistics Support Agreement, termed the Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement**, which had been dragging on for several years, was operationalised in January this year.

भारत-रूस द्विपक्षीय रसद सहयोग समझौता, जिसे पारस्परिक रसद विनिमय समझौता कहा जाता है, कई वर्षों से लंबित रहने के बाद इस वर्ष जनवरी में लागू किया गया।

- There was a flutter on social media recently with claims that it allows the stationing of **3,000 Russian troops** on Indian soil or vice versa, painting it as a military alliance. हाल ही में सामाजिक माध्यमों पर यह दावा किया गया कि यह समझौता भारत में **3,000 रूसी सैनिकों** अथवा रूस में भारतीय सैनिकों की तैनाती की अनुमति देता है, और इसे सैन्य गठबंधन के रूप में प्रस्तुत किया गया।
- However, it is like any Logistics Support Agreement, the likes of which India has signed with other countries.

किन्तु यह अन्य रसद सहयोग समझौतों की ही तरह है, जिन पर भारत ने कई देशों के साथ हस्ताक्षर किए हैं।

What are Logistics Support Agreements?

रसद सहयोग समझौते क्या हैं?

- A logistics agreement is a foundational military cooperation agreement between countries for administrative purposes that enables the reciprocal use of each other's bases and ports for supplies, repair, and fuel.

रसद सहयोग समझौता देशों के बीच प्रशासनिक उद्देश्यों के लिए किया जाने वाला एक मूलभूत सैन्य सहयोग समझौता है, जो एक-दूसरे के अड्डों और बंदरगाहों का उपयोग आपूर्ति, मरम्मत तथा ईंधन भरने के लिए संभव बनाता है।

- The agreement also stipulates the occasions on which this can be utilised, generally for exercises, joint training, port calls, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief situations.

यह समझौता उन परिस्थितियों को भी निर्धारित करता है जिनमें इसका उपयोग किया जा सकता है, जैसे सैन्य अभ्यास, संयुक्त प्रशिक्षण, बंदरगाह यात्राएँ तथा मानवीय सहायता एवं आपदा राहत अभियान।

- As defence cooperation and military-to-military engagement become vital in international relations, the **agreement simplifies essential administrative procedures and reduces bureaucracy.**

अंतरराष्ट्रीय संबंधों में रक्षा सहयोग और सैन्य संपर्कों के बढ़ते महत्व के कारण यह समझौता आवश्यक प्रशासनिक प्रक्रियाओं को सरल बनाता है और नौकरशाही बाधाओं को कम करता है।

- For instance, the **agreement with the United States, called the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement**, signed in 2016, was the first such arrangement.

उदाहरण के लिए, **संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका** के साथ वर्ष 2016 में हस्ताक्षरित **रसद विनिमय जापान समझौता** इस प्रकार की पहली व्यवस्था थी।

- It provides a framework for reciprocal provision of logistic support, supplies and services for activities such as joint exercises, training, or humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.**

यह संयुक्त सैन्य अभ्यासों, प्रशिक्षण तथा मानवीय सहायता एवं आपदा राहत गतिविधियों के लिए पारस्परिक रसद सहायता, आपूर्ति और सेवाएँ उपलब्ध कराने का ढाँचा प्रदान करता है।

- "It does not provide for the establishment of any bases or basing arrangements,"** Minister of State for Defence **Subhash Bhamre** said in a written reply in Parliament in February 2017.

रक्षा राज्य मंत्री **सुभाष भामरे** ने फरवरी 2017 में संसद में लिखित उत्तर देते हुए स्पष्ट किया था कि यह किसी सैन्य अड्डे की स्थापना अथवा स्थायी तैनाती की व्यवस्था प्रदान नहीं करता।

- If the hyperbole is to be believed, India and Russia can station troops on each other's territory, then by convention, it also means that India and the United States can do the same under the logistics exchange agreement.**

यदि अतिरंजित दावों को सही माना जाए, तो भारत और रूस एक-दूसरे के क्षेत्र में सैनिक तैनात कर सकते हैं, और उसी तर्क के अनुसार भारत तथा अमेरिका भी ऐसा कर सकते हैं।

- But that is grossly incorrect, as clarified by the Minister, and is so for any logistics support agreement.**

किन्तु मंत्री द्वारा स्पष्ट किया गया कि यह पूर्णतः गलत व्याख्या है और यही स्थिति सभी रसद सहयोग समझौतों पर लागू होती है।

What are the existing agreements?

वर्तमान समझौते कौन-कौन से हैं?

- India has signed a series of logistics support agreements since the logistics exchange agreement in 2016.

भारत ने वर्ष 2016 के बाद से अनेक रसद सहयोग समझौतों पर हस्ताक्षर किए हैं।

- Currently, India has similar agreements with **the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Vietnam, Japan, Australia, Singapore, and Russia.**

वर्तमान में भारत के **संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका, यूनाइटेड किंगडम, फ्रांस, वियतनाम, जापान, ऑस्ट्रेलिया, सिंगापुर तथा रूस** के साथ ऐसे समझौते हैं।

- These agreements provide logistics support and technical assistance.**

ये समझौते रसद सहायता तथा तकनीकी सहयोग प्रदान करते हैं।

- There is also one with Oman covered under the overarching defence cooperation agreement.**

ओमान के साथ भी व्यापक रक्षा सहयोग समझौते के अंतर्गत ऐसी व्यवस्था मौजूद है।

What is the agreement with Russia?

रूस के साथ समझौता क्या है?

- Like other agreements, the **Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement** defines procedures for supporting military formations, port calls of warships, and the use of airspace and airfield facilities by military aircraft of both countries.

अन्य समझौतों की तरह पारस्परिक रसद विनिमय समझौता सैन्य टुकड़ियों के समर्थन, युद्धपोतों की बंदरगाह यात्राओं तथा दोनों देशों के सैन्य विमानों द्वारा वायुक्षेत्र और हवाई अड्डा सुविधाओं के उपयोग की प्रक्रियाएँ निर्धारित करता है।

- It also covers logistics and technical support for warships, military aircraft, and other defence equipment.
यह युद्धपोतों, सैन्य विमानों तथा अन्य रक्षा उपकरणों के लिए रसद एवं तकनीकी सहायता की व्यवस्था भी करता है।
- The agreement was signed in **Moscow on February 18, 2025**, and **President Vladimir Putin** signed the federal law ratifying it on **December 15, 2025**.
इस समझौते पर **18 फरवरी 2025** को **मॉस्को** में हस्ताक्षर किए गए थे और राष्ट्रपति **व्लादिमीर पुतिन** ने **15 दिसंबर 2025** को इसके अनुमोदन संबंधी संघीय कानून पर हस्ताक्षर किए।
- According to the Kremlin, the purpose of the agreement is to define procedures for the deployment of military formations, port calls by warships, and the use of airspace and airfield infrastructure by military aircraft of the two countries.
क्रेमलिन के अनुसार इस समझौते का उद्देश्य सैन्य टुकड़ियों की तैनाती, युद्धपोतों की बंदरगाह यात्राओं तथा दोनों देशों के सैन्य विमानों द्वारा वायुक्षेत्र और हवाई अड्डा अवसंरचना के उपयोग की प्रक्रियाओं को निर्धारित करना है।
- Broadly, the agreement covers **joint military exercises, training, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions, port and repair services, medical support, food supplies, technical resources, and reciprocal access to military facilities**.
व्यापक रूप से यह समझौता संयुक्त सैन्य अभ्यास, प्रशिक्षण, मानवीय सहायता एवं आपदा राहत अभियान, बंदरगाह एवं मरम्मत सेवाएँ, चिकित्सीय सहायता, खाद्य आपूर्ति, तकनीकी संसाधन तथा सैन्य सुविधाओं तक पारस्परिक पहुँच को सम्मिलित करता है।
- The agreement stipulates a maximum of **3,000 troops**, representing a broad upper limit that takes into account the size of contingents and the number of ships or aircraft that may visit during mutually agreed engagements.
समझौते में **3,000 सैनिकों** की अधिकतम सीमा का उल्लेख है, जो केवल एक व्यापक उच्चतम सीमा है और इसमें संयुक्त गतिविधियों के दौरान आने वाले सैन्य दलों, जहाज़ों और विमानों की संख्या को ध्यान में रखा गया है।
- It is valid for a period of **five years**, allowing for revisions later to reflect changing circumstances and requirements.
यह समझौता **पाँच वर्षों** के लिए वैध है और भविष्य में बदलती आवश्यकताओं के अनुसार इसमें संशोधन किया जा सकता है।
- Also, the agreement does not confer any provision for **permanent basing of assets**.
इसके अतिरिक्त यह समझौता **स्थायी सैन्य तैनाती** का कोई प्रावधान प्रदान नहीं करता।
- The agreement shall be exercised during joint exercises, port calls, or visits mutually agreed upon by both nations.
इसका उपयोग केवल संयुक्त सैन्य अभ्यासों, बंदरगाह यात्राओं अथवा दोनों देशों द्वारा स्वीकृत अन्य दौरों के दौरान किया जाएगा।
- Officials clarified that **no permanent or long-term stationing has been agreed upon as part of the agreement**.
अधिकारियों ने स्पष्ट किया है कि **इस समझौते के अंतर्गत किसी स्थायी अथवा दीर्घकालिक तैनाती पर सहमति नहीं बनी है।**
- One important aspect is that the agreement gives access to **Russian military facilities in the Arctic** as both countries expand cooperation there, especially as new navigation routes open due to **global warming**.
एक महत्वपूर्ण पहलू यह है कि यह समझौता **आर्कटिक क्षेत्र में रूसी सैन्य सुविधाओं** तक पहुँच प्रदान करता है, जहाँ वैश्विक तापवृद्धि के कारण नए समुद्री मार्ग खुलने के साथ दोनों देश अपना सहयोग बढ़ा रहे हैं।



U.S. drops 'Indo' from name of its military's Pacific Command

GS II: IR
Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

The Pentagon is restoring the name of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command to the U.S. Pacific Command, it said on Tuesday, reversing a 2018 decision.

The renaming will not change the command's area of responsibility, which stretches from the western part of India to America's Pacific coastline, the Department of War said in a statement.

Its "fundamental mission and its unwavering commitment to maintain-

ing a free and open theatre alongside regional allies and partners" also remain unchanged, it added. The name change "honours the command's deep historical roots, fostering a sense of pride and collective spirit among all who serve in the Pacific," the department said.

The U.S. Pacific Command was established after the Second World War. It was renamed as the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command in 2018, in a nod to the growing importance of the Indian Ocean in U.S. strategic thinking.

18J6. U.S. drops 'Indo' from name of its military's Pacific Command

अमेरिका ने अपनी सैन्य 'इंडो-पैसिफिक कमांड' के नाम से 'इंडो' शब्द हटाया

The Pentagon is restoring the name of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command to the U.S. Pacific Command, it said on Tuesday, reversing a 2018 decision.

पेंटागन ने मंगलवार को कहा कि वह यू.एस. इंडो-पैसिफिक कमांड का नाम बदलकर फिर से यू.एस. पैसिफिक कमांड कर रहा है, जिससे 2018 का निर्णय पलट दिया गया है।

The renaming will not change the command's area of responsibility, which stretches from the western part of India to America's Pacific coastline, the Department of War said in a statement.

डिपार्टमेंट ऑफ वॉर ने एक बयान में कहा कि इस नाम परिवर्तन से कमांड के उत्तरदायित्व क्षेत्र में कोई बदलाव नहीं होगा, जो भारत के पश्चिमी भाग से लेकर अमेरिका के प्रशांत तट तक फैला हुआ है।

- Its "fundamental mission and its unwavering commitment to maintaining a free and open theatre alongside regional allies and partners" also remain unchanged, it added.
बयान में कहा गया कि इसका "मूल मिशन और क्षेत्रीय सहयोगियों तथा साझेदारों के साथ एक मुक्त और खुला क्षेत्र बनाए रखने की अटूट प्रतिबद्धता" भी अपरिवर्तित रहेगी।
- The U.S. Pacific Command was established after the Second World War.
यू.एस. पैसिफिक कमांड की स्थापना द्वितीय विश्व युद्ध के बाद की गई थी।
- It was renamed as the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command in 2018, in a nod to the growing importance of the Indian Ocean in U.S. strategic thinking.
इसे 2018 में यू.एस. इंडो-पैसिफिक कमांड नाम दिया गया था, जो अमेरिकी रणनीतिक सोच में हिन्द महासागर के बढ़ते महत्व को दर्शाता था।

GS Paper III: Economy		18 June 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
18J6	The RBI and its growing fiscal role आरबीआई और उसकी बढ़ती राजकोषीय भूमिका	
18J6	RBI allows banks to offer higher interest to NRIs/PIOs RBI ने बैंकों को NRI/PIO जमाकर्ताओं को अधिक ब्याज देने की अनुमति दी	
18J6	India, U.K. announce July 15 as trade deal implementation date भारत और ब्रिटेन ने 15 जुलाई को व्यापार समझौते के क्रियान्वयन की तिथि घोषित किया	



The RBI and its growing fiscal role

RBI's record ₹2.87 lakh crore surplus transfer to the Centre shows its growing fiscal significance, as earnings from reserve management and foreign assets support govt. finances; the trend raises questions about central bank independence, fiscal centralisation, and exclusion of such transfers from fiscal devolution to States

ISS III: Economy

ECONOMIC NOTES

Deepanshu Mohan
Ankur Singh

Central banks occupy a peculiar position in modern democracies. Governments spend, tax, and borrow. Central banks manage inflation, preserve confidence in the currency, and safeguard financial stability. Their credibility rests on maintaining a degree of distance from the fiscal compulsions of the governments they serve.

Recent developments surrounding the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) invite a closer examination of that relationship.

Much of the recent discussion has focused on the RBI's management of foreign exchange reserves, interventions with respect to managing the rupee, including instances of reserve-rebalancing through gold sales, and increased foreign-currency holdings.

Yet, the more consequential story surrounding this is the extent to which the institution may be seen to be becoming more executive or fiscalised in its role to support the government.

In May, the RBI approved a record surplus transfer of ₹2.87 lakh crore to the Union government for FY26. While fully consistent with the Economic Capital Framework, its scale raises questions about the evolving role of the central bank within India's fiscal architecture.

A structural shift

Surplus transfers have been around the ₹30,000 crore to ₹65,000 crore level for the past few years. The tipping point was reached in 2019 after the implementation of the revised Economic Capital Framework.

The transfer is now at a record high of ₹2.87 lakh crore for FY26.

This move coincides with the phenomenal growth of the RBI's balance sheet. It increased by 20.6% in one year to ₹91.97 lakh crore by March 2026. Gross income increased by over 26% during the same period.

Traditionally, governments fund expenditure through taxation, borrowing,



The Reserve Bank of India continues to operate within a well-defined framework. REUTERS

and revenue growth. Political consent is needed for taxation. Borrowing is disciplined by markets and future repayment obligations. Economic growth requires real growth in productive capacity.

Central-bank transfers are different. They generate fiscal space without new taxes, new borrowing, or commensurate growth in economic production. The latest transfer alone is bigger than the annual budgets of several Indian States.

This is not a bad practice to make such transfers. However, it does pose an interesting question. When does a stabilising institution start to act as a fiscal instrument?

The evolution of the RBI's reserve management is a good example.

The RBI may have sold almost \$12 billion worth of gold and bought foreign-currency assets by about \$7.5 billion in the face of rupee pressures, according to recent reports.

These are standard reserve-management decisions when looked at superficially. Central banks are constantly adjusting their portfolios based on market conditions. Gold is a strategic reserve asset. Foreign-currency assets are the source of liquidity for intervening in exchange-rate markets.

However, the management of reserves has become a financial issue.

The recent surplus transfer included a significant portion of gains from foreign

assets, foreign exchange transactions, and interest earned on securities holdings. The activities are mainly being carried out to ensure monetary and financial stability, but are also producing increasingly significant fiscal revenues for the sovereign.

This is where the discussion transcends accounting. The RBI's balance sheet is now at ₹92 lakh crore. The composition of reserves, intervention in the exchange rate, and asset allocation decisions now impact not just monetary stability, but also the economy's overall health. They are becoming more and more important for fiscal results as well.

The experience of India is different from that of the advanced economies, where central banks became entangled with fiscal policy by engaging in quantitative easing and buying a large number of bonds. In this case, the link has come about because of the increasing significance of the fiscal value of central-bank earnings.

The federal blind spot

The least talked about part of this debate is fiscal federalism.

The total amount of ₹2.87 lakh crore transfer is non-tax revenue and hence it is a Union government gain. It is not part of the divisible pool of income tax collections or GST revenues which are subject to Finance Commission formulas. There is no automatic share to the States.

States still have significant spending obligations. Concurrently, they have restrictions on borrowing under Article 293 and have much less fiscal flexibility than the Union government.

However, one of the biggest transfers of resources from the public sector in recent years is still not part of fiscal devolution.

The point isn't whether States have a legal claim to RBI profits. They do not. The question is whether a central institution acting on behalf of the monetary union as a whole should indirectly support fiscal centralisation, without any mention of accountability, transparency or federal balance.

Dividend transfers, cesses, surcharges and borrowing restrictions are all considered to be individual policy instruments when viewed individually. Together, they show a progressive shift in the fiscal landscape of India towards the centre.

An evolving institution

The debate over the RBI's record surplus transfer is therefore not ultimately about the dividend itself. It is about how modern states finance themselves.

The central bank has evolved from being primarily a guardian of monetary stability into an increasingly important source of fiscal capacity. The latest transfer may have eased borrowing pressures and strengthened the government's fiscal position, but it also underscores how closely monetary institutions and fiscal outcomes have become intertwined.

The RBI continues to operate within a well-defined framework and retains substantial operational autonomy. Yet central bank independence is not merely a matter of legal design. It is also a question of institutional distance.

As surplus transfers become larger and fiscal pressures intensify, preserving that distance may become more difficult. It may also become more important. (Deepanshu Mohan is Dean and Professor of Economics at O.P. Jindal Global University. He is currently Visiting Professor at LSE and a Visiting Research Fellow at University of Oxford. Ankur Singh is a Research Analyst with Centre for New Economics Studies)

THE GIST

▼ The RBI's balance sheet increased by 20.6% in one year to ₹91.97 lakh crore by March 2026, while gross income rose by over 26% during the same period.

▼ The RBI may have sold almost \$12 billion worth of gold and bought foreign-currency assets by about \$7.5 billion in the face of rupee pressures, with the recent surplus transfer including gains from foreign assets, foreign exchange transactions and interest earned on securities holdings.

18J6. The RBI and its growing fiscal role

आरबीआई और उसकी बढ़ती राजकोषीय भूमिका

- **RBI's record ₹2.87 lakh crore surplus transfer to the Centre shows its growing fiscal significance, as earnings from reserve management and foreign assets support govt. finances;** the trend raises questions about central bank independence, fiscal centralisation, and **exclusion of such transfers from fiscal devolution to States**
- **केंद्र को आरबीआई द्वारा किए गए रिकॉर्ड ₹2.87 लाख करोड़ के अधिशेष हस्तांतरण से उसकी बढ़ती राजकोषीय महत्ता स्पष्ट होती है, क्योंकि आरक्षित निधियों के प्रबंधन तथा विदेशी परिसंपत्तियों से प्राप्त आय सरकार के वित्त को समर्थन प्रदान करती है; यह प्रवृत्ति केंद्रीय बैंक की स्वतंत्रता, राजकोषीय केंद्रीकरण तथा राज्यों को होने वाले राजकोषीय हस्तांतरण से ऐसी राशि को बाहर रखने संबंधी प्रश्न भी उठाती है।**
- **Central banks manage inflation, preserve confidence in the currency, and safeguard financial stability.**

केंद्रीय बैंक मुद्रास्फीति का प्रबंधन करते हैं, मुद्रा में विश्वास बनाए रखते हैं तथा वित्तीय स्थिरता सुनिश्चित करते हैं।

A structural shift

एक संरचनात्मक परिवर्तन

- Surplus transfers have been around the ₹30,000 crore to ₹65,000 crore level for the past few years.
पिछले कुछ वर्षों में अधिशेष हस्तांतरण की राशि सामान्यतः 30,000 करोड़ रुपये से 65,000 करोड़ रुपये के बीच रही है।
- The tipping point was reached in 2019 after the implementation of the revised **Economic Capital Framework**.
संशोधित आर्थिक पूंजी ढाँचे के लागू होने के बाद 2019 में एक निर्णायक मोड़ आया।
- The transfer is now at a record high of ₹2.87 lakh crore for FY26.
वित्तीय वर्ष 2026 के लिए यह हस्तांतरण अब बढ़कर रिकॉर्ड 2.87 लाख करोड़ रुपये तक पहुँच गया है।
- The latest transfer alone is bigger than the annual budgets of several Indian States.
हालिया हस्तांतरण अकेले ही भारत के अनेक राज्यों के वार्षिक बजट से अधिक है।
- This is not a bad practice to make such transfers.
ऐसे हस्तांतरण करना स्वयं में कोई अनुचित प्रथा नहीं है।
- However, it does pose an interesting question.
किन्तु यह एक महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न अवश्य उत्पन्न करता है।
- When does a stabilising institution start to act as a fiscal instrument?
एक स्थिरता प्रदान करने वाली संस्था कब राजकोषीय साधन के रूप में कार्य करने लगती है?
- The evolution of the RBI's **reserve management** is a good example.
भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक के भंडार प्रबंधन का विकास इसका एक अच्छा उदाहरण है।
- The RBI may have sold almost 12 billion डॉलर worth of gold and bought foreign-currency assets by about 7.5 billion डॉलर in the face of rupee pressures, according to recent reports.
हालिया रिपोर्टों के अनुसार रुपये पर दबाव की स्थिति में भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक ने लगभग 12 अरब डॉलर मूल्य का स्वर्ण बेचा तथा लगभग 7.5 अरब डॉलर मूल्य की विदेशी मुद्रा परिसंपत्तियाँ खरीदीं।
- These are standard reserve-management decisions when looked at superficially.
सतही दृष्टि से देखें तो ये सामान्य भंडार प्रबंधन संबंधी निर्णय हैं।
- Central banks are constantly adjusting their portfolios based on market conditions.
केंद्रीय बैंक बाजार परिस्थितियों के अनुसार निरंतर अपने निवेश पोर्टफोलियो में परिवर्तन करते रहते हैं।
- Gold is a strategic reserve asset.
स्वर्ण एक रणनीतिक आरक्षित परिसंपत्ति है।
- Foreign-currency assets are the source of liquidity for intervening in exchange-rate markets.
विदेशी मुद्रा परिसंपत्तियाँ विनिमय दर बाजारों में हस्तक्षेप हेतु आवश्यक तरलता का स्रोत होती हैं।
- However, the management of reserves has become a fiscal issue.
किन्तु अब भंडार प्रबंधन एक राजकोषीय विषय भी बन गया है।
- The recent surplus transfer included a significant portion of gains from **foreign assets**, **foreign exchange transactions**, and interest earned on securities holdings.
हालिया अधिशेष हस्तांतरण में विदेशी परिसंपत्तियों, विदेशी मुद्रा लेन-देन, तथा प्रतिभूतियों पर अर्जित ब्याज से प्राप्त लाभ का महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा शामिल था।
- The activities are mainly being carried out to ensure monetary and financial stability, but are also producing increasingly significant fiscal revenues for the sovereign.
यद्यपि ये गतिविधियाँ मुख्य रूप से मौद्रिक और वित्तीय स्थिरता बनाए रखने के लिए की जाती हैं, फिर भी इनके माध्यम से सरकार को लगातार बढ़ता हुआ महत्वपूर्ण राजकोषीय राजस्व प्राप्त हो रहा है।
- This is where the discussion transcends **accounting**.
यहीं पर यह चर्चा केवल लेखांकन के दायरे से आगे बढ़ जाती है।
- The RBI's **balance sheet** is now at ₹92 lakh crore.
भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक की तुलन पत्र अब 92 लाख करोड़ रुपये तक पहुँच चुकी है।



- The composition of reserves, intervention in the exchange rate, and asset allocation decisions now impact not just monetary stability, but also the economy's overall health.
भंडार की संरचना, विनिमय दर में हस्तक्षेप तथा परिसंपत्ति आवंटन से संबंधित निर्णय अब केवल मौद्रिक स्थिरता ही नहीं, बल्कि समग्र अर्थव्यवस्था की स्थिति को भी प्रभावित करते हैं।
- They are becoming more and more important for **fiscal outcomes** as well.
ये निर्णय **राजकोषीय परिणामों** के लिए भी लगातार अधिक महत्वपूर्ण होते जा रहे हैं।
- The **experience of India is different from that of the advanced economies**, where central banks became entangled with fiscal policy by engaging in **quantitative easing** and buying a large number of bonds.
भारत का अनुभव **विकसित अर्थव्यवस्थाओं** से भिन्न है, जहाँ केंद्रीय बैंक **मात्रात्मक सहजता** की नीति अपनाकर तथा बड़ी मात्रा में बांड खरीदकर राजकोषीय नीति से गहराई से जुड़ गए थे।
- In this case, the link has come about because of the increasing significance of the fiscal value of **central-bank earnings**.
भारत के मामले में यह संबंध **केंद्रीय बैंक की आय के राजकोषीय महत्व** में बढ़ोतरी के कारण विकसित हुआ है।

The federal blind spot संघीय व्यवस्था की उपेक्षित चुनौती

- The least talked about part of this debate is **fiscal federalism**.
इस बहस का सबसे कम चर्चित पक्ष **राजकोषीय संघवाद** है।
- The **total amount of ₹2.87 lakh crore transfer** is non-tax revenue and hence it is a Union government gain.
2.87 लाख करोड़ रुपये का यह हस्तांतरण करेतर राजस्व है और इसलिए इसका लाभ केंद्र सरकार को प्राप्त होता है।
- It is not part of the divisible pool of **income tax collections or goods and services tax revenues** which are subject to Finance Commission formulas.



GS III: Economy

RBI allows banks to offer higher interest to NRIs/PIOs

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to temporarily withdraw the interest rate ceiling on fresh Foreign Currently Non-Resident-Bank [FCNR(B)] deposits of 3-5 year tenors and the restriction on interest rates on Non-Resident External (NRE) deposits of three-year and above tenors, including deposits that are renewed upon maturity. The move, a review of its 2025 direction, is to boost forex reserves and will be in effect till September 30, 2026. The central bank issued amendment directions to this effect on Wednesday. As per the directions, banks will be able to offer higher interest rates to this specific category of depositors and interest rates on NRE/NRO deposits will not be higher than those offered by the bank on comparable domestic rupee term deposits.

यह **आयकर संग्रह** अथवा **वस्तु एवं सेवा कर राजस्व** के उस विभाज्य कोष का हिस्सा नहीं है, जिसका वितरण वित्त आयोग के सूत्रों के अनुसार किया जाता है।

- There is no automatic share to the States.
इसमें राज्यों के लिए कोई स्वचालित हिस्सा निर्धारित नहीं है।
- States still have significant spending obligations.
राज्यों पर अब भी महत्वपूर्ण व्यय संबंधी दायित्व हैं।
- Concurrently, they have restrictions on borrowing under **Article 293** and have much less fiscal flexibility than the Union government.
साथ ही, उन पर **अनुच्छेद 293** के अंतर्गत उधारी संबंधी प्रतिबंध लागू हैं तथा उनके पास केंद्र सरकार की तुलना में कहीं कम राजकोषीय लचीलापन है।
- Dividend transfers, cesses, surcharges and borrowing restrictions** are all considered to be individual policy instruments when viewed individually.
लाभांश हस्तांतरण, उपकर, अधिभार तथा उधारी संबंधी प्रतिबंधों को अलग-अलग देखने पर स्वतंत्र नीतिगत साधन माना जाता है।

18J6. RBI allows banks to offer higher interest to NRIs/PIOs

RBI ने बैंकों को NRI/PIO जमाकर्ताओं को अधिक ब्याज



देने की अनुमति दी

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has decided to temporarily withdraw the **interest rate ceiling** on fresh **Foreign Currency Non-Resident-Bank [FCNR(B)] deposits** of 3-5 year tenors and the restriction on interest rates on **Non-Resident External (NRE) deposits** of three-year and above tenors, including deposits that are renewed upon maturity.

भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक (RBI) ने 3-5 वर्ष की अवधि वाले नए विदेशी मुद्रा अनिवासी बैंक [FCNR(B)] जमा पर

ब्याज दर की ऊपरी सीमा तथा तीन वर्ष और उससे अधिक अवधि वाले अनिवासी बाह्य (NRE) जमा पर ब्याज दर संबंधी प्रतिबंध को अस्थायी रूप से हटाने का निर्णय लिया है, जिसमें परिपक्वता के बाद नवीनीकृत जमा भी शामिल हैं।

- The move, a review of its **2025 direction**, is to boost **forex reserves** and will be in effect till **September 30, 2026**.

यह कदम 2025 के निर्देश की समीक्षा के तहत उठाया गया है, जिसका उद्देश्य विदेशी मुद्रा भंडार (Forex Reserves) को बढ़ाना है, और यह 30 सितंबर 2026 तक प्रभावी रहेगा।

- And interest rates on **NRE/NRO deposits** will not be higher than those offered by the bank on comparable **domestic rupee term deposits**.

और NRE/NRO जमा पर ब्याज दरें बैंक द्वारा समान घरेलू रुपये की सावधि जमाओं पर दी जाने वाली ब्याज दरों से अधिक नहीं होंगी।

India, U.K. announce July 15 as trade deal implementation date

GS III: Economy
T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

India and the United Kingdom have overcome last-minute differences over steel import duties to finally announce July 15 as the implementation date for the trade deal between the two countries, the two governments announced on Wednesday.

The **Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)** was signed by the two countries in July 2025 and was all set to be implemented by April or early May 2026.

However, a fresh regulation by the U.K. announced in May and applicable to all countries cut the quota for duty-free steel imports by 60% and doubled the tariff on above-quota imports to 50%. These new rules are to come into effect from July 1, 2026.

These tariffs and quotas were not part of the trade deal negotiations and suddenly halted the implementation process.

According to Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal, a team from India has been in the U.K. over the last few days to move things along.

"Delighted to note that the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement will enter into force on 15th July 2026," Prime Minister Narendra Modi posted on X following the announcement. "This agreement will significantly boost our bilateral trade and investment."

The implementation of the trade deal, under which the U.K. will remove



PM Modi with his British counterpart Keir Starmer during the G7 Summit.

tariffs on 99% of its product lines, will be accompanied by the implementation of the Agreement on Social Security, also referred to as the Double Contribution Convention (DCC), on July 15. It further said that such protections would be through a mix of country-specific quotas, residual quotas and access under an Authorised Use Scheme (AUS).

'Landmark consensus'

"Demonstrating the collaborative strength of the India-U.K. Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CETA), India and the United Kingdom have successfully reached a landmark consensus to safeguard and promote bilateral steel trade," the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said in a release.

Without revealing details on what exactly the solution to the U.K. steel tariff issue would entail, the release added that "both sides mutually agreed to protect commercial interests, minimise market disruptions, and ensure an overall balanced and stable trading environment for exporters".

18J6. India, U.K. announce July 15 as trade deal implementation date

भारत और ब्रिटेन ने 15 जुलाई को व्यापार समझौते के

क्रियान्वयन की तिथि घोषित किया

- The **Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)** was signed by the two countries in **July 2025** and was all set to be implemented by April or early May 2026.

व्यापक आर्थिक एवं व्यापार समझौते (CETA) पर दोनों देशों ने जुलाई 2025 में हस्ताक्षर किए थे और इसे अप्रैल या मई 2026 की शुरुआत तक लागू किया जाना था।

- However, a fresh regulation by the **U.K.** announced in May and applicable to all countries cut the quota for **duty-free steel imports** by 60% and doubled the tariff on above-quota imports to 50%.

हालाँकि, ब्रिटेन द्वारा मई में घोषित एक नए नियम, जो सभी देशों पर लागू है, ने शुल्क-मुक्त इस्पात आयात के कोटे में 60% की कटौती कर दी और कोटे से अधिक आयात पर शुल्क को बढ़ाकर 50% कर दिया।

- These tariffs and quotas were not part of the trade deal negotiations and suddenly halted the implementation process.

ये शुल्क और कोटा व्यापार समझौते की वार्ताओं का हिस्सा नहीं थे और इन्होंने अचानक क्रियान्वयन प्रक्रिया को रोक दिया।

- "Delighted to note that the **India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement** will enter into force on **15th July 2026**," Prime Minister Narendra Modi posted on X

following the announcement.

“यह जानकर प्रसन्नता हुई कि भारत-यूके व्यापक आर्थिक एवं व्यापार समझौता 15 जुलाई 2026 से प्रभावी होगा,” घोषणा के बाद प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने X पर पोस्ट किया।

- The implementation of the trade deal, under which the **U.K. will remove tariffs on 99% of its product lines, will be accompanied by the implementation of the Agreement on Social Security, also referred to as the Double Contribution Convention (DCC), on July 15.**
इस व्यापार समझौते के क्रियान्वयन के साथ, जिसके तहत ब्रिटेन अपनी 99% उत्पाद श्रेणियों पर शुल्क समाप्त करेगा, सामाजिक सुरक्षा समझौता, जिसे डबल कंट्रीब्यूशन कन्वेंशन (DCC) भी कहा जाता है, भी 15 जुलाई से लागू होगा।

GS Paper III: Science and Technology		18 June 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
18J6	The universe's expansion still accelerating: researchers शोधकर्ताओं के अनुसार ब्रह्मांड का विस्तार अभी भी तीव्र गति से बढ़ रहा है	
18J6	QUIZ	
18J6	Innovate or be eaten नवाचार करें या पीछे छूट जाएँ	

The universe's expansion still accelerating: researchers

GS III: S&T

Reuters

Taking a fresh look at data involving a type of exploding stars, a team of researchers says it has confirmed the notion that the universe is expanding at an accelerated rate – the very observation that led to the identification in the 1990s of an enigmatic cosmic force called dark energy.

The study's results rebut research published last year that concluded that this cosmic expansion is no longer speeding up – a finding that had challenged the basic understanding of the universe. “The universe is still accelerating,” said astrophysicist Brodie Popovic of the University of Southampton in England, one of the leaders of the study published this month in the journal *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*. The study's findings, by a team that included two Nobel Prize recipients, were guided by observations in two different datasets of a type of stellar explosion called a Type Ia supernova in order to calculate vast cosmic distances. These supernovae cause the destruction of an object called a white dwarf, the dense remnant of a low- to intermediate-mass star at the end of its

lifecycle. This type of supernova has proven valuable in investigating the universe's structure based on evidence that all of these explosions have roughly the same luminosity. Their observed brightness differs depending upon their distance from earth, making them useful as cosmic mile markers.

By measuring the brightness of these supernovae as seen from earth, scientists can gauge the universe's expansion rate and its change over time. The Big Bang event roughly 13.8 billion years ago initiated the universe, and it has been expanding ever since. Scientists in 1998 disclosed that this expansion is accelerating, with an invisible force called dark energy as the hypothesised reason.

The universe's contents include ordinary matter – stars, planets, gas, dust and all the familiar stuff on earth – and dark matter and dark energy. Ordinary matter represents an estimated 5% of the contents. Dark matter, which is known from its gravitational influences on galaxies and stars, makes up an estimated 27%. Dark energy makes up an estimated 68%. The authors of the 2025 study, which was published in the same journal as the new study, concluded that dark energy is weakening and has stopped accelerating the universe's expansion.

“Over the past decade, a group at Yonsei University has argued that supernova distances should be calibrated differently by accounting for the ages of the stars that eventually explode, and that this ‘age effect’ could substantially alter the evidence for acceleration. In our study, we found no evidence for the claimed ‘age effect’ in the largest calibrated supernova samples used by the cosmology community over the last decade,” astrophysicist Adam Riess of Johns Hopkins said. Astrophysicist Young-Wook Lee of Yonsei University, located in Seoul, was one of the leaders of the 2025 study. He defended the findings of his team, and said the main arguments made by the researchers in the new study have “serious methodological flaws or lead to conclusions that are internally inconsistent by their own logic.”

The researchers in the new study expressed confidence in their methodology and their conclusions confirming acceleration.

18J6. The universe's expansion still accelerating: researchers

शोधकर्ताओं के अनुसार ब्रह्मांड का विस्तार अभी भी तीव्र गति से बढ़ रहा है

Universe still expanding at an accelerated rate

ब्रह्मांड अब भी त्वरित गति से विस्तार कर रहा है

- Taking a fresh look at data involving a type of **exploding stars**, a team of researchers says it has confirmed the notion that the **universe is expanding at an accelerated rate** — the very observation that led to the identification in the 1990s of an **enigmatic cosmic force called dark energy**.

एक प्रकार के विस्फोटित होने वाले तारों से संबंधित आँकड़ों का पुनः विश्लेषण करते हुए शोधकर्ताओं की एक टीम ने पुष्टि की है कि ब्रह्मांड त्वरित गति से विस्तार कर रहा है — यही वह अवलोकन था जिसके आधार पर 1990 के दशक में डार्क एनर्जी (अदृश्य ऊर्जा) नामक रहस्यमयी ब्रह्मांडीय बल की पहचान की गई थी।

- The study's findings, by a team that included **two Nobel Prize recipients**, were guided by observations in two different datasets of a **type of stellar**



explosion called a **Type Ia supernova** in order to calculate vast cosmic distances.

इस अध्ययन के निष्कर्ष, जिसमें दो नोबेल पुरस्कार विजेता भी शामिल थे, टाइप Ia सुपरनोवा नामक तारकीय विस्फोट के दो अलग-अलग आँकड़ा-संग्रहों के अवलोकनों पर आधारित थे, जिनका उपयोग विशाल ब्रह्मांडीय दूरियों की गणना के लिए किया गया।

- These supernovae cause the destruction of an object called a **white dwarf**, the dense remnant of a low- to intermediate-mass star at the end of its lifecycle.
ये सुपरनोवा श्वेत बौने (White Dwarf) नामक पिंड को नष्ट कर देते हैं, जो अपने जीवनचक्र के अंत में निम्न या मध्यम द्रव्यमान वाले तारे का घना अवशेष होता है।
- This type of supernova has proven valuable in investigating the universe's structure based on evidence that all of these explosions have roughly the same **luminosity**.
इस प्रकार के सुपरनोवा ब्रह्मांड की संरचना के अध्ययन में अत्यंत उपयोगी सिद्ध हुए हैं, क्योंकि प्रमाण बताते हैं कि इन सभी विस्फोटों की दीप्तिमानता (Luminosity) लगभग समान होती है।
- By measuring the brightness of these supernovae as seen from earth, scientists can gauge the universe's **expansion rate** and its change over time.
पृथ्वी से दिखाई देने वाली इन सुपरनोवा की चमक को मापकर वैज्ञानिक ब्रह्मांड की विस्तार दर और समय के साथ उसमें होने वाले परिवर्तनों का आकलन कर सकते हैं।
- The **Big Bang** event roughly 13.8 billion years ago initiated the universe, and it has been expanding ever since.
लगभग 13.8 अरब वर्ष पूर्व हुए बिग बैंग ने ब्रह्मांड की उत्पत्ति की थी और तब से यह निरंतर विस्तार कर रहा है।
- Scientists in 1998 disclosed that this expansion is accelerating, with an invisible force called **dark energy** as the hypothesised reason.
वर्ष 1998 में वैज्ञानिकों ने बताया कि यह विस्तार तेज़ हो रहा है, जिसका संभावित कारण डार्क एनर्जी नामक अदृश्य बल माना गया।
- The universe's contents include **ordinary matter** — stars, planets, gas, dust and all the familiar stuff on earth — and **dark matter** and **dark energy**.
ब्रह्मांड में सामान्य पदार्थ, जैसे तारे, ग्रह, गैस, धूल और पृथ्वी पर उपस्थित अन्य परिचित पदार्थों के साथ-साथ डार्क मैटर और डार्क एनर्जी भी शामिल हैं।
- Ordinary matter represents an estimated **5%** of the contents.
सामान्य पदार्थ ब्रह्मांड की कुल सामग्री का लगभग 5% भाग है।
- Dark matter, which is known from its **gravitational influences** on galaxies and stars, makes up an estimated **27%**.
डार्क मैटर, जिसकी पहचान आकाशगंगाओं और तारों पर उसके गुरुत्वीय प्रभावों से होती है, लगभग 27% भाग का निर्माण करता है।
- Dark energy makes up an estimated **68%**.
डार्क एनर्जी ब्रह्मांड की कुल सामग्री का लगभग 68% भाग बनाती है।
- The authors of the **2025 study**, which was published in the same journal as the new study, concluded that dark energy is weakening and has stopped accelerating the universe's expansion.
उसी पत्रिका में प्रकाशित 2025 के अध्ययन के लेखकों ने निष्कर्ष निकाला था कि डार्क एनर्जी कमजोर हो रही है और उसने ब्रह्मांड के विस्तार को तीव्र करना बंद कर दिया है।

Answers to June 16 quiz:

1. Light you still see in a perfectly dark room -
Ans: **Eigengrau**
 2. Organelles that synthesise melanin - Ans:
Melanosomes
 3. Structural components of Vantablack - Ans:
Carbon nanotubes
 4. Radiation thought to be emitted by black holes - Ans: **Hawking radiation**
- Visual: **Peacock spider**

First contact

Tamal Biswas | K.N. Viswanathan | Swati Yadav |
Stuti Jain | Pankaj Garde

18J6. QUIZ

1. Eigengrau: Light you still see in a perfectly dark room



- **Eigengrau**, a German term meaning “intrinsic gray” or “own gray,” refers to the dark gray colour perceived by the human eye in conditions of complete darkness.
- Even when no external light enters the eye, people do not usually see absolute black.
- This phenomenon occurs because retinal cells and neurons in the visual system continue to generate spontaneous electrical activity.
- As a result, the brain interprets these signals as a faint gray shade.
- Eigengrau demonstrates that human vision depends not only on external light but also on internal neural processes within the visual system.

2. Melanosomes: Organelles that synthesise melanin

- **Melanosomes** are specialized organelles found within melanocytes, the cells responsible for producing melanin in the skin, hair, and eyes.
- These membrane-bound structures serve as sites where the pigment melanin is synthesized, stored, and transported.
- **Melanin** plays a crucial role in **determining skin and hair colour** and helps **protect tissues from harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation by absorbing and dispersing solar energy**.
- Variations in the size, number, and distribution of melanosomes contribute to differences in pigmentation among individuals. Defects in melanosome formation can lead to pigmentation disorders such as **albinism**.

3. Carbon Nanotubes: Structural components of Vantablack



VANTABLACK
THE DARKEST MAN-MADE MATERIAL

WHAT IS VANTABLACK?

- Vantablack is a super black material made of vertically aligned carbon nanotubes (CNTs).
- It absorbs up to 99.965% of visible light, making it the darkest material known.
- Developed by Surrey NanoSystems, UK.

KEY FEATURES

- Absorbs up to 99.965% of visible light
- Extremely low reflectivity
- Vertically aligned carbon nanotube structure
- High thermal stability
- Chemically inert

APPLICATIONS

- Space telescopes & satellites (reduce stray light)
- Scientific instruments & optical devices
- Camouflage & defense applications
- High-end cameras & sensors
- Next-generation solar energy devices

HOW IT WORKS
Carbon nanotubes are grown vertically like a "forest". Light entering this forest gets trapped through multiple reflections and is absorbed as heat, leaving almost no light reflected.

CARBON NANOTUBES (CNTs)
WONDER MATERIALS OF THE 21ST CENTURY

WHAT ARE CARBON NANOTUBES?

- CNTs are tiny, cylindrical structures made of carbon atoms arranged in a hexagonal lattice.
- They can be single-walled (SWCNTs) or multi-walled (MWCNTs).
- Diameter: ~1-100 nanometers.
- Length: Up to several micrometers.
- Discovered in 1991 by Sumio Iijima.

STRUCTURE OF CNTs

- Single-Walled CNT (SWCNT)
- Multi-Walled CNT (MWCNT)

EXCEPTIONAL PROPERTIES

- Very high strength (stronger than steel)
- Lightweight
- Excellent electrical conductivity
- High thermal conductivity
- Large surface area
- Chemical stability

PRODUCTION METHODS

- Arc Discharge Method
- Laser Ablation Method
- Chemical Vapor Deposition (CVD)

APPLICATIONS

- ELECTRONICS
- ENERGY STORAGE
- COMPOSITE MATERIALS
- MEDICAL FIELD
- SENSORS
- WATER FILTRATION

FUTURE PROSPECTS

- CNTs are key to future technologies in electronics, energy, medicine, and space.
- They can help build strong, light, smart and sustainable materials.
- CNTs are paving the way for a nano-powered future.

VANTABLACK shows the power of light absorption.
CARBON NANOTUBES show the power of structure at the nanoscale.
Together, they represent the future of innovation and technology.

- Vantablack is one of the darkest artificial materials ever created and is composed primarily of vertically aligned carbon nanotubes.
- These nanotubes are extremely thin, measuring only a few nanometres in diameter, and are arranged densely on a surface. When light enters the nanotube structure, it becomes trapped through repeated reflections and is almost entirely absorbed rather than reflected back.



- As a result, Vantablack absorbs more than 99.9% of visible light, making objects coated with it appear almost two-dimensional.
 - It has applications in astronomy, optical instruments, and advanced scientific research.

GS III: S&T

Innovate or be eaten

India must realise the importance of innovating up to the frontier

There is no question that Indian professionals are capable of pathbreaking innovation. As evidenced by the strong representation of Indian and Indian-origin technology industry leaders, Indian executives have displayed extraordinary talent in both the managerial and technical work that goes into building and advancing complex businesses at the forefront of the global economy's most important engines. 'Bharat Innovates 2026', the event in Nice, France, supported by the Ministry of Education, has shown that many of these innovations are possible in India, and that patient incubation of startups in key strategic areas can lead to exceptional results that are competitive with the best-in-class globally. India's potential to be a global home for innovation is real, especially with the kind of middle power collaboration that French President Emmanuel Macron advocated for at the event. The innovation question is key to processing the aftermath of Anthropic's most powerful AI models, Claude Mythos and Fable, being banned for non-Americans, a move that has already affected some Indian entities and users.

Perhaps it is not possible to brute-force frontier AI or semiconductor technology, given the tens of billions of dollars even a single player requires to make incremental advances in these fields. Becoming an AI deployment superpower, as many tech policymakers advocate, may also be a pursuit of a losing battle; India, after all, is not alone in seeking knowledge economy efficiencies from AI. But the field of opportunities remains nonetheless vast: deep tech in areas such as space exploration, defence, and even material sciences remain an open contest. For India to pursue innovation, two ingredients are important: India must be a stable and attractive home for capital and talent. For the former, the swash-buckling rent-seeking of the successful must be reined in to keep innovators from dreading success on Indian soil; venture capital must be in a position to assess exploratory and cutting-edge pitches on the same footing as they do in other countries; and tax policies must be clear and predictable. To be an attractive home for talent, what is required is quite simple: the top talent must look forward to their future in India, instead of running into a dead end for their potential and the life they feel greener pastures may afford them. For this, investments in public goods such as clean air, abundant urban green spaces, and affordable and reliable public transport can go a long way. These are, after all, what returnees miss the most. Some of India's oldest and most stubborn problems are in the way of a truly innovative ecosystem. The good news is that these problems need political capital, not risk capital.

इस निर्णय का प्रभाव कुछ भारतीय संस्थाओं और उपयोगकर्ताओं पर भी पड़ा है।

4. Hawking Radiation: Radiation thought to be emitted by black holes

- Hawking radiation** is a theoretical form of radiation proposed in 1974 by the physicist Stephen Hawking. According to quantum mechanics, particle-antiparticle pairs constantly form near the event horizon of a black hole.
 - If one particle falls into the black hole while the other escapes, the escaping particle appears as radiation emitted by the black hole.
 - This process gradually causes the black hole to lose mass and energy over extremely long periods.
 - Hawking radiation was a groundbreaking concept because it combined principles of quantum physics, thermodynamics, and Einstein's theory of gravity, transforming scientific understanding of black holes.

18J6. Innovate or be eaten

नवाचार करें या पीछे छूट जाएँ

- 'Bharat Innovates 2026', the event in Nice, France, supported by the Ministry of Education, has shown that many of these innovations are possible in India, and that patient incubation of startups in key strategic areas can lead to exceptional results that are competitive with the best-in-class globally.

शिक्षा मंत्रालय द्वारा समर्थित फ्रांस के नीस शहर में आयोजित 'भारत

इनोवेट्स 2026' कार्यक्रम ने यह प्रदर्शित किया है कि ऐसे अनेक नवाचार

भारत में संभव हैं तथा रणनीतिक क्षेत्रों में स्टार्टअप्स के धैर्यपूर्ण संवर्धन से

ऐसे उत्कृष्ट परिणाम प्राप्त किए जा सकते हैं जो वैश्विक स्तर पर सर्वश्रेष्ठ के समकक्ष हों।

- India's potential to be a global home for innovation is real, especially with the kind of middle power collaboration that French President Emmanuel Macron advocated for at the event.

भारत की वैश्विक नवाचार केंद्र बनने की क्षमता वास्तविक है, विशेषकर उस प्रकार के मध्यम शक्ति सहयोग (Middle Power Collaboration) के साथ जिसका समर्थन फ्रांस के राष्ट्रपति इमैनुएल मैक्रॉ ने इस कार्यक्रम में किया।

- The innovation question is key to processing the aftermath of Anthropic's most powerful AI models, Claude Mythos and Fable, being banned for non-Americans, a move that has already affected some Indian entities and users.

Anthropic के सबसे शक्तिशाली एआई मॉडल Claude Mythos और

Fable को गैर-अमेरिकियों के लिए प्रतिबंधित किए जाने के बाद उत्पन्न

परिस्थितियों को समझने में नवाचार का प्रश्न अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण है, क्योंकि



- But the field of opportunities remains nonetheless vast: **deep tech** in areas such as **space exploration, defence, and material sciences** remain an open contest.
फिर भी अवसरों का क्षेत्र अत्यंत व्यापक बना हुआ है; अंतरिक्ष अन्वेषण, रक्षा तथा पदार्थ विज्ञान जैसे क्षेत्रों में डीप टेक अभी भी खुली प्रतिस्पर्धा का क्षेत्र है।
- For India to pursue innovation, two ingredients are important: India must be a stable and attractive home for **capital** and **talent**.
भारत को नवाचार के मार्ग पर आगे बढ़ाने के लिए दो तत्व अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण हैं: भारत को पूंजी और प्रतिभा दोनों के लिए एक स्थिर तथा आकर्षक केंद्र बनना होगा।
- Venture capital** must be in a position to assess exploratory and cutting-edge pitches on the same footing as they do in other countries.

GS Paper III: Environment		18 June 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
18J6	Scheme for crocodile sanctuaries मगरमच्छ अभयारण्यों के लिए योजना	
18J6	Oil pollution तेल प्रदूषण	
18J6	'India to meet 3% compressed biogas blending goal for FY27' 'भारत FY27 तक 3% संपीड़ित बायोगैस मिश्रण लक्ष्य हासिल करेगा'	

Scheme for crocodile sanctuaries

GS III: Environment

Dr. H.R. Bustard, an expert on crocodiles and an officer of the FAO (UNDP), was deputed by the Government of India to advise the Andhra Pradesh Government on the conservation and farming of crocodiles in various parts of the State.

It is stated that three species of crocodiles namely gharial (found in the Ganga, Brahmaputra and Mahanadi), the maggar or freshwater crocodile (found generally in rivers and reservoirs) and the estuarine or salt-water crocodiles (found in the estuaries of major rivers) were facing extinction owing to large-scale and indiscriminate killing for meat. The eggs are also eaten and so the species face the problem of survival.

Dr. Bustard inspected the Corangi mangrove forest in the Kakinada Forest Division last week accompanied by Mr. T.V. Subba Rao, Additional Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr. Pushpalumar, Director Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad and Mr. B. Bhomarajam, Conservator of Forests, L.P. Circle, Rajamundry. Dr. Bustard stated the area was eminently suitable for farming the salt-water crocodiles. A scheme would be prepared for the purpose and submitted to the Government shortly.

They inspected the Godavari river area from Devipatnam to Peramtapalli.

Dr. Bustard found the region between the Papi Hills and Peramtapalli was an excellent habitat for crocodiles and has prepared a scheme for the conservation and farming of crocodiles there.

He wanted these two areas to be declared as sanctuaries for the preservation and farming of crocodiles.

18J6. Scheme for crocodile sanctuaries मगरमच्छ अभयारण्यों के लिए योजना

- Dr. H.R. Bustard, an expert on crocodiles and an officer of the FAO (UNDP), was deputed by the Government of India to advise the Andhra Pradesh Government on the conservation and farming of crocodiles in various parts of the State.

डॉ. एच.आर. बस्टर्ड, जो मगरमच्छों के विशेषज्ञ तथा FAO (UNDP) के एक अधिकारी थे, उन्हें भारत सरकार द्वारा आंध्र प्रदेश सरकार को राज्य के विभिन्न भागों में मगरमच्छों के संरक्षण और पालन के संबंध में सलाह देने के लिए नियुक्त किया गया था।

- It is stated that three species of crocodiles namely gharial (found in the Ganga, Brahmaputra and Mahanadi), the maggar or freshwater crocodile (found generally in rivers and reservoirs) and the estuarine or salt-water crocodiles (found in the estuaries of major rivers) were facing extinction owing to large-scale and indiscriminate killing for meat.

यह बताया गया कि मगरमच्छों की तीन प्रजातियाँ, अर्थात् घड़ियाल (जो गंगा, ब्रह्मपुत्र और महानदी में पाया जाता है), मगर या मीठे पानी का मगरमच्छ (जो सामान्यतः नदियों और जलाशयों में पाया जाता है) तथा मुहाना या खारे पानी का मगरमच्छ (जो प्रमुख नदियों के मुहानों में पाया जाता है), मांस के लिए बड़े पैमाने पर और अंधाधुंध शिकार के कारण विलुप्ति के खतरे का सामना कर रहे थे।



- The **eggs are also eaten** and so the species face the problem of survival.
इनके अंडे भी खाए जाते हैं और इसलिए इन प्रजातियों के अस्तित्व पर संकट उत्पन्न हो गया है।
- They inspected the **Godavari river area** from **Devipatnam** to **Peramtapalli**.
उन्होंने देवीपटनम से पेरमटपल्ली तक के गोदावरी नदी क्षेत्र का निरीक्षण किया।

18J6. Oil pollution

Oil pollution

GS III: Environment

Washington, June 17: The **International Oil Pollution Conferences** has passed a resolution which recommends the establishment of a limit of fifty to one hundred and fifty miles from the coasts of maritime nations, within which the discharge of oils or mixtures constituting nuisance, should be prohibited and that each Government would require ships flying its flags to refrain from discharging oil near the shores of other countries.

सिफारिश की गई है, जिसके भीतर तेल अथवा प्रदूषणकारी मिश्रणों के निर्वहन पर प्रतिबंध लगाया जाना चाहिए।

तेल प्रदूषण

- Washington, June 17:** The **International Oil Pollution Conferences** has passed a resolution which recommends the establishment of a limit of **• fifty to one hundred and fifty miles** from the coasts of maritime nations, within which the discharge of oils or mixtures constituting nuisance, should be prohibited.

वाशिंगटन, 17 जून: अंतरराष्ट्रीय तेल प्रदूषण सम्मेलन ने एक प्रस्ताव पारित किया है जिसमें समुद्री देशों के तटों से पचास से एक सौ पचास मील की सीमा निर्धारित करने की

'India to meet 3% compressed biogas blending goal for FY27'

18J6. 'India to meet 3% compressed biogas blending goal for FY27'

'भारत FY27 तक 3% संपीड़ित

बायोगैस मिश्रण लक्ष्य हासिल करेगा'

- The Centre is on track to meet the goal of blending **3% compressed biogas (CBG)** with **CNG** and domestic **pipelined natural gas (PNG)** for **FY27** with the blending percentage having already nearly doubled to about **2%** at present, officials told **The Hindu**.

अधिकारियों ने द हिंदू को बताया कि केंद्र सरकार **FY27** तक **CNG** और घरेलू **पाइपड नेचुरल गैस (PNG)** में **3% संपीड़ित बायोगैस (CBG)** मिश्रण के लक्ष्य को हासिल करने की दिशा में आगे बढ़ रही है, क्योंकि वर्तमान में मिश्रण का प्रतिशत लगभग दोगुना होकर **2%**

GS III: Environment

Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

The Centre is on track to meet the goal of blending 3% compressed biogas (CBG) with CNG and domestic piped natural gas for FY27 with the blending percentage having already nearly doubled to about 2% at present, officials told **The Hindu**.

They added with more CBG plants under varied stages of construction, this would provide a fillip towards achieving the target.

India's present consumption of natural gas for domestic PNG and CNG in transport combined is



A biogas Plant at Bengaluru in the State of Karnataka.

about 34-35 million metric standard cubic metre per day (MMSCMD).

"In April, CBG sales were approximately 0.66 mmscmd and about 0.63 mmscmd in May," they

stated, explaining that at the present rate of consumption they amount to nearly 2% of blending.

More plants

According to the Petroleum Ministry's Gobardhan portal, construction of 324 CBG/bio-CNG plants are under progress while construction work is yet to start on 1,261 plants.

Suresh N.S., senior research scientist, Strategic Initiatives Group at think-tank CSTEP said geopolitical developments underscore urgency of boosting India's domestic energy security and reducing dependence on imported fuels.

तक पहुँच चुका है।