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PCS Special:	20 August
20A8	China recovers first stage of a rocket on land for the first time चीन ने पहली बार रॉकेट के प्रथम चरण को जमीन पर सफलतापूर्वक पुनः प्राप्त किया
20A8	After a 35-year-gap, Bangladesh to vote in presidential election today 35 वर्षों के अंतराल के बाद बांग्लादेश में आज राष्ट्रपति चुनाव के लिए मतदान होगा।



Dynamic duo: Skipper Harmanpreet Singh and Abhishek shared four goals between them as India overcame Pakistan 5-3 in the hockey World Cup in Amstelveen, Netherlands, on Wednesday. Hardik Singh completed the tally. (Hockey News Bureau/Red 11)

Dynamic duo: Skipper Harmanpreet Singh and Abhishek shared four goals between them as India overcame Pakistan 5-3 in the hockey World Cup in **Amstelveen, Netherlands**, on Wednesday. Hardik Singh completed the tally.

China recovers first stage of a rocket on land for the first time

PCS

Associated Press
BEIJING

China has successfully recaptured the first stage of a rocket on land for the first time, state media reported on Wednesday, as the country seeks to advance its space programme.

Although this marks China's first successful recovery on land, it is the second time the country has recovered a rocket stage, following a successful recovery on a sea platform in July.

Chinese state news agency Xinhua said the reusable rocket, **Zhuque-3**, was launched on Wednesday morning and that the rocket's first stage was re-

covered afterward.

Elon Musk's SpaceX and Jeff Bezos's Blue Origin have been recovering rockets since 2015, helping drive down launch costs by reusing hardware that would otherwise be discarded after carrying satellites and other payloads toward space.

Xinhua said that Wednesday's recovery also marked China's first use of deployable landing legs and deemed the result "a major breakthrough in the country's reusable rocket technology".

On July 10, the first stage of a Long March-10B rocket separated from the second stage after lift-off and returned to a platform at sea.

that the rocket's first stage was recovered afterward.

चीनी सरकारी समाचार एजेंसी शिन्हुआ ने कहा कि पुनः प्रयोज्य रॉकेट **Zhuque-3** को बुधवार सुबह प्रक्षेपित किया गया और इसके बाद रॉकेट के प्रथम चरण को पुनः प्राप्त कर लिया गया।

- **Elon Musk's SpaceX and Jeff Bezos's Blue Origin have been recovering rockets since 2015**, helping drive down launch costs by reusing hardware that would otherwise be discarded after carrying satellites and other payloads toward space.

एलन मस्क की SpaceX और जेफ बेजोस की Blue Origin 2015 से रॉकेटों को पुनः प्राप्त कर रही हैं, जिससे प्रक्षेपण लागत को कम करने में मदद मिली है, क्योंकि वे ऐसे हार्डवेयर का पुनः उपयोग करती हैं जिन्हें उपग्रहों और अन्य पेलोड को अंतरिक्ष की ओर ले जाने के बाद अन्यथा त्याग दिया जाता।

- Xinhua said that Wednesday's recovery also marked China's first use of deployable landing legs and deemed the result "a major breakthrough in the country's reusable rocket technology".

शिन्हुआ ने कहा कि बुधवार की यह पुनर्प्राप्ति चीन द्वारा तैनात किए जा सकने वाले लैंडिंग लेग्स के पहले उपयोग का भी प्रतीक है और इसे "देश की पुनः प्रयोज्य रॉकेट प्रौद्योगिकी में एक बड़ी सफलता" बताया।

20A8. China recovers first stage of a rocket on land for the first time

चीन ने पहली बार रॉकेट के प्रथम चरण को जमीन पर सफलतापूर्वक पुनः प्राप्त किया

- China has successfully recaptured the first stage of a rocket on land for the first time, state media reported on Wednesday, as the country seeks to advance its space programme.

सरकारी मीडिया ने बुधवार को बताया कि चीन ने पहली बार किसी रॉकेट के प्रथम चरण को जमीन पर सफलतापूर्वक पुनः प्राप्त किया है, क्योंकि देश अपने अंतरिक्ष कार्यक्रम को आगे बढ़ाने का प्रयास कर रहा है।

- Although this marks China's first successful recovery on land, it is the second time the country has recovered a rocket stage, following a successful recovery on a sea platform in July.

हालाँकि, यह चीन द्वारा जमीन पर रॉकेट के प्रथम चरण की पहली सफल पुनर्प्राप्ति है, लेकिन यह दूसरी बार है जब देश ने किसी रॉकेट चरण को पुनः प्राप्त किया है; इससे पहले जुलाई में समुद्र में स्थित एक प्लेटफॉर्म पर सफल पुनर्प्राप्ति की गई थी।

- Chinese state news agency Xinhua said the **reusable rocket, Zhuque-3**, was launched on Wednesday morning and

- On July 10, the **first stage of a Long March-10B rocket separated from the second stage after lift-off and returned to a platform at sea.**

10 जुलाई को Long March-10B रॉकेट का प्रथम चरण प्रक्षेपण के बाद दूसरे चरण से अलग हुआ और समुद्र में स्थित एक प्लेटफॉर्म पर वापस लौट आया।

After a 35-year-gap, Bangladesh to vote in presidential election today



PCS Bangladesh will hold its presidential election on Thursday, with lawmakers set to choose between the ruling BNP stalwart Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and 11-party Opposition alliance candidate Colonel Oli Ahmed (retired). The voting will take place for the first time in a presidential election after a gap of 35 years. PTI

AFP

20A8. After a 35-year-gap, Bangladesh to vote in presidential election today

35 वर्ष के अंतराल के बाद बांग्लादेश में आज राष्ट्रपति चुनाव के लिए मतदान

- Bangladesh will hold its presidential election on Thursday, with lawmakers set to choose between the ruling BNP stalwart Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and 11-party Opposition alliance candidate Colonel Oli Ahmed (retired). बांग्लादेश में गुरुवार को राष्ट्रपति चुनाव होगा, जिसमें सांसद सत्तारूढ़ BNP के प्रमुख नेता मिर्जा फखरुल इस्लाम आलमगीर और 11-दलीय विपक्षी गठबंधन के उम्मीदवार सेवानिवृत्त कर्नल ओली अहमद में से एक का चुनाव करेंगे।

The voting will take place for the first time in a presidential election after a gap of 35 years.
राष्ट्रपति चुनाव में 35 वर्षों के अंतराल के बाद पहली बार मतदान होगा।

GS Paper 1: History		20 August 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
20A8	Urdhva Tandava explained ऊर्ध्व तांडव की व्याख्या	
20A8	W andiwash Fort to be preserved as monument वांडीवाश किले को स्मारक के रूप में संरक्षित किया जाएगा।	
20A8	Quiz	

Urdhva Tandava explained

One of Lord Siva's many tandavas (dances) is the urdhva tandava, where His right leg is raised above His head. The story usually given explaining this tandava is that there was once a dance competition between Kali and Siva. Siva raised His right leg above His head, and asked Kali to repeat the move. She said it would be immodest if a woman struck such a pose, and conceded defeat. But this is not the explanation, said Sumathi Sri in a discourse. The story begins with Daksha, father of Dakshayani (Parvati). Dakshayani married Siva. Besides Dakshayani, Daksha had 27 daughters, representing the 27 stars. Chandra fell in love with Rohini. But Daksha requested him to marry all his 27 daughters. Chandra agreed. However, the only wife he loved was Rohini. So, he neglected the other wives. Rohini's sisters complained to Daksha. The latter cursed Chandra and said he should start waning.

As the moon started waning, he became nervous. So, he approached Lord Siva for help. Siva said He would put Chandra on His head, and Chandra would then start waxing. But what Chandra had done was wrong. Therefore, he would wane, as Daksha had wanted, but would also grow back. And none could harm him, because he was on Siva's head. Arunagirinatha in a verse talks of the Siva-Kali dance, where he refers to Kali as *abhinna Kali* (the one not separated from Siva). This shows that Siva and Kali did not dance separately. They danced together as Ardhanareeswara. It was while they were dancing as Ardhanareeswara, that the waning Chandra fell at Siva's feet, seeking help. Siva picked him up with His toes and put him on His head. That was why His right leg was raised during the dance.

20A8. Urdhva Tandava explained ऊर्ध्व तांडव की व्याख्या

- One of Lord Siva's many tandavas (dances) is the urdhva tandava, where His right leg is raised above His head. भगवान शिव के अनेक तांडवों (नृत्यों) में से एक ऊर्ध्व तांडव है, जिसमें उनका दाहिना पैर सिर के ऊपर उठा हुआ होता है।
- The story usually given explaining this tandava is that there was once a dance competition between Kali and Siva. इस तांडव की सामान्यतः दी जाने वाली कथा यह है कि एक बार काली और शिव के बीच नृत्य प्रतियोगिता हुई थी।
- Siva raised His right leg above His head, and asked Kali to repeat the move. शिव ने अपना दाहिना पैर सिर के ऊपर उठाया और काली से भी उसी मुद्रा को दोहराने के लिए कहा।

- She said it would be immodest if a woman struck such a pose, and conceded defeat.
काली ने कहा कि किसी महिला द्वारा ऐसी मुद्रा बनाना अशोभनीय होगा और उन्होंने अपनी हार स्वीकार कर ली।
- But this is not the explanation, said Sumathi Sri in a discourse.
लेकिन सुमति श्री ने एक प्रवचन में कहा कि यह इसकी वास्तविक व्याख्या नहीं है।
- The story begins with Daksha, father of Dakshayani (Parvati).
कथा दक्ष, जो दक्षायणी (पार्वती) के पिता थे, से शुरू होती है।
- Dakshayani married Siva.
दक्षायणी ने शिव से विवाह किया।
- Besides Dakshayani, Daksha had 27 daughters, representing the 27 stars.
दक्ष की दक्षायणी के अतिरिक्त 27 पुत्रियाँ थीं, जो 27 नक्षत्रों का प्रतिनिधित्व करती थीं।
- Chandra fell in love with Rohini.
चंद्रमा को रोहिणी से प्रेम हो गया।
- But Daksha requested him to marry all his 27 daughters.
लेकिन दक्ष ने उनसे अपनी सभी 27 पुत्रियों से विवाह करने का अनुरोध किया।
- Chandra agreed.
चंद्रमा सहमत हो गए।
- However, the only wife he loved was Rohini.
हालाँकि, वे केवल रोहिणी से ही प्रेम करते थे।
- So, he neglected the other wives.
इसलिए उन्होंने अन्य पत्नियों की उपेक्षा की।
- Rohini's sisters complained to Daksha.
रोहिणी की बहनों ने दक्ष से शिकायत की।
- The latter cursed Chandra and said he should start waning.
दक्ष ने चंद्रमा को शाप दिया और कहा कि उनका क्षय होना शुरू हो जाए।
- As the moon started waning, he became nervous.
जैसे-जैसे चंद्रमा का क्षय होने लगा, वे चिंतित हो गए।
- So, he approached Lord Siva for help.
इसलिए वे सहायता के लिए भगवान शिव के पास पहुँचे।
- Siva said He would put Chandra on His head, and Chandra would then start waxing.
शिव ने कहा कि वे चंद्रमा को अपने सिर पर धारण करेंगे और इसके बाद चंद्रमा का वृद्धि/शुक्ल पक्ष शुरू हो जाएगा।
- But what Chandra had done was wrong.
लेकिन चंद्रमा ने जो किया था, वह गलत था।
- Therefore, he would wane, as Daksha had wanted, but would also grow back.
इसलिए, दक्ष की इच्छा के अनुसार चंद्रमा का क्षय भी होगा, लेकिन इसके बाद वह पुनः बढ़ेगा भी।
- And none could harm him, because he was on Siva's head.
और कोई उसे नुकसान नहीं पहुँचा सकेगा, क्योंकि वह शिव के सिर पर स्थित होगा।
- Arunagirinatha in a verse talks of the Siva-Kali dance, where he refers to Kali as abhinna Kali (the one not separated from Siva).
अरुणगिरिनाथ एक पद्य में शिव-काली नृत्य का वर्णन करते हैं, जहाँ वे काली को 'अभिन्न काली' कहते हैं, अर्थात् शिव से अलग न होने वाली काली।
- This shows that Siva and Kali did not dance separately.
इससे पता चलता है कि शिव और काली ने अलग-अलग नृत्य नहीं किया।
- They danced together as Ardhanareeswara.
उन्होंने अर्धनारीश्वर के रूप में एक साथ नृत्य किया।
- It was while they were dancing as Ardhanareeswara, that the waning Chandra fell at Siva's feet, seeking help.

जब वे अर्धनारीश्वर के रूप में नृत्य कर रहे थे, तभी क्षीण होते हुए चंद्रमा सहायता की याचना करते हुए शिव के चरणों में गिर पड़े।

- Siva picked him up with His toes and put him on His head.
शिव ने उसे अपने पैर की उँगलियों से उठाया और अपने सिर पर धारण कर लिया।
- That was why His right leg was raised during the dance.
इसी कारण नृत्य के दौरान उनका दाहिना पैर उठा हुआ था।

Lord Shiva's Tandavas (Divine Dances)

Meaning of Tandava

Tandava is the vigorous, rhythmic and dynamic dance associated primarily with **Lord Shiva in his form as Nataraja, the "Lord of Dance."**

In Indian religious thought and art, Shiva's dance is not merely physical movement. It symbolises cosmic processes such as **creation, preservation, destruction, concealment and liberation.**

The **Natya Shastra**, traditionally attributed to **Bharata Muni**, discusses Tandava technique through **karanas** and **angaharas**. It describes **108 karanas** and **32 angaharas**, but it does not provide one universally fixed list of seven named Tandavas. Later Shaiva, iconographic and dance traditions developed different classifications.

Important Caution: Is There One Fixed List?

There is **no single universally accepted list** of Shiva's Tandavas across all Sanskrit texts, Agamas, regional traditions and iconographic manuals.

A widely used **Sapta Tandava or Seven Tandavas** classification includes the following forms.

Ananda Tandava.

Sandhya Tandava.

Kali or Kalika Tandava.

Tripura Tandava.

Uma Tandava.

Samhara Tandava.

Urdhva Tandava.

Other traditions may substitute names such as **Gauri Tandava, Shiva Tandava or Rudra Tandava.** Some iconographic texts describe even more forms. Therefore, examination answers should mention

the textual variation rather than presenting one list as universally canonical.

Ananda Tandava

- **Ananda Tandava** means the **Dance of Bliss**.
- It is the most famous representation of Shiva as **Nataraja**, especially associated with the **Chidambaram Nataraja Temple in Tamil Nadu**.
- In the classic icon, Shiva dances within a ring of flames. The **damaru** represents creation, the **fire** represents dissolution, and the raised hand in **abhaya mudra** conveys protection.
- His right foot presses down **Apasmara**, the dwarf representing ignorance, while the raised foot signifies spiritual liberation.
- This form became particularly celebrated in **Chola-period bronze sculpture**. IGNCA notes that the age of **Rajaraja Chola I** witnessed the perfected expression of Ananda Tandava in bronze Natarajas.

Sandhya Tandava

Sandhya Tandava is traditionally associated with **twilight or the transition between day and night**.

It represents cosmic rhythm, balance and transition.

In Shaiva tradition, Shiva is imagined dancing while deities accompany him with music.

The form is traditionally connected with the **Rajata Sabha or Silver Hall at Madurai**, one of Tamil Nadu's celebrated Shiva dance halls.

The philosophical idea is that the cosmos remains dynamic even during moments of apparent transition or stillness.

Kali or Kalika Tandava

Kali Tandava expresses Shiva's dynamic relationship with **Goddess Kali or Shakti**.

It is associated with tremendous energy, competition, power and the inseparability of **Shiva and Shakti**.

Tamil tradition particularly connects this dance with **Thiruvallangadu**, where Shiva is believed to have engaged Kali in a dance contest.

The tradition emphasises that Shiva represents consciousness, while Shakti represents active cosmic energy.

Thus, neither principle is understood fully without the other.



Urdhva Tandava

Urdhva Tandava literally refers to the **elevated or upward dance**.

Its most distinctive feature is Shiva raising one leg dramatically upward.

It is frequently linked to the dance contest between Shiva and Kali at **Thiruvalangadu**.

In iconography, the extremely elevated leg demonstrates both physical mastery and divine transcendence.

For students, the simplest way to remember it is:

Urdhva = upward-raised leg.

Tripura Tandava

Tripura Tandava is associated with Shiva's destruction of **Tripura**, the three fortified cities of the demons known collectively as the **Tripurasuras**.

In mythology, Shiva destroys the three cities with a single decisive act and is therefore known as **Tripurantaka**.

The dance represents **victory over evil, arrogance and cosmic disorder**.

Tamil tradition connects Tripura Tandava with **Kutralam or Courtallam**, associated with the **Chitra Sabha**.

It combines the ideas of martial victory and restoration of cosmic order.

Uma Tandava

Uma Tandava represents Shiva dancing in association with **Uma or Parvati**.

Unlike purely destructive forms, it places emphasis on the complementary relationship between **Shiva and Shakti**.

Its deeper philosophical meaning is the unity of **consciousness and energy**, or in broader philosophical language, **Purusha and Prakriti**.

The presence of Uma softens the fierce dimension of Tandava and emphasises cosmic harmony.

Samhara Tandava

Samhara Tandava represents **destruction or dissolution**.

The Sanskrit word **samhara** means withdrawal, destruction or dissolution.

In this form, Shiva symbolises the destruction of an exhausted cosmic order before a new cycle can begin.

The idea should not be understood simply as negative destruction.

In Indian cosmology, destruction is often a **necessary preliminary to renewal and creation**.

Thus:

Creation → Preservation → Dissolution → Regeneration.

Samhara Tandava represents the dissolution phase of this cosmic cycle.

Rudra Tandava and Its Relation to Samhara

- **Rudra Tandava** is a commonly used term for Shiva's fierce, powerful and destructive dance.
- It is frequently associated in later popular traditions with Shiva's anger, grief or cosmic destruction.
- However, **Rudra Tandava is not always treated as a separate member of the Sapta Tandava list.**
- In many presentations, it functions as a broader description of Shiva's fierce dances, particularly those associated with **Samhara**.
- This distinction is useful for avoiding confusion in examinations.

Shiva's Dance and the Five Cosmic Functions

Shiva's cosmic dance is often interpreted through **five fundamental activities**, particularly in Shaiva philosophical traditions.

Srishti means creation.

Sthiti means preservation or maintenance.

Samhara means dissolution.

Tirobhava or Tirodhana means concealment or veiling.

Anugraha means grace, liberation or emancipation.

The Nataraja image visually brings these processes together, symbolising the continuous cosmic rhythm rather than a single historical event.

Historical Importance of Nataraja Iconography

Images of dancing Shiva existed in Indian art before the Chola period, but the internationally



recognised Nataraja bronze form reached extraordinary refinement under the Cholas of Tamil Nadu.

The Metropolitan Museum notes that dancing Shiva appeared in sculpture by around the 5th century CE, while the famous mature form developed particularly under the Cholas.

IGNCA specifically associates the perfected bronze Ananda Tandava form with the age of Rajaraja Chola I, whose Brihadisvara Temple at Thanjavur was consecrated in 1010 CE.

Pancha Sabhai Tradition

Tamil Shaiva tradition identifies five celebrated dance halls or Pancha Sabhai, each linked with Shiva's dance.

Chidambaram — Kanaka Sabha or Golden Hall — Ananda Tandava.

Madurai — Rajata Sabha or Silver Hall — Sandhya Tandava.

Thiruvallangadu — Ratna Sabha or Gem Hall — Kali/Urdhva-related tradition.

Courtallam — Chitra Sabha or Picture Hall — Tripura Tandava.

Tirunelveli region — Tamra Sabha or Copper Hall — another traditional dance manifestation.

These traditions demonstrate how Shiva's dance became embedded not only in theology but also in temple geography, sculpture and regional cultural memory.

Wandiwash Fort to be preserved as monument

GS I: History

Madras, August 19: The Fort at Wandiwash in north Arcot district, where a battle was fought between the English and the French in mid-18th century AD, now in ruins is to be preserved as a monument of State importance by the Tamil Nadu Government.

The Battle of Wandiwash (1760 AD) practically ended the French supremacy and marked the triumph and ascendancy of the British regime in South India.

Extending over a square mile, the Fort, which is right in the midst of the town is in a state of neglect. It is a village by itself. The ramparts, except in a small portion are intact. There is a big entrance. In the centre, many residential buildings have sprung up over the years. Necessary funds have now been sanctioned by the Government to protect this historic Fort.

There are no records about the origin of this Fort, but experts feel that it must have been the hub of activity in the Vijayanagar period (13th-14th century). It fell into the hands of the British around 1750 AD when Hyder Ali captured it from them. He entered Wandiwash via Chengam and Tiruvannamalai and after taking the Fort, stayed in Vellore. The British recaptured it from the Muslim ruler a year later. Again, Wandiwash was the scene of a major battle between the French and the British in January 1760, the former led by Count de Lalli and the latter's army by Sir Eyrecoote. The French were defeated and Bussy, one of the prominent leaders, was captured.

20A8. Wandiwash Fort to be preserved as monument वांडीवाश किले को स्मारक के रूप में संरक्षित किया जाएगा।

• **Madras, August 19:** The Fort at Wandiwash in north Arcot district, where a battle was fought between the English and the French in mid-18th century AD, now in ruins is to be preserved as a monument of State importance by the Tamil Nadu Government.

• **मद्रास, 19 अगस्त:** उत्तरी अर्काट जिले में स्थित वांडीवाश का किला, जहाँ 18वीं शताब्दी ईस्वी के मध्य में अंग्रेजों और फ्रांसीसियों के बीच युद्ध हुआ था, वर्तमान में खंडहर अवस्था में है और तमिलनाडु सरकार द्वारा इसे राज्य महत्व के स्मारक के रूप में संरक्षित किया जाएगा।

• The **Battle of Wandiwash (1760 AD)** practically ended French supremacy and marked the triumph and ascendancy of the **British regime in South India.**

• **वांडीवाश के युद्ध (1760 ईस्वी)** ने व्यावहारिक रूप से फ्रांसीसी प्रभुत्व का अंत कर दिया और दक्षिण भारत में ब्रिटिश शासन की विजय एवं उत्थान को चिह्नित किया।

- Extending over a **square mile**, the Fort, which is right in the midst of the town, is in a state of neglect.
- लगभग **एक वर्ग मील** में फैला यह किला, जो नगर के ठीक मध्य में स्थित है, उपेक्षित अवस्था में है।
- It is a village by itself.
- यह अपने आप में एक गाँव है।
- The **ramparts**, except in a small portion, are intact.
- एक छोटे हिस्से को छोड़कर, इसकी **प्राचीरें** सुरक्षित हैं।
- There is a big entrance.
- यहाँ एक बड़ा प्रवेश द्वार है।
- In the centre, many residential buildings have sprung up over the years.
- इसके मध्य भाग में वर्षों के दौरान अनेक आवासीय भवन बन गए हैं।
- Necessary funds have now been sanctioned by the Government to protect this **historic Fort**.
- सरकार ने अब इस **ऐतिहासिक किले** की सुरक्षा के लिए आवश्यक धनराशि स्वीकृत कर दी है।
- There are no records about the origin of this Fort, but experts feel that it must have been the hub of activity in the **Vijayanagar period (13th-14th century)**.
- इस किले की उत्पत्ति के संबंध में कोई अभिलेख उपलब्ध नहीं है, लेकिन विशेषज्ञों का मानना है कि यह **विजयनगर काल (13वीं-14वीं शताब्दी)** में गतिविधियों का प्रमुख केंद्र रहा होगा।
- It fell into the hands of the **British around 1750 AD** when **Hyder Ali** captured it from them.
- यह लगभग **1750 ईस्वी में अंग्रेजों के हाथों** में चला गया, जब **हैदर अली** ने इसे उनसे छीन लिया।
- He entered Wandiwash via **Chengam and Tiruvannamalai** and after taking the Fort, stayed in **Vellore**.
- उन्होंने **चेंगम और तिरुवन्नामलाई** के रास्ते वांडीवाश में प्रवेश किया और किले पर अधिकार करने के बाद **वेल्लोर** में ठहरे।
- The **British recaptured it from the Muslim ruler a year later**.
- एक वर्ष बाद अंग्रेजों ने इसे **मुस्लिम शासक** से पुनः अपने अधिकार में ले लिया।
- Again, Wandiwash was the scene of a major battle between the **French and the British in January 1760**, the former led by **Count de Lally** and the latter's army by **Sir Eyrecoote**.
- पुनः, **जनवरी 1760 में वांडीवाश फ्रांसीसियों और अंग्रेजों के बीच एक प्रमुख युद्ध** का स्थल बना, जिसमें फ्रांसीसी पक्ष का नेतृत्व **काउंट डी लैली** और अंग्रेजी सेना का नेतृत्व **सर आयरकूट** कर रहे थे।
- The French were defeated and **Bussi**, one of the prominent leaders, was captured.
- फ्रांसीसी पराजित हुए और उनके प्रमुख नेताओं में से एक **बुसी** को बंदी बना लिया गया।

Battle of Wandiwash (1760 AD)

Basic Introduction

- The **Battle of Wandiwash**, fought on **22 January 1760**, was the decisive military engagement of the **Third Carnatic War (1757–1763)** between the **British East India Company and the French** in India.
- It was fought near **Wandiwash**, the Anglicised form of **Vandavasi**, in present-day **Tiruvannamalai district of Tamil Nadu**.
- The British forces were commanded by **Colonel Eyre Coote**, while the principal French army was commanded by **Thomas Arthur, Comte de Lally (Count de Lally)**. The celebrated French commander **Marquis de Bussy-Castelnau** participated in the battle and

was captured.

- The battle resulted in a **decisive British victory** and effectively destroyed France's capacity to challenge the British militarily for political supremacy in India.
- An official historical gazetteer available through IGNCA describes Wandiwash as the site of a victory that was, in its consequences, among the **most important victories won over the French in India**.

Historical Background: Anglo-French Rivalry in India

- During the **18th century**, the decline of Mughal authority created opportunities for regional powers as well as European trading companies to increase their political influence.
- The two principal European competitors in southern India were the **English East India Company** and the **French East India Company**.
- Their commercial rivalry gradually developed into a struggle for political and military influence, particularly in the **Carnatic and Hyderabad**.
- This rivalry produced the **three Carnatic Wars**, which formed an important stage in the transition of European companies from commercial organisations to political powers.

Carnatic Wars at a Glance

- The **First Carnatic War (1746–1748)** was connected with the **War of the Austrian Succession** in Europe.
- The **Second Carnatic War (1749–1754)** centred substantially on succession disputes in **Hyderabad and the Carnatic**, in which the British and French supported rival claimants.
- The **Third Carnatic War (1757–1763)** was the Indian theatre of the wider **Seven Years' War (1756–1763)** between Britain and France and their respective allies.
- The **Battle of Wandiwash** became the decisive land engagement of this final phase of Anglo-French rivalry in the Carnatic.

Immediate Background of the Battle

- France sent **Count de Lally** to India in **1758** with the objective of strengthening French power and driving the British from their settlements.
- Lally initially achieved some success, including the capture of **Fort St. David**, but his subsequent campaign suffered from serious financial, logistical and strategic difficulties.
- His attempt to capture **Madras in 1758–59** ended unsuccessfully.
- French fortunes were further weakened by inadequate financial resources, shortages of

supplies and, crucially, the absence of dependable **French naval support**.

- By contrast, British power had been strengthened by increasing financial resources and political influence, particularly following developments in **Bengal after the Battle of Plassey (1757)**.
- In late **1759**, Eyre Coote captured Wandiwash. Lally subsequently attempted to recover this strategically important position.
- In **January 1760**, Lally moved against Wandiwash, compelling Coote to advance to relieve the fort. This brought the two armies into direct confrontation on **22 January 1760**.

Battle of Wandiwash: 22 January 1760

British Side

- The British East India Company forces were led by **Colonel Eyre Coote (1726–1783)**.
- Coote had earlier participated in the British campaigns in India and subsequently emerged as one of the Company's most important military commanders.

French Side

- The French forces were commanded by **Count de Lally**.
- **Marquis de Bussy-Castelnau**, one of France's most experienced commanders in India and an important figure in establishing earlier French influence in the Deccan, participated on the French side.

Course of the Battle

- Lally was attempting to recover the strategically important **Wandiwash fort** when Coote advanced against the French position.
- The confrontation developed into a pitched battle outside Wandiwash.
- The French employed their cavalry and infantry against the British formation, but the British forces maintained their position.
- British artillery and disciplined infantry played an important role in disrupting the French lines.
- During the fighting, the French position progressively weakened and **Eyre Coote pressed the attack**, eventually breaking the French formation.
- The French forces were decisively defeated and forced to retreat towards their principal stronghold at **Pondicherry**.



- **Marquis de Bussy was captured**, depriving France of one of its most experienced commanders in India.

Why Did the British Win?

Superior Naval Position

- British maritime strength was one of the fundamental strategic advantages behind the victory.
- French forces increasingly lacked dependable naval support, making it difficult to obtain **troops, money, supplies and reinforcements** from overseas.
- This demonstrates an important feature of European warfare in India: control of the sea could determine the sustainability of military operations on land.

Financial Superiority

- The British East India Company had access to stronger financial resources.
- Its position in **Bengal**, strengthened after **Plassey (1757)**, considerably improved its ability to finance military campaigns.
- In contrast, Lally repeatedly faced shortages of money and supplies.

Military Leadership

- **Eyre Coote** displayed effective battlefield command and successfully exploited weaknesses in the French position.
- The British forces maintained greater cohesion during the decisive phases of the engagement.

French Administrative and Command Problems

- The French establishment in India suffered from disagreements and tensions among its political, military and naval leadership.
- Lally's difficult relations with French officials and commanders weakened coordination.

Failure to Build a Sustainable Political Base

- Earlier French leaders, particularly **Dupleix and Bussy**, had attempted to expand French influence through alliances with Indian rulers.
- By the time of Wandiwash, the French were increasingly unable to translate such relationships into the financial and military resources required to defeat the British.

Immediate Consequences

- Wandiwash destroyed the French field army's ability to challenge British military power effectively in the Carnatic.
- Following their defeat, the French were progressively confined to **Pondicherry**, their principal settlement in India.
- British forces subsequently besieged Pondicherry.
- **Pondicherry surrendered in January 1761**, effectively ending France's immediate military challenge to British supremacy in southern India.

Treaty of Paris, 1763

- The global **Seven Years' War** formally ended with the **Treaty of Paris in 1763**.
- France recovered certain commercial settlements in India, including **Pondicherry**, but its capacity to pursue territorial-political rivalry with Britain had been fundamentally curtailed.
- Therefore, France **did not disappear completely from India after Wandiwash**. French settlements continued to exist, but France ceased to pose the same kind of sustained political and military challenge to British expansion.
- This distinction is important for competitive examinations: **Wandiwash ended the effective French challenge to British political supremacy, not the French commercial presence in India**.

Historical Significance

Turning Point in Anglo-French Rivalry

- The Battle of Wandiwash decisively shifted the balance of power between the two major European competitors in India in favour of Britain.

Foundation for British Paramountcy

- After eliminating France as its principal European political competitor, the British East India Company could increasingly concentrate on conflicts with major Indian powers.
- British supremacy was still **not complete in 1760**. The Company subsequently had to confront powers such as **Mysore, the Marathas and other regional states**.
- Thus, Wandiwash should be understood as a major step towards British paramountcy rather than the moment when the conquest of India was completed.



Commercial Rivalry Became Political Supremacy

- The battle demonstrates how European trading companies increasingly used **fortifications, armies, diplomacy, Indian allies and naval power** to convert commercial influence into territorial and political power.

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:

1. This town, on National Highway 1, is often called the Gateway to Ladakh and has become a tourist spot because of its Kargil War association. Name it. **Ans: Dras**
2. This man, who partly grew up in Turkey, sent planeloads of relief to India following the Gujarat earthquake, just two years after the Kargil War for which he was the architect. He was sentenced to death in his country for subverting the Constitution. Name him. **Ans: Pervez Musharraf**
3. This Army officer, posthumously awarded the Param Vir Chakra, was killed at point 4875 during the Kargil War.

He was played by Siddharth Malhotra in the 2021 film *Shershaah*. Name him. **Ans: Captain Vikram Batra**

4. This elite squadron that executed Operation Safed Sagar was also involved in executing Operation Sindoor in 2025. Name them. **Ans: Golden Arrows**

5. What was the military operation to clear out the Kargil sector called? **Ans: Operation Vijay**

Visual: Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee is seen in this photo with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in 1999 just months before the Kargil war broke out. What was the name of the peace agreement that they signed? **Ans: Lahore Declaration**

Early Birds: Sitaram Saharaj | Sukdev Shet | Dodo Jayaditya | Sumana Dutta | Arun Kumar Singh

20A8. Quiz

1. Dras

- **Dras** is a town in the Kargil district of the Union Territory of Ladakh. It lies on **National Highway 1**, between the Zoji La Pass and Kargil town, and is popularly called the **"Gateway to Ladakh."**
- During the **Kargil War of 1999**, strategically important battles were fought in the surrounding Dras sector, including those at **Tololing and Tiger Hill**.
- The **Kargil War Memorial** at Dras commemorates Indian soldiers who sacrificed their lives during Operation Vijay.
- Its battlefield heritage, mountainous landscape and war memorial have made Dras an important destination for tourism and national remembrance.

2. Pervez Musharraf

- **General Pervez Musharraf** spent part of his childhood in Turkey and was Pakistan's Army Chief during the **1999 Kargil conflict**, whose planning is widely associated with Pakistan's military leadership.
- Following the **Gujarat earthquake of 26 January 2001**, Pakistan sent three planeloads of relief supplies, and Musharraf telephoned Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- A special court sentenced him to death for high treason on **17 December 2019** for suspending Pakistan's Constitution in 2007.
- Musharraf died in Dubai on **5 February 2023**. Pakistan's Supreme Court subsequently upheld the conviction posthumously in **January 2024**.

3. Captain Vikram Batra

- **Captain Vikram Batra** belonged to the **13 Jammu and Kashmir Rifles** and displayed exceptional courage during the Kargil War.
- He played a crucial role in the capture of **Point 5140** and later fought at **Point 4875** in the Mushkoh Valley.
- He was killed in action at Point 4875 on **7 July 1999** while assisting the evacuation of an injured officer.
- He was posthumously awarded the **Param Vir Chakra**, India's highest wartime gallantry award.
- Actor **Sidharth Malhotra** portrayed him in the 2021 biographical film *Shershaah*. Point 4875 is also remembered as **Batra Top**.

4. Golden Arrows

- **Golden Arrows** is the nickname of the Indian Air Force's **No. 17 Squadron**; it is a squadron, not an "elite squadron" as a separate formal category.



- Under Wing Commander **B.S. Dhanoa**, the squadron operated MiG-21 aircraft and participated in **Operation Safed Sagar**, the IAF's air campaign during the 1999 Kargil War.
- The squadron was resurrected on **11 September 2019** and became the first Indian squadron equipped with **Rafale fighters**.
- Its participation in **Operation Sindoor in 2025** has been widely reported. However, detailed squadron-wise operational assignments have not been comprehensively disclosed officially for security reasons.

5. Operation Vijay

- The Indian military campaign to evict Pakistani intruders from the Kargil sector was called **Operation Vijay**.
- The intrusion came to light in **May 1999**, after Pakistani troops and infiltrators occupied dominating heights on the Indian side of the Line of Control.
- The Indian Army conducted difficult high-altitude operations to recapture positions such as **Tololing, Tiger Hill and Point 4875**.
- The Indian Air Force supported the campaign through **Operation Safed Sagar**, beginning offensive operations on **26 May 1999**.
- India successfully restored control over the occupied positions, and **26 July** is commemorated annually as **Kargil Vijay Diwas**.

6. Lahore Declaration

- Prime Ministers **Atal Bihari Vajpayee** and **Nawaz Sharif** signed the **Lahore Declaration** in Lahore on **21 February 1999**, during Vajpayee's historic bus journey to Pakistan.
- It expressed a commitment to peaceful bilateral relations, intensified dialogue and implementation of the **Simla Agreement**.
- The accompanying Memorandum of Understanding included confidence-building measures concerning nuclear risks, advance notification of ballistic-missile tests and improved communication.
- The Kargil intrusion emerged only a few months later, severely undermining the peace initiative.
- The photograph therefore represents an important but short-lived attempt to improve India–Pakistan relations immediately before the Kargil War.

GS Paper 1: Society		20 August 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
20A8	Pinarayi says Centre is trying to include NPR in Census work पिनराई ने कहा, केंद्र जनगणना कार्य में NPR को शामिल करने का प्रयास कर रहा है	
20A8	Census 2027: rights groups flag gaps in disability categories जनगणना 2027: अधिकार समूहों ने दिव्यांगता श्रेणियों में कमियों को उजागर किया	
20A8	Census 2027 has a nefarious purpose, says Jairam Ramesh जयराम रमेश ने कहा, जनगणना 2027 का एक दुर्भावनापूर्ण उद्देश्य है	
20A8	The myth called 'perfect victim' 'परिपूर्ण पीड़िता' कहलाने वाला मिथक	
20A8	Why is the Supreme Court examining polygamy again? — सर्वोच्च न्यायालय बहुविवाह की फिर से जाँच क्यों कर रहा है?	
20A8	Punjab's decade-long journey towards a formal sacrilege law औपचारिक ईशनिंदा कानून की दिशा में पंजाब की एक दशक लंबी यात्रा	



Pinarayi says Centre is trying to include NPR in Census work

GS I: Society

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Leader of the Opposition of Kerala Pinarayi Vijayan has slammed the Census 2027 questionnaire that reportedly seeks information on religion and place of birth of both parents, saying that the Centre is trying to include the National Population Register (NPR) in the Census work.

Mr. Vijayan, in a Facebook post, said any policy that links religion with citizenship is unacceptable.

"Although the Census and NPR are separate, the Centre is trying to include NPR in the Census. The Home Ministry report of 2018-19 had made it clear that the National Register of Citizens (NRC) is pre-

pared by filtering data from the NPR and that NPR is a preparatory step for NRC," he said, urging the Union government to remove such "sinister queries" from the questionnaire.

Mr. Vijayan recalled that the Keralam government had issued a fresh order during the Left Democratic Front's (LDF) tenure reaffirming that the NPR would not be implemented in the State under any circumstances. Mr. Vijayan called upon the secular sections of society to resist attempts by the Sangh Parivar to target "a particular section of society." He also termed it a matter of concern that the UDF government in Keralam was silent on the issue.

clear that the National Register of Citizens (NRC) is prepared by filtering data from the NPR and that NPR is a preparatory step for NRC," he said, urging the Union government to remove such "sinister queries" from the questionnaire.

गृह मंत्रालय की 2018-19 की रिपोर्ट ने स्पष्ट किया था कि राष्ट्रीय नागरिक रजिस्टर (NRC) तैयार करने के लिए NPR के आँकड़ों को छाँटा जाता है और NPR, NRC की तैयारी का एक चरण है," उन्होंने कहा और केंद्र सरकार से प्रश्नावली से ऐसे "दुर्भावनापूर्ण प्रश्नों" को हटाने का आग्रह किया।

- Mr. Vijayan recalled that the Keralam government had issued a fresh order during the Left Democratic Front's (LDF) tenure reaffirming that the NPR would not be implemented in the State under any circumstances.
श्री विजयन ने याद दिलाया कि लेफ्ट डेमोक्रेटिक फ्रंट (LDF) के कार्यकाल के दौरान केरल सरकार ने एक नया आदेश जारी करके यह पुनः स्पष्ट किया था कि किसी भी परिस्थिति में राज्य में NPR लागू नहीं किया जाएगा।
- Mr. Vijayan called upon the secular sections of society to resist attempts by the Sangh Parivar to target "a particular section of society."
श्री विजयन ने समाज के धर्मनिरपेक्ष वर्गों से "समाज के एक विशेष वर्ग" को निशाना बनाने के लिए संघ परिवार द्वारा किए जा रहे प्रयासों का विरोध करने का आह्वान किया।
- He also termed it a matter of concern that the UDF government in Keralam was silent on the issue.
उन्होंने यह भी कहा कि केरल में UDF सरकार की इस मुद्दे पर चुप्पी चिंता का विषय है।

20A8. Pinarayi says Centre is trying to include NPR in Census work

पिनराई ने कहा, केंद्र जनगणना कार्य में NPR को शामिल करने का प्रयास कर रहा है

- Leader of the Opposition of Kerala Pinarayi Vijayan has slammed the Census 2027 questionnaire that reportedly seeks information on religion and place of birth of both parents, saying that the Centre is trying to include the National Population Register (NPR) in the Census work.

केरल के विपक्ष के नेता पिनराई विजयन ने जनगणना 2027 की उस प्रश्नावली की आलोचना की है, जिसमें कथित रूप से धर्म और माता-पिता दोनों के जन्मस्थान की जानकारी माँगी गई है। उन्होंने कहा कि केंद्र सरकार राष्ट्रीय जनसंख्या रजिस्टर (NPR) को जनगणना कार्य में शामिल करने का प्रयास कर रही है।

- Mr. Vijayan, in a Facebook post, said any policy that links religion with citizenship is unacceptable.
श्री विजयन ने फेसबुक पोस्ट में कहा कि धर्म को नागरिकता से जोड़ने वाली कोई भी नीति अस्वीकार्य है।

- "Although the Census and NPR are separate, the Centre is trying to include NPR in the Census.
"यद्यपि जनगणना और NPR अलग-अलग हैं, लेकिन केंद्र सरकार NPR को जनगणना में शामिल करने का प्रयास कर रही है।

- The Home Ministry report of 2018-19 had made it



Census 2027 has a nefarious purpose, says Jairam Ramesh

GS I: Society

Vijaita Singh

NEW DELHI

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh on Wednesday alleged that Census 2027 had a “deeper nefarious purpose”, citing the inclusion of what he described as unprecedented questions on religion, date of birth and the birthplace of respondents’ parents.

He raised concerns over the Census questionnaire, alleging that the methodology for collecting caste data is “deliberately flawed”.

He was responding to a *The Hindu* report published on August 18 that the questionnaire for the Population Enumeration phase of Census 2027 has gone live in Ladakh and snow-bound areas of three other States ahead of the rest of the country. The questionnaire seeks information on religion, date of birth and place of birth, up to the village level, of both the father and the mother of respondents.

While members of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes can choose their caste or tribe from a predetermined drop-down menu, other respondents will have to type their caste name in an open field.

In a post on X, Mr. Ra-



Jairam Ramesh

mesh said the approach to gathering caste-related information could undermine the credibility of the data collected. “The methodology of asking questions on caste in Census 2027 is deliberately flawed,” he said.

Flags micro questions

He pointed to what he described as unprecedented questions seeking details related to religion and date of birth. According to him, such “micro questions” have not featured in previous Census exercises.

Mr. Ramesh also noted that Census data are traditionally protected by confidentiality provisions and argued that the expanded scope of data collection raises concerns about the government’s intentions. “Census is confidential. Clearly, Census 2027 has a deeper nefarious purpose,” he alleged.

20A8. Census 2027 has a nefarious purpose, says Jairam Ramesh

जयराम रमेश ने कहा, जनगणना 2027 का एक

दुर्भावनापूर्ण उद्देश्य है

- Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh on Wednesday alleged that Census 2027 had a “deeper nefarious purpose”, citing the inclusion of what he described as unprecedented questions on religion, date of birth and the birthplace of respondents’ parents.

कांग्रेस महासचिव जयराम रमेश ने बुधवार को आरोप लगाया कि जनगणना 2027 का “एक गहरा दुर्भावनापूर्ण उद्देश्य” है, क्योंकि इसमें उनके अनुसार धर्म, जन्मतिथि और उत्तरदाताओं के माता-पिता के जन्मस्थान से संबंधित ऐसे प्रश्न शामिल किए गए हैं, जो पहले कभी नहीं पूछे गए।

- He raised concerns over the Census questionnaire, alleging that the methodology for collecting caste data is “deliberately flawed”.

उन्होंने जनगणना प्रश्नावली को लेकर चिंता व्यक्त करते हुए आरोप लगाया कि जाति संबंधी आँकड़े एकत्र करने की पद्धति “जानबूझकर त्रुटिपूर्ण” है।

- He was responding to a *The Hindu* report published on August 18 that the questionnaire for the Population Enumeration phase of Census 2027 has gone live in Ladakh and snow-bound areas of three other States ahead of the rest of the country.

वह 18 अगस्त को प्रकाशित *The Hindu* की एक रिपोर्ट पर प्रतिक्रिया दे रहे थे, जिसमें बताया गया था कि जनगणना 2027 के जनसंख्या गणना चरण की प्रश्नावली देश के बाकी हिस्सों से पहले लद्दाख और तीन अन्य राज्यों के बर्फ से ढके क्षेत्रों में उपलब्ध करा दी गई है।

- The questionnaire seeks information on religion, date of birth and place of birth, up to the village level, of both the father and the mother of respondents.

प्रश्नावली में उत्तरदाताओं के पिता और माता दोनों के धर्म, जन्मतिथि और जन्मस्थान की जानकारी माँगी गई है, जिसमें जन्मस्थान की जानकारी गाँव के स्तर तक माँगी गई है।

- While members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes can choose their caste or tribe from a predetermined drop-down menu, other respondents will have to type their caste name in an open field.

जबकि अनुसूचित जाति (SC) और अनुसूचित जनजाति (ST) के सदस्य पहले से निर्धारित ड्रॉप-डाउन मेनू में से अपनी जाति या जनजाति का चयन कर सकते हैं, अन्य उत्तरदाताओं को अपनी जाति का नाम खुले फील्ड में स्वयं दर्ज करना होगा।

- In a post on X, Mr. Ramesh said the approach to gathering caste-related information could undermine the credibility of the data collected.

X पर एक पोस्ट में श्री रमेश ने कहा कि जाति संबंधी जानकारी एकत्र करने का यह तरीका एकत्र किए गए आँकड़ों की विश्वसनीयता को कमजोर कर सकता है।

- “The methodology of asking questions on caste in Census 2027 is deliberately flawed,” he said.
उन्होंने कहा, “जनगणना 2027 में जाति संबंधी प्रश्न पूछने की पद्धति जानबूझकर त्रुटिपूर्ण है।”

Flags micro questions

सूक्ष्म प्रश्नों पर आपत्ति

- He pointed to what he described as unprecedented questions seeking details related to religion and date of birth.
उन्होंने धर्म और जन्मतिथि से संबंधित विवरण माँगने वाले उन प्रश्नों की ओर संकेत किया, जिन्हें उन्होंने **अभूतपूर्व प्रश्न** बताया।
- According to him, such “micro questions” have not featured in previous Census exercises.
उनके अनुसार, ऐसे “**सूक्ष्म प्रश्न**” पिछली जनगणना प्रक्रियाओं में शामिल नहीं किए गए हैं।
- Mr. Ramesh also noted that Census data are traditionally protected by confidentiality provisions and argued that the expanded scope of data collection raises concerns about the government’s intentions.
श्री रमेश ने यह भी कहा कि जनगणना के आँकड़े परंपरागत रूप से गोपनीयता संबंधी प्रावधानों द्वारा संरक्षित होते हैं और तर्क दिया कि आँकड़े एकत्र करने के विस्तारित दायरे से सरकार की **मंशा को लेकर चिंताएँ** उत्पन्न होती हैं।
- “Census is confidential. Clearly, Census 2027 has a deeper nefarious purpose,” he alleged.
उन्होंने आरोप लगाया, “जनगणना गोपनीय होती है। स्पष्ट रूप से, जनगणना 2027 का एक गहरा **दुर्भावनापूर्ण उद्देश्य है।**”



Census 2027: rights groups flag gaps in disability categories

GS I: Society

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

Disability rights organisations and activists have raised concerns over the proposed classification of disabilities for enumeration in Census 2027, saying the nine-category framework does not adequately include several disabilities recognised under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016.

The National Platform for the Rights of the Disabled (NPRD) said the proposed Census categories — seeing, hearing, speech, mobility, intellectual disability, mental illness, acid attack, chronic neurological disease and blood disorder — did not adequately reflect the 21 “specified disabilities” recognised under the RPwD Act.

New additions

The organisation pointed out that six of the proposed categories — seeing, hearing, speech, mobility, intellectual disability and mental illness — essentially carry forward the categories used in the 2011 Census, with “mental retardation” renamed “intellectual disability”. The additions are acid at-

tack, chronic neurological disease and blood disorder.

The NPRD, citing information shared by the Politics & Disability Forum, said the proposed framework was particularly concerning in view of an assurance by Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Ramdas Athawale that data on all 21 disabilities would be captured in the Census.

Poor representation

The RPwD Act recognises a wide range of conditions, including cerebral palsy, dwarfism, muscular dystrophy, specific learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder and multiple sclerosis.

Activists said several of these conditions had not been distinctly represented in the proposed Census categories.

Autism spectrum disorder, specific learning disabilities, and dwarfism were among those they said risked being left out.

The organisations said such broad categorisation could affect the quality of data generated by enumerators and result in an undercount of specific disability groups.

20A8. Census 2027: rights groups flag gaps in disability categories

जनगणना 2027: अधिकार समूहों ने दिव्यांगता श्रेणियों में कमियों को उजागर किया

Disability rights organisations and activists have raised concerns over the proposed classification of disabilities for enumeration in Census 2027, saying the nine-category framework does not adequately include several disabilities recognised under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016.

दिव्यांगता अधिकार संगठनों और कार्यकर्ताओं ने जनगणना 2027 में गणना के लिए प्रस्तावित दिव्यांगताओं के वर्गीकरण को लेकर चिंता जताई है और कहा है कि नौ-श्रेणी वाला ढाँचा दिव्यांगजन अधिकार अधिनियम, 2016 के तहत मान्यता प्राप्त कई दिव्यांगताओं को पर्याप्त रूप से शामिल नहीं करता।

The National Platform for the Rights of the Disabled (NPRD) said the proposed Census categories — seeing, hearing, speech, mobility, intellectual disability, mental illness, acid attack, chronic neurological disease and blood disorder — did not adequately reflect the 21 “specified disabilities” recognised under the RPwD Act.

National Platform for the Rights of the Disabled (NPRD) ने कहा कि प्रस्तावित जनगणना श्रेणियाँ—दृष्टि, श्रवण, वाक्, गतिशीलता, बौद्धिक दिव्यांगता, मानसिक बीमारी, एसिड अटैक, दीर्घकालिक तंत्रिका संबंधी रोग और रक्त विकार—RPwD अधिनियम के तहत मान्यता प्राप्त 21 “निर्दिष्ट दिव्यांगताओं” को पर्याप्त रूप से प्रतिबिंबित नहीं करती हैं।

New additions

नई श्रेणियाँ

The organisation pointed out that six of the proposed categories — seeing, hearing, speech, mobility, intellectual disability and mental illness — essentially carry forward the categories used in the 2011 Census, with “mental retardation” renamed “intellectual disability”.

संगठन ने बताया कि प्रस्तावित श्रेणियों में से छह—दृष्टि, श्रवण, वाक्, गतिशीलता, बौद्धिक दिव्यांगता और मानसिक बीमारी—मूलतः 2011 की जनगणना में इस्तेमाल की गई श्रेणियों को ही आगे बढ़ाती हैं, जिसमें “mental retardation” को “intellectual disability” के रूप में नामित किया गया है।

- The additions are acid attack, chronic neurological disease and blood disorder. नई जोड़ी गई श्रेणियाँ एसिड अटैक, दीर्घकालिक तंत्रिका संबंधी रोग और रक्त विकार हैं।
- The NPRD, citing information shared by the Politics & Disability Forum, said the proposed framework was particularly concerning in view of an assurance by Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Ramdas Athawale that data on all 21 disabilities would be captured in the Census.

NPRD ने Politics & Disability Forum द्वारा साझा की गई जानकारी का हवाला देते हुए कहा कि प्रस्तावित ढाँचा विशेष रूप से चिंताजनक है, क्योंकि सामाजिक न्याय और अधिकारिता राज्य मंत्री रामदास आठवले ने आश्वासन दिया था कि जनगणना में सभी 21 दिव्यांगताओं से संबंधित आँकड़े दर्ज किए जाएंगे।

Poor representation अपर्याप्त प्रतिनिधित्व

- The RPwD Act recognises a wide range of conditions, including cerebral palsy, dwarfism, muscular dystrophy, specific learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder and multiple sclerosis.
RPwD अधिनियम कई प्रकार की स्थितियों को मान्यता देता है, जिनमें सेरेब्रल पाल्सी, बौनापन, मस्कुलर डिस्ट्रॉफी, विशिष्ट अधिगम दिव्यांगताएँ, ऑटिज्म स्पेक्ट्रम डिसऑर्डर और मल्टीपल स्केलेरोसिस शामिल हैं।
- Activists said several of these conditions had not been distinctly represented in the proposed Census categories.
कार्यकर्ताओं ने कहा कि इनमें से कई स्थितियों को प्रस्तावित जनगणना श्रेणियों में अलग से स्पष्ट रूप से शामिल नहीं किया गया है।
- Autism spectrum disorder, specific learning disabilities, and dwarfism were among those they said risked being left out.
उन्होंने कहा कि ऑटिज्म स्पेक्ट्रम डिसऑर्डर, विशिष्ट अधिगम दिव्यांगताएँ और बौनापन उन स्थितियों में शामिल हैं, जिनके छूट जाने का जोखिम है।
- The organisations said such broad categorisation could affect the quality of data generated by enumerators and result in an undercount of specific disability groups.
संगठनों ने कहा कि इस प्रकार का व्यापक वर्गीकरण गणनाकर्ताओं द्वारा एकत्र किए जाने वाले आँकड़ों की गुणवत्ता को प्रभावित कर सकता है और विशिष्ट दिव्यांगता समूहों की कम गणना (Undercount) का कारण बन सकता है।

The myth called 'perfect victim'

The Tejpal case shows how the 'ideal victim' stereotype can shape judicial perceptions, with survivors often judged by their behaviour and personal background rather than the evidence; such assumptions have created a hierarchy of victimisation, prompting the court to call for greater gender sensitivity in judicial writing

ISSUE: Society

LETTER & SPIRIT

Grace Paul Vallooran

In August 6, the Goa Division Bench of the Bombay High Court set aside the 2021 judgment of the trial court that had acquitted Tarun Tejpal. The High Court convicted Tejpal, the former editor of *Tehelka* magazine, and sentenced him to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment for raping a former colleague.

While terming the trial court's ruling "perverse", the High Court also said that it had fallen for the notion that a sexual assault complainant must be a 'perfect victim' and conduct herself in a certain way to appear credible.

Nils Christie's concept
What is the idea of a 'perfect victim' or an 'ideal victim'? It was theorised by Norwegian criminologist Nils Christie in a chapter of the same name, in the book *From Crime Policy to Victim Policy*, in 1986.

Christie said the 'ideal victim' or 'perfect victim' possesses five main attributes. First, they are often female, disabled, very young, or very old, and are therefore weak in relation to the offender. Second, they are involved in "respectable activities". Third, they cannot reasonably be blamed for being where they were during the crime. Fourth, they do not know the offender personally. Fifth, they are attacked by a perpetrator who is "big and bad". Christie also noted that while being weak, the victim must have enough social power to influence sympathy and have their victim status recognised.

This one-size-fits-all idea of victimhood is propagated widely – by the media, social media, films, and by the larger society. Race, class, gender and other factors are involved in these dramatic portrayals where the most "innocent" and "deserving" become the 'ideal victim' while others are viewed as "undeserving" of sympathy, Christie argued.

In contrast to the idea of the 'ideal



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victim' is the idea of the 'ideal offender'. According to Christie, such an individual must be framed as purely bad, dangerous, and a stranger to the victim so that it becomes easy for society not to like him. When the offender is a familiar person with a "good background story", the 'ideal' dynamic breaks down.

In the case of Tejpal, his social status and his image as a liberal intellectual complicated this stereotype of the 'ideal offender'. As per Christie's argument, when there is no 'ideal offender' to hate, it becomes hard to perceive an 'ideal victim' to sympathise with.

Hierarchy of victimisation
This narrow perception of an 'ideal victim' creates a hierarchy of victimisation. Those who are thought of as "undeserving" are even perceived as contributing to the situation and receive less sympathy or none at all.

For instance, in the 1979 Mathura custodial rape case of a teenager, the Sessions Court had relied on the survivor's previous sexual experience to reason that she had likely consented, and described her as "habituated to sexual intercourse". The Supreme Court, while

acquitting the accused policemen, noted the absence of any alarm or resistance from the survivor or injuries on her body.

Similarly, in the gang-rape case of social worker Bhanwari Devi (1992) that became a catalyst for the formulation of the Vishakha guidelines and later, the enactment of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, the Jaipur District and Sessions Court in 1995 acquitted the accused of gang rape. The court reasoned that it was unlikely that upper caste men would "pollute" themselves by having sexual relations with a Dalit woman. In short, in the eyes of the court, Devi's caste status made her an unlikely 'ideal victim'.

In 2017, in an interim order, a Punjab and Haryana High Court division bench suspended the sentences and granted bail to three former Jindal Global Law School students convicted of gang-raping and blackmailing a classmate. It described the survivor's behaviour as having a "perverse streak".

The court said, "...We are conscious of the fact that allegations of the victim regarding her being threatened into submission and blackmail lend sufficient

diabolism to the offence, but a careful examination of her statement again offers an alternate conclusion of misadventure stemming from a promiscuous attitude and a voyeuristic mind." This remark placed the survivor's sexual behaviour at the centre of the court's assessment, effectively questioning her status as an 'ideal victim'.

These rulings have demanded a 'performance' of trauma from survivors. Any digression from that expected behaviour has cast doubts on the survivors' credibility and status as legitimate. The rulings reflect Christie's theory that victimhood is not an objective state, but a deeply gendered moral status that can be granted or denied by society.

The Tejpal case

In 2021, in the Tejpal case, the Goa Sessions Court noted that there were several discrepancies in the survivor's versions. It also said that while the victim had claimed to be in shock and trauma after exiting the lift on November 7, 2013, the CCTV footage showed that she was composed and smiling.

The High Court criticised the Sessions Court for focusing on the complainant's conduct, reactions, and personal background instead of the evidence on record. It also noted that a survivor has already faced trauma and might feel too ashamed, nervous, or confused to respond clearly when questioned repeatedly in an unfamiliar environment.

The Supreme Court has questioned this idea in some of its judgments. In 2025, former Chief Justice B.R. Gavai had apologised on behalf of the judiciary for the Supreme Court judgment in the Mathura case, calling it a "moment of institutional embarrassment".

Recently, on August 3, the Supreme Court issued a report recommending greater gender sensitivity in judicial writing. It cautioned judges against drawing adverse conclusions from delayed reporting, lack of physical injuries, inconsistencies in testimony or a survivor's demeanour, noting that trauma affects people differently.

THE GIST

▼ Nils Christie's 'ideal victim' theory holds that vulnerability, respectability and innocence shape who is perceived as deserving of sympathy.

▼ Court rulings in cases such as Mathura, Bhanwari Devi and Tejpal show how survivors' behaviour and personal circumstances have been used to question their credibility.

▼ The Supreme Court has recently urged judges to avoid such assumptions, noting that trauma can affect survivors differently.

20A8. The myth called 'perfect victim'

‘परिपूर्ण पीड़िता’ कहलाने वाला मिथक



- On August 6, the **Goa Division Bench of the Bombay High Court** set aside the **2021 judgment of the trial court** that had acquitted **Tarun Tejpal**.
6 अगस्त को बॉम्बे हाई कोर्ट की गोवा डिवीजन बेंच ने ट्रायल कोर्ट के 2021 के उस फैसले को रद्द कर दिया, जिसमें **तरुण तेजपाल को बरी** किया गया था।
- The High Court convicted Tejpal, the former editor of *Tehelka* magazine, and sentenced him to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment for raping a former colleague.
हाई कोर्ट ने *Tehelka* पत्रिका के पूर्व संपादक **तेजपाल को दोषी ठहराया** और एक पूर्व सहकर्मी के साथ बलात्कार के लिए उन्हें **10 वर्ष के कठोर कारावास** की सजा सुनाई।
- While terming the trial court's ruling "perverse", the High Court also said that it had fallen for the notion that **a sexual assault complainant must be a 'perfect victim' and conduct herself in a certain way to appear credible**.
ट्रायल कोर्ट के फैसले को **"विकृत (perverse)"** बताते हुए हाई कोर्ट ने यह भी कहा कि वह इस धारणा से प्रभावित हो गया था कि यौन उत्पीड़न की शिकायतकर्ता को एक **'परिपूर्ण पीड़िता'** होना चाहिए और विश्वसनीय दिखाई देने के लिए उसे एक निश्चित तरीके से व्यवहार करना चाहिए।

Nils Christie's concept निल्स क्रिस्टी की अवधारणा

- What is the idea of a 'perfect victim' or an 'ideal victim'?**
'परिपूर्ण पीड़िता' या 'आदर्श पीड़िता' की अवधारणा क्या है?
- It was theorised by Norwegian criminologist Nils Christie in a chapter of the same name, in the book *From Crime Policy to Victim Policy*, in 1986.
इस अवधारणा का सिद्धांत **नॉर्वे के अपराधशास्त्री निल्स क्रिस्टी** ने 1986 में प्रकाशित पुस्तक *From Crime Policy to Victim Policy* के इसी नाम वाले अध्याय में प्रस्तुत किया था।
- Christie said the **'ideal victim' or 'perfect victim' possesses five main attributes**.
क्रिस्टी के अनुसार, **'आदर्श पीड़िता' या 'परिपूर्ण पीड़िता'** में पाँच प्रमुख विशेषताएँ होती हैं।
- First, they are often female, disabled, very young, or very old, and are therefore weak in relation to the offender.**
पहली, वे प्रायः **महिला, दिव्यांग, बहुत कम उम्र के या बहुत अधिक उम्र के** होते हैं और इसलिए अपराधी की तुलना में कमजोर होते हैं।
- Second, they are involved in "respectable activities".**
दूसरी, वे **"सम्मानजनक गतिविधियों"** में संलग्न होते हैं।
- Third, they cannot reasonably be blamed for being where they were during the crime.**
तीसरी, अपराध के समय वे जिस स्थान पर मौजूद थे, उसके लिए उन्हें **उचित रूप से दोषी नहीं ठहराया जा सकता**।
- Fourth, they do not know the offender personally.**
चौथी, वे **अपराधी को व्यक्तिगत रूप से नहीं जानते**।
- Fifth, they are attacked by a perpetrator who is "big and bad".**
पाँचवीं, उन पर ऐसा अपराधी हमला करता है जो **"शक्तिशाली और बुरा"** होता है।
- Christie also noted that while being weak, the victim must have enough social power to influence sympathy and have their victim status recognised.
क्रिस्टी ने यह भी कहा कि कमजोर होने के बावजूद पीड़ित के पास इतनी **सामाजिक शक्ति** होनी चाहिए कि वह लोगों की सहानुभूति प्रभावित कर सके और उसकी पीड़ित की स्थिति को मान्यता मिल सके।
- This one-size-fits-all idea of victimhood is propagated widely — by the media, social media, films, and by the larger society.
पीड़ित होने की यह **एकरूप/सर्वमान्य धारणा** मीडिया, सोशल मीडिया, फिल्मों और व्यापक समाज द्वारा व्यापक रूप से प्रचारित की जाती है।



- Race, class, gender and other factors are involved in these dramatic portrayals where the most “innocent” and “deserving” become the ‘ideal victim’ while others are viewed as “undeserving” of sympathy, Christie argued.
क्रिस्टी ने तर्क दिया कि इन नाटकीय प्रस्तुतियों में जाति, वर्ग, लिंग और अन्य कारक शामिल होते हैं, जहाँ सबसे अधिक “निर्दोष” और “सहानुभूति के योग्य” व्यक्ति ‘आदर्श पीड़ित’ बन जाते हैं, जबकि अन्य लोगों को “सहानुभूति के अयोग्य” माना जाता है।
- In contrast to the idea of the ‘ideal victim’ is the idea of the ‘ideal offender’.
‘आदर्श पीड़ित’ की अवधारणा के विपरीत ‘आदर्श अपराधी’ की अवधारणा है।
- According to Christie, such an individual must be framed as purely bad, dangerous, and a stranger to the victim so that it becomes easy for society not to like him.
क्रिस्टी के अनुसार, ऐसे व्यक्ति को पूरी तरह बुरा, खतरनाक और पीड़ित के लिए अजनबी के रूप में प्रस्तुत किया जाना चाहिए, ताकि समाज के लिए उसे नापसंद करना आसान हो।
- When the offender is a familiar person with a “good background story”, the ‘ideal’ dynamic breaks down.
जब अपराधी एक परिचित व्यक्ति हो और उसकी “अच्छी सामाजिक पृष्ठभूमि” हो, तो यह ‘आदर्श’ समीकरण टूट जाता है।
- In the case of Tejpal, his social status and his image as a liberal intellectual complicated this stereotype of the ‘ideal offender’.
तेजपाल के मामले में उनकी सामाजिक स्थिति और उदारवादी बुद्धिजीवी की छवि ने ‘आदर्श अपराधी’ की इस रूढ़ धारणा को जटिल बना दिया।
- As per Christie’s argument, when there is no ‘ideal offender’ to hate, it becomes hard to perceive an ‘ideal victim’ to sympathise with.
क्रिस्टी के तर्क के अनुसार, जब घृणा करने के लिए कोई ‘आदर्श अपराधी’ मौजूद नहीं होता, तो सहानुभूति रखने के लिए किसी ‘आदर्श पीड़ित’ को देख पाना भी कठिन हो जाता है।

Hierarchy of victimisation

पीड़ितकरण का पदानुक्रम

- This narrow perception of an ‘ideal victim’ creates a hierarchy of victimisation.
‘आदर्श पीड़ित’ की यह संकीर्ण धारणा पीड़ितकरण का एक पदानुक्रम निर्मित करती है।
- Those who are thought of as “undeserving” are even perceived as contributing to the situation and receive less sympathy or none at all.
जिन लोगों को “सहानुभूति के अयोग्य” माना जाता है, उन्हें कभी-कभी स्थिति में योगदान देने वाला भी समझा जाता है और उन्हें कम या बिल्कुल भी सहानुभूति नहीं मिलती।
- For instance, in the 1979 Mathura custodial rape case of a teenager, the Sessions Court had relied on the survivor’s previous sexual experience to reason that she had likely consented, and described her as “habituated to sexual intercourse”.
उदाहरण के लिए, 1979 के मथुरा हिरासत में बलात्कार मामले में, सेशन कोर्ट ने जीवित बची पीड़िता के पूर्व यौन अनुभव पर भरोसा करते हुए यह तर्क दिया था कि उसने संभवतः सहमति दी थी और उसे “यौन संबंधों की अभ्यस्त” बताया था।
- The Supreme Court, while acquitting the accused policemen, noted the absence of any alarm or resistance from the survivor or injuries on her body.
सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने आरोपी पुलिसकर्मियों को बरी करते हुए पीड़िता की ओर से किसी प्रकार की घबराहट या प्रतिरोध की अनुपस्थिति तथा उसके शरीर पर चोटों के अभाव का उल्लेख किया था।
- Similarly, in the gang-rape case of social worker Bhanwari Devi (1992) that became a catalyst for the formulation of the Vishakha guidelines and later, the enactment of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, the Jaipur District and Sessions Court in 1995 acquitted the accused of gang rape.
इसी प्रकार, सामाजिक कार्यकर्ता भंवरी देवी के 1992 के सामूहिक बलात्कार मामले में, जो विशाखा दिशानिर्देशों

के निर्माण और बाद में कार्यस्थल पर महिलाओं का यौन उत्पीड़न (रोकथाम, निषेध और निवारण) अधिनियम, 2013 के निर्माण का आधार बना, जयपुर जिला एवं सत्र न्यायालय ने 1995 में सामूहिक बलात्कार के आरोपियों को बरी कर दिया था।

- The court reasoned that it was unlikely that upper caste men would “pollute” themselves by having sexual relations with a Dalit woman.
अदालत ने यह तर्क दिया कि यह संभावना कम थी कि उच्च जाति के पुरुष किसी दलित महिला के साथ यौन संबंध बनाकर स्वयं को “अपवित्र” करेंगे।
- In short, in the eyes of the court, Devi's caste status made her an unlikely ‘ideal victim’.
संक्षेप में, अदालत की दृष्टि में देवी की जातिगत स्थिति ने उन्हें एक संभावित ‘आदर्श पीड़िता’ नहीं माना।
- In 2017, in an interim order, a Punjab and Haryana High Court division bench suspended the sentences and granted bail to three former Jindal Global Law School students convicted of gang-raping and blackmailing a classmate.
2017 में, एक अंतरिम आदेश के माध्यम से पंजाब और हरियाणा हाई कोर्ट की डिवीजन बेंच ने एक सहपाठी के साथ सामूहिक बलात्कार और उसे ब्लैकमेल करने के दोषी जिंदल ग्लोबल लॉ स्कूल के तीन पूर्व छात्रों की सजा निलंबित कर दी और उन्हें जमानत दे दी।
- It described the survivor's behaviour as having a “perverse streak”.
अदालत ने पीड़िता के व्यवहार में “विकृत प्रवृत्ति” होने की बात कही।
- The court said, “...We are conscious of the fact that allegations of the victim regarding her being threatened into submission and blackmail lend sufficient diabolism to the offence, but a careful examination of her statement again offers an alternate conclusion of misadventure stemming from a promiscuous attitude and a voyeuristic mind.”
अदालत ने कहा, “...हम इस तथ्य से अवगत हैं कि पीड़िता द्वारा उसे धमकाकर अधीन करने और ब्लैकमेल करने के लगाए गए आरोप इस अपराध को पर्याप्त दुष्टता प्रदान करते हैं, लेकिन उसके बयान की सावधानीपूर्वक जाँच करने पर एक वैकल्पिक निष्कर्ष सामने आता है कि यह घटना कामुक/उच्छृंखल रवैये और दृश्यरतिक मानसिकता से उत्पन्न दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण घटना थी।”
- This remark placed the survivor's sexual behaviour at the centre of the court's assessment, effectively questioning her status as an ‘ideal victim’.
इस टिप्पणी ने पीड़िता के यौन व्यवहार को अदालत के आकलन के केंद्र में ला दिया और प्रभावी रूप से एक ‘आदर्श पीड़िता’ के रूप में उसकी स्थिति पर प्रश्न उठाया।
- These rulings have demanded a ‘performance’ of trauma from survivors.
इन फैसलों ने पीड़िताओं से आघात की एक निश्चित ‘प्रस्तुति’ की अपेक्षा की है।
- Any digression from that expected behaviour has cast doubts on the survivors' credibility and status as legitimate.
अपेक्षित व्यवहार से किसी भी प्रकार का विचलन पीड़िताओं की विश्वसनीयता और वैध पीड़ित के रूप में उनकी स्थिति पर संदेह उत्पन्न करता रहा है।
- The rulings reflect Christie's theory that victimhood is not an objective state, but a deeply gendered moral status that can be granted or denied by society.
ये फैसले क्रिस्टी के इस सिद्धांत को प्रतिबिंबित करते हैं कि पीड़ित होना कोई वस्तुनिष्ठ स्थिति नहीं, बल्कि एक गहराई से लैंगिक नैतिक स्थिति है, जिसे समाज प्रदान भी कर सकता है और अस्वीकार भी कर सकता है।

The Tejpal case तेजपाल मामला

- In 2021, in the Tejpal case, the Goa Sessions Court noted that there were several discrepancies in the survivor's versions.
2021 में तेजपाल मामले में गोवा सेशन कोर्ट ने उल्लेख किया कि पीड़िता के बयानों में कई विसंगतियाँ थीं।
- It also said that while the victim had claimed to be in shock and trauma after exiting the lift on November 7, 2013, the CCTV footage showed that she was composed and smiling.

इसने यह भी कहा कि यद्यपि पीड़िता ने दावा किया था कि 7 नवंबर 2013 को लिफ्ट से बाहर निकलने के बाद वह सड़मे और आघात में थी, लेकिन CCTV फुटेज में वह शांत और मुस्कुराती हुई दिखाई दे रही थी।

- The High Court criticised the Sessions Court for focusing on the complainant's conduct, reactions, and personal background instead of the evidence on record. हाई कोर्ट ने सेशंस कोर्ट की आलोचना करते हुए कहा कि उसने रिकॉर्ड पर उपलब्ध साक्ष्यों के बजाय शिकायतकर्ता के व्यवहार, प्रतिक्रियाओं और व्यक्तिगत पृष्ठभूमि पर ध्यान केंद्रित किया।
- It also noted that a survivor has already faced trauma and might feel too ashamed, nervous, or confused to respond clearly when questioned repeatedly in an unfamiliar environment. इसने यह भी कहा कि पीड़िता पहले ही आघात का सामना कर चुकी होती है और अपरिचित वातावरण में बार-बार पूछताछ किए जाने पर वह इतनी शर्मिंदा, घबराई हुई या भ्रमित हो सकती है कि स्पष्ट रूप से जवाब न दे सके।
- The Supreme Court has questioned this idea in some of its judgments. सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने अपने कुछ फैसलों में इस अवधारणा पर सवाल उठाया है।
- In 2025, former Chief Justice B.R. Gavai had apologised on behalf of the judiciary for the Supreme Court judgment in the Mathura case, calling it a "moment of institutional embarrassment".

2025 में, पूर्व मुख्य न्यायाधीश बी.आर. गवाई ने मथुरा मामले में सुप्रीम कोर्ट के फैसले के लिए न्यायपालिका की ओर से माफी माँगी और इसे "संस्थागत शर्मिंदगी का क्षण" बताया।

- Recently, on August 3, the Supreme Court issued a report recommending greater gender sensitivity in judicial writing. हाल ही में, 3 अगस्त को सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने न्यायिक लेखन में अधिक लैंगिक संवेदनशीलता की सिफारिश करते हुए एक रिपोर्ट जारी की।
- It cautioned judges against drawing adverse conclusions from delayed reporting, lack of physical injuries, inconsistencies in testimony or a survivor's demeanour, noting that trauma affects people differently. इसने न्यायाधीशों को देरी से रिपोर्ट करने, शारीरिक चोटों के अभाव, गवाही में विसंगतियाँ या पीड़िता के व्यवहार से प्रतिकूल निष्कर्ष निकालने के प्रति सावधान किया और कहा कि आघात अलग-अलग लोगों को अलग-अलग तरीके से प्रभावित करता है।



Why is the Supreme Court examining polygamy again?

What are the petitioners seeking? What has the court ruled on polygamy before?

SSJ: Society
Ziya Us Salam

The story so far:

The Muslim men's supposed right to have multiple wives is once again before the Supreme Court. Following a petition challenging the constitutional status of polygamy, the court sought the Centre's response last week. It also asked the Centre to consider taking suitable legislative steps to abolish the practice for all citizens, irrespective of religion. The petition was filed by five activists, who sought to have polygamy treated as a criminal offence under Section 82 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

Incidentally, Section 82 applies to non-Muslims and provides for a punishment of up to seven years for marrying another person during the subsistence of an existing marriage. The petitioners also sought annulment of the exemptions granted under Muslim Personal Law.

What are the petitioners seeking?

The five petitioners challenged the constitutional validity of Section 2 of the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937, which permits polygamy. They claimed that the said Act is against the Constitution's Articles 14, 15, and 16, which provide equality to all citizens irrespective of their religion or gender. They also requested the court to direct the Union government to take steps towards the codification of Muslim Personal Law to ensure that its provisions run parallel to Constitutional provisions of gender equality.

They sought compulsory registration of Muslim marriages and divorces with State authorities to prevent any second or subsequent marriage of a man with a subsisting marriage. In case this was flouted, the first wife and children should have the first and lasting right to the matrimonial home.

The petitioners also sought the court to direct the Law Commission of India or the

Union government to prepare a draft for the codification of Muslim Personal Law that aligns marriage, divorce, and succession with constitutional principles of gender equality. Incidentally, two of the activists had reached out to the Supreme Court to prohibit instant triple talaq in the famous Shayara Bano and others case. Then too, they argued that the practice of triple talaq violates fundamental rights of women. Following their petition, the apex court had invalidated instant triple talaq in August 2017. The court had then refrained from giving its verdict on polygamy and nikah halala, which too had been sought. Following the verdict, the Centre framed the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act in 2019. The Act made instant triple talaq a punishable offence.

What has the court ruled before?

In the much-talked-about Sarla Mudgal case of 1995, the Supreme Court prohibited a Hindu man with a subsisting

marriage from converting to Islam purely for the purpose of marrying for the second time. The court noted, "the second marriage of a Hindu husband after converting to Islam without having dissolved the first marriage is void."

The court ruled on similar lines in the *Lily Thomas v. Union of India* case in 2000. Here the Supreme Court reiterated its stand of the Sarla Mudgal case, holding that a second marriage contracted after a feigned conversion to Islam was illegal and punishable under Section 494 of the Indian Penal Code.

Does Islam sanction polygamy?

Contrary to the contention that the Quran encourages polygamy, the book encourages monogamy. It permits a man to have up to four wives in special circumstances, such as marrying a widow or an orphan. It, however, makes it incumbent upon him to grant them complete equality. This being a practical impossibility, it asks men to desist from multiple marriages.

Says verse 3 of Surah Nisa, "If you fear you might fail to give orphan women their due rights if you were to marry them, then marry other women of your choice – two, three, or four. But if you are afraid you will fail to maintain justice, then content yourselves with one." Pertinently, this verse was revealed at a time when many men used to have multiple spouses, their numbers often running into three figures.

THE GIST

The Supreme Court has sought the Centre's response to a petition challenging polygamy under Muslim Personal Law and asked it to consider legislative steps to abolish the practice for all citizens, irrespective of religion.

The petitioners have challenged the constitutional validity of the law permitting polygamy, seeking its criminalisation, compulsory registration of Muslim marriages and divorces, and codification of Muslim Personal Law in line with gender equality.

20A8. Why is the Supreme Court examining polygamy again? — सर्वोच्च न्यायालय बहुविवाह की फिर से जाँच क्यों कर रहा है?

- The Muslim men's supposed right to have multiple wives is once again before the Supreme Court.
सर्वोच्च न्यायालय बहुविवाह की फिर से जाँच क्यों कर रहा है? मुस्लिम पुरुषों को एक से अधिक पत्नियाँ रखने के कथित अधिकार का मुद्दा एक बार फिर सर्वोच्च न्यायालय के समक्ष है।
- Following a petition challenging the constitutional status of polygamy, the court sought the Centre's response last week.
बहुविवाह की संवैधानिक वैधता को चुनौती देने वाली याचिका के बाद न्यायालय ने पिछले सप्ताह केंद्र सरकार से उसका पक्ष पूछा।
- It also asked the Centre to consider taking suitable legislative steps to abolish the practice for all citizens, irrespective of religion.
न्यायालय ने केंद्र से यह भी विचार करने को कहा कि धर्म से परे सभी नागरिकों के लिए इस प्रथा को समाप्त करने हेतु उपयुक्त विधायी कदम उठाए जाएँ।
- The petition was filed by five activists, who sought to have polygamy treated as a criminal offence under Section 82 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.
यह याचिका पाँच कार्यकर्ताओं द्वारा दायर की गई थी, जिन्होंने बहुविवाह को भारतीय न्याय संहिता की धारा 82 के तहत आपराधिक अपराध माना जाने की मांग की।
- Incidentally, Section 82 applies to non-Muslims and provides for a punishment of up to seven years for marrying another person during the subsistence of an existing marriage.
उल्लेखनीय है कि धारा 82 गैर-मुसलमानों पर लागू होती है और मौजूदा विवाह के कायम रहते किसी अन्य व्यक्ति से विवाह करने के लिए अधिकतम सात वर्ष तक के कारावास का प्रावधान करती है।
- The petitioners also sought annulment of the exemptions granted under Muslim Personal Law.
याचिकाकर्ताओं ने मुस्लिम पर्सनल लॉ के तहत दिए गए अपवादों को समाप्त करने की भी मांग की।

What are the petitioners seeking? — याचिकाकर्ता क्या चाहते हैं?

- The five petitioners challenged the constitutional validity of Section 2 of the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937, which permits polygamy.
पाँच याचिकाकर्ताओं ने मुस्लिम पर्सनल लॉ (शरीयत) एप्लीकेशन अधिनियम, 1937 की धारा 2 की संवैधानिक वैधता को चुनौती दी, जो बहुविवाह की अनुमति देती है।

- They claimed that the said Act is against the Constitution's Articles 14, 15, and 16, which provide equality to all citizens irrespective of their religion or gender.
उन्होंने दावा किया कि उक्त अधिनियम संविधान के अनुच्छेद 14, 15 और 16 के विरुद्ध है, जो धर्म या लिंग की परवाह किए बिना सभी नागरिकों को समानता प्रदान करते हैं।
- They also requested the court to direct the Union government to take steps towards the codification of Muslim Personal Law to ensure that its provisions run parallel to Constitutional provisions of gender equality.
उन्होंने न्यायालय से केंद्र सरकार को मुस्लिम पर्सनल लॉ के संहिताकरण की दिशा में कदम उठाने का निर्देश देने की भी मांग की, ताकि इसके प्रावधान लैंगिक समानता से संबंधित संवैधानिक प्रावधानों के अनुरूप हों।
- They sought compulsory registration of Muslim marriages and divorces with State authorities to prevent any second or subsequent marriage of a man with a subsisting marriage.
उन्होंने मुस्लिम विवाहों और तलाकों का राज्य प्राधिकारियों के पास अनिवार्य पंजीकरण करने की मांग की, ताकि किसी पुरुष द्वारा मौजूदा विवाह के रहते दूसरा या बाद का विवाह करने को रोका जा सके।
- In case this was flouted, the first wife and children should have the first and lasting right to the matrimonial home.
इस प्रावधान का उल्लंघन होने की स्थिति में पहली पत्नी और बच्चों को वैवाहिक घर पर प्राथमिक और स्थायी अधिकार दिया जाना चाहिए।
- The petitioners also sought the court to direct the Law Commission of India or the Union government to prepare a draft for the codification of Muslim Personal Law that aligns marriage, divorce, and succession with constitutional principles of gender equality.
याचिकाकर्ताओं ने न्यायालय से विधि आयोग या केंद्र सरकार को मुस्लिम पर्सनल लॉ के संहिताकरण का एक मसौदा तैयार करने का निर्देश देने की भी मांग की, जो विवाह, तलाक और उत्तराधिकार को लैंगिक समानता के संवैधानिक सिद्धांतों के अनुरूप बनाए।
- Incidentally, two of the activists had reached out to the Supreme Court to prohibit instant triple talaq in the famous Shayara Bano and others case.
उल्लेखनीय है कि इन कार्यकर्ताओं में से दो कार्यकर्ताओं ने प्रसिद्ध शायरा बानो एवं अन्य मामले में तत्काल तीन तलाक पर प्रतिबंध लगाने के लिए सर्वोच्च न्यायालय का रुख किया था।
- Then too, they argued that the practice of triple talaq violates fundamental rights of women.
उस समय भी उन्होंने तर्क दिया था कि तीन तलाक की प्रथा महिलाओं के मौलिक अधिकारों का उल्लंघन करती है।
- Following their petition, the apex court had invalidated instant triple talaq in August 2017.
उनकी याचिका के बाद सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने अगस्त 2017 में तत्काल तीन तलाक को अमान्य घोषित कर दिया था।
- The court had then refrained from giving its verdict on polygamy and nikah halala, which too had been sought.
हालाँकि, उस समय न्यायालय ने बहुविवाह और निकाह हलाला पर फैसला देने से परहेज किया था, जबकि याचिका में इन पर भी निर्णय की मांग की गई थी।
- Following the verdict, the Centre framed the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act in 2019.
इस फैसले के बाद केंद्र सरकार ने मुस्लिम महिला (विवाह पर अधिकारों का संरक्षण) अधिनियम, 2019 बनाया।
- The Act made instant triple talaq a punishable offence.
इस अधिनियम ने तत्काल तीन तलाक को दंडनीय अपराध बना दिया।

What has the court ruled before? — न्यायालय पहले क्या फैसला दे चुका है?

- In the much-talked-about **Sarla Mudgal case of 1995**, the Supreme Court prohibited a Hindu man with a subsisting marriage from converting to Islam purely for the purpose of marrying for the second time.

बहुचर्चित सरला मुद्गल मामले, 1995 में सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने ऐसे हिंदू पुरुष, जिसका विवाह अभी कायम है, को केवल दूसरी शादी करने के उद्देश्य से इस्लाम धर्म अपनाने से रोक दिया था।

- The court noted, “the second marriage of a Hindu husband after converting to Islam without having dissolved the first marriage is void.”

न्यायालय ने कहा कि “पहली शादी को समाप्त किए बिना इस्लाम धर्म अपनाने के बाद हिंदू पति द्वारा किया गया दूसरा विवाह शून्य है।”

- The court ruled on similar lines in the **Lily Thomas v. Union of India** case in 2000. न्यायालय ने लिली थॉमस बनाम भारत संघ मामले, 2000 में भी इसी प्रकार का फैसला दिया।
- Here the Supreme Court reiterated its stand of the Sarla Mudgal case, holding that a second marriage contracted after a feigned conversion to Islam was illegal and punishable under Section 494 of the Indian Penal Code.

इस मामले में सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने सरला मुद्गल मामले में अपने रुख को दोहराते हुए कहा कि केवल दूसरी शादी करने के उद्देश्य से इस्लाम में किया गया दिखावटी धर्मांतरण करने के बाद किया गया दूसरा विवाह अवैध है और भारतीय दंड संहिता की धारा 494 के तहत दंडनीय है।

Does Islam sanction polygamy? — क्या इस्लाम बहुविवाह को मान्यता देता है?

- Contrary to the contention that the Quran encourages polygamy, the book encourages monogamy.
इस दावे के विपरीत कि कुरान बहुविवाह को प्रोत्साहित करता है, कुरान एकविवाह को प्रोत्साहित करता है।
- It permits a man to have up to four wives in special circumstances, such as marrying a widow or an orphan.
यह विशेष परिस्थितियों में, जैसे विधवा या अनाथ महिला से विवाह, किसी पुरुष को अधिकतम चार पत्नियाँ रखने की अनुमति देता है।
- It, however, makes it incumbent upon him to grant them complete equality.
हालाँकि, इसमें पुरुष के लिए सभी पत्नियों को पूर्ण समानता प्रदान करना अनिवार्य किया गया है।
- This being a practical impossibility, it asks men to desist from multiple marriages.
व्यावहारिक रूप से यह अत्यंत कठिन होने के कारण, इसमें पुरुषों से एक से अधिक विवाह करने से परहेज करने को कहा गया है।
- Says verse 3 of Surah Nisa, “If you fear you might fail to give orphan women their due rights if you were to marry them, then marry other women of your choice — two, three, or four.
सूरह निसा की आयत 3 में कहा गया है, “यदि तुम्हें भय हो कि अनाथ महिलाओं से विवाह करने पर तुम उनके अधिकारों के साथ न्याय नहीं कर पाओगे, तो अपनी पसंद की अन्य महिलाओं से विवाह करो—दो, तीन या चार।”
- But if you are afraid you will fail to maintain justice, then content yourselves with one.
“लेकिन यदि तुम्हें भय हो कि तुम न्याय कायम नहीं रख पाओगे, तो केवल एक से संतुष्ट रहो।”
- Pertinently, this verse was revealed at a time when many men used to have multiple spouses, their numbers often running into three figures.
महत्वपूर्ण रूप से, यह आयत उस समय प्रकट हुई थी जब अनेक पुरुषों की एक से अधिक पत्नियाँ होती थीं और उनकी संख्या अक्सर सैकड़ों तक पहुँच जाती थी।

Punjab's decade-long journey towards a formal sacrilege law

Punjab has made repeated attempts to enact a stringent sacrilege law, with earlier Bills facing constitutional objections and the latest State law now under challenge; the 2026 law raises questions of equality, proportionality, federal legislative competence and secularism

ESS / Society
Prathmesh Kher

Punjab's journey towards a codified sacrilege law illustrates how these pressures play out at the State level. In 2016, the then Akali Dal-BJP government passed a bill imposing life imprisonment for sacrilege committed specifically against the Guru Granth Sahib. The Centre returned it, objecting that a law protecting only one religion's scripture could not sit easily with India's secular Constitution. In 2018, the succeeding Congress government tried again, this time extending the same life sentence to the Guru Granth Sahib, the Bhagavad Gita, the Quran, and the Bible through a new Section 295AA of the Penal Code. That Bill, too, was returned without Presidential assent.

A further attempt followed in July 2025, when the Aam Aadmi Party government introduced the Punjab Prevention of Offences Against Holy Scripture(s) Bill, again covering all four texts, with sentences ranging from ten years to life. That Bill was sent to a select committee and has since been effectively shelved. Instead, the State government found a narrower route: rather than amending the central Penal Code, it amended an existing State law concerned specifically with the ceremonial custody of the Guru Granth Sahib. Because this technically falls within the State's own legislative competence, the government argued that it requires no Presidential assent, and the Governor's signature was enough to bring it into force in April 2026.

The manoeuvre has not gone unchallenged. A petition before the Punjab and Haryana High Court argues that a life sentence is a matter of criminal law, which sits on the Concurrent List and therefore cannot simply bypass central scrutiny by dressing itself up as an amendment to a ceremonial statute. Critics have also pointed out that, in covering only the Sikh scripture, the current law revives precisely the objection that sank the 2016 attempt: a State cannot credibly claim to be protecting "communal harmony" while legislating in favour of one faith's sentiments and not another's. Whichever way the litigation goes, the sequence of events across a decade shows a State legislature persistently trying, by one route or another, to entrench a sacrilege code of ever-increasing severity, undeterred by repeated constitutional rebuffs.

The constitutional contradiction
Secularism was declared part of the Constitution's unamendable "basic structure" in *S.R. Bommai versus Union of India*, precisely so that the State could neither favour a religion nor punish disrespect towards one. Article 25 guarantees not just the right to practise religion but, implicitly, the space for social reformers, sceptics and atheists to challenge religious practice, since the same article subjects the right to religious freedom to "public order, morality and health" and permits the State to legislate for social welfare and reform even where this cuts against religious custom. Article 19(1)(a) guarantees free speech in the same breath that Article 19(2) permits "reasonable restrictions" in the interests



Faith and law: A Sikh priest carries Sri Guru Granth Sahib, in Amritsar on July 24, ANI

of public order, decency or morality. A cartoon, a novel, a documentary, a stray remark on social media: all can be made to fit the language of "insult" without any accompanying threat of actual disorder, and Indian criminal procedure allows a First Information Report to be lodged, and an accused to be arrested, well before any court examines whether the constitutionally required "deliberate and malicious intent" was in fact present. The chilling effect happens at the point of complaint, not at the point of conviction.

The Supreme Court has, in a neighbouring context, already endorsed exactly this objection. In *Shreya Singhal versus Union of India* in 2015, it struck down Section 66A of the Information Technology Act in its entirety, holding that criminalising online messages using undefined terms such as "offensive" and "menacing" left the provision impermissibly vague, invited arbitrary enforcement, and chilled protected speech in violation of Article 19(1)(a). Section 295A and its BNS successor rest on terms no more precise, "outrage," "insult," "religious feelings", policed after the fact by whichever officer happens to receive the complaint, yet the court has never brought the *Shreya Singhal* reasoning to bear on the provision whose own constitutionality it settled, without revisiting it since *Ramji Lal Modi* almost sixty years earlier. The inconsistency reads as reluctance rather than principle: it is easier to strike down a recent statute governing an unfamiliar medium than to unsettle an eighty-year-old precedent with a long and emotionally fraught

history behind it.

The Punjab context

Set against Punjab's law specifically, the contradiction sharpens into several distinct legal problems. The first concerns equality. By protecting only the Guru Granth Sahib and no other scripture, the 2026 Act revives the very objection that sank the 2016 attempt: a provision drawing a line between one community's sacred text and every other's needs an "intelligible differentia" bearing a "rational nexus" to its stated purpose of communal harmony, the test the Supreme Court set out in *State of West Bengal versus Anwar Ali Sarkar*, and it is difficult to see how singling out one faith serves a purpose framed in terms of all of them.

This is not merely a doctrinal prediction. In May 2026, the Anglican Church of India, through its Amritsar bishop, petitioned the Punjab and Haryana High Court arguing that the Act creates a religion-specific penal regime that violates the constitutional guarantee of equality before law, and sought both the quashing of the Act and a stay on its implementation.

The Bench's response points to an underappreciated wrinkle in the equality argument itself: it reportedly questioned how a church whose own scripture the Act does not touch could claim to be aggrieved by it at all, a question that inadvertently demonstrates the very defect being alleged, since a law can discriminate in structure while leaving those it excludes without the conventional standing to challenge it. The

petition remains pending.

The second is a matter of proportionality. The Act's mandatory minimum sentence, which under its most serious provisions can extend to life imprisonment and leaves no room for a judge to calibrate punishment to the facts of a given case, sits awkwardly beside *Mithu versus State of Punjab*, in which the Supreme Court struck down a different mandatory sentencing provision precisely because it stripped courts of discretion and so failed the test of a "just, fair and reasonable" procedure that *Maneka Gandhi versus Union of India* had read into Article 21; that the earlier case also happened to arise out of Punjab makes the parallel almost too neat. The third goes to federal competence. Criminal law sits on the Concurrent List, and Article 254 provides that a State law repugnant to a central enactment on the same subject, such as the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita's own provisions on sacrilege and on outraging religious feeling, is void to that extent unless it has received Presidential assent under Article 254(2). Punjab avoided that requirement in 2026 by amending a pre-existing, ostensibly ceremonial state statute rather than the BNS directly, an approach now under challenge in the Punjab and Haryana High Court on precisely the ground that a life sentence for the same underlying wrong cannot dodge central scrutiny merely by changing which statute book it sits in. Each of these is a distinct constitutional infirmity, quite apart from the broader secularism argument above, and Punjab's law arguably carries all three at once. (Second in a three-part series)

20A8. Punjab's decade-long journey towards a formal sacrilege law

औपचारिक ईशनिंदा कानून की दिशा में पंजाब की एक दशक लंबी यात्रा

- Punjab's journey towards a codified sacrilege law illustrates how these pressures play out at the State level.
संहिताबद्ध ईशनिंदा कानून की दिशा में पंजाब की यात्रा यह दर्शाती है कि ये दबाव राज्य स्तर पर किस प्रकार सामने आते हैं।
- In 2016, the then Akali Dal-BJP government passed a bill imposing life imprisonment for sacrilege committed specifically against the Guru Granth Sahib.

2016 में, तत्कालीन अकाली दल-भाजपा सरकार ने विशेष रूप से गुरु ग्रंथ साहिब के प्रति ईशनिंदा करने पर आजीवन कारावास का प्रावधान करने वाला विधेयक पारित किया।

- The Centre returned it, objecting that a law protecting only one religion's scripture could not sit easily with India's secular Constitution.

केंद्र सरकार ने इसे वापस कर दिया और आपत्ति जताई कि केवल एक धर्म के धर्मग्रंथ की रक्षा करने वाला कानून भारत के धर्मनिरपेक्ष संविधान के साथ सहज रूप से सामंजस्य नहीं बैठा सकता।

- In 2018, the succeeding Congress government tried again, this time extending the same life sentence to the Guru Granth Sahib, the Bhagavad Gita, the Quran, and the Bible through a new Section 295AA of the Penal Code.

2018 में, इसके बाद आई कांग्रेस सरकार ने फिर प्रयास किया, इस बार दंड संहिता की नई धारा 295AA के माध्यम से गुरु ग्रंथ साहिब, भगवद्गीता, कुरान और बाइबिल—चारों धर्मग्रंथों के प्रति ईशनिंदा के लिए समान आजीवन कारावास का प्रावधान किया।

- That Bill, too, was returned without Presidential assent. वह विधेयक भी राष्ट्रपति की स्वीकृति के बिना वापस कर दिया गया।
- A further attempt followed in July 2025, when the Aam Aadmi Party government introduced the Punjab Prevention of Offences Against Holy Scripture(s) Bill, again covering all four texts, with sentences ranging from ten years to life.

इसके बाद जुलाई 2025 में एक और प्रयास किया गया, जब आम आदमी पार्टी सरकार ने Punjab

Prevention of Offences Against Holy Scripture(s) Bill पेश किया, जिसमें फिर से इन चारों धर्मग्रंथों को शामिल किया गया और 10 वर्ष से लेकर आजीवन कारावास तक की सजा का प्रावधान था।

- That Bill was sent to a select committee and has since been effectively shelved. उस विधेयक को चयन समिति (Select Committee) के पास भेज दिया गया और तब से उसे प्रभावी रूप से ठंडे बस्ते में डाल दिया गया है।
- Instead, the State government found a narrower route: rather than amending the central Penal Code, it amended an existing State law concerned specifically with the ceremonial custody of the Guru Granth Sahib. इसके बजाय, राज्य सरकार ने एक संकीर्ण वैकल्पिक मार्ग अपनाया: केंद्रीय दंड संहिता में संशोधन करने के बजाय उसने एक मौजूदा राज्य कानून में संशोधन किया, जो विशेष रूप से गुरु ग्रंथ साहिब की औपचारिक अभिरक्षा से संबंधित था।

Because this technically falls within the State's own legislative competence, the government argued that it requires no Presidential assent, and the Governor's signature was enough to bring it into force in April 2026.

सरकार ने तर्क दिया कि तकनीकी रूप से यह विषय राज्य की अपनी विधायी क्षमता के अंतर्गत आता है, इसलिए इसके लिए राष्ट्रपति की स्वीकृति आवश्यक नहीं है और राज्यपाल के हस्ताक्षर इसे अप्रैल 2026 में लागू करने के लिए पर्याप्त थे।

- The manoeuvre has not gone unchallenged. इस कानूनी उपाय को चुनौती भी दी गई है।
- A petition before the Punjab and Haryana High Court argues that a life sentence is a matter of criminal law, which sits on the Concurrent List and therefore cannot simply bypass central scrutiny by dressing itself up as an amendment to a ceremonial statute.

पंजाब और हरियाणा हाई कोर्ट के समक्ष दायर एक याचिका में तर्क दिया गया है कि आजीवन कारावास

आपराधिक कानून का विषय है, जो समवर्ती सूची (Concurrent List) में आता है; इसलिए इसे केवल एक औपचारिक कानून में संशोधन का रूप देकर केंद्र की समीक्षा को दरकिनार नहीं किया जा सकता।

- Critics have also pointed out that, in covering only the Sikh scripture, the current law revives precisely the objection that sank the 2016 attempt: a State cannot credibly claim to be protecting "communal harmony" while legislating in favour of one faith's sentiments and not another's.

आलोचकों ने यह भी इंगित किया है कि केवल सिख धर्मग्रंथ को शामिल करने के कारण वर्तमान कानून ठीक



उसी आपत्ति को फिर से जन्म देता है जिसने 2016 के प्रयास को विफल किया था: कोई राज्य एक धर्म की भावनाओं के पक्ष में कानून बनाकर और दूसरे धर्म की भावनाओं को समान संरक्षण न देकर विश्वसनीय रूप से “सांप्रदायिक सद्भाव” की रक्षा का दावा नहीं कर सकता।

- Whichever way the litigation goes, the sequence of events across a decade shows a State legislature persistently trying, by one route or another, to entrench a sacrilege code of ever-increasing severity, undeterred by repeated constitutional rebuffs.
मुकदमेबाजी का परिणाम चाहे जो हो, पिछले एक दशक की घटनाओं का क्रम दर्शाता है कि राज्य विधानमंडल बार-बार संवैधानिक अस्वीकृतियों के बावजूद किसी न किसी मार्ग से लगातार बढ़ती कठोरता वाले ईशनिंदा कानून को स्थापित करने का प्रयास करता रहा है।

The constitutional contradiction संवैधानिक विरोधाभास

- Secularism was declared part of the Constitution’s unamendable “basic structure” in S.R. Bommai versus Union of India, precisely so that the State could neither favour a religion nor punish disrespect towards one.
S.R. Bommai बनाम Union of India मामले में धर्मनिरपेक्षता को संविधान की अपरिवर्तनीय “मूल संरचना (Basic Structure)” का हिस्सा घोषित किया गया था, ताकि राज्य न तो किसी धर्म का पक्ष ले सके और न ही किसी एक धर्म के प्रति अनादर के लिए दंड दे सके।
- Article 25 guarantees not just the right to practise religion but, implicitly, the space for social reformers, sceptics and atheists to challenge religious practise, since the same article subjects the right to religious freedom to “public order, morality and health” and permits the State to legislate for social welfare and reform even where this cuts against religious custom.
अनुच्छेद 25 केवल धर्म का पालन करने के अधिकार की गारंटी नहीं देता, बल्कि अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से सामाजिक सुधारकों, संशयवादियों और नास्तिकों को धार्मिक प्रथाओं को चुनौती देने की गुंजाइश भी देता है, क्योंकि यही अनुच्छेद धार्मिक स्वतंत्रता के अधिकार को “लोक व्यवस्था, नैतिकता और स्वास्थ्य” के अधीन करता है तथा राज्य को सामाजिक कल्याण और सुधार के लिए कानून बनाने की अनुमति देता है, भले ही वह धार्मिक प्रथा के विरुद्ध क्यों न हो।
- Article 19(1)(a) guarantees free speech in the same breath that Article 19(2) permits “reasonable restrictions” in the interests of public order, decency or morality.
अनुच्छेद 19(1)(a) अभिव्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता की गारंटी देता है, जबकि **अनुच्छेद 19(2)** लोक व्यवस्था, शिष्टता या नैतिकता के हित में “युक्तिसंगत प्रतिबंधों” की अनुमति देता है।
- A cartoon, a novel, a documentary, a stray remark on social media: all can be made to fit the language of “insult” without any accompanying threat of actual disorder, and Indian criminal procedure allows a First Information Report to be lodged, and an accused to be arrested, well before any court examines whether the constitutionally required “deliberate and malicious intent” was in fact present.
एक कार्टून, उपन्यास, वृत्तचित्र या सोशल मीडिया पर की गई कोई आकस्मिक टिप्पणी—इन सभी को वास्तविक अशांति की किसी साथ-साथ मौजूद धमकी के बिना भी “अपमान” की भाषा के अंतर्गत लाया जा सकता है; और भारतीय आपराधिक प्रक्रिया के तहत किसी अदालत द्वारा यह जाँच किए जाने से काफी पहले ही प्रथम सूचना रिपोर्ट (FIR) दर्ज की जा सकती है और आरोपी को गिरफ्तार किया जा सकता है कि संवैधानिक रूप से आवश्यक “जानबूझकर और दुर्भावनापूर्ण आशय” वास्तव में मौजूद था या नहीं।
- The chilling effect happens at the point of complaint, not at the point of conviction.
अभिव्यक्ति पर भय पैदा करने वाला प्रभाव दोषसिद्धि के समय नहीं, बल्कि शिकायत दर्ज होने के समय ही उत्पन्न हो जाता है।
- The Supreme Court has, in a neighbouring context, already endorsed exactly this objection.
सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने एक संबंधित संदर्भ में पहले ही इसी आपत्ति को स्वीकार किया है।

- In *Shreya Singhal versus Union of India* in 2015, it struck down Section 66A of the Information Technology Act in its entirety, holding that criminalising online messages using undefined terms such as “offensive” and “menacing” left the provision impermissibly vague, invited arbitrary enforcement, and chilled protected speech in violation of Article 19(1)(a).
2015 में Shreya Singhal बनाम Union of India मामले में सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी अधिनियम की धारा 66A को पूरी तरह निरस्त कर दिया और कहा कि “offensive” और “menacing” जैसे अपरिभाषित शब्दों के आधार पर ऑनलाइन संदेशों को अपराध बनाना प्रावधान को अस्वीकार्य रूप से अस्पष्ट बनाता है, मनमाने प्रवर्तन को आमंत्रित करता है और अनुच्छेद 19(1)(a) के उल्लंघन में संरक्षित अभिव्यक्ति पर भय का प्रभाव डालता है।
- Section 295A and its BNS successor rest on terms no more precise, “outrage,” “insult,” “religious feelings”, policed after the fact by whichever officer happens to receive the complaint, yet the court has never brought the *Shreya Singhal* reasoning to bear on the provision whose own constitutionality it settled, without revisiting it since *Ramji Lal Modi* almost sixty years earlier.
धारा 295A और BNS में इसके उत्तराधिकारी प्रावधान भी इससे अधिक स्पष्ट शब्दों पर आधारित नहीं हैं—जैसे “आक्रोश”, “अपमान” और “धार्मिक भावनाएँ”—जिनका प्रवर्तन शिकायत प्राप्त करने वाले अधिकारी द्वारा घटना के बाद किया जाता है; फिर भी अदालत ने *Shreya Singhal* के तर्क को उस प्रावधान पर लागू नहीं किया जिसकी संवैधानिक वैधता उसने स्वयं लगभग छह दशक पहले *Ramji Lal Modi* मामले के बाद से पुनः विचार किए बिना तय कर दी थी।
- The inconsistency reads as reluctance rather than principle: it is easier to strike down a recent statute governing an unfamiliar medium than to unsettle an eighty-year-old precedent with a long and emotionally fraught history behind it.
यह असंगति सैद्धांतिक दृष्टिकोण की अपेक्षा अनिच्छा जैसी प्रतीत होती है: किसी अपरिचित माध्यम को नियंत्रित करने वाले हालिया कानून को निरस्त करना उस लगभग 80 वर्ष पुराने न्यायिक पूर्वनिर्णय को अस्थिर करने की तुलना में आसान है, जिसके पीछे एक लंबा और भावनात्मक रूप से जटिल इतिहास है।

The Punjab context

पंजाब का संदर्भ

- Set against Punjab’s law specifically, the contradiction sharpens into several distinct legal problems.
विशेष रूप से पंजाब के कानून के संदर्भ में यह विरोधाभास कई अलग-अलग कानूनी समस्याओं के रूप में और स्पष्ट हो जाता है।
- The first concerns equality.
पहली समस्या समानता से संबंधित है।
- By protecting only the *Guru Granth Sahib* and no other scripture, the 2026 Act revives the very objection that sank the 2016 attempt: a provision drawing a line between one community’s sacred text and every other’s needs an “intelligible differentia” bearing a “rational nexus” to its stated purpose of communal harmony, the test the Supreme Court set out in *State of West Bengal versus Anwar Ali Sarkar*, and it is difficult to see how singling out one faith serves a purpose framed in terms of all of them.
केवल गुरु ग्रंथ साहिब को संरक्षण देकर और किसी अन्य धर्मग्रंथ को नहीं, 2026 का अधिनियम वही आपत्ति फिर से उत्पन्न करता है जिसने 2016 के प्रयास को विफल किया था: एक समुदाय के पवित्र ग्रंथ और अन्य सभी ग्रंथों के बीच भेद करने वाले प्रावधान में “बोधगम्य भिन्नता (intelligible differentia)” होनी चाहिए, जिसका सामुदायिक सद्भाव के घोषित उद्देश्य से “तार्किक संबंध (rational nexus)” हो; यह वही कसौटी है जिसे सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने *State of West Bengal बनाम Anwar Ali Sarkar* मामले में निर्धारित किया था, और यह समझना कठिन है कि केवल एक धर्म को अलग करके चुनना सभी धर्मों से संबंधित उद्देश्य की पूर्ति कैसे करता है।

- This is not merely a doctrinal prediction.
यह केवल सैद्धांतिक कानूनी अनुमान नहीं है।
- In May 2026, the Anglican Church of India, through its Amritsar bishop, petitioned the Punjab and Haryana High Court arguing that the Act creates a religion-specific penal regime that violates the constitutional guarantee of equality before law, and sought both the quashing of the Act and a stay on its implementation.
मई 2026 में एंग्लिकन चर्च ऑफ इंडिया ने अपने अमृतसर बिशप के माध्यम से पंजाब एवं हरियाणा उच्च न्यायालय में याचिका दायर की, जिसमें तर्क दिया गया कि यह अधिनियम धर्म-विशिष्ट दंड व्यवस्था बनाता है, जो कानून के समक्ष समानता की संवैधानिक गारंटी का उल्लंघन करती है; याचिका में अधिनियम को निरस्त करने और इसके कार्यान्वयन पर रोक लगाने की मांग की गई।
- The Bench's response points to an underappreciated wrinkle in the equality argument itself: it reportedly questioned how a church whose own scripture the Act does not touch could claim to be aggrieved by it at all, a question that inadvertently demonstrates the very defect being alleged, since a law can discriminate in structure while leaving those it excludes without the conventional standing to challenge it.
पीठ की प्रतिक्रिया समानता के तर्क में मौजूद एक कम चर्चित जटिलता की ओर संकेत करती है: उसने कथित रूप से प्रश्न किया कि जिस चर्च के अपने धर्मग्रंथ को अधिनियम प्रभावित ही नहीं करता, वह इससे व्यथित पक्ष होने का दावा कैसे कर सकता है; यह प्रश्न अनजाने में उसी दोष को प्रदर्शित करता है जिसका आरोप लगाया जा रहा है, क्योंकि कोई कानून अपनी संरचना में भेदभावपूर्ण हो सकता है और फिर भी जिन लोगों को वह बाहर रखता है, उन्हें उसे चुनौती देने की पारंपरिक वैधानिक स्थिति (standing) से वंचित कर सकता है।
- The petition remains pending.
याचिका अभी लंबित है।
- The second is a matter of proportionality.
दूसरी समस्या आनुपातिकता से संबंधित है।
- The Act's mandatory minimum sentence, which under its most serious provisions can extend to life imprisonment and leaves no room for a judge to calibrate punishment to the facts of a given case, sits awkwardly beside Mithu versus State of Punjab, in which the Supreme Court struck down a different mandatory sentencing provision precisely because it stripped courts of discretion and so failed the test of a "just, fair and reasonable" procedure that Maneka Gandhi versus Union of India had read into Article 21; that the earlier case also happened to arise out of Punjab makes the parallel almost too neat.
अधिनियम में निर्धारित अनिवार्य न्यूनतम सजा, जो इसके सबसे गंभीर प्रावधानों के तहत आजीवन कारावास तक हो सकती है और न्यायाधीश को मामले के तथ्यों के अनुसार सजा निर्धारित करने का कोई अवसर नहीं देती, मिठू बनाम पंजाब राज्य मामले के संदर्भ में असहज रूप से सामने आती है। उस मामले में सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने एक अन्य अनिवार्य दंड प्रावधान को इसलिए निरस्त किया था क्योंकि उसने न्यायालयों के विवेकाधिकार को समाप्त कर दिया था और इस कारण वह मेनका गांधी बनाम भारत संघ मामले के माध्यम से अनुच्छेद 21 में निहित "न्यायसंगत, निष्पक्ष और उचित" प्रक्रिया की कसौटी पर विफल रहा था; यह तथ्य कि पिछला मामला भी पंजाब से संबंधित था, इस समानता को और अधिक स्पष्ट बनाता है।
- The third goes to federal competence.
तीसरी समस्या संघीय विधायी क्षमता से संबंधित है।
- Criminal law sits on the Concurrent List, and Article 254 provides that a State law repugnant to a central enactment on the same subject, such as the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita's own provisions on sacrilege and on outraging religious feeling, is void to that extent unless it has received Presidential assent under Article 254(2).
आपराधिक कानून समवर्ती सूची में आता है और अनुच्छेद 254 यह प्रावधान करता है कि उसी विषय पर बने किसी केंद्रीय कानून के प्रतिकूल राज्य कानून, जैसे भारतीय न्याय संहिता के ईशनिंदा और धार्मिक भावनाओं को ठेस पहुँचाने संबंधी प्रावधान, उस सीमा तक अमान्य होंगे, जब तक कि उन्हें अनुच्छेद 254(2) के तहत राष्ट्रपति की स्वीकृति प्राप्त न हो।



- Punjab avoided that requirement in 2026 by amending a pre-existing, ostensibly ceremonial state statute rather than the BNS directly, an approach now under challenge in the Punjab and Haryana High Court on precisely the ground that a life sentence for the same underlying wrong cannot dodge central scrutiny merely by changing which statute book it sits in.
पंजाब ने 2026 में BNS में सीधे संशोधन करने के बजाय एक पूर्व-मौजूद, कथित रूप से औपचारिक राज्य कानून में संशोधन करके इस आवश्यकता से बचने का प्रयास किया; अब इसी दृष्टिकोण को पंजाब एवं हरियाणा उच्च न्यायालय में इस आधार पर चुनौती दी गई है कि उसी मूल अपराध के लिए आजीवन कारावास का प्रावधान केवल यह बदलकर कि वह किस कानून में शामिल है, केंद्रीय जाँच-पड़ताल से बच नहीं सकता।
- Each of these is a distinct constitutional infirmity, quite apart from the broader secularism argument above, and Punjab's law arguably carries all three at once.
इनमें से प्रत्येक एक अलग संवैधानिक दोष है, जो ऊपर दिए गए व्यापक धर्मनिरपेक्षता के तर्क से अलग है, और तर्क दिया जा सकता है कि पंजाब का कानून तीनों संवैधानिक समस्याओं को एक साथ समेटे हुए है।

GS Paper 1: Geography		01 August 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
20A8	China completes first stage of 'military base' at disputed South China Sea reef विवादित दक्षिण चीन सागर की चट्टान पर चीन ने 'सैन्य अड्डे' का पहला चरण पूरा किया	

Historic low



Climate crisis: The city of Dusseldorf during prolonged dry weather across Europe that has left the Rhine River at near-record low levels, disrupting German industries, near Monheim, Germany, on Wednesday. REUTERS

Climate crisis: The city of Dusseldorf during prolonged dry weather across Europe that has left the **Rhine River** at near-record low levels, disrupting German industries, near Monheim, Germany, on Wednesday.

China completes first stage of 'military base' at disputed South China Sea reef

GS I: Geography
HUMAN GEOGRAPHY
GS II: IR

China has completed the first phase of construction on Antelope Reef in the Paracels archipelago, building a man-made island in the hotly-disputed South China Sea that analysts say will form part of its largest-military base.

Satellite images reviewed by Reuters show the reclaimed feature in outline for the first time, with barges and dredgers having left after at least six months of work in the busy waterway.

The completion shows the South China Sea as an increasingly militarised arena of contest between China and the U.S. and its allies, as both sides jostle for advantages that could prove critical in any future conflict over Taiwan.

"The northern part of the South China Sea would be particularly important in a Taiwan conflict scenario, so Antelope is ideally placed," said Ben Lewis, founder of the open-source data platform PLATracker.

Construction of buildings work has started in the southeast corner of the island, including a helicopter pad, in the July 19 images taken by Vantor, a commercial provider of satellite images.

China's defence ministry did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

China has yet to acknowledge construction of a new military base, while state media have said Antelope will serve civilian needs such as weather forecasting and scientific research.

Regional security analysts and military attaches say it is more likely to strengthen China's military hold on the northern part of the vital waterway.

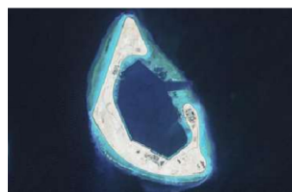
Potential runway

The images show a reclaimed island nearly 6 km long, with a straight line of coast longer than 3 km that some analysts see as a potential runway.

A wharf stretching 680 m fronts a deep water harbour, with one Vantor image showing a coast guard ship alongside.

In a study this week, the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies said the first excavation work for a new runway appeared to have already started.

Open source intelligence tracker Damien Symon, who first highlighted



Construction has started in the southeast corner of Antelope Reef, including a helicopter pad, in the images taken by Vantor. REUTERS

dredging at the reef on X in early January said he spotted initial signs of work last December.

Mr. Lewis said he believed Antelope Reef could prove to be one of the Chinese military's most important features in the South China Sea, larger than neighbouring Woody Island and easier to defend

military panel, headed by President Xi Jinping.

China's military planners might feel more comfortable keeping some weapons, such as its H-6 strategic bombers, in the Paracels and closer to the Chinese mainland rather than on the Spratlys further south.

The construction work was "modest", Chinese South China Sea scholar Ding Duo said in an opinion piece published in the official China Daily in June.

"Rather than militarisation, the purpose is peaceful and constructive - making the waters safer for everyone who depends on them," Mr. Ding wrote.

The comments mirror China's previous explanations of its build-up in the Spratlys in waters also claimed by Southeast Asian neighbours Vietnam,

the Philippines, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei.

Woody Island has served as the traditional administrative centre for China in the South China Sea, housing at times jet fighters and surface-to-air missiles. Triton Island, also in the Paracels, hosts extensive long-range surveillance devices.

Vietnam's claims

China has occupied all the Paracels since 1974, when it forced off the navy of the former South Vietnam. Vietnam, which claims the entire grouping as its own, has moved in recent years to expand its own network of bases in the Spratlys.

Vietnam's Foreign Ministry did not immediately respond to Reuters requests for comment. It has previously asserted its sovereignty claims to Ante-

lope, saying in March it "resolutely opposes such actions (and) has made representations".

Antelope could also help support any bid by China to create so-called bastions or protected ocean areas in the South China Sea to defend its nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarines, said Singapore-based security scholar Collin Koh.

Mr. Koh said the island buildup, likely to house extensive surveillance equipment, could potentially complicate submarine operations by the United States and Vietnam, which are both active in the area.

Such bastions close to home ports would protect China's submarines from exposure to rival attack, avoiding having to send them out into the western Pacific.

20A8. China completes first stage of 'military base' at disputed South China Sea reef

विवादित दक्षिण चीन सागर की चट्टान पर चीन ने 'सैन्य अड्डे' का पहला चरण पूरा किया

- China has completed the **first phase of construction on Antelope Reef** in the **Paracels archipelago**, building a **man-made island** in the hotly-disputed **South China Sea** that analysts say will form part of its **largest military base**.
- चीन ने पैरासेल द्वीपसमूह में एंटीलोप रीफ पर निर्माण का पहला चरण पूरा कर लिया है और अत्यधिक विवादित दक्षिण चीन सागर में एक कृत्रिम द्वीप बनाया है, जो विश्लेषकों के अनुसार उसके सबसे बड़े सैन्य अड्डे का हिस्सा बनेगा।
- Satellite images reviewed by **Reuters** show the reclaimed feature in outline for the first time, with **barges and dredgers** having left after at least **six months of work** in the busy waterway.
- रॉयटर्स द्वारा समीक्षा की गई उपग्रह तस्वीरों में पहली बार पुनः प्राप्त की गई भू-आकृति की रूपरेखा दिखाई देती है, जहाँ व्यस्त जलमार्ग में कम-से-कम छह महीने तक काम करने के बाद बजरे और ड्रेजर जा चुके हैं।
- The completion shows the **South China Sea** as an increasingly **militarised arena of contest** between **China and the U.S. and its allies**, as both sides jostle for advantages that could prove critical in any future conflict over **Taiwan**.
- इस निर्माण का पूरा होना दर्शाता है कि दक्षिण चीन सागर, चीन तथा अमेरिका और उसके सहयोगियों के बीच तेजी से सैन्यीकृत प्रतिस्पर्धा का क्षेत्र बनता जा रहा है, क्योंकि दोनों पक्ष ऐसे लाभ प्राप्त करने के लिए संघर्ष कर रहे हैं जो ताइवान को लेकर भविष्य में होने वाले किसी भी संघर्ष में निर्णायक सिद्ध हो सकते हैं।
- "The northern part of the **South China Sea** would be particularly important in a **Taiwan conflict scenario**, so Antelope is ideally placed," said **Ben Lewis**, founder of the open-source data platform **PLATracker**.
- ओपन-सोर्स डेटा प्लेटफॉर्म **PLATracker** के संस्थापक **बेन लुईस** ने कहा, "ताइवान संघर्ष की स्थिति में दक्षिण चीन सागर का उत्तरी हिस्सा विशेष रूप से महत्वपूर्ण होगा, इसलिए एंटीलोप आदर्श स्थान पर स्थित है।"
- Construction of buildings work has started in the **southeast corner of the island**, including a **helicopter pad**, in the **July 19 images** taken by **Vantor**, a commercial provider of satellite images.
- उपग्रह तस्वीरों के वाणिज्यिक प्रदाता **वैंटोर** द्वारा ली गई **19 जुलाई की तस्वीरों** में द्वीप के दक्षिण-पूर्वी कोने में इमारतों का निर्माण कार्य शुरू हो चुका है, जिसमें एक **हेलीकॉप्टर पैड** भी शामिल है।
- China's **defence ministry** did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.
- चीन के **रक्षा मंत्रालय** ने टिप्पणी के लिए रॉयटर्स के अनुरोध का तत्काल जवाब नहीं दिया।
- China has yet to acknowledge construction of a **new military base**, while state media have said Antelope will serve **civilian needs** such as **weather forecasting and scientific research**.
- चीन ने अभी तक **नए सैन्य अड्डे** के निर्माण को स्वीकार नहीं किया है, जबकि सरकारी मीडिया ने कहा है कि एंटीलोप मौसम पूर्वानुमान और वैज्ञानिक अनुसंधान जैसी नागरिक आवश्यकताओं को पूरा करेगा।
- Regional security analysts and military attaches say it is more likely to strengthen **China's military hold** on the **northern part of the vital waterway**.
- क्षेत्रीय सुरक्षा विश्लेषकों और सैन्य अताशे का कहना है कि इससे इस महत्वपूर्ण जलमार्ग के उत्तरी हिस्से पर चीन की सैन्य पकड़ मजबूत होने की अधिक संभावना है।

Potential runway

संभावित हवाई पट्टी

- The images show a **reclaimed island nearly 6 km long**, with a straight line of coast longer than **3 km** that some analysts see as a **potential runway**.



- तस्वीरों में लगभग 6 किलोमीटर लंबा पुनः प्राप्त द्वीप दिखाई देता है, जिसकी सीधी तटरेखा 3 किलोमीटर से अधिक लंबी है और कुछ विश्लेषक इसे एक संभावित हवाई पट्टी के रूप में देखते हैं।
- A wharf stretching 680 m fronts a deep water harbour, with one Vantor image showing a coast guard ship alongside.
- 680 मीटर लंबा घाट एक गहरे पानी वाले बंदरगाह के सामने स्थित है और वैंटोर की एक तस्वीर में उसके साथ तटरक्षक जहाज दिखाई देता है।
- In a study this week, the Washington-based **Center for Strategic and International Studies** said the first excavation work for a **new runway** appeared to have already started.
- इस सप्ताह किए गए एक अध्ययन में वाशिंगटन स्थित **सेंटर फॉर स्ट्रैटेजिक एंड इंटरनेशनल स्टडीज** ने कहा कि **नई हवाई पट्टी** के लिए प्रारंभिक खुदाई का काम पहले ही शुरू हो चुका प्रतीत होता है।
- Open source intelligence tracker **Damien Symon**, who first highlighted dredging at the reef on X in early January said he spotted initial signs of work last December.
- ओपन-सोर्स इंटेलिजेंस ट्रैकर **डेमियन साइमन**, जिन्होंने जनवरी की शुरुआत में X पर इस चट्टान पर हो रही ड्रेजिंग को पहली बार उजागर किया था, ने कहा कि उन्होंने पिछले दिसंबर में काम के शुरुआती संकेत देखे थे।
- Mr. Lewis said he believed **Antelope Reef** could prove to be one of the **Chinese military's most important features** in the **South China Sea**, larger than neighbouring **Woody Island** and easier to defend.
- श्री लुईस ने कहा कि उनका मानना है कि **एंटीलोप रीफ**, **दक्षिण चीन सागर** में **चीनी सेना** के सबसे महत्वपूर्ण ठिकानों में से एक साबित हो सकता है, जो पड़ोसी **बुडी द्वीप** से बड़ा और रक्षा करने में अधिक आसान है।
- than a network of bases further south in the **Spratlys archipelago**.
- और यह दक्षिण में दूर स्थित **स्प्रेटली द्वीपसमूह** के सैन्य अड्डों के नेटवर्क की तुलना में अधिक आसानी से सुरक्षित किया जा सकता है।
- "I think the importance of the **South China Sea** and the **Southern Theater Command** has been elevated in the last year by the **Central Military Commission** largely as it relates to **Taiwan**," Mr. Lewis added, referring to China's top military panel, headed by **President Xi Jinping**.
- चीन के सर्वोच्च सैन्य निकाय, जिसकी अध्यक्षता **राष्ट्रपति शी जिनपिंग** करते हैं, का उल्लेख करते हुए श्री लुईस ने आगे कहा, "मेरा मानना है कि मुख्य रूप से **ताइवान** से इसके संबंध के कारण पिछले वर्ष **केंद्रीय सैन्य आयोग** द्वारा **दक्षिण चीन सागर** और **दक्षिणी थिएटर कमान** के महत्व को बढ़ाया गया है।"
- China's military planners might feel more comfortable keeping some weapons, such as its **H-6 strategic bombers**, in the **Paracels** and closer to the Chinese mainland rather than on the **Spratlys** further south.
- चीन के सैन्य योजनाकार कुछ हथियारों, जैसे उसके **H-6 रणनीतिक बमवर्षकों**, को दक्षिण में दूर स्थित **स्प्रेटली द्वीपसमूह** के बजाय **पैरासेल द्वीपसमूह** और चीनी मुख्य भूमि के अधिक निकट रखना अधिक सुविधाजनक समझ सकते हैं।
- The construction work was "**modest**", Chinese South China Sea scholar **Ding Duo** said in an opinion piece published in the official **China Daily** in June.
- दक्षिण चीन सागर के चीनी विद्वान **डिंग डुओ** ने जून में आधिकारिक समाचारपत्र **चाइना डेली** में प्रकाशित एक विचार लेख में कहा कि निर्माण कार्य "**मामूली**" था।
- "Rather than militarisation, the purpose is **peaceful and constructive** – making the waters safer for everyone who depends on them," Mr. Ding wrote.
- श्री डिंग ने लिखा, "इसका उद्देश्य सैन्यीकरण नहीं, बल्कि **शांतिपूर्ण और रचनात्मक** है—इन जलक्षेत्रों को उन सभी लोगों के लिए अधिक सुरक्षित बनाना जो उन पर निर्भर हैं।"
- The comments mirror China's previous explanations of its build-up in the **Spratlys** in waters also claimed by Southeast Asian neighbours **Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei**.



- ये टिप्पणियाँ **स्प्रेटली द्वीपसमूह** में चीन के निर्माण कार्य के संबंध में उसके पिछले स्पष्टीकरणों को दोहराती हैं, जिसके जलक्षेत्र पर दक्षिण-पूर्व एशियाई पड़ोसी देशों **वियतनाम, फिलीपींस, मलेशिया, ताइवान और ब्रुनेई** द्वारा भी दावा किया जाता है।
- Woody Island** has served as the traditional administrative centre for China in the **South China Sea**, housing at times **jet fighters and surface-to-air missiles**.
- वुडी द्वीप, दक्षिण चीन सागर** में चीन के पारंपरिक प्रशासनिक केंद्र के रूप में कार्य करता रहा है और यहाँ समय-समय पर **लड़ाकू जेट विमानों तथा सतह से हवा में मार करने वाली मिसाइलों** को तैनात किया गया है।
- Triton Island**, also in the Paracels, hosts extensive **long-range surveillance devices**.
- पैरासेल द्वीपसमूह में स्थित **ट्राइटन द्वीप** पर भी व्यापक स्तर के **लंबी दूरी के निगरानी उपकरण मौजूद हैं**।

Vietnam's claims

वियतनाम के दावे

- China has occupied all the **Paracels since 1974**, when it forced off the navy of the former **South Vietnam**.
- चीन ने **1974 से पूरे पैरासेल द्वीपसमूह** पर कब्जा कर रखा है, जब उसने पूर्ववर्ती **दक्षिण वियतनाम** की नौसेना को वहाँ से खदेड़ दिया था।
- Vietnam, which claims the entire grouping as its own, has moved in recent years to expand its own **network of bases in the Spratlys**.
- पूरे द्वीपसमूह पर अपना दावा करने वाले वियतनाम ने हाल के वर्षों में **स्प्रेटली द्वीपसमूह में अपने सैन्य अड्डों के नेटवर्क** का विस्तार किया है।
- Vietnam's **Foreign Ministry** did not immediately respond to Reuters requests for comment.
- वियतनाम के **विदेश मंत्रालय** ने टिप्पणी के लिए रॉयटर्स के अनुरोधों का तत्काल जवाब नहीं दिया।
- It has previously asserted its **sovereignty claims to Antelope**, saying in March it **"resolutely opposes such actions (and) has made representations"**.
- उसने पहले भी **एंटीलोप** पर अपनी संप्रभुता के दावे को दोहराते हुए मार्च में कहा था कि वह **"ऐसी कार्रवाइयों का दृढ़तापूर्वक विरोध करता है (और) उसने इस संबंध में अपना पक्ष प्रस्तुत किया है।"**
- Antelope could also help support any bid by China to create so-called **bastions or protected ocean areas** in the South China Sea to defend its **nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarines**, said Singapore-based security scholar **Collin Koh**.
- सिंगापुर स्थित सुरक्षा विद्वान **कॉलिन कोह** ने कहा कि एंटीलोप, दक्षिण चीन सागर में अपने परमाणु हथियारों से **लैस बैलिस्टिक मिसाइल पनडुब्बियों** की रक्षा के लिए तथाकथित सुरक्षित गढ़ या संरक्षित समुद्री क्षेत्र बनाने के चीन के किसी भी प्रयास में सहायता कर सकता है।
- Mr. Koh said the island buildup, likely to house extensive **surveillance equipment**, could potentially complicate **submarine operations by the United States and Vietnam**, which are both active in the area.
- श्री कोह ने कहा कि द्वीप पर किया जा रहा निर्माण, जहाँ व्यापक **निगरानी उपकरण** स्थापित किए जाने की संभावना है, इस क्षेत्र में सक्रिय **अमेरिका और वियतनाम की पनडुब्बी गतिविधियों** को संभावित रूप से जटिल बना सकता है।
- Such bastions close to home ports would protect **China's submarines** from exposure to rival attack, avoiding having to send them out into the **western Pacific**.
- घरेलू बंदरगाहों के निकट ऐसे सुरक्षित गढ़ **चीन की पनडुब्बियों** को प्रतिद्वंद्वियों के हमले के खतरे से सुरक्षित रखेंगे और उन्हें **पश्चिमी प्रशांत महासागर** में भेजने की आवश्यकता से बचाएँगे।



GS Paper II: Polity	20 August 2026
TOPICS COVERED	
20A8	Amit Shah to chair Southern Zonal Council in T.N. today अमित शाह आज तमिलनाडु में दक्षिणी क्षेत्रीय परिषद की अध्यक्षता करेंगे

Amit Shah to chair Southern Zonal Council in T.N. today

GS II: Polity

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The 31st meeting of the Southern Zonal Council, chaired by Home Minister Amit Shah, is set to take place on Thursday at a private hotel near Mamallapuram, about 40 km south of Chennai.

Mr. Shah, who arrived in Chennai on Wednesday evening, will chair the meeting, while Tamil Nadu

Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay will be the vice-chairman, a statement said. The meeting is scheduled to take place for about four hours from around 10 a.m. on Thursday.

The meeting is organised by the Inter-State Council Secretariat of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, with the State acting as the host for this edition. The Council, whose recommendations are ad-

visory in nature, is likely to deliberate on several core issues concerning the southern States. Zonal Councils are statutory bodies established under the States Reorganisation Act, 1956. Chief Ministers, Lieutenant Governors and Administrators of the member States and Union Territories, along with two other Ministers from each State, will take part in the meeting.

20A8. Amit Shah to chair Southern Zonal Council in T.N. today

अमित शाह आज तमिलनाडु में दक्षिणी क्षेत्रीय परिषद की अध्यक्षता करेंगे

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गृह मंत्री अमित शाह की अध्यक्षता में दक्षिणी क्षेत्रीय परिषद (Southern Zonal Council) की 31वीं बैठक गुरुवार को चेन्नई से लगभग 40 किमी दक्षिण में स्थित मामल्लपुरम के पास एक निजी होटल में होने वाली है।

- Mr. Shah, who arrived in Chennai on Wednesday evening, will chair the meeting, while Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay will be the vice-chairman, a statement said. एक बयान के अनुसार, श्री शाह बुधवार शाम चेन्नई पहुँचे और बैठक की अध्यक्षता करेंगे, जबकि तमिलनाडु के मुख्यमंत्री सी. जोसेफ विजय इसके उपाध्यक्ष होंगे।
- The meeting is scheduled to take place for about four hours from around 10 a.m. on Thursday. बैठक गुरुवार को लगभग सुबह 10 बजे से करीब चार घंटे तक चलने वाली है।
- The meeting is organised by the Inter-State Council Secretariat of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, with the State acting as the host for this edition. इस बैठक का आयोजन केंद्रीय गृह मंत्रालय के अंतर-राज्य परिषद सचिवालय द्वारा किया जा रहा है और इस बार तमिलनाडु मेजबान राज्य है।
- The Council, whose recommendations are advisory in nature, is likely to deliberate on several core issues concerning the southern States.



परिषद की सिफारिशें सलाहकारी प्रकृति की होती हैं और इसमें दक्षिणी राज्यों से संबंधित कई प्रमुख मुद्दों पर विचार-विमर्श किए जाने की संभावना है।

- Zonal Councils are statutory bodies established under the **States Reorganisation Act, 1956**. **क्षेत्रीय परिषदें (Zonal Councils)** राज्य पुनर्गठन अधिनियम, 1956 के तहत स्थापित वैधानिक निकाय हैं।
- Chief Ministers, Lieutenant Governors and Administrators of the member States and Union Territories, along with two other Ministers from each State, will take part in the meeting. सदस्य राज्यों और केंद्रशासित प्रदेशों के मुख्यमंत्री, उपराज्यपाल एवं प्रशासक, तथा प्रत्येक राज्य के दो अन्य मंत्री बैठक में भाग लेंगे।

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TOPICS COVERED		
20A8	NMC proposes national licence to practise medicine NMC ने पूरे देश में चिकित्सा-व्यवसाय के लिए राष्ट्रीय लाइसेंस का प्रस्ताव रखा	
20A8	Due diligence समुचित जाँच-पड़ताल	

NMC proposes national licence to practise medicine

GS II: Governance

Bindu Shajan
Perappadan
NEW DELHI

The National Medical Commission (NMC) has proposed a registration system under which a medical practitioner, once registered with a State Medical Council, would be eligible to practise across India without obtaining fresh registration or a licence in another State. The practitioner would be allotted a Unique Identification (UID) number in the National Medical Register.

The proposal is part of the draft Registration of Medical Practitioners and Licence to Practice Medicine (Amendment) Regulations, 2026, notified by the NMC on August 11. The Commission has invited objections and suggestions for 30 days from the date

of notification. Under the proposed system, State Medical Councils would continue to scrutinise applications and grant registration and licence for doctors to practise, but the approval would be reflected in both the State Medical Register (SMR) and National Medical Register (NMR).

The draft rules seek to amend the 2023 regulations governing registration and licensing of doctors, routing the process through a unified registration portal of the NMC's Ethics and Medical Registration Board.

UID to have State code

The UID assigned in the register would incorporate the State/Union Territory code and the practitioner's SMR number, the NMC said. Once the State Medi-



A Unique Identification number will be allotted under the proposed system. GETTY IMAGES

cal Council grants registration and the Ethics and Medical Registration Board allots the UID, the doctor would not require fresh registration or a separate licence to practise in another State or Union Territory.

The draft also proposes automatic electronic synchronisation between the national and State registers so that a change made in one register is reflected in

the other. The NMR would serve as a central repository of registration details as well as disciplinary proceedings, including suspension, removal, and restoration of registration.

The NMR would also carry information on whether a doctor's licence is active or inactive, and details of disciplinary action taken, if any. The Ethics and Medical Registration Board and the NMC would have powers to seek records and monitor State Medical Councils to promote uniformity and transparency in regulation.

The proposal retains the five-year validity of a licence. If a doctor does not apply for renewal within three months of expiry, the registration will be marked inactive, and the practitioner will not be entitled to practise medicine. The

inactive status would reflect in the NMR.

While seeking to create a nationwide registration framework, the draft leaves disciplinary jurisdiction primarily with the State Council in whose territorial jurisdiction the alleged professional misconduct, unethical conduct or medical negligence occurred.

The State Council would have the power to inquire into and decide the matter, and record the outcome against the practitioner's credentials in the online register. Where disciplinary action is recommended by a State Council other than the doctor's primary registering council, the action would be reflected in the NMR and automatically updated in the State register of the council of primary registration.

20A8. NMC proposes national licence to practise medicine

NMC ने पूरे देश में चिकित्सा-व्यवसाय के लिए राष्ट्रीय लाइसेंस का प्रस्ताव रखा

- The **National Medical Commission (NMC)** has proposed a registration system under which a medical practitioner, once registered with a State Medical Council, would be eligible to

practise across India without obtaining fresh registration or a licence in another State.

राष्ट्रीय चिकित्सा आयोग (NMC) ने एक ऐसी पंजीकरण प्रणाली का प्रस्ताव दिया है, जिसके तहत किसी राज्य चिकित्सा परिषद के साथ एक बार पंजीकृत होने के बाद कोई चिकित्सक किसी अन्य राज्य में नया पंजीकरण या लाइसेंस प्राप्त किए बिना पूरे भारत में चिकित्सा-व्यवसाय कर सकेगा।

- The practitioner would be allotted a Unique Identification (UID) number in the National Medical Register.

चिकित्सक को राष्ट्रीय चिकित्सा रजिस्टर (NMR) में एक विशिष्ट पहचान संख्या (UID) आवंटित की जाएगी।

- The proposal is part of the draft Registration of Medical Practitioners and Licence to Practise Medicine (Amendment) Regulations, 2026, notified by the NMC on August 11.

यह प्रस्ताव Registration of Medical Practitioners and Licence to Practise Medicine

(Amendment) Regulations, 2026 के मसौदे का हिस्सा है, जिसे NMC ने 11 अगस्त को अधिसूचित किया था।

- The Commission has invited objections and suggestions for 30 days from the date of notification.

आयोग ने अधिसूचना की तारीख से 30 दिनों के भीतर आपत्तियाँ और सुझाव आमंत्रित किए हैं।

- Under the proposed system, State Medical Councils would continue to scrutinise applications and grant registration and licence for doctors to practise, but the approval would be reflected in both the State Medical Register (SMR) and National Medical Register (NMR).

प्रस्तावित प्रणाली के तहत राज्य चिकित्सा परिषदें आवेदनों की जाँच करने और चिकित्सकों को चिकित्सा-

व्यवसाय के लिए पंजीकरण तथा लाइसेंस प्रदान करने का कार्य जारी रखेंगी, लेकिन यह स्वीकृति राज्य

चिकित्सा रजिस्टर (SMR) और राष्ट्रीय चिकित्सा रजिस्टर (NMR) दोनों में दर्ज होगी।

- The draft rules seek to amend the 2023 regulations governing registration and licensing of doctors, routing the process through a unified registration portal of the NMC's Ethics and Medical Registration Board.

मसौदा नियमों का उद्देश्य चिकित्सकों के पंजीकरण और लाइसेंस को नियंत्रित करने वाले 2023 के नियमों में संशोधन करना है तथा इस प्रक्रिया को NMC के Ethics and Medical Registration Board के एकीकृत पंजीकरण पोर्टल के माध्यम से संचालित करना है।

UID to have State code

UID में राज्य कोड शामिल होगा

- The UID assigned in the register would incorporate the State/Union Territory code and the practitioner's SMR number, the NMC said.

NMC ने कहा कि रजिस्टर में आवंटित UID में राज्य/केंद्रशासित प्रदेश का कोड और चिकित्सक का SMR नंबर शामिल होगा।

- Once the State Medical Council grants registration and the Ethics and Medical Registration Board allots the UID, the doctor would not require fresh registration or a separate licence to practise in another State or Union Territory.

एक बार राज्य चिकित्सा परिषद द्वारा पंजीकरण प्रदान किए जाने और Ethics and Medical

Registration Board द्वारा UID आवंटित किए जाने के बाद चिकित्सक को किसी अन्य राज्य या

केंद्रशासित प्रदेश में चिकित्सा-व्यवसाय करने के लिए नए पंजीकरण या अलग लाइसेंस की आवश्यकता नहीं होगी।

- The draft also proposes automatic electronic synchronisation between the national and State registers so that a change made in one register is reflected in the other.

मसौदे में राष्ट्रीय और राज्य रजिस्ट्रों के बीच स्वचालित इलेक्ट्रॉनिक समन्वय का भी प्रस्ताव है, ताकि एक रजिस्टर में किया गया कोई भी परिवर्तन दूसरे रजिस्टर में भी प्रदर्शित हो।

- The NMR would serve as a central repository of registration details as well as disciplinary proceedings, including suspension, removal, and restoration of registration.

NMR पंजीकरण संबंधी विवरणों के साथ-साथ **निलंबन, पंजीकरण से हटाने और पंजीकरण की बहाली** सहित अनुशासनात्मक कार्यवाहियों के विवरण के लिए एक **केंद्रीय भंडार** के रूप में कार्य करेगा।

- The NMR would also carry information on whether a doctor's licence is active or inactive, and details of disciplinary action taken, if any.

NMR में यह जानकारी भी उपलब्ध होगी कि किसी चिकित्सक का लाइसेंस **सक्रिय या निष्क्रिय** है तथा यदि कोई अनुशासनात्मक कार्रवाई की गई है तो उसका विवरण भी दर्ज होगा।

- The Ethics and Medical Registration Board and the NMC would have powers to seek records and monitor State Medical Councils to promote uniformity and transparency in regulation.

Ethics and Medical Registration Board तथा NMC के पास रिकॉर्ड माँगने और राज्य चिकित्सा परिषदों की निगरानी करने की शक्तियाँ होंगी, ताकि नियमन में **एकरूपता और पारदर्शिता** को बढ़ावा दिया जा सके।

- The proposal retains the five-year validity of a licence.
प्रस्ताव में लाइसेंस की **पाँच वर्ष की वैधता** को बरकरार रखा गया है।

- If a doctor does not apply for renewal within three months of expiry, the registration will be marked inactive, and the practitioner will not be entitled to practise medicine.

यदि कोई चिकित्सक लाइसेंस की अवधि समाप्त होने के **तीन महीने के भीतर नवीनीकरण के लिए आवेदन नहीं करता**, तो उसका पंजीकरण **निष्क्रिय** चिह्नित कर दिया जाएगा और चिकित्सक को चिकित्सा-व्यवसाय करने का अधिकार नहीं होगा।

- The inactive status would reflect in the NMR.
यह **निष्क्रिय स्थिति NMR** में भी प्रदर्शित होगी।

- While seeking to create a nationwide registration framework, the draft leaves disciplinary jurisdiction primarily with the State Council in whose territorial jurisdiction the alleged professional misconduct, unethical conduct or medical negligence occurred.

देशव्यापी **पंजीकरण ढाँचा** बनाने का प्रयास करते हुए भी मसौदा अनुशासनात्मक अधिकार क्षेत्र मुख्यतः उस **राज्य परिषद** के पास रखता है, जिसके क्षेत्राधिकार में कथित **पेशेवर कदाचार, अनैतिक आचरण या चिकित्सकीय लापरवाही** हुई हो।

- The State Council would have the power to inquire into and decide the matter, and record the outcome against the practitioner's credentials in the online register.

राज्य परिषद के पास मामले की **जाँच करने और उस पर निर्णय लेने** की शक्ति होगी तथा वह परिणाम को ऑनलाइन रजिस्टर में चिकित्सक के **प्रमाण-पत्र/पंजीकरण विवरण** के विरुद्ध दर्ज करेगी।

- Where disciplinary action is recommended by a State Council other than the doctor's primary registering council, the action would be reflected in the NMR and automatically updated in the State register of the council of primary registration.

यदि चिकित्सक की **प्राथमिक पंजीकरण परिषद** के अलावा कोई अन्य राज्य परिषद अनुशासनात्मक कार्रवाई की सिफारिश करती है, तो यह कार्रवाई **NMR में दर्ज** होगी और प्राथमिक पंजीकरण वाली परिषद के **राज्य रजिस्टर में स्वतः अपडेट** हो जाएगी।



GS II: Governance

Due diligence

Curbs on surrogate advertising must avoid regulatory overreach

Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Tukaram Mundhe's attempts to disrupt the marketing chain, by targeting the celebrities who prop up the brand recall of manufacturers' products, is an encouraging counterpoise to the consumer goods advertising landscape of today. This landscape has long suffered the consequences of a gross asymmetry: the person with the persuasive power suffers almost none of the economic downsides of consuming certain goods, a situation sustained as much by uncritical endorsement as by inequities in the public health-care system. But the FDA must still prove its suspicions. According to it, Vimal Elaichi — which Shah Rukh Khan, Ajay Devgn and Tiger Shroff have endorsed — does not have a market identity independent of its association with tobacco and that endorsing it amounts to a surrogate endorsement of tobacco products. While this seems a reasonable reading of the **Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA) Rules**, the Delhi High Court, in **DGHS vs Som Pan Product Pvt. Ltd. (2024)**, had held that the state had a responsibility to prove a case of surrogate advertising. That is, neither could brand registration alone prove surrogate advertising nor could the mere existence of a technically legal product permit a particular advertisement.

While Mr. Mundhe's efforts are commendable, the FDA should follow through with inquiries under COTPA and the Food Safety and Standards Act 2006 that withstand scrutiny. India bears the world's largest burden of oral cancer, and the FDA is right to treat certain advertisements as unfair trade practices with significant consequences for consumer health. The endorser liability created by the Consumer Protection Act 2019, together with hefty financial penalties, has also undermined celebrities' ability to invoke ignorance of a manufacturer's intentions as a defence. The FDA's decision to have celebrity endorsers explain their decision-making is a logical extension of this principle in the domain of enforcement. The problem exemplified by tobacco also extends to products making unsubstantiated claims (e.g., "boosts immunity"), and educational and financial products. Unfortunately, India's regulatory regime is fragmented across a slew of Acts and Rules; problematic advertisements often invoke legal and administrative instruments to draw the judiciary's intervention. Penalties or bans in the FDA's case could significantly narrow the space exploited for surrogate advertising. If the FDA fails to act fairly, however, it could become yet another example of regulatory overreach that strengthened the practices it sought to end.

DGHS vs Som Pan Product Pvt. Ltd. (2024), had held that the state had a responsibility to prove a case of surrogate advertising.

हालाँकि यह सिगरेट और अन्य तंबाकू उत्पाद अधिनियम (COTPA) के नियमों की एक उचित व्याख्या प्रतीत होती है, लेकिन दिल्ली उच्च न्यायालय ने DGHS बनाम Som Pan Product Pvt. Ltd. (2024) मामले में कहा था कि सरोगेट विज्ञापन के मामले को सिद्ध करने की जिम्मेदारी राज्य की है।

- That is, neither could brand registration alone prove surrogate advertising nor could the mere existence of a technically legal product permit a particular advertisement.
अर्थात्, न तो केवल ब्रांड का पंजीकरण अपने आप में सरोगेट विज्ञापन को सिद्ध कर सकता है और न ही किसी तकनीकी रूप से वैध उत्पाद के अस्तित्व मात्र से किसी विशेष विज्ञापन को अनुमति मिल सकती है।
- While Mr. Mundhe's efforts are commendable, the FDA should follow through with inquiries under COTPA and the Food Safety and Standards Act 2006 that withstand scrutiny.
यद्यपि श्री मुंडे के प्रयास सराहनीय हैं, FDA को COTPA और खाद्य सुरक्षा एवं मानक अधिनियम, 2006 के तहत ऐसी जाँच को आगे बढ़ाना चाहिए जो न्यायिक और सार्वजनिक जाँच-पड़ताल की कसौटी पर खरी उतरे।

20A8. Due diligence

समुचित जाँच-पड़ताल

- Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Tukaram Mundhe's attempts to disrupt the marketing chain, by targeting the celebrities who prop up the brand recall of manufacturers' products, is an encouraging counterpoise to the consumer goods advertising landscape of today.

महाराष्ट्र खाद्य एवं औषधि प्रशासन (FDA) के आयुक्त तुकाराम मुंडे द्वारा निर्माताओं के उत्पादों की ब्रांड पहचान को बढ़ावा देने वाली हस्तियों को निशाना बनाकर विपणन श्रृंखला को बाधित करने के प्रयास आज के उपभोक्ता वस्तुओं के विज्ञापन परिदृश्य के लिए एक उत्साहजनक संतुलनकारी कदम हैं।

- This landscape has long suffered the consequences of a gross asymmetry: the person with the persuasive power suffers almost none of the economic downsides of consuming certain goods, a situation sustained as much by uncritical endorsement as by inequities in the public health-care system.

यह परिदृश्य लंबे समय से एक गंभीर असमानता के परिणामों से प्रभावित रहा है:

जिस व्यक्ति के पास प्रभावशाली ढंग से किसी उत्पाद को बढ़ावा देने की शक्ति होती है, उसे कुछ वस्तुओं के उपभोग से होने वाले आर्थिक दुष्परिणामों का लगभग कोई नुकसान नहीं उठाना पड़ता; यह स्थिति जितनी बिना आलोचनात्मक जाँच के किए गए समर्थन से बनी हुई है, उतनी ही सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य देखभाल प्रणाली की असमानताओं से भी।

- But the FDA must still prove its suspicions.
लेकिन FDA को अभी भी अपने संदेहों को सिद्ध करना होगा।

- According to it, Vimal Elaichi — which Shah Rukh Khan, Ajay Devgn and Tiger Shroff have endorsed — does not have a market identity independent of its association with tobacco and that endorsing it amounts to a surrogate endorsement of tobacco products.

इसके अनुसार, विमल इलायची—जिसका समर्थन शाहरुख खान, अजय देवगन और टाइगर श्रॉफ ने किया है—की बाजार में ऐसी स्वतंत्र पहचान नहीं है जो इसके तंबाकू से संबंध से अलग हो, और इसका समर्थन करना तंबाकू उत्पादों के सरोगेट समर्थन (surrogate endorsement) के समान है।

- While this seems a reasonable reading of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA) Rules, the Delhi High Court, in

- India bears the world's largest burden of oral cancer, and the FDA is right to treat certain advertisements as unfair trade practices with significant consequences for consumer health. भारत में मौखिक कैंसर का विश्व में सबसे बड़ा बोझ है, और FDA का कुछ विज्ञापनों को अनुचित व्यापार व्यवहार मानना उचित है, क्योंकि इनके उपभोक्ता स्वास्थ्य पर महत्वपूर्ण दुष्परिणाम हो सकते हैं।
- The endorser liability created by the **Consumer Protection Act 2019**, together with hefty financial penalties, has also undermined celebrities' ability to invoke ignorance of a manufacturer's intentions as a defence.
उपभोक्ता संरक्षण अधिनियम, 2019 द्वारा निर्धारित प्रचारक/एंडोर्सर की जवाबदेही, भारी वित्तीय दंड के साथ मिलकर, हस्तियों की इस दलील को कमजोर करती है कि वे निर्माता के इरादों से अनभिज्ञ थीं और इसे अपने बचाव के रूप में प्रस्तुत कर सकती हैं।
- The FDA's decision to have celebrity endorsers explain their decision-making is a logical extension of this principle in the domain of enforcement.
FDA द्वारा सेलिब्रिटी एंडोर्सरों से उनके निर्णय लेने की प्रक्रिया को स्पष्ट करने के लिए कहना, प्रवर्तन के क्षेत्र में इसी सिद्धांत का एक तार्किक विस्तार है।
- The problem exemplified by tobacco also extends to products making unsubstantiated claims (e.g., "boosts immunity"), and educational and financial products.
तंबाकू द्वारा प्रदर्शित समस्या उन उत्पादों तक भी विस्तृत होती है जो अप्रमाणित दावे करते हैं, जैसे "प्रतिरक्षा बढ़ाता है", तथा यह समस्या शैक्षिक और वित्तीय उत्पादों में भी दिखाई देती है।
- Unfortunately, India's regulatory regime is fragmented across a slew of Acts and Rules; problematic advertisements often invoke legal and administrative instruments to draw the judiciary's intervention.
दुर्भाग्यवश, भारत की नियामक व्यवस्था अनेक अधिनियमों और नियमों में बंटी हुई है; समस्याग्रस्त विज्ञापन अक्सर विभिन्न कानूनी और प्रशासनिक साधनों का सहारा लेते हैं, जिसके परिणामस्वरूप न्यायपालिका के हस्तक्षेप की आवश्यकता उत्पन्न होती है।
- Penalties or bans in the FDA's case could significantly narrow the space exploited for surrogate advertising.
FDA के मामले में दंड या प्रतिबंध सरोगेट विज्ञापन के लिए इस्तेमाल किए जाने वाले अवसरों को काफी हद तक सीमित कर सकते हैं।
- If the FDA fails to act fairly, however, it could become yet another example of regulatory overreach that strengthened the practices it sought to end.
हालाँकि, यदि FDA निष्पक्ष रूप से कार्य करने में विफल रहता है, तो यह नियामक अतिशय हस्तक्षेप (regulatory overreach) का एक और उदाहरण बन सकता है, जिसने उन्हीं प्रथाओं को मजबूत कर दिया जिन्हें वह समाप्त करना चाहता था।

GS Paper II: International Relations		20 August 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
20A8	Rajnath, Japanese Defence Minister to hold talks today राजनाथ और जापान के रक्षा मंत्री आज वार्ता करेंगे	
20A8	FM to lead ministerial delegation for key meet in Singapore वित्त मंत्री सिंगापुर में महत्वपूर्ण बैठक के लिए मंत्रिस्तरीय प्रतिनिधिमंडल का नेतृत्व करेंगी	



Rajnath, Japanese Defence Minister to hold talks today

GS II: IR

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will hold a bilateral meeting with his Japanese counterpart, Shinjiro Koizumi, in New Delhi on Thursday, with the two sides expected to discuss ways to further strengthen defence and security cooperation and enhance strategic trust in the Indo-Pacific.

According to the Ministry of Defence, the Ministers are expected to exchange views on deeper maritime security cooperation and closer collaboration in defence equipment and technology under the 'Make in India' framework, particularly following Japan's revision of its Three Principles on Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology.

The meeting is also expected to provide an opportunity to identify new areas of collaboration and prepare a road map for ad-



Shinjiro Koizumi during a visit to the Navy's Western Command in Mumbai. @MODJAPAN_EN

vancing bilateral defence and security cooperation, with both countries sharing a vision of a free, open, resilient and prosperous Indo-Pacific.

Mr. Koizumi, on his maiden visit to India, visited the Western Naval Command in Mumbai on Wednesday. He held discussions with the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, and Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command, Vice-Admiral Sanjay

Vatsayan. He also visited the indigenously built guided-missile destroyer *INS Chennai*.

The two-day visit underscores the growing momentum in India-Japan defence ties and comes weeks after Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's visit to New Delhi for the Annual Summit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, where the two sides agreed to deepen defence and security cooperation.

20A8. Rajnath, Japanese Defence Minister to hold talks today

राजनाथ और जापान के रक्षा मंत्री आज वार्ता करेंगे

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will hold a bilateral meeting with his Japanese counterpart, Shinjiro Koizumi, in New Delhi on Thursday, with the two sides expected to discuss ways to further strengthen defence and security cooperation and enhance strategic trust in the Indo-Pacific.

रक्षा मंत्री राजनाथ सिंह गुरुवार को नई दिल्ली में अपने जापानी समकक्ष शिंजिरो कोइजुमी के साथ द्विपक्षीय बैठक करेंगे, जिसमें दोनों पक्षों द्वारा रक्षा एवं सुरक्षा सहयोग को और मजबूत करने तथा हिंद-प्रशांत क्षेत्र में रणनीतिक विश्वास बढ़ाने के उपायों पर चर्चा किए जाने की संभावना है।

- According to the Ministry of Defence, the Ministers are expected to exchange views on deeper maritime security cooperation and closer collaboration in defence equipment and technology under the 'Make in India' framework, particularly following Japan's revision of its Three Principles on Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology.

रक्षा मंत्रालय के अनुसार, दोनों मंत्री गहन समुद्री सुरक्षा सहयोग तथा 'मेक इन इंडिया' ढाँचे के तहत रक्षा उपकरणों और प्रौद्योगिकी के क्षेत्र में अधिक निकट सहयोग पर विचारों का आदान-प्रदान कर सकते हैं, विशेष रूप से रक्षा उपकरण एवं प्रौद्योगिकी के हस्तांतरण से संबंधित जापान के तीन सिद्धांतों में संशोधन के बाद।

- The meeting is also expected to provide an opportunity to identify new areas of collaboration and prepare a road map for advancing bilateral defence and security cooperation, with both countries sharing a vision of a free, open, resilient and prosperous Indo-Pacific.

बैठक से सहयोग के नए क्षेत्रों की पहचान करने तथा द्विपक्षीय रक्षा एवं सुरक्षा सहयोग को आगे बढ़ाने के लिए एक रोडमैप तैयार करने का अवसर भी मिलने की उम्मीद है, क्योंकि दोनों देश एक स्वतंत्र, खुले, लचीले और समृद्ध हिंद-प्रशांत की साझा परिकल्पना रखते हैं।

- Mr. Koizumi, on his maiden visit to India, visited the Western Naval Command in Mumbai on Wednesday.

श्री कोइजुमी ने अपनी पहली भारत यात्रा के दौरान बुधवार को मुंबई स्थित पश्चिमी नौसेना कमान का दौरा किया।

- He held discussions with the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, and Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command, Vice-Admiral Sanjay Vatsayan. उन्होंने नौसेना प्रमुख एडमिरल कृष्ण स्वामीनाथन तथा पश्चिमी नौसेना कमान के फ्लैग ऑफिसर कमांडिंग-इन-चीफ वाइस एडमिरल संजय वत्सायन के साथ चर्चा की।

- He also visited the indigenously built guided-missile destroyer INS Chennai. उन्होंने स्वदेशी रूप से निर्मित निर्देशित मिसाइल विध्वंसक पोत INS चेन्नई का भी दौरा किया।

- The two-day visit underscores the growing momentum in India-Japan defence ties and comes weeks after Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's visit to New Delhi for the Annual Summit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, where the two sides agreed to deepen defence and security cooperation.

यह दो दिवसीय यात्रा भारत-जापान रक्षा संबंधों में बढ़ती गति को रेखांकित करती है और जापान की प्रधानमंत्री सानाए ताकाइची की नई दिल्ली यात्रा के कुछ सप्ताह बाद हो रही है, जो प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी के साथ वार्षिक शिखर सम्मेलन के लिए हुई थी; इस दौरान दोनों पक्षों ने रक्षा एवं सुरक्षा सहयोग को गहरा करने पर सहमति व्यक्त की थी।



FM to lead ministerial delegation for key meet in Singapore

GS II: IR
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman will lead a ministerial delegation that will attend the 4th India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR) to be held on Thursday, the Ministry of Finance said.

The delegation will also include Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar, Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal, and MoS for Electronics & IT and Commerce & Industry Jitin Prasada.

In a separate release, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said that Mr. Goyal would be accompanied by "around 70 senior business leaders from diverse sectors" to strengthen India-Singapore economic and commercial ties. "The delegation in-



Nirmala Sitharaman

cludes representatives from technology, software and AI, manufacturing and engineering, infrastructure and sustainability, financial services and FinTech, healthcare and life sciences, food and agriculture, logistics, maritime and trade, and professional services," the Commerce Ministry statement said.

The ISMR, established in 2022, is the apex ministerial mechanism for advancing the India-Singapore Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

20A8. FM to lead ministerial delegation for key meet in Singapore

वित्त मंत्री सिंगापुर में महत्वपूर्ण बैठक के लिए मंत्रिस्तरीय प्रतिनिधिमंडल का नेतृत्व करेंगी

- Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman will lead a ministerial delegation that will attend the 4th India Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR) to be held on Thursday, the Ministry of Finance said.

वित्त एवं कॉर्पोरेट कार्य मंत्री निर्मला सीतारमण एक मंत्रिस्तरीय प्रतिनिधिमंडल का नेतृत्व करेंगी, जो गुरुवार को आयोजित होने वाली चौथी भारत-सिंगापुर मंत्रिस्तरीय गोलमेज बैठक (ISMR) में भाग लेगा, वित्त मंत्रालय ने यह जानकारी दी।

- The delegation will also include Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar, Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal, and MoS for Electronics & IT and Commerce & Industry Jitin Prasada. प्रतिनिधिमंडल में विदेश मंत्री एस. जयशंकर, वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्री पीयूष गोयल तथा इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स एवं IT और वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग राज्य मंत्री जितिन प्रसाद भी शामिल होंगे।

- In a separate release, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said that Mr. Goyal would be accompanied by "around 70 senior business leaders from diverse sectors" to strengthen India-Singapore economic and commercial ties.

वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्रालय ने एक अलग विज्ञप्ति में

कहा कि श्री गोयल के साथ "विभिन्न क्षेत्रों के लगभग 70 वरिष्ठ कारोबारी नेता" होंगे, जिनका उद्देश्य भारत-सिंगापुर आर्थिक और वाणिज्यिक संबंधों को मजबूत करना है।

- "The delegation includes representatives from technology, software and AI, manufacturing and engineering, infrastructure and sustainability, financial services and FinTech, healthcare and life sciences, food and agriculture, logistics, maritime and trade, and professional services," the Commerce Ministry statement said. वाणिज्य मंत्रालय के बयान के अनुसार, "प्रतिनिधिमंडल में प्रौद्योगिकी, सॉफ्टवेयर और AI, विनिर्माण एवं इंजीनियरिंग, बुनियादी ढाँचा एवं संधारणीयता, वित्तीय सेवाएँ एवं FinTech, स्वास्थ्य सेवा एवं जीवन विज्ञान, खाद्य एवं कृषि, लॉजिस्टिक्स, समुद्री क्षेत्र एवं व्यापार तथा पेशेवर सेवाओं" के प्रतिनिधि शामिल हैं।
- The ISMR, established in 2022, is the apex ministerial mechanism for advancing the India-Singapore Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

2022 में स्थापित ISMR, भारत-सिंगापुर व्यापक रणनीतिक साझेदारी (Comprehensive Strategic Partnership) को आगे बढ़ाने के लिए शीर्ष मंत्रिस्तरीय तंत्र है।



GS Paper III: Economy		20 August 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
20A8	Transmission constraints threaten India's renewable energy expansion पारेषण संबंधी बाधाएँ भारत के नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा विस्तार के लिए खतरा	
20A8	Revolving credit key tool for rural wealth creation परिक्रामी ऋण ग्रामीण संपदा सृजन का प्रमुख साधन	

'Transmission constraints threaten India's renewable energy expansion'

GS III: Economy

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Insufficient transmission lines have emerged as a major obstacle to India's rapid expansion of renewable energy capacity, leading to many solar power projects being "curtailed" during daylight hours, rating agency ICRA said on Wednesday. Curtailment occurs when a power generator is forced to reduce or stop producing electricity due to oversupply and grid congestion.

Around 37% of renewable energy capacity at substations affected by curtailment in the northern, western, and southern regions operates under a Temporary General Network Access (T-GNA), and this capacity faces 30% to 50% curtailment during the day, ICRA said in a statement.

T-GNA is a short-term arrangement that allows a re-



Renewable energy will account for more than 35% of power generation by 2029-30.

newable energy project to use available capacity on the inter-State transmission system, typically for periods ranging from a single time block to about 11 months. Prolonged T-GNA use can affect a power supplier's revenues. ICRA says projects operating under T-GNA are particularly vulnerable to curtailment, raising their operational costs.

In western India, where about 55% of the affected

capacity was under T-GNA, peak curtailment reached 8,617 MW as of August 6; the corresponding figure for the northern region was 5,573 MW.

Better infrastructure

Girishkumar Kadam, senior vice-president and group head of corporate ratings at ICRA, said at a press briefing that timely execution of intra-State and inter-State transmission infrastructure, along with greater storage capacity, would be critical to sustaining renewable energy additions. Apart from "transmission constraints", the impediments included delays in firming Power Purchase Agreements, land acquisition, and distribution company finances.

The constraint comes even as India's renewable energy pipeline remains substantial. ICRA said more than 150 GW of re-

newable projects were under construction as of June 30 this year. It estimates that renewable energy, including large hydro, will account for more than 35% of electricity generation by the financial year 2029-2030, compared with 22% in 2024-2025.

Grid adequacy is key

However, bids for new renewable energy projects have slowed sharply. After 40.6 GW was awarded in 2024-25, awards fell to 14.7 GW in 2025-26 and stood at 4.7 GW through August 10 this year.

ICRA also estimated that 40 GW to 45 GW of capacity with bids awarded remained without signed PPAs as of April 2026.

Mr. Kadam said the nature of new biddings also changing, with greater focus on firm and dispatchable renewable energy (FDRE) and round-the-clock (RTC) power.

20A8. Transmission constraints threaten India's renewable energy expansion

पारेषण संबंधी बाधाएँ भारत के नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा विस्तार के लिए खतरा

- Insufficient transmission lines have emerged as a major obstacle to India's rapid expansion of renewable energy capacity, leading to many solar power projects being "curtailed" during daylight hours, rating agency ICRA said on Wednesday.

अपर्याप्त पारेषण लाइनों ने भारत की नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा क्षमता के तीव्र विस्तार में एक बड़ी बाधा का रूप ले



लिया है, जिसके कारण दिन के समय कई सौर ऊर्जा परियोजनाओं का उत्पादन “कम (curtailed)” करना पड़ रहा है, रेटिंग एजेंसी ICRA ने बुधवार को कहा।

- Curtailment occurs when a power generator is forced to reduce or stop producing electricity due to oversupply and grid congestion.
कर्टैलमेंट तब होता है जब बिजली की अधिक आपूर्ति और ग्रिड में भीड़/अवरोध (grid congestion) के कारण बिजली उत्पादक को विद्युत उत्पादन कम करने या बंद करने के लिए मजबूर होना पड़ता है।
- Around 37% of renewable energy capacity at substations affected by curtailment in the northern, western, and southern regions operates under a Temporary General Network Access (T-GNA), and this capacity faces 30% to 50% curtailment during the day, ICRA said in a statement.
ICRA ने एक बयान में कहा कि उत्तरी, पश्चिमी और दक्षिणी क्षेत्रों में कर्टैलमेंट से प्रभावित सबस्टेशनों पर स्थित नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा क्षमता का लगभग 37% टेम्परेरी जनरल नेटवर्क एक्सेस (T-GNA) के तहत संचालित होता है और इस क्षमता को दिन के समय 30% से 50% तक कर्टैलमेंट का सामना करना पड़ता है।
- T-GNA is a short-term arrangement that allows a renewable energy project to use available capacity on the inter-State transmission system, typically for periods ranging from a single time block to about 11 months.
T-GNA एक अल्पकालिक व्यवस्था है, जो किसी नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा परियोजना को अंतर-राज्यीय पारेषण प्रणाली में उपलब्ध क्षमता का उपयोग करने की अनुमति देती है; सामान्यतः इसकी अवधि एक टाइम ब्लॉक से लेकर लगभग 11 महीने तक होती है।
- Prolonged T-GNA use can affect a power supplier's revenues.
T-GNA का लंबे समय तक उपयोग बिजली आपूर्तिकर्ता के राजस्व को प्रभावित कर सकता है।
- ICRA says projects operating under T-GNA are particularly vulnerable to curtailment, raising their operational costs.
ICRA के अनुसार, T-GNA के तहत संचालित परियोजनाएँ कर्टैलमेंट के प्रति विशेष रूप से संवेदनशील होती हैं, जिससे उनकी परिचालन लागत बढ़ जाती है।
- In western India, where about 55% of the affected capacity was under T-GNA, peak curtailment reached 8,617 MW as of August 6; the corresponding figure for the northern region was 5,573 MW.
पश्चिमी भारत में, जहाँ प्रभावित क्षमता का लगभग 55% T-GNA के तहत था, वहाँ 6 अगस्त तक अधिकतम कर्टैलमेंट 8,617 MW तक पहुँच गया; उत्तरी क्षेत्र में यह आँकड़ा 5,573 MW था।

Better infrastructure — बेहतर बुनियादी ढाँचा

- Girishkumar Kadam, senior vice-president and group head of corporate ratings at ICRA, said at a press briefing that timely execution of intra-State and inter-State transmission infrastructure, along with greater storage capacity, would be critical to sustaining renewable energy additions.
ICRA में कॉर्पोरेट रेटिंग्स के वरिष्ठ उपाध्यक्ष और समूह प्रमुख गिरीशकुमार कदम ने एक प्रेस ब्रीफिंग में कहा कि अंतर-राज्यीय और अंतराज्यीय पारेषण बुनियादी ढाँचे का समय पर निर्माण, साथ ही अधिक ऊर्जा भंडारण क्षमता, नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा क्षमता में वृद्धि को बनाए रखने के लिए महत्वपूर्ण होगी।
- Apart from “transmission constraints”, the impediments included delays in firming Power Purchase Agreements, land acquisition, and distribution company finances.
“पारेषण संबंधी बाधाओं” के अलावा, अन्य बाधाओं में विद्युत खरीद समझौतों (PPAs) को अंतिम रूप देने में देरी, भूमि अधिग्रहण और वितरण कंपनियों की वित्तीय स्थिति शामिल थीं।
- The constraint comes even as India's renewable energy pipeline remains substantial.
यह बाधा ऐसे समय में सामने आई है जब भारत की नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा परियोजनाओं की पाइपलाइन अभी भी काफी बड़ी है।

- ICRA said more than 150 GW of renewable projects were under construction as of June 30 this year.
ICRA ने कहा कि इस वर्ष 30 जून तक 150 GW से अधिक नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा परियोजनाएँ निर्माणाधीन थीं।
- It estimates that renewable energy, including large hydro, will account for more than 35% of electricity generation by the financial year 2029-2030, compared with 22% in 2024-2025.
ICRA का अनुमान है कि बड़ी जलविद्युत परियोजनाओं सहित नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा वित्त वर्ष 2029-30 तक कुल बिजली उत्पादन में 35% से अधिक की हिस्सेदारी रखेगी, जबकि 2024-25 में यह हिस्सेदारी 22% थी।

Grid adequacy is key — ग्रिड की पर्याप्तता महत्वपूर्ण है

- However, bids for new renewable energy projects have slowed sharply.
हालाँकि, नई नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा परियोजनाओं के लिए बोलियों/निविदाओं की प्रक्रिया में तेज गिरावट आई है।
- After 40.6 GW was awarded in 2024-25, awards fell to 14.7 GW in 2025-26 and stood at 4.7 GW through August 10 this year.
2024-25 में 40.6 GW की परियोजनाएँ आवंटित किए जाने के बाद, 2025-26 में यह आँकड़ा घटकर 14.7 GW रह गया और इस वर्ष 10 अगस्त तक 4.7 GW रहा।
- ICRA also estimated that 40 GW to 45 GW of capacity with bids awarded remained without signed PPAs as of April 2026.
ICRA ने यह भी अनुमान लगाया कि अप्रैल 2026 तक 40-45 GW क्षमता वाली ऐसी परियोजनाएँ, जिन्हें बोलियाँ आवंटित की जा चुकी थीं, फिर भी हस्ताक्षरित PPAs के बिना थीं।
- Mr. Kadam said the nature of new bidding is also changing, with greater focus on firm and dispatchable renewable energy (FDRE) and round-the-clock (RTC) power.
श्री कदम ने कहा कि नई बोली प्रक्रिया का स्वरूप भी बदल रहा है, जिसमें फर्म एवं डिस्पैचेबल नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा (FDRE) और चौबीसों घंटे (RTC) बिजली पर अधिक ध्यान दिया जा रहा है।



Revolving credit key tool for rural wealth creation

GS III: Economy: Inclusive Growth

Santosh V. Perumal
CHENNAI

Revolving credit, one of India's finest tools for financial inclusion, has been able to make deep inroads for creating sustainable rural wealth, but rising risks of debt recycling made Reserve Bank of India (RBI) skeptical.

For rural India, where income is majorly seasonal and contributes 46% to 50% of gross domestic product, revolving credit became an important component and shield against financial shocks as well as informal loan sharks.

Structural rigidity in the formal credit framework led to mismatch in cash flow needs of farmers, who incur expenses on seeds, fertilisers, labour and irrigation months ahead of income stream. Revolving credit bridges this gap by providing liquidity as required. This led to the emergence of Kisan Credit Card (KCC), overdraft facilities, self-help group (SHG) credit lines, microfinance-linked loans and of late increasingly digital credit products (which is now a cause of concern).

The role of revolving credit extends beyond the farm sector. Rural micro-enterprises depend on flexible working capital. SHG-bank linkage programmes, supported by NABARD, have created one of the world's largest community-based credit eco-

systems. The spread of formal rural finance has risen significantly, showing a rising share of rural households accessing institutional credit channels like KCC.

Financial buffer

A normal term loan is sanctioned once and repaid in fixed instalments, but in revolving credit, which comes with a pre-approved credit limit, borrowers can draw, repay and reuse. It is like a financial buffer, allowing households, farmers and small entrepreneurs manage short-term cash needs, emergencies, and income fluctuations without applying for a fresh loan each time. A prominent form of revolving credit in the rural areas was the KCC scheme, introduced in 1998-99. Over time, it expanded beyond crop cultivation to allied activities such as dairy, fisheries and animal husbandry.

Latest data suggest that more than 7.72 crore KCCs are active nationwide, with outstanding loans of about ₹10.2 lakh crore, majority of the beneficiaries being small and marginal farmers.

For the lenders, revolving credit products are strategically attractive as they provide recurring income streams and better utilisation of existing credit infrastructure, as well as higher returns on assets through repeated usage, but unchecked expansion



Making inroads: NBFCs have emerged as a pillar of last-mile credit delivery where traditional banks face challenges. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

may increase delinquencies and capital requirements; implying profitability when managed with strong risk controls.

Untapped potential

Finding the vast untapped potential and higher yield (as small-ticket unsecured revolving loans generally carry higher interest rates on higher risk), NBFCs (non-banking finance companies) have largely expanded revolving credit through consumer credit lines, digital loans, merchant finance, MSME working-capital loans and fintech partnerships.

NBFCs have emerged as an important pillar of India's last-mile credit delivery, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas where traditional banks face challenges due to high transaction costs, lack of collateral and information asymmetry. Per the latest data, there are more than 9,000 registered NBFCs

operating in India, with vast majority in the Base Layer category, having overall outstanding credit of ₹58.61 lakh crore by mid-2026.

The rural credit footprint of NBFCs is largely driven by microfinance institutions (MFIs), gold loan companies, vehicle financiers, MSME and small-ticket retail lenders. Agriculture remains a relatively small component of overall NBFC lending.

The portfolio outstanding (POS) of the microfinance sector, comprising players such as NBFC-MFIs and small finance banks, stood at ₹2.77 lakh crore as at March-end 2026 compared to ₹3.35 lakh crore as at March-end 2024.

The essence

The RBI's attempt to restrict the revolving credit offered by NBFCs shows its legitimate concern as the regulatory body needs to

tread a delicate balance between financial inclusion and financial stability.

To bring clarity, the RBI is proposing amendment as it defines 'term loan' and 'revolving credit' for the first time. A term loan can be disbursed in one or more tranches, but repayment must follow a fixed schedule. Once repaid, the credit limit cannot be restored or reused. Any facility that does not meet this definition will be treated as revolving credit, which NBFCs can no longer offer.

Rising concerns around unsecured retail credit and potential debt cycles rather prompted RBI to seek amendments. KCC and such other instruments are essential for growth, but unchecked and easy accessibility through digital platforms and consumer finance channels could pose more vulnerabilities. The NBFC-MFIs have been among the largest providers of unsecured loans. According to SIDBI-Equifax report, total microfinance POS fell by about 17% YoY to ₹2.77 lakh crore by March 2026 and the top five states (Bihar, U.P., Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Karnataka) account for 57% of total POS.

Debt evergreening

Apprehensive of evergreening, RBI repeatedly flagged the rapid growth of unsecured retail credit, particularly through fintech-NBFC partnerships,

offering high-risk loan products as revolving credit. The latest Economic Survey acknowledges the NBFC's critical role in inclusion but warned that unchecked expansion can weaken household balance sheets. The RBI remained skeptical of certain forms of revolving credit offered by non-bank entities, particularly where repayment patterns mask household indebtedness.

The RBI's concerns were not only on thin boundary between lending and technology but also on that technology has made borrowing easier and faster than financial discipline. Multiple borrowings through various apps and lack of due diligence have elevated risks. Some digital platforms relied on algorithms and alternative data without sufficient assessment of repayment capacity.

Unlike farm or business revolving credit, many digital credit lines financed consumption. A blanket restriction may be counterproductive as the MFI space has historically been underserved and lending muted on asset quality pressures and limited funding access. The policy challenge is to identify credit that helps in income generation as excessive regulatory tightening may push borrowers back towards informal lenders, defeating the purpose of financial inclusion.

20A8. Revolving credit key tool for rural wealth creation

परिक्रामी ऋण ग्रामीण संपदा सृजन का प्रमुख साधन

- Revolving credit, one of India's finest tools for financial inclusion, has been able to make deep inroads for creating sustainable rural wealth, but rising risks of debt recycling made Reserve Bank of India (RBI) skeptical.

परिक्रामी ऋण (Revolving Credit), जो भारत में वित्तीय समावेशन के प्रमुख साधनों में से एक है, टिकाऊ ग्रामीण संपदा के सृजन में गहराई तक पहुँच बनाने में सफल रहा है, लेकिन ऋण के पुनर्चक्रण (debt recycling) के बढ़ते जोखिमों ने भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक (RBI) को इसके प्रति आशंकित कर दिया है।

- For rural India, where income is majorly seasonal and contributes 46% to 50% of gross domestic product, revolving credit became an important component and shield against financial shocks as well as informal loan sharks.

ग्रामीण भारत में, जहाँ आय मुख्यतः मौसमी होती है और सकल घरेलू उत्पाद में 46% से 50% का योगदान करती है, परिक्रामी ऋण वित्तीय झटकों तथा अनौपचारिक साहूकारों से सुरक्षा प्रदान करने वाला एक महत्वपूर्ण साधन बन गया।

- Structural rigidity in the formal credit framework led to mismatch in cash flow needs of farmers, who incur expenses on seeds, fertilisers, labour and irrigation months ahead of income stream.

औपचारिक ऋण व्यवस्था की संरचनात्मक कठोरता के कारण किसानों की नकदी प्रवाह संबंधी आवश्यकताओं और उनकी आय के बीच असंगति उत्पन्न हुई, क्योंकि किसानों को बीज, उर्वरक, श्रम और सिंचाई पर आय प्राप्त होने से कई महीने पहले ही खर्च करना पड़ता है।

- Revolving credit bridges this gap by providing liquidity as required.

परिक्रामी ऋण आवश्यकतानुसार तरलता उपलब्ध कराकर इस अंतर को पाटता है।

- This led to the emergence of Kisan Credit Card (KCC), overdraft facilities, self-help group (SHG) credit lines, microfinance linked loans and of late increasingly digital credit products (which is now a cause of concern).
इसी कारण किसान क्रेडिट कार्ड (KCC), ओवरड्राफ्ट सुविधाएँ, स्वयं सहायता समूह (SHG) की ऋण सुविधाएँ, माइक्रोफाइनेंस से जुड़े ऋण और हाल के समय में तेजी से बढ़ते डिजिटल ऋण उत्पादों का विकास हुआ, जो अब चिंता का विषय भी बन रहे हैं।
- The role of revolving credit extends beyond the farm sector.
परिक्रामी ऋण की भूमिका कृषि क्षेत्र से आगे भी विस्तृत है।
- Rural microenterprises depend on flexible working capital.
ग्रामीण सूक्ष्म उद्यम लचीली कार्यशील पूंजी पर निर्भर करते हैं।
- SHG-bank linkage programmes, supported by NABARD, have created one of the world's largest community-based credit ecosystems.
NABARD द्वारा समर्थित SHG-बैंक लिंकेज कार्यक्रमों ने दुनिया के सबसे बड़े समुदाय-आधारित ऋण पारिस्थितिकी तंत्रों में से एक का निर्माण किया है।
- The spread of formal rural finance has risen significantly, showing a rising share of rural households accessing institutional credit channels like KCC.
औपचारिक ग्रामीण वित्त का प्रसार उल्लेखनीय रूप से बढ़ा है, जिससे यह पता चलता है कि KCC जैसे संस्थागत ऋण माध्यमों तक पहुँच रखने वाले ग्रामीण परिवारों का अनुपात बढ़ रहा है।

Financial buffer

वित्तीय सुरक्षा कवच

- A normal term loan is sanctioned once and repaid in fixed instalments, but in revolving credit, which comes with a pre-approved credit limit, borrowers can draw, repay and reuse.
एक सामान्य सावधि ऋण (term loan) एक बार स्वीकृत किया जाता है और निश्चित किस्तों में चुकाया जाता है, जबकि परिक्रामी ऋण, जिसमें पहले से स्वीकृत ऋण सीमा होती है, में उधारकर्ता राशि निकाल सकता है, चुका सकता है और पुनः उपयोग कर सकता है।
- It is like a financial buffer, allowing households, farmers and small entrepreneurs manage short-term cash needs, emergencies, and income fluctuations without applying for a fresh loan each time.
यह एक वित्तीय सुरक्षा कवच की तरह है, जो परिवारों, किसानों और छोटे उद्यमियों को हर बार नए ऋण के लिए आवेदन किए बिना अल्पकालिक नकदी आवश्यकताओं, आपात स्थितियों और आय में उतार-चढ़ाव का प्रबंधन करने में सक्षम बनाता है।
- A prominent form of revolving credit in the rural areas was the KCC scheme, introduced in 1998-99.
ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में परिक्रामी ऋण का एक प्रमुख रूप KCC योजना रही है, जिसे 1998-99 में शुरू किया गया था।
- Over time, it expanded beyond crop cultivation to allied activities such as dairy, fisheries and animal husbandry.
समय के साथ इसका विस्तार फसल उत्पादन से आगे बढ़कर डेयरी, मत्स्य पालन और पशुपालन जैसी संबद्ध गतिविधियों तक हुआ।
- Latest data suggest that more than 7.72 crore KCCs are active nationwide, with outstanding loans of about ₹10.2 lakh crore, majority of the beneficiaries being small and marginal farmers.
नवीनतम आँकड़ों के अनुसार, देशभर में 7.72 करोड़ से अधिक KCC सक्रिय हैं और इन पर लगभग ₹10.2 लाख करोड़ का बकाया ऋण है; इनमें अधिकांश लाभार्थी लघु और सीमांत किसान हैं।
- For the lenders, revolving credit products are strategically attractive as they provide recurring income streams and better utilisation of existing credit infrastructure, as well as higher returns on assets through repeated usage, but unchecked expansion may increase delinquencies and capital requirements; implying profitability when managed with strong risk controls.

ऋणदाताओं के लिए परिक्रामी ऋण उत्पाद रणनीतिक रूप से आकर्षक हैं, क्योंकि वे निरंतर आय के स्रोत, मौजूदा ऋण बुनियादी ढाँचे का बेहतर उपयोग तथा बार-बार उपयोग के माध्यम से परिसंपत्तियों पर अधिक प्रतिफल प्रदान करते हैं; लेकिन अनियंत्रित विस्तार भुगतान चूक और पूंजी आवश्यकताओं को बढ़ा सकता है, इसलिए मजबूत जोखिम नियंत्रण के साथ ही इनकी लाभप्रदता सुनिश्चित की जा सकती है।

Untapped potential

अप्रयुक्त क्षमता

- Finding the vast untapped potential and higher yield (as small-ticket unsecured revolving loans generally carry higher interest rates on higher risk), NBFCs (non-banking finance companies) have largely expanded revolving credit through consumer credit lines, digital loans, merchant finance, MSME working-capital loans and fintech partnerships. विशाल अप्रयुक्त क्षमता और अधिक प्रतिफल को देखते हुए—क्योंकि छोटी राशि वाले असुरक्षित परिक्रामी ऋणों पर अधिक जोखिम के कारण सामान्यतः अधिक ब्याज दरें होती हैं—गैर-बैंकिंग वित्तीय कंपनियों (NBFCs) ने उपभोक्ता ऋण सीमाओं, डिजिटल ऋणों, मर्चेन्ट वित्त, MSME कार्यशील पूंजी ऋणों और फिनटेक साझेदारियों के माध्यम से परिक्रामी ऋण का बड़े पैमाने पर विस्तार किया है।
- NBFCs have emerged as an important pillar of India's last-mile credit delivery, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas where traditional banks face challenges due to high transaction costs, lack of collateral and information asymmetry. NBFCs भारत में अंतिम छोर तक ऋण पहुँचाने की व्यवस्था का एक महत्वपूर्ण स्तंभ बनकर उभरी हैं, विशेषकर ग्रामीण और अर्ध-शहरी क्षेत्रों में, जहाँ पारंपरिक बैंकों को उच्च लेन-देन लागत, संपार्श्विक की कमी और सूचना विषमता जैसी चुनौतियों का सामना करना पड़ता है।
- Per the latest data, there are more than 9,000 registered NBFCs operating in India, with vast majority in the Base Layer category, having overall outstanding credit of ₹58.61 lakh crore by mid-2026. नवीनतम आँकड़ों के अनुसार, भारत में 9,000 से अधिक पंजीकृत NBFCs कार्यरत हैं, जिनमें अधिकांश बेस लेयर श्रेणी में हैं और जिनका कुल बकाया ऋण 2026 के मध्य तक ₹58.61 लाख करोड़ था।
- The rural credit footprint of NBFCs is largely driven by microfinance institutions (MFIs), gold loan companies, vehicle financiers, MSME and small-ticket retail lenders. ग्रामीण ऋण क्षेत्र में NBFCs की उपस्थिति मुख्यतः माइक्रोफाइनेंस संस्थानों (MFIs), गोल्ड लोन कंपनियों, वाहन वित्तदाताओं, MSME ऋणदाताओं और छोटी राशि वाले खुदरा ऋणदाताओं द्वारा संचालित है।
- Agriculture remains a relatively small component of overall NBFC lending. कृषि ऋण, NBFCs द्वारा दिए जाने वाले कुल ऋण का अपेक्षाकृत छोटा हिस्सा बना हुआ है।
- The portfolio outstanding (POS) of the microfinance sector, comprising players such as NBFC-MFIs and small finance banks, stood at ₹2.77 lakh crore as at March-end 2026 compared to ₹3.35 lakh a year earlier and ₹3.78 lakh crore as at March-end 2024. माइक्रोफाइनेंस क्षेत्र का पोर्टफोलियो बकाया (POS), जिसमें NBFC-MFIs और स्मॉल फाइनेंस बैंक जैसे संस्थान शामिल हैं, मार्च 2026 के अंत में ₹2.77 लाख करोड़ था, जबकि एक वर्ष पहले यह ₹3.35 लाख करोड़ और मार्च 2024 के अंत में ₹3.78 लाख करोड़ था।

The essence

मूल बात

- The RBI's attempt to restrict the revolving credit offered by NBFCs shows its legitimate concern as the regulatory body needs to tread a delicate balance between financial inclusion and financial stability. NBFCs द्वारा दिए जाने वाले परिक्रामी ऋण को सीमित करने का RBI का प्रयास उसकी उचित चिंता को



दर्शाता है, क्योंकि नियामक संस्था को **वित्तीय समावेशन और वित्तीय स्थिरता के बीच नाजुक संतुलन** बनाए रखना आवश्यक है।

- To bring clarity, the RBI is proposing amendment as it defines 'term loan' and 'revolving credit' for the first time.
स्पष्टता लाने के लिए RBI संशोधन का प्रस्ताव कर रहा है, जिसके तहत पहली बार **'सावधि ऋण'** और **'परिक्रामी ऋण'** को परिभाषित किया जा रहा है।
- A term loan can be disbursed in one or more tranches, but repayment must follow a fixed schedule.
सावधि ऋण को **एक या अधिक किस्तों** में वितरित किया जा सकता है, लेकिन उसका पुनर्भुगतान **निश्चित समय-सारणी** के अनुसार होना चाहिए।
- Once repaid, the credit limit cannot be restored or reused.
एक बार चुकाए जाने के बाद **ऋण सीमा को पुनः बहाल या पुनः उपयोग नहीं** किया जा सकता।
- Any facility that does not meet this definition will be treated as revolving credit, which NBFCs can no longer offer.
जो भी सुविधा इस परिभाषा को पूरा नहीं करती, उसे **परिक्रामी ऋण** माना जाएगा, जिसे NBFCs अब पेश नहीं कर सकेंगी।
- Rising concerns around unsecured retail credit and potential debt cycles rather prompted RBI to seek amendments.
बल्कि **असुरक्षित खुदरा ऋण** और संभावित **ऋण चक्रों** को लेकर बढ़ती चिंताओं ने RBI को संशोधन की मांग करने के लिए प्रेरित किया।
- KCC and such other instruments are essential for growth, but unchecked and easy accessibility through digital platforms and consumer finance channels could pose more vulnerabilities.
KCC और ऐसे अन्य साधन आर्थिक विकास के लिए आवश्यक हैं, लेकिन डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म और उपभोक्ता वित्त माध्यमों के जरिए इनकी **अनियंत्रित और आसान उपलब्धता** अधिक कमजोरियाँ पैदा कर सकती है।
- The NBFC-MFIs have been among the largest providers of unsecured loans.
NBFC-MFIs असुरक्षित ऋणों के सबसे बड़े प्रदाताओं में शामिल रहे हैं।
- According to SIDBI-Equifax report, total microfinance POS fell by about 17% YoY to ₹2.77 lakh crore by March 2026 and the top five states (Bihar, U.P., Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Karnataka) account for 57% of total POS.
SIDBI-Equifax रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, मार्च 2026 तक कुल माइक्रोफाइनेंस POS में साल-दर-साल लगभग **17% की गिरावट आई और यह ₹2.77 लाख करोड़** रह गया; जबकि शीर्ष पाँच राज्य—**बिहार, उत्तर प्रदेश, तमिलनाडु, पश्चिम बंगाल और कर्नाटक**—कुल POS का **57% हिस्सा** रखते हैं।

Debt evergreening ऋण का एवरग्रीनिंग

- Apprehensive of evergreening, RBI repeatedly flagged the rapid growth of unsecured retail credit, particularly through fintech-NBFC partnerships, offering high-risk loan products as revolving credit.
ऋण के एवरग्रीनिंग की आशंका को देखते हुए RBI ने बार-बार **असुरक्षित खुदरा ऋण** के तीव्र विस्तार को चिह्नित किया है, विशेष रूप से **फिनटेक-NBFC साझेदारियों** के माध्यम से, जहाँ उच्च जोखिम वाले ऋण उत्पादों को **परिक्रामी ऋण** के रूप में पेश किया जा रहा है।
- The latest Economic Survey acknowledges the NBFC's critical role in inclusion but warned that unchecked expansion can weaken household balance sheets.
नवीनतम **आर्थिक सर्वेक्षण** NBFCs की वित्तीय समावेशन में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका को स्वीकार करता है, लेकिन चेतावनी देता है कि **अनियंत्रित विस्तार परिवारों की वित्तीय स्थिति को कमजोर** कर सकता है।
- The RBI remained skeptical of certain forms of revolving credit offered by non-bank entities, particularly where repayment patterns mask household indebtedness.



RBI गैर-बैंकिंग संस्थाओं द्वारा दिए जाने वाले कुछ प्रकार के परिक्रामी ऋण के प्रति आशंकित बना रहा, विशेष रूप से वहाँ जहाँ पुनर्भुगतान के पैटर्न परिवारों के वास्तविक ऋणग्रस्तता स्तर को छिपाते हैं।

- The RBI's concerns were not only on thin boundary between lending and technology but also on that technology has made borrowing easier and faster than financial discipline.
RBI की चिंताएँ केवल ऋण देने और प्रौद्योगिकी के बीच धुंधली होती सीमा तक सीमित नहीं थीं, बल्कि इस बात को लेकर भी थीं कि प्रौद्योगिकी ने वित्तीय अनुशासन की तुलना में उधार लेना अधिक आसान और तेज बना दिया है।
- Multiple borrowings through various apps and lack of due diligence have elevated risks.
विभिन्न ऐप्स के माध्यम से एकाधिक ऋण लेना और समुचित जाँच-पड़ताल (due diligence) का अभाव जोखिमों को बढ़ा रहे हैं।
- Some digital platforms relied on algorithms and alternative data without sufficient assessment of repayment capacity.
कुछ डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म ने पुनर्भुगतान क्षमता का पर्याप्त आकलन किए बिना एल्गोरिदम और वैकल्पिक आँकड़ों पर निर्भरता दिखाई।
- Unlike farm or business revolving credit, many digital credit lines financed consumption.
कृषि या व्यावसायिक परिक्रामी ऋण के विपरीत, कई डिजिटल ऋण सीमाओं का उपयोग उपभोग के वित्तपोषण के लिए किया गया।
- A blanket restriction may be counterproductive as the MFI space has historically been underserved and lending muted on asset quality pressures and limited funding access.
व्यापक प्रतिबंध प्रतिकूल परिणाम दे सकता है, क्योंकि MFI क्षेत्र ऐतिहासिक रूप से कम सेवा प्राप्त क्षेत्र रहा है और परिसंपत्ति गुणवत्ता संबंधी दबावों तथा सीमित वित्तपोषण पहुँच के कारण ऋण वितरण पहले ही धीमा रहा है।
- The policy challenge is to identify credit that helps in income generation as excessive regulatory tightening may push borrowers back towards informal lenders, defeating the purpose of financial inclusion.
नीतिगत चुनौती ऐसे ऋण की पहचान करना है जो आय सृजन में सहायता करता हो, क्योंकि अत्यधिक नियामकीय कठोरता उधारकर्ताओं को फिर से अनौपचारिक ऋणदाताओं की ओर धकेल सकती है और इस प्रकार वित्तीय समावेशन के उद्देश्य को विफल कर सकती है।

GS Paper III: Environment		20 August 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
20A8	If solar irrigation is over-drawing groundwater, it's being done wrong यदि सौर सिंचाई भूजल का अत्यधिक दोहन कर रही है, तो इसे गलत तरीके से लागू किया जा रहा है।	

If solar irrigation is over-drawing groundwater, it's being done wrong

Over the past five years, India's agricultural solar programme, PM-KUSUM, has installed over 2.5 million solar pumps, making them affordable through subsidies; as the govt. prepares PM-KUSUM 2.0, the challenge is to advance the clean energy transition without continuing to over-exploit groundwater

GS III: Environment
Mohammad Faiz Alam
Alok Sikka

“Solar irrigation will worsen the groundwater crisis.” This concern is raised in most discussions about the rapid spread of solar irrigation in India – where heavily subsidised or free electricity has led to unsustainable groundwater abstraction, contributing to falling water tables, depleting aquifers, and growing fiscal burdens on energy utilities.

Thus, with solar irrigation offering almost free power and no incentive to limit pumping, farmers may draw ever more groundwater.

However, there are three gaps in this framing that one should consider. First, the current debate often treats solar irrigation as a single model – typically a farmer operating a standalone solar pump with no incentive to conserve water.

In reality, solar irrigation models come in different shapes and sizes differentiated by design, ownership structure, and pricing incentives, all of which influence groundwater-related outcomes.

Dependence on model

For example, grid-connected solar models that allow farmers to sell surplus solar electricity back to the grid provides incentives for efficient water use.

Evidence from Gujarat's Suryashakti Kisan Yojana (SKY) scheme, where approximately 100 agricultural feeders were transitioned to solar energy, shows that solar farmers had significantly slower growth in energy consumption and irrigation application than non-solar farmers, indicating more sustainable water use.

The SKY scheme offered around ₹7 per unit of energy as a feed-in-tariff, creating a meaningful incentive to conserve electricity and export energy. And by exporting energy, farmers earned an average of roughly ₹21,900 annually, effectively transforming them from energy consumers to energy producers.

Similarly, in Bangladesh, in the most common solar model – called the fee-for-service centralised solar model – pump owners have earned revenue by supplying water to multiple farmers within a fixed command area. This model showed that farmers who used solar irrigation did not apply more water than farmers who used diesel for irrigation even though solar irrigation was 20-30% cheaper.

This is because excessive irrigation by one farmer reduced the operator's ability to serve others, making the efficient and equitable use of groundwater for irrigation imperative for businesses looking to become financially sustainable.

So the real question is not whether solar irrigation is inherently good or bad for groundwater but what kind of solar irrigation model is deployed, where, and with what incentives.

Even for standalone off-grid pumps under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Uthhan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM), there is evidence that solar pump utilisation – and the extent to which it replaces diesel versus grid electricity use – varies widely with



Solar irrigation models come in different shapes and sizes differentiated by design, ownership structure, and pricing incentives, all of which influence groundwater-related outcomes. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

installed capacity, the water table's depth, and years of operating experience.

Diverse outcomes

Second, the current debate treats energy as the only factor determining groundwater outcomes, discounting the impact of local hydrogeology and agriculture. Evidence shows solar irrigation impact on farmers' irrigation behaviour is shaped by local hydrogeology, cropping patterns, marginal returns to irrigation, and soil type, among other factors.

In regions with hard-rock aquifers with limited water storage capacity, and rainfed cropping, where each additional unit of irrigation water yields high marginal benefits, water use changed little between solar and non-solar uses (regardless of the energy source in the latter case). This diversity in outcomes must be central to policy design.

In regions such as Punjab and Haryana, where irrigation is already widespread and dominated by water-intensive crops like rice and wheat, there is little scope to expand irrigated area, making it unlikely that solar irrigation will drive further groundwater over-exploitation.

The key question in such regions is not whether solar threatens groundwater, but whether it can make water, energy, and food systems more sustainable. Replacing subsidised fossil-fuel electricity with grid-connected solar can reduce subsidy costs, lower emissions, and encourage more efficient water and energy use.

On the other hand, Eastern India presents a different picture where irrigation expansion has been constrained more by access to energy than to water. Large areas remain rainfed, with farmers facing high diesel costs and unreliable power for irrigation. In such regions, solar irrigation can meaningfully improve agricultural productivity and climate resilience.

This shows solar irrigation policy, as it

relates to groundwater, should follow a differentiated regional approach, reflected in context-specific deployment of solar irrigation models, paired with stronger groundwater monitoring and adaptive management to catch emerging stress early.

Emissions, subsidy burdens

A third limitation is when solar irrigation is evaluated in a silo, either as a water or energy intervention, when its consequences span water, energy, and food. For example, groundwater irrigation in India is estimated to generate between 45-62 million tonnes of carbon dioxide a year. Agricultural electricity subsidies across States amount to over ₹1 lakh crore a year. Solar irrigation can reduce both emissions and subsidy burdens.

Estimates from Gujarat suggest each grid-connected solar farmer offsets approximately 12.3 tonnes of CO₂ annually through on-farm solar use and electricity exported to the grid while subsidies covered nearly one-fourth of government investments within the first two years. Scaled across India's more than 25 million agricultural pumps, the mitigation and fiscal implications are substantial. Thus, the question we should be asking is not whether solar irrigation will worsen groundwater risks but how best solar irrigation can be deployed to maximise its benefits.

Expanding access

Over the past five years, India's agricultural solar programme, PM-KUSUM, has installed over 2.5 million solar pumps, making them affordable for smallholder farmers through subsidies. As the government prepares PM-KUSUM 2.0, the challenge is to advance the clean energy transition without worsening the country's already over-exploited groundwater. In water-stressed regions, grid-connected solar can be expanded

either through individual pumps or by making entire agricultural feeders go solar. Ideally, both models should reward farmers for saving water while benefit energy distribution companies (DISCOMs) transition to clean energy.

However, the current approach of paying farmers to save water by selling surplus electricity to the grid has seen limited uptake. Feeder-level transitions to solar energy has performed better, but in its current form does little to change pumping behaviour. Both models therefore need to be refined.

The individual pump model requires simpler grid connection procedures and attractive buyback prices that reflect the local value of water and crops. DISCOMs should also be incentivised to support it. Feeder-level transition to solar energy, meanwhile, should be paired with water-saving incentives to reduce both water and energy use, not just benefit DISCOMs. These could include support for micro-irrigation and direct cash payments for reduced pumping, similar to Punjab's 'Pani Bachao, Paisa Kamao' and Haryana's 'Mera Pani Meri Virasat' schemes.

That said, where farmers still lack reliable irrigation, the priority is expanding access rather than saving water. Standalone solar pumps should therefore remain the preferred option in areas with limited irrigation, poor grid access, and low groundwater risk. Rather than focusing on individual ownership, greater emphasis should be placed on scaling them through water-user associations, water-selling entrepreneurs, and farmer cooperatives in India's most irrigation-deprived regions.

(Mohammad Faiz Alam is senior regional researcher at International Water Management Institute and Alok Sikka is an emeritus scientist and former country representative - India and Bangladesh at International Water Management Institute.)

20A8. If solar irrigation is over-drawing groundwater, it's being done wrong

यदि सौर सिंचाई भूजल का अत्यधिक दोहन कर रही है, तो इसे गलत तरीके से लागू किया जा रहा है।

- “Solar irrigation will worsen the groundwater crisis.”
“सौर सिंचाई भूजल संकट को और गंभीर बना देगी।”
- This concern is raised in most discussions about the rapid spread of solar irrigation in India — where heavily subsidised or free electricity has led to unsustainable groundwater abstraction, contributing to falling water tables, depleting aquifers, and growing fiscal burdens on energy utilities.
भारत में सौर सिंचाई के तेजी से विस्तार को लेकर होने वाली अधिकांश चर्चाओं में यह चिंता व्यक्त की जाती है—जहाँ अत्यधिक सब्सिडी वाली या मुफ्त बिजली ने असंधारणीय भूजल दोहन को बढ़ावा दिया है, जिसके परिणामस्वरूप भूजल स्तर में गिरावट, जलभृतों (Aquifers) का क्षरण और ऊर्जा उपयोगिताओं पर बढ़ता हुआ राजकोषीय बोझ देखने को मिला है।
- Thus, with solar irrigation offering almost free power and no incentive to limit pumping, farmers may draw ever more groundwater.
इस प्रकार, सौर सिंचाई द्वारा लगभग मुफ्त बिजली उपलब्ध होने और पंपिंग को सीमित करने के लिए कोई प्रोत्साहन न होने के कारण किसान लगातार अधिक मात्रा में भूजल का दोहन कर सकते हैं।
- However, there are three gaps in this framing that one should consider.
हालाँकि, इस दृष्टिकोण में तीन ऐसी कमियाँ हैं जिन पर विचार किया जाना चाहिए।
- First, the current debate often treats solar irrigation as a single model – typically a farmer operating a standalone solar pump with no incentive to conserve water.
पहला, वर्तमान बहस में अक्सर सौर सिंचाई को एक ही मॉडल के रूप में देखा जाता है—आमतौर पर ऐसा मॉडल जिसमें किसान एक स्वतंत्र सौर पंप संचालित करता है और उसके पास जल संरक्षण के लिए कोई प्रोत्साहन नहीं होता।
- In reality, solar irrigation models come in different shapes and sizes differentiated by design, ownership structure, and pricing incentives, all of which influence groundwater-related outcomes.
वास्तव में, सौर सिंचाई के मॉडल विभिन्न रूपों और आकारों में होते हैं, जो डिजाइन, स्वामित्व संरचना और मूल्य-निर्धारण प्रोत्साहनों के आधार पर अलग-अलग होते हैं तथा ये सभी भूजल से संबंधित परिणामों को प्रभावित करते हैं।

Dependence on model मॉडल पर निर्भरता

- For example, grid-connected solar models that allow farmers to sell surplus solar electricity back to the grid provides incentives for efficient water use.
उदाहरण के लिए, ग्रिड से जुड़े सौर मॉडल, जो किसानों को अतिरिक्त सौर बिजली को वापस ग्रिड में बेचने की अनुमति देते हैं, कुशल जल उपयोग के लिए प्रोत्साहन प्रदान करते हैं।
- Evidence from Gujarat's Suryashakti Kisan Yojana (SKY) scheme, where approximately 100 agricultural feeders were transitioned to solar energy, shows that solar farmers had significantly slower growth in energy consumption and irrigation application than non-solar farmers, indicating more sustainable water use.
गुजरात की सूर्यशक्ति किसान योजना (SKY) से प्राप्त साक्ष्य, जिसमें लगभग 100 कृषि फीडरों को सौर ऊर्जा में परिवर्तित किया गया था, दर्शाते हैं कि सौर ऊर्जा का उपयोग करने वाले किसानों में गैर-सौर किसानों की तुलना में ऊर्जा खपत और सिंचाई के विस्तार की वृद्धि दर काफी धीमी रही, जो अधिक संधारणीय जल उपयोग का संकेत देती है।
- The SKY scheme offered around ₹7 per unit of energy as a feed-in-tariff, creating a meaningful incentive to conserve electricity and export energy.
SKY योजना के तहत ऊर्जा के लिए लगभग ₹7 प्रति यूनिट का फीड-इन टैरिफ प्रदान किया गया, जिससे बिजली बचाने और ऊर्जा को ग्रिड में निर्यात करने के लिए एक सार्थक प्रोत्साहन मिला।
- And by exporting energy, farmers earned an average of roughly ₹21,900 annually, effectively transforming them from energy consumers to energy producers.

ऊर्जा का निर्यात करके किसानों ने औसतन लगभग ₹21,900 प्रतिवर्ष अर्जित किए, जिससे वे प्रभावी रूप से ऊर्जा उपभोक्ताओं से ऊर्जा उत्पादकों में परिवर्तित हो गए।

- Similarly, in Bangladesh, in the most common solar model — called the fee-for-service centralised solar model — pump owners have earned revenue by supplying water to multiple farmers within a fixed command area.

इसी प्रकार, बांग्लादेश में सबसे सामान्य सौर मॉडल—जिसे फीस-फॉर-सर्विस केंद्रीकृत सौर मॉडल कहा जाता है—में पंप मालिकों ने एक निश्चित कमांड क्षेत्र के भीतर अनेक किसानों को पानी उपलब्ध कराकर राजस्व अर्जित किया है।

- This model showed that farmers who used solar irrigation did not apply more water than farmers who used diesel for irrigation even though solar irrigation was 20-30% cheaper. इस मॉडल से पता चला कि सौर सिंचाई का उपयोग करने वाले किसानों ने डीजल से सिंचाई करने वाले किसानों की तुलना में अधिक पानी का उपयोग नहीं किया, जबकि सौर सिंचाई 20-30% सस्ती थी।
- This is because excessive irrigation by one farmer reduced the operator's ability to serve others, making the efficient and equitable use of groundwater for irrigation imperative for businesses looking to become financially sustainable. ऐसा इसलिए हुआ क्योंकि एक किसान द्वारा अत्यधिक सिंचाई करने से ऑपरेटर की अन्य किसानों को सेवा प्रदान करने की क्षमता कम हो जाती थी, जिससे वित्तीय रूप से संधारणीय बनने की इच्छा रखने वाले व्यवसायों के लिए सिंचाई हेतु भूजल का कुशल और समानतापूर्ण उपयोग अनिवार्य हो गया।
- So the real question is not whether solar irrigation is inherently good or bad for groundwater but what kind of solar irrigation model is deployed, where, and with what incentives. इसलिए वास्तविक प्रश्न यह नहीं है कि सौर सिंचाई भूजल के लिए स्वाभाविक रूप से अच्छी है या बुरी, बल्कि यह है कि किस प्रकार का सौर सिंचाई मॉडल, कहाँ और किन प्रोत्साहनों के साथ लागू किया जाता है।
- Even for standalone off-grid pumps under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM), there is evidence that solar pump utilisation — and the extent to which it replaces diesel versus grid electricity use — varies widely with installed capacity, the water table's depth, and years of operating experience.

प्रधानमंत्री किसान ऊर्जा सुरक्षा एवं उत्थान महाभियान (PM-KUSUM) के अंतर्गत स्वतंत्र ऑफ-ग्रिड पंपों के मामले में भी साक्ष्य बताते हैं कि सौर पंपों का उपयोग—और वे डीजल की तुलना में ग्रिड बिजली के उपयोग को किस सीमा तक प्रतिस्थापित करते हैं—स्थापित क्षमता, जल स्तर की गहराई और संचालन के अनुभव के वर्षों के अनुसार व्यापक रूप से भिन्न होता है।

Diverse outcomes

विविध परिणाम

- Second, the current debate treats energy as the only factor determining groundwater outcomes, discounting the impact of local hydrogeology and agriculture. दूसरा, वर्तमान बहस में ऊर्जा को भूजल संबंधी परिणामों को निर्धारित करने वाला एकमात्र कारक माना जाता है तथा स्थानीय जलभूविज्ञान और कृषि के प्रभाव को कम करके आँका जाता है।
- Evidence shows solar irrigation impact on farmers' irrigation behaviour is shaped by local hydrogeology, cropping patterns, marginal returns to irrigation, and soil type, among other factors. साक्ष्य दर्शाते हैं कि किसानों के सिंचाई व्यवहार पर सौर सिंचाई का प्रभाव स्थानीय जलभूविज्ञान, फसल प्रतिरूप, सिंचाई से प्राप्त सीमांत प्रतिफल और मिट्टी के प्रकार सहित कई अन्य कारकों से निर्धारित होता है।
- In regions with hard-rock aquifers with limited water storage capacity, and rainfed cropping, where each additional unit of irrigation water yields high marginal benefits, water use changed little between solar and non-solar uses (regardless of the energy source in the latter case). कठोर-शैल जलभृतों, जिनकी जल भंडारण क्षमता सीमित होती है, और वर्षा-आधारित कृषि वाले क्षेत्रों में, जहाँ

सिंचाई जल की प्रत्येक अतिरिक्त इकाई से उच्च **सीमांत लाभ** प्राप्त होता है, सौर और गैर-सौर सिंचाई के बीच जल उपयोग में बहुत कम अंतर पाया गया, भले ही बाद वाले मामले में ऊर्जा का स्रोत कोई भी हो।

- This diversity in outcomes must be central to policy design.
परिणामों में इस **विविधता** को नीति-निर्माण का केंद्रीय आधार बनाया जाना चाहिए।
- In regions such as Punjab and Haryana, where irrigation is already widespread and dominated by water-intensive crops like rice and wheat, there is little scope to expand irrigated area, making it unlikely that solar irrigation will drive further groundwater over-exploitation.

पंजाब और हरियाणा जैसे क्षेत्रों में, जहाँ सिंचाई पहले से ही व्यापक है और **चावल तथा गेहूँ जैसी जल-गहन फसलों** का प्रभुत्व है, सिंचित क्षेत्र के विस्तार की बहुत कम गुंजाइश है, जिससे यह संभावना कम हो जाती है कि सौर सिंचाई भूजल के अतिरिक्त अति-दोहन को बढ़ावा देगी।

- The key question in such regions is not whether solar threatens groundwater, but whether it can make water, energy, and food systems more sustainable.
ऐसे क्षेत्रों में मुख्य प्रश्न यह नहीं है कि सौर ऊर्जा भूजल के लिए खतरा है या नहीं, बल्कि यह है कि क्या यह **जल, ऊर्जा और खाद्य प्रणालियों को अधिक संधारणीय** बना सकती है।
- Replacing subsidised fossil-fuel electricity with grid-connected solar can reduce subsidy costs, lower emissions, and encourage more efficient water and energy use.

सब्सिडी वाली जीवाश्म-ईंधन आधारित बिजली को ग्रिड से जुड़ी सौर ऊर्जा से प्रतिस्थापित करने से **सब्सिडी लागत में कमी, उत्सर्जन में कमी** तथा जल और ऊर्जा के अधिक **कुशल उपयोग** को प्रोत्साहन मिल सकता है।

- On the other hand, Eastern India presents a different picture where irrigation expansion has been constrained more by access to energy than to water.
दूसरी ओर, **पूर्वी भारत** की स्थिति अलग है, जहाँ सिंचाई का विस्तार जल की तुलना में **ऊर्जा तक पहुँच** की कमी से अधिक बाधित रहा है।
- Large areas remain rainfed, with farmers facing high diesel costs and unreliable power for irrigation.
बड़े क्षेत्र अभी भी **वर्षा-आधारित कृषि** पर निर्भर हैं और किसानों को सिंचाई के लिए **डीजल की ऊँची लागत** तथा **अविश्वसनीय बिजली आपूर्ति** का सामना करना पड़ता है।
- In such regions, solar irrigation can meaningfully improve agricultural productivity and climate resilience.
ऐसे क्षेत्रों में सौर सिंचाई **कृषि उत्पादकता और जलवायु अनुकूलन क्षमता** में सार्थक सुधार ला सकती है।
- This shows solar irrigation policy, as it relates to groundwater, should follow a differentiated regional approach, reflected in context-specific deployment of solar irrigation models, paired with stronger groundwater monitoring and adaptive management to catch emerging stress early.
यह दर्शाता है कि भूजल के संदर्भ में सौर सिंचाई नीति को **क्षेत्र-विशिष्ट दृष्टिकोण** अपनाना चाहिए, जिसमें स्थानीय परिस्थितियों के अनुरूप सौर सिंचाई मॉडलों की तैनाती के साथ **मजबूत भूजल निगरानी और अनुकूली प्रबंधन** को जोड़ा जाए, ताकि उभरते हुए जल-संकट का प्रारंभिक चरण में ही पता लगाया जा सके।

Emissions, subsidy burdens — उत्सर्जन, सब्सिडी का बोझ

- A third limitation is when solar irrigation is evaluated in a silo, either as a water or energy intervention, when its consequences span water, energy, and food.
तीसरी सीमा यह है कि जब **सौर सिंचाई** का मूल्यांकन अलग-थलग करके, केवल जल या ऊर्जा संबंधी हस्तक्षेप के रूप में किया जाता है, जबकि इसके प्रभाव **जल, ऊर्जा और खाद्य**—तीनों क्षेत्रों तक विस्तृत होते हैं।
- For example, **groundwater irrigation in India is estimated to generate between 45–62 million tonnes of carbon dioxide** a year.
उदाहरण के लिए, भारत में **भूजल सिंचाई** से प्रतिवर्ष लगभग **4.5–6.2 करोड़ टन कार्बन डाइऑक्साइड** उत्सर्जित होने का अनुमान है।

- Agricultural electricity subsidies across States amount to over **₹1 lakh crore a year**. विभिन्न राज्यों में कृषि विद्युत सब्सिडी की राशि प्रतिवर्ष **₹1 लाख करोड़** से अधिक है।
- Solar irrigation can reduce both emissions and subsidy burdens. सौर सिंचाई उत्सर्जन और सब्सिडी के बोझ, दोनों को कम कर सकती है।
- Estimates from Gujarat suggest each grid-connected solar farmer offsets approximately **12.3 tonnes of CO₂ annually** through on-farm solar use and electricity exported to the grid while subsidies covered nearly one-fourth of government investments within the first two years. गुजरात के अनुमानों के अनुसार, प्रत्येक ग्रिड से जुड़े सौर किसान खेत में सौर ऊर्जा के उपयोग तथा ग्रिड को बिजली निर्यात करने के माध्यम से प्रतिवर्ष लगभग **12.3 टन CO₂** उत्सर्जन की भरपाई करता है, जबकि पहले दो वर्षों के भीतर सब्सिडी ने सरकारी निवेश की लगभग **एक-चौथाई राशि** को वहन किया।
- Scaled across India's more than **25 million agricultural pumps**, the mitigation and fiscal implications are substantial. भारत में मौजूद **2.5 करोड़ से अधिक कृषि पंपों** पर इसे व्यापक स्तर पर लागू किया जाए, तो इसके **उत्सर्जन-न्यूनन और राजकोषीय प्रभाव** काफी महत्वपूर्ण होंगे।
- Thus, the question we should be asking is not whether solar irrigation will worsen groundwater risks but how best solar irrigation can be deployed to maximise its benefits. अतः हमें यह प्रश्न नहीं पूछना चाहिए कि सौर सिंचाई भूजल संबंधी जोखिमों को बढ़ाएगी या नहीं, बल्कि यह पूछना चाहिए कि इसके **लाभों को अधिकतम करने के लिए सौर सिंचाई को सर्वोत्तम तरीके से कैसे लागू किया जा सकता है।**

Expanding access — पहुँच का विस्तार

- Over the past five years, **India's agricultural solar programme, PM-KUSUM, has installed over 2.5 million solar pumps, making them affordable for smallholder farmers through subsidies.** पिछले पाँच वर्षों में भारत के कृषि सौर कार्यक्रम **PM-KUSUM** के तहत **25 लाख से अधिक सौर पंप** स्थापित किए गए हैं, जिससे सब्सिडी के माध्यम से उन्हें **लघु एवं सीमांत किसानों** के लिए किफायती बनाया गया है।
- As the government prepares **PM-KUSUM 2.0**, the challenge is to advance the clean energy transition without worsening the country's already over-exploited groundwater. जैसे-जैसे सरकार **PM-KUSUM 2.0** की तैयारी कर रही है, चुनौती यह है कि देश के पहले से ही **अत्यधिक दोहन किए जा चुके भूजल** की स्थिति को और खराब किए बिना **स्वच्छ ऊर्जा संक्रमण** को आगे बढ़ाया जाए।
- In water-stressed regions, grid-connected solar can be expanded either through individual pumps or by making entire agricultural feeders go solar. **जल-संकटग्रस्त क्षेत्रों में ग्रिड से जुड़ी सौर ऊर्जा का विस्तार** या तो **व्यक्तिगत पंपों** के माध्यम से किया जा सकता है अथवा **पूरे कृषि फीडरों को सौर ऊर्जा आधारित** बनाया जा सकता है।
- Ideally, both models should reward farmers for saving water while helping energy distribution companies (**DISCOMs**) transition to clean energy. आदर्श रूप से, दोनों मॉडलों में किसानों को **जल बचाने के लिए प्रोत्साहित** किया जाना चाहिए तथा साथ ही **ऊर्जा वितरण कंपनियों (DISCOMs)** को स्वच्छ ऊर्जा की ओर संक्रमण में सहायता मिलनी चाहिए।
- However, the current approach of paying farmers to save water by selling surplus electricity to the grid has seen limited uptake. हालाँकि, **अधिशेष बिजली को ग्रिड को बेचकर जल बचाने के लिए किसानों को भुगतान करने** की वर्तमान व्यवस्था को सीमित स्तर पर ही अपनाया गया है।
- Feeder-level transitions to solar energy have performed better, but in their current form they do little to change pumping behaviour. **फीडर-स्तरीय सौर ऊर्जा संक्रमण** ने बेहतर प्रदर्शन किया है, लेकिन अपने वर्तमान स्वरूप में यह **पंपिंग व्यवहार में बहुत कम परिवर्तन** करता है।
- Both models therefore need to be refined. इसलिए, दोनों मॉडलों में **सुधार किए जाने की आवश्यकता** है।



- The individual pump model requires simpler grid connection procedures and attractive buyback prices that reflect the local value of water and crops.
व्यक्तिगत पंप मॉडल के लिए सरल ग्रिड-कनेक्शन प्रक्रियाओं तथा ऐसी आकर्षक बायबैक कीमतों की आवश्यकता है, जो जल और फसलों के स्थानीय मूल्य को प्रतिबिंबित करें।
- DISCOMs should also be incentivised to support it.
DISCOMs को भी इसे समर्थन देने के लिए प्रोत्साहित किया जाना चाहिए।
- Feeder-level transition to solar energy, meanwhile, should be paired with water-saving incentives to reduce both water and energy use, not just benefit DISCOMs.
इस बीच, **फीडर-स्तरीय सौर ऊर्जा संक्रमण** को **जल-बचत प्रोत्साहनों** के साथ जोड़ा जाना चाहिए, ताकि केवल DISCOMs को लाभ पहुँचाने के बजाय **जल और ऊर्जा—दोनों के उपयोग को कम किया जा सके।**
- These could include support for **micro-irrigation** and direct cash payments for reduced pumping, similar to Punjab's '**Pani Bachao, Paisa Kamao**' and Haryana's '**Mera Pani Meri Virasat**' schemes.
इनमें **सूक्ष्म सिंचाई (micro-irrigation)** के लिए सहायता तथा पंपिंग में कमी लाने के लिए प्रत्यक्ष नकद भुगतान शामिल हो सकते हैं, जो पंजाब की '**पानी बचाओ, पैसा कमाओ**' और हरियाणा की '**मेरा पानी मेरी विरासत**' योजनाओं के समान हों।
- That said, where farmers still lack reliable irrigation, the priority is expanding access rather than saving water.
फिर भी, जहाँ किसानों के पास अभी भी **विश्वसनीय सिंचाई की सुविधा उपलब्ध नहीं है**, वहाँ प्राथमिकता जल बचाने के बजाय **सिंचाई तक पहुँच का विस्तार** करना होना चाहिए।
- Standalone solar pumps should therefore remain the preferred option in areas with limited irrigation, poor grid access, and low groundwater risk.
इसलिए, **सीमित सिंचाई, खराब ग्रिड पहुँच और कम भूजल जोखिम** वाले क्षेत्रों में **स्टैंडअलोन सौर पंप** प्राथमिक विकल्प बने रहने चाहिए।
- Rather than focusing on individual ownership, greater emphasis should be placed on scaling them through **water-user associations, water-selling entrepreneurs, and farmer cooperatives** in India's most irrigation-deprived regions.
व्यक्तिगत स्वामित्व पर ध्यान केंद्रित करने के बजाय, भारत के सबसे अधिक **सिंचाई-वंचित क्षेत्रों में जल-उपयोगकर्ता संघों, जल-विक्रय उद्यमियों और किसान सहकारी समितियों** के माध्यम से इनका व्यापक स्तर पर विस्तार करने पर अधिक जोर दिया जाना चाहिए।

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TOPICS COVERED		
20A8	J&K an 'important part of India'; will re-evaluate travel advisory: U.S. envoy J&K ‘भारत का महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा’; अमेरिकी दूत यात्रा परामर्श की फिर से समीक्षा करेंगे	

J&K an 'important part of India'; will re-evaluate travel advisory: U.S. envoy

GS III: Internal Security
Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

On his maiden visit to Jammu and Kashmir, Sergio Gor, U.S. Ambassador to India and Special Envoy to South and Central Asia, on Wednesday praised the Centre and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for their efforts to "keep India's important place safe".

"J&K is an important part of India and it's an incredibly beautiful place. I am thrilled to see this place. Delhi and the Chief Minister have made incredible steps to keep this place safe. We will have some fol-



Boosting ties: U.S. Ambassador Sergio Gor with Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. X/@USAMBINDIA

low-ups to Washington and Delhi," Mr. Gor said after meeting Mr. Abdullah at the latter's residence here.

Referring to J&K as "an important part of India" is a departure from the past,

when Kashmir was referred to as "an unresolved issue between India and Pakistan". Mr. Gor hinted at re-evaluating the travel advisory for J&K, which remains in the 'Level 4- Do

not travel' category. "We will be looking at travel warnings. It should be downgraded. It [J&K] is a beautiful area and a lot of Americans want to come here," he said.

Mr. Abdullah said that the meeting was "good opportunity to discuss relations between two countries and what the U.S. can do with J&K". "There are some legacy issues which over time we will be working to resolve," he added.

Pakistan summoned U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Natalie Baker and lodged a "strong demarche" over remarks by Mr. Gor.

20A8. J&K an 'important part of India'; will re-evaluate travel advisory: U.S. envoy J&K 'भारत का महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा'; अमेरिकी दूत यात्रा परामर्श की फिर से समीक्षा करेंगे

- On his maiden visit to Jammu and Kashmir, Sergio Gor, U.S. Ambassador to India and Special Envoy to South and Central Asia, on Wednesday praised the Centre and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for their efforts to "keep India's important place safe".

जम्मू-कश्मीर की अपनी पहली यात्रा पर आए भारत में अमेरिकी राजदूत और दक्षिण एवं मध्य एशिया के लिए विशेष दूत सर्जियो गोर ने बुधवार को केंद्र सरकार और मुख्यमंत्री उमर अब्दुल्ला के उन प्रयासों की प्रशंसा की, जिनका उद्देश्य "भारत के महत्वपूर्ण स्थान को सुरक्षित रखना" है।

- "J&K is an important part of India and it's an incredibly beautiful place. "J&K भारत का एक महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा है और यह एक अविश्वसनीय रूप से सुंदर स्थान है।
- I am thrilled to see this place. मैं इस स्थान को देखकर बेहद प्रसन्न हूँ।
- Delhi and the Chief Minister have made incredible steps to keep this place safe. दिल्ली और मुख्यमंत्री ने इस स्थान को सुरक्षित रखने के लिए असाधारण कदम उठाए हैं।
- We will have some follow-ups to Washington and Delhi," Mr. Gor said after meeting Mr. Abdullah at the latter's residence here. हम वाशिंगटन और दिल्ली के साथ आगे की कुछ कार्यवाहियाँ करेंगे," श्री गोर ने यहाँ श्री अब्दुल्ला के आवास पर उनसे मुलाकात के बाद कहा।
- Referring to J&K as "an important part of India" is a departure from the past, when Kashmir was referred to as "an unresolved issue between India and Pakistan". J&K को "भारत का एक महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा" कहना अतीत के रुख से अलग है, जब कश्मीर को "भारत और पाकिस्तान के बीच एक अनसुलझा मुद्दा" कहा जाता था।
- Mr. Gor hinted at re-evaluating the travel advisory for J&K, which remains in the 'Level 4 — Do not travel' category. श्री गोर ने J&K के लिए यात्रा परामर्श की पुनः समीक्षा करने का संकेत दिया, जो अभी भी 'लेवल 4 — यात्रा न करें' श्रेणी में है।



- "We will be looking at travel warnings.
"हम यात्रा चेतावनियों की समीक्षा करेंगे।
- It should be downgraded.
इसे निचले स्तर पर लाया जाना चाहिए।
- It [J&K] is a beautiful area and a lot of Americans want to come here," he said.
यह [J&K] एक सुंदर क्षेत्र है और बहुत से अमेरिकी यहाँ आना चाहते हैं," उन्होंने कहा।
- Mr. Abdullah said that the meeting was "good opportunity to discuss relations between two countries and what the U.S. can do with J&K".
श्री अब्दुल्ला ने कहा कि यह बैठक "दोनों देशों के संबंधों और अमेरिका J&K के लिए क्या कर सकता है, इस पर चर्चा करने का अच्छा अवसर" थी।
- "There are some legacy issues which over time we will be working to resolve," he added.
उन्होंने कहा, "कुछ विरासत में मिले पुराने मुद्दे हैं, जिन्हें समय के साथ हम हल करने के लिए काम करेंगे।"
- Pakistan summoned U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Natalie Baker and lodged a "strong demarche" over remarks by Mr. Gor.
श्री गोर की टिप्पणियों को लेकर पाकिस्तान ने अमेरिकी कार्यवाहक राजदूत नताली बेकर को तलब किया और उनके समक्ष "कड़ा राजनयिक विरोध" (strong demarche) दर्ज कराया।

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