To watch an in-depth discussion on the topic, click on the YouTube link below: https://www.youtube.com/@PatrioticIAS

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07_12_2024 DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

1. **RBI Retains Repo Rate at 6.5% Amid High Inflation**
   उच्च मुद्रास्फीति के बीच RBI ने रेपो रेट 6.5% पर बरकरार रखा **(GS Paper-III: Growth and Inflation)**

2. **Vikram Misri to visit Dhaka on Monday as tensions mount** / विक्रम मिस्री सोमवार को ढाका का दौरा करेंगे, बढ़ते तनाव के बीच **(GS Paper-II: India-Bangladesh)**

3. **SC to hear plea to reduce water level at Mullaperiyar**
   मुल्लापेरियार में जल स्तर कम करने की याचिका पर सुप्रीम कोर्ट की सुनवाई **(GS Paper-I: Geography)**

4. **European Space Agency to support Gaganyaan mission**
   यूरोपीय अंतरिक्ष एजेंसी गगनयान मिशन का समर्थन करेगी **(GS Paper-III: Environment)**

5. **Nicobarese have ancestral connection with Austroasiatic populations: study** / निकोबारी लोगों का ऑस्ट्रोएशियाटिक जनसंख्या से पूर्वजों का संबंध: अध्ययन **(GS Paper-I: Human Geography)**

6. **Staying the course** / नीति पर कायम रहना **(GS Paper-III: Growth and Inflation)**

7. **Public health — insights from the 1896 Bombay Plague**
   सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य – 1896 के बॉम्बे प्लेग से प्राप्त जानकारियां **(GS Paper-I: History)**

8. **Silica Scars / सिलिका के निशान (GS Paper-III: Mining/Disaster Management)**

9. **Building on the Revival of the Manufacturing Sector निर्माण क्षेत्र के पुनरुद्धार पर निर्माण (GS Paper-III: Manufacturing Sector)**

10. **The Cyclone That Battered Tamil Nadu / तमिलनाडु पर कहर ढाने वाला चक्रवात (GS Paper-I: Geography/GS Paper-III: Disaster Management)**

11. **Indira Gandhi Peace Prize to be conferred on Michelle Bachelet / इंदिरा गांधी शांति पुरस्कार मिशेल बाचेलेट को प्रदान किया जाएगा (PCS/GS Paper-II: India-South America)**

12. **Kolambkar sworn in as pro tem Speaker / कोलंबकर ने प्रो-टेम स्पीकर के रूप में शपथ ली (GS Paper-II: Pro-Tem Speaker)**

13. **No plans for de-dollarisation: Das / डॉलर से मुक्ति की कोई योजना नहीं: दास (GS Paper-III: Foreign Reserve)**

14. **RBI's MuleHunter to prevent digital fraud / आरबीआई का म्यूलहंटर डिजिटल धोखाधड़ी को रोकने के लिए (GS Paper-III: Cyber Crime)**

15. **Small finance banks allowed to transfer loan amounts via UPI / स्मॉल फाइनेंस बैंक को यूपीआई के माध्यम से ऋण राशि स्थानांतरित करने की अनुमति (GS Paper-III: Banking System)**

16. **Balance between growth and inflation is unsettled, says RBI Governor Das / विकास और महंगाई के बीच संतुलन अनिश्चित है, कहते हैं आरबीआई गवर्नर दास (GS Paper-III)**

17. After capturing Hama, Syrian insurgents advance to Homs / हामा पर कब्जा करने के बाद, सीरियाई विद्रोहियों ने होम्स की ओर बढ़ाई अग्रिम स्थिति (GS Paper-II: IR)

18. Synagogue comes under arson attack in Australia ऑस्ट्रेलिया में सिनागोग पर आगजनी हमला (GS Paper-I: A&C)

Amid high inflation, RBI retains repo rate at 6.5%

Monetary Policy Committee takes note of slowdown in growth momentum, downgrades growth and inflation estimates for 2024-25; persistent inflation deflates consumption and growth, says Das

GS Paper III: Growth and Inflation

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday held steadfast in its battle against inflation amid weakening growth momentum, with four of six members voting to keep policy repo rate unchanged at 6.50% for the 11th bi-monthly review in a row.

However, acknowledging that the economy is facing tight liquidity conditions that are likely to persist for a few months, it cut the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) for banks by 50 basis points to 4%, after a gap of two and half years, in a bid to support growth.

While divisions within the MPC on a *status quo* on rates expanded from the 5:1 vote in October, the pa-

Balancing act
The RBI on Friday tried to find a balance between inflation management and supporting economic growth

- The RBI kept the repo rate **unchanged at 6.5%** for a record 11th meeting in a row
- The Cash Reserve Ratio — the proportion of deposits that banks must set aside with the central bank — has

been cut by **50 basis points to 4%**
- The cut will infuse ₹1.16 lakh crore into the banking system and will soften short-term interest rates and enhance capacity of banks to extend credit

nel was unanimous on sticking to a 'neutral' stance and remaining unambiguously focused on a durable alignment of inflation with its 4% target, while supporting growth. Inflation had spiked to a 14-month high of 6.2% in October, the last available price rise number.

"The MPC took note of the recent slowdown in the growth momentum, which

translates into a downward revision in the growth forecast for the current year. Going forward into the second half of this year and the next year, the MPC assessed the growth outlook to be resilient, but warranting close monitoring," RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said in his statement.

Noting the RBI's mandate is to ensure price stability while supporting

growth, he said persistently high inflation reduced the disposable income of consumers and dented private consumption which negatively impacted the real GDP growth.

Real GDP growth in the July to September quarter fell to a seven-quarter low of 5.4%, compared to RBI's 7% projection, and the MPC has now downgraded the growth forecast for 2024-25 to 6.6% from 7.2%.

Similarly, with inflation increasing sharply in September and October led by an unanticipated increase in food prices, the retail inflation for 2024-25 has now been projected at 4.8% compared to the 4.5% average projected till October.

RBI Retains Repo Rate at 6.5% Amid High Inflation

उच्च मुद्रास्फीति के बीच RBI ने रेपो रेट 6.5% पर बरकरार रखा

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) retained the policy repo rate at 6.5% for the 11th bi-monthly review in a row, with four out of six members voting for no change.

भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक (RBI) की मौद्रिक नीति समिति (MPC) ने लगातार 11वीं द्वि-मासिक समीक्षा के लिए रेपो दर को 6.5% पर बनाए रखा, जिसमें छह में से चार सदस्यों ने कोई बदलाव न करने के पक्ष में मतदान किया।

- To address **tight liquidity conditions**, the **Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR)** for banks was reduced by **50 basis points to 4%**, marking the first cut in **two and a half years**.
  कठोर तरलता परिस्थितियों का समाधान करने के लिए बैंकों के लिए **नकद आरक्षित अनुपात (CRR)** को **50 आधार अंक घटाकर 4%** कर दिया गया, जो **ढाई साल** में पहली बार हुआ है।
- **Inflation** spiked to a **14-month high of 6.2% in October**, significantly impacting disposable income and consumption.
  अक्टूबर में मुद्रास्फीति **6.2% तक पहुंच गई**, जो **14 महीनों** में **सबसे अधिक** है और इसने उपभोक्ताओं की **निवल आय और खपत** को गंभीर रूप से प्रभावित किया।
- The **Real GDP growth** for the **July-September quarter** fell to a **seven-quarter low of 5.4%**, compared to the RBI's earlier projection of **7%**.
  जुलाई-सितंबर तिमाही में **वास्तविक GDP वृद्धि** घटकर **7 तिमाहियों** के निचले स्तर **5.4%** पर पहुंच गई, जबकि RBI का पूर्वानुमान **7%** था।
- The **growth forecast for 2024-25** has been **downgraded to 6.6%** from **7.2%**, and **retail inflation** is now projected at **4.8%** for the same period, up from the earlier **4.5% average**.
  2024-25 के लिए **वृद्धि का पूर्वानुमान** घटाकर **6.6%** कर दिया गया है, जो पहले **7.2%** था। **खुदरा मुद्रास्फीति** अब इसी अवधि के लिए **4.8%** रहने की संभावना है, जो पहले **4.5% औसत** थी।
- The **MPC** emphasized a **neutral policy stance** and reiterated its focus on achieving a **durable inflation alignment with the 4% target** while supporting growth.
  MPC ने **तटस्थ नीति रुख** पर जोर दिया और **4% के लक्ष्य के साथ स्थायी मुद्रास्फीति संरेखण** प्राप्त करने पर ध्यान केंद्रित किया, साथ ही वृद्धि को समर्थन देने पर भी जोर दिया।
- RBI Governor **Shaktikanta Das** noted that persistently high inflation reduces **disposable income** and dents **private consumption**, negatively affecting **real GDP growth**.
  RBI के गवर्नर **शक्तिकांत दास** ने बताया कि लगातार उच्च मुद्रास्फीति **निवल आय** को कम करती है और **निजी खपत** को प्रभावित करती है, जिससे **वास्तविक GDP वृद्धि** पर नकारात्मक प्रभाव पड़ता है।

Food Inflation Pressures and RBI's Monetary Policy Updates
खाद्य मुद्रास्फीति का दबाव और RBI की मौद्रिक नीति अद्यतन

- Food inflation pressures are expected to persist in the **third quarter (Q3)** of the financial year and ease only in **Q4 of 2024-25**, driven by seasonal corrections in **vegetable prices**, **kharif harvest arrivals**, likely good **rabi output**, and adequate **cereal buffer stocks**, according to RBI Governor **Shaktikanta Das**.

  खाद्य मुद्रास्फीति का दबाव वित्तीय वर्ष की **तीसरी तिमाही (Q3)** में जारी रहने की संभावना है और यह **2024-25 की चौथी तिमाही (Q4)** में ही कम होगा। यह **सब्जियों की मौसमी सुधार**, **खरीफ फसल की आवक**, संभावित अच्छी **रबी उत्पादन**, और पर्याप्त **अनाज भंडार** के कारण होगा, जैसा कि RBI गवर्नर **शक्तिकांत दास** ने कहा।

- **Adverse weather events**, geopolitical uncertainties, and **financial market volatility** pose **upside risks to inflation**, Das added.

  प्रतिकूल मौसम घटनाएं, भू-राजनीतिक अनिश्चितताएं, और **वित्तीय बाजार में अस्थिरता** मुद्रास्फीति के **बढ़ने के जोखिम** पैदा करती हैं, दास ने कहा।

- The **MPC** stressed that **durable price stability** is crucial for laying strong foundations for high growth and remains committed to restoring the **inflation-growth balance**.

  MPC ने जोर दिया कि **स्थायी मूल्य स्थिरता** उच्च वृद्धि के लिए मजबूत नींव रखने के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है और **मुद्रास्फीति-वृद्धि संतुलन** बहाल करने के लिए प्रतिबद्ध है।

- Das described the current **growth-inflation flux** as a "critical juncture" and emphasized the need for **prudence and practicality** in navigating the complexities of the evolving situation.

  दास ने मौजूदा **वृद्धि-मुद्रास्फीति के अस्थिरता** को एक "महत्वपूर्ण चरण" बताया और विकसित हो रही स्थिति की जटिलताओं को संभालने में **सावधानी और व्यावहारिकता** की आवश्यकता पर जोर दिया।

- To address **liquidity stress** in the system, the RBI will reduce the **Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR)** of all banks to **4% of Net Demand and Time Liabilities (NDTL)** in two **tranches of 25 bps** each, effective from **December 14, 2024**, and **December 28, 2024**.

  प्रणाली में **तरलता तनाव** को संबोधित करने के लिए, RBI सभी बैंकों के **नकद आरक्षित अनुपात (CRR)** को **शुद्ध मांग और समय देयता (NDTL)** के 4% तक दो चरणों में घटाएगा। पहला चरण **14 दिसंबर 2024** से और दूसरा **28 दिसंबर 2024** से प्रभावी होगा।

- This reduction in the CRR will release **primary liquidity** of about **₹1.16 lakh crore** into the banking system, Das stated.

  दास के अनुसार, इस CRR में कटौती से बैंकिंग प्रणाली में लगभग **₹1.16 लाख करोड़** की **मूलभूत तरलता** जारी होगी।

- To attract more **capital inflows**, the RBI has increased the **interest rate ceiling on FCNR(B) deposits** for different maturities:

  FCNR(B) जमा पर ब्याज दर सीमा को अधिक पूंजी प्रवाह आकर्षित करने के लिए RBI ने बढ़ाया है:

  - For **1 year to less than 3 years maturity**, the ceiling is now **overnight Alternative Reference Rate (ARR) plus 400 bps**, up from **250 bps**.

1 वर्ष से कम 3 वर्षों की परिपक्वता के लिए सीमा अब **ओवरनाइट वैकल्पिक संदर्भ दर (ARR) प्लस 400 बेस पॉइंट** है, जो पहले **250 बेस पॉइंट** थी।

o For **3 to 5 years maturity**, the ceiling has been increased to **overnight ARR plus 500 bps**, up from **350 bps**.

3 से 5 वर्षों की परिपक्वता के लिए सीमा अब **ओवरनाइट ARR प्लस 500 बेस पॉइंट** है, जो पहले **350 बेस पॉइंट** थी।

- This **relaxation** will remain in effect till **March 31, 2025**, to encourage deposits.

यह **छूट 31 मार्च 2025** तक प्रभावी रहेगी, ताकि जमा को प्रोत्साहित किया जा सके।

Vikram Misri to visit Dhaka on Monday as tensions mount
विक्रम मिस्री सोमवार को ढाका का दौरा करेंगे, बढ़ते तनाव के बीच

- In India's **first high-level diplomatic outreach** to Bangladesh since the fall of the **Sheikh Hasina-led regime**, Foreign Secretary **Vikram Misri** will visit Dhaka on **December 9**, the Ministry of External Affairs announced on Friday.

भारत द्वारा **शेख हसीना के नेतृत्व वाली सरकार के पतन** के बाद बांग्लादेश के साथ **पहली उच्च स्तरीय राजनयिक पहल** के तहत विदेश सचिव **विक्रम मिस्री 9 दिसंबर** को ढाका का दौरा करेंगे, विदेश मंत्रालय ने शुक्रवार को घोषणा की।

- His visit is part of "**structured interactions**" with Bangladesh, MEA spokesperson **Randhir Jaiswal** said.

यह दौरा बांग्लादेश के साथ "**संरचित बातचीत**" का हिस्सा है, विदेश मंत्रालय के प्रवक्ता **रणधीर जयसवाल** ने कहा।

- Mr. Misri's **day-long visit** comes against the backdrop of a **heated war of words** between the two countries, especially regarding **attacks against the Hindu minority in Bangladesh**.

श्री मिस्री का **एक दिवसीय दौरा** दोनों देशों के बीच **गरम बहस** के बीच हो रहा है, विशेष रूप से बांग्लादेश में **हिंदू अल्पसंख्यक पर हमलों** के संदर्भ में।

Vikram Misri

In India's first high-level diplomatic outreach to Bangladesh since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led regime, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri will visit Dhaka on December 9, the Ministry of External Affairs announced on Friday. His visit is part of "structured interactions" with Bangladesh, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

Mr. Misri's day-long visit comes against the backdrop of a heated war of words between the two countries that has escalated in recent weeks, especially regarding attacks against the Hindu minority in Bangladesh.

On Friday, Bangladesh called back its Acting Deputy High Commissioner Shikdar Mohammad Ashrafur Rahman in Kolkata, and Arif Mohammad, Assistant High Commissioner in its Agartala mission, for "urgent consultation", after a Hindu group committed an act of vandalism at the Assistant High Commission of Bangladesh in Tripura's capital Agartala.

Bangladesh condemned the incident and India expressed "regret" but the Indian High Commissioner to Dhaka, Pranay Verma, was still summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Dhaka on Wednesday.

CONTINUED ON

- On Friday, Bangladesh **called back its Acting Deputy High Commissioner** Shikdar Mohammad Ashrafur Rahman in Kolkata and Arif Mohammad, Assistant High Commissioner in Agartala, for **urgent consultation**.

  शुक्रवार को बांग्लादेश ने कोलकाता स्थित अपने **कार्यवाहक उप उच्चायुक्त** शेखदर मोहम्मद अशरफुर रहमान और अगरतला के सहायक उच्चायुक्त अरिफ मोहम्मद को **तत्काल परामर्श** के लिए बुला लिया।

- The decision followed an incident where a **Hindu group committed an act of vandalism** at the Assistant High Commission of Bangladesh in **Agartala**, Tripura.

  यह निर्णय एक घटना के बाद लिया गया जिसमें **एक हिंदू समूह ने अगरतला, त्रिपुरा** में बांग्लादेश के सहायक उच्चायोग पर **तोड़फोड़** की।

- Bangladesh condemned the incident, and India expressed **"regret,"** but the Indian High Commissioner to Dhaka, **Pranay Verma**, was summoned to the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Dhaka** on Wednesday.

  बांग्लादेश ने इस घटना की निंदा की और भारत ने **"खेद"** व्यक्त किया, लेकिन ढाका में भारतीय उच्चायुक्त **प्रणय वर्मा** को बुधवार को **बांग्लादेश के विदेश मंत्रालय** में बुलाया गया।

- Earlier this week, Bangladesh **suspended all visa and consular work** in its Agartala mission due to the **security breach**.

  इस सप्ताह की शुरुआत में, बांग्लादेश ने अगरतला स्थित अपने मिशन में **सभी वीज़ा और वाणिज्यिक कार्य निलंबित** कर दिए क्योंकि **सुरक्षा का उल्लंघन** हुआ था।

- A **Bangladeshi official** confirmed that Ashrafur Rahman would return after participating in **Foreign Secretary-level talks** scheduled for next week.

  एक **बांग्लादेशी अधिकारी** ने पुष्टि की कि अशरफुर रहमान अगले सप्ताह निर्धारित **विदेश सचिव स्तर की वार्ता** में भाग लेने के बाद लौटेंगे।

- Bilateral ties further deteriorated on **November 25**, when **Vaishnav monk Chinmoy Das** was arrested in **Chittagong** amidst **communal clashes**.

  25 नवंबर को, जब **वैष्णव साधु चिन्मय दास** को **चटगांव** में **सांप्रदायिक झगड़ों** के दौरान गिरफ्तार किया गया, तो द्विपक्षीय संबंध और बिगड़ गए।

- India expressed **"deep concern"** when Mr. Das was denied bail and sent to **police custody**.

  भारत ने **"गहरी चिंता"** व्यक्त की जब श्री दास को जमानत देने से इनकार कर दिया गया और उन्हें **पुलिस हिरासत** में भेज दिया गया।

- On Friday, MEA spokesperson **Randhir Jaiswal** reiterated India's expectation that the **legal processes** in Bangladesh would be conducted in a **fair, just, and transparent** manner.

  शुक्रवार को, विदेश मंत्रालय के प्रवक्ता **रणधीर जयसवाल** ने बांग्लादेश में **कानूनी प्रक्रियाओं** को **निष्पक्ष, न्यायसंगत और पारदर्शी** तरीके से पूरा करने की भारत की उम्मीद को दोहराया।

SC to hear plea to reduce water level at Mullaperiyar

GS Paper I: Geography

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday fixed in January a detailed hearing of a petition seeking to bring down the permissible water level of the Mullaperiyar dam in Kerala from 142 ft to 120 ft to obviate the possibility of a dam breach.

A Bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyyan asked petitioner-advocate Mathews J. Nedumpara, who appeared online, to come and present his case in person in court.

Wayanad landslides
The petition filed by Mr. Nedumpara referred to the recent landslides in Wayanad, which claimed over 220 lives, making it one of the worst natural disasters in recent times. "You have raised several constitutional issues. It is better you come to court and argue the case," Justice Kant told Mr. Nedumpara.

"In view of the recent tragedy in Wayanad, the water level of the dam has
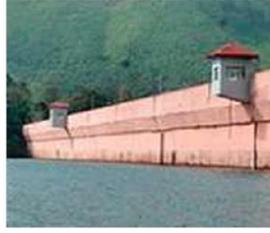
A view of Mullaperiyar dam near Idukki.

to be brought below 120 ft as many experts have opined," it said.

Mr. Nedumpara had red-flagged that if Mullaperiyar dam was breached,

"lives and properties of five million people of Kerala would be at grave risk".

The petition has said the limestone-and-surkhi dam was commissioned in 1895 and had an estimated lifespan of only 50 years.

Dam breach fears
"People of Kerala fear that the dam may break. If it happens, it is said that the districts of Idukki, Ernakulam, Alappuzha, Kottayam will be completely washed away," the petition has claimed.

The plea has argued that two judgments of the Supreme Court, in 2006 and 2014, had prevented the decommissioning of the Mullaperiyar dam and the construction of a new dam in its place.

It said the judgments were erroneous. The plea said in the event of Mullaperiyar dam breaking, the flood waters would be absorbed by the Idukki dam. According to Mr. Nedumpara, the two judgments found the dam "eternally safe".

SC to hear plea to reduce water level at Mullaperiyar
मुल्लापेरियार में जल स्तर कम करने की याचिका पर सुप्रीम कोर्ट की सुनवाई

- The **Supreme Court** has scheduled a detailed hearing in **January** for a petition to lower the permissible water level of the **Mullaperiyar dam** in Kerala from **142 ft** to **120 ft** to avoid a potential dam breach.
  सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने **जनवरी** में केरल के **मुल्लापेरियार बांध** का जल स्तर **142 फीट** से **120 फीट** तक कम करने के लिए दायर याचिका पर विस्तृत सुनवाई तय की है ताकि बांध टूटने की संभावना को टाला जा सके।

- A Bench of **Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyyan** instructed petitioner-advocate **Mathews J. Nedumpara** to present his case in person in court.
  न्यायमूर्ति सूर्यकांत और उज्जल भुयान की पीठ ने याचिकाकर्ता-एडवोकेट **मैथ्यूज जे. नेडुम्पारा** को अदालत में व्यक्तिगत रूप से अपना मामला पेश करने के लिए कहा।

Wayanad landslides
वायनाड भूस्खलन

- The petition mentions the recent **landslides in Wayanad**, which resulted in the loss of over **220 lives**, marking one of the worst natural disasters in recent times.
  याचिका में हाल ही में वायनाड में हुए **भूस्खलन** का उल्लेख किया गया है, जिसमें **220 से अधिक लोगों की जान** गई, जो हाल के समय की सबसे गंभीर प्राकृतिक आपदाओं में से एक है।

- The court noted the **constitutional issues** raised in the petition and suggested the petitioner argue them in person.

अदालत ने याचिका में उठाए गए **संवैधानिक मुद्दों** पर ध्यान दिया और याचिकाकर्ता को व्यक्तिगत रूप से दलील देने का सुझाव दिया।

- The petition argued that due to the recent **Wayanad tragedy**, the **water level** of the dam should be reduced below **120 ft** based on expert opinions.
याचिका में कहा गया कि हाल की **वायनाड त्रासदी** के मद्देनजर, विशेषज्ञों की राय के अनुसार बांध के **जल स्तर** को **120 फीट** से नीचे लाना चाहिए।

Dam breach fears
बांध टूटने का खतरा

- Mr. Nedumpara warned that if the **Mullaperiyar dam** breaches, the lives and properties of **5 million people in Kerala** would be in grave danger.
श्री नेदुम्पारा ने आगाह किया कि अगर **मुल्लापेरियार बांध** टूटता है तो **केरल के 50 लाख लोगों** की जान और संपत्ति गंभीर खतरे में होगी।
- The petition highlighted that the **limestone-and-surkhi dam**, commissioned in **1895**, had an estimated lifespan of only **50 years**.
याचिका में कहा गया कि **1895** में निर्मित यह **चूना पत्थर और सुरखी का बांध** केवल **50 वर्षों** की अनुमानित आयु के लिए बनाया गया था।
- The plea raised concerns that if the dam breaks, districts like **Idukki, Ernakulam, Alappuzha, and Kottayam** could be entirely washed away.
याचिका में कहा गया कि यदि बांध टूटता है तो **इडुक्की, एर्नाकुलम, अलाप्पुझा और कोट्टायम** जैसे जिले पूरी तरह बह सकते हैं।

Supreme Court judgments
सुप्रीम कोर्ट के निर्णय

- The petition criticized two Supreme Court judgments in **2006 and 2014** for preventing the decommissioning of the **Mullaperiyar dam** and the construction of a new dam.
याचिका में सुप्रीम कोर्ट के **2006 और 2014** के दो फैसलों की आलोचना की गई, जिनमें **मुल्लापेरियार बांध** को हटाने और नए बांध के निर्माण को रोका गया।
- It claimed the judgments were erroneous and argued that the **Idukki dam** could absorb the floodwaters in the event of a Mullaperiyar breach.
याचिका में कहा गया कि ये फैसले गलत थे और यह दलील दी गई कि अगर मुल्लापेरियार बांध टूटता है तो **इडुक्की बांध** बाढ़ के पानी को रोक सकता है।
- The plea noted that the two judgments found the dam to be "**eternally safe**."
याचिका में कहा गया कि इन दो फैसलों में बांध को "**सदैव सुरक्षित**" माना गया।

European Space Agency to support Gaganyaan mission
यूरोपीय अंतरिक्ष एजेंसी गगनयान मिशन का समर्थन करेगी

European Space Agency to support Gaganyaan mission

GS Paper III: S&T

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the European Space Agency (ESA) have signed a **Technical Implementing Plan (TIP)** document for **ground tracking support** for India's **Gaganyaan missions**.
  भारतीय अंतरिक्ष अनुसंधान संगठन (ISRO) और यूरोपीय अंतरिक्ष एजेंसी (ESA) ने भारत के **गगनयान मिशन** के लिए **ग्राउंड ट्रैकिंग समर्थन** हेतु **टेक्निकल इंप्लीमेंटिंग प्लान (TIP)** दस्तावेज़ पर हस्ताक्षर किए हैं।

- The TIP, **inked at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre on Wednesday**, enables the ESA to provide ground station support for the space missions, ensuring **continuity in data flow** and communication with the orbital module for **monitoring and orbital operations**.
  यह TIP, जो **बुधवार को सतीश धवन अंतरिक्ष केंद्र** में हस्ताक्षरित हुआ, ESA को अंतरिक्ष मिशनों के लिए **ग्राउंड स्टेशन समर्थन** प्रदान करने की अनुमति देता है, जो **डेटा प्रवाह** और कक्षीय संचालन के लिए कक्षीय मॉड्यूल के साथ संचार सुनिश्चित करेगा।

- ISRO stated that it had a **long-standing system of cooperation** with ESA, and both agencies had been collaboratively supporting each other in the **successful accomplishment of several space missions** in the past.
  ISRO ने कहा कि उसका ESA के साथ **लंबे समय से सहयोग का सिस्टम** रहा है, और दोनों एजेंसियां अतीत में **कई अंतरिक्ष मिशनों की सफलता** में एक-दूसरे का सहयोग कर रही थीं।

- The TIP represents another **step forward in cooperation** between ISRO and ESA, as per ISRO's statement.
  ISRO के अनुसार, यह TIP दोनों एजेंसियों के बीच सहयोग में **एक और कदम आगे** बढ़ाने का प्रतीक है।

- The TIP was signed by **Anil Kumar A.K.**, Director, ISTRAC, on behalf of ISRO, and by **Dietmar Pilz**, Director of Technology, Engineering and Quality, and Director of ESTEC,

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the European Space Agency (ESA) has signed a Technical Implementing Plan (TIP) document for ground tracking support for India's Gaganyaan missions.

The TIP, inked at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre on Wednesday, enables the ESA to provide ground station support for the space missions, which will ensure continuity in data flow and communication with the orbital module for monitoring and orbital operations.

ISRO said it had a long-standing system of cooperation with the ESA. They had been collaboratively supporting each other in successful accomplishment of several space missions in the past. The TIP was another step forward in the cooperation between the agencies, ISRO said.

The TIP was signed by Anil Kumar A.K., Director, ISTRAC, on behalf of ISRO, and by Dietmar Pilz, Director of Technology, Engineering and Quality and Director of ESTEC, Netherlands, from the ESA.

The Gaganyaan project envisages demonstration of human spaceflight capability by launching a crew of three members into an orbit of 400 km for a three-day mission and bringing them back to earth by landing in Indian sea waters.

Netherlands, from the ESA.

इस TIP पर ISRO की ओर से **अनिल कुमार ए.के.**, निदेशक, ISTRAC और ESA की ओर से **डाइटमार पिल्ज**, निदेशक, प्रौद्योगिकी, इंजीनियरिंग और गुणवत्ता, और ESTEC, नीदरलैंड्स के निदेशक द्वारा हस्ताक्षर किए गए।

- The Gaganyaan project envisions the **demonstration of human spaceflight capability** by launching a **crew of three members** into an orbit of **400 km** for a **three-day mission**, followed by their return to **Indian sea waters**.

गगनयान परियोजना का उद्देश्य **मानव अंतरिक्ष उड़ान क्षमता का प्रदर्शन** करना है, जिसमें **तीन सदस्यों के क्रू** को **400 किमी की कक्षा** में **तीन-दिवसीय मिशन** के लिए लॉन्च करना और फिर उन्हें **भारतीय समुद्री जल** में सुरक्षित लौटाना शामिल है।

Nicobarese have ancestral connection with Austroasiatic populations: study

GS Paper I: Human Geography

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

The 25,000-strong Nicobarese population appears to have a significant ancestral connection with Austroasiatic populations across South and Southeast Asia and, they could have settled in the region only about 5,000 years ago, according to a new genetic research by scientists from CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) and others.

The study highlighted the common genetic affinity of the 'Htin Mal', a population in the mainland of Southeast Asia, who speak an Austroasiatic language, with the Nicobarese. The 'Htin Mal' community has maintained remarkable ethnic distinctness over time, exhibiting a pro-

An aerial view of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. GETTY IMAGES

nounced genetic drift from the Nicobarese, said CCMB's top scientist Kumarasamy Thangaraj .

Gyaneshwer Chaubey from Banaras Hindu University (BHU) led the group of researchers from nine institutions for a detailed genetic analysis, using DNA markers inherited exclusively from mothers and fathers respectively,

and those from both the parents from among the Nicobarese people. This is to explore their ancestry and genetic affinities with the South and Southeast Asian populations.

Nicobar Islands are situated in the eastern Indian Ocean and south of the Andaman Islands. The archipelago consists of seven large islands, including Car

Nicobar and Great Nicobar, and numerous smaller ones. "Previous theories suggested that the linguistic ancestors of the Nicobarese settled in the Nicobar archipelago during the early Holocene, about 11,700 years ago. Our new genetic research involved 1,559 individuals from South and Southeast Asia showed it to be only about 5,000 years," pointed out Dr. Thangaraj.

"Genomic regions shared across linguistic groups suggests an ancient distribution of Austroasiatic populations in Southeast Asia," said Prof. Chaubey, the lead author. "Our findings argue that the Nicobarese and the 'Htin Mal' represent valuable genetic proxies for understanding ancient Austroasiatic heritage," he added.

निकोबारी लोगों का ऑस्ट्रोएशियाटिक जनसंख्या से पूर्वजों का संबंध: अध्ययन

- The **25,000-strong Nicobarese population** has a **significant ancestral connection** with **Austroasiatic populations** across **South and Southeast Asia**, and they could have settled in the region only about **5,000 years ago**, according to a new genetic research by scientists from **CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB)** and others.

  25,000 की निकोबारी जनसंख्या का **दक्षिण और दक्षिण-पूर्व एशिया** की **ऑस्ट्रोएशियाटिक जनसंख्या** से एक **महत्वपूर्ण पूर्वज संबंध** है, और वे इस क्षेत्र में लगभग **5,000 वर्ष पहले** बसे होंगे, यह **CSIR-सेंटर फॉर सेल्यूलर एंड मॉलिक्यूलर बायोलॉजी (CCMB)** और अन्य वैज्ञानिकों के नए जीनोमिक अनुसंधान से सामने आया।

- The study highlighted the **common genetic affinity** of the **'Htin Mal'**, a population in the mainland of Southeast Asia who speak an **Austroasiatic language**, with the Nicobarese.

  अध्ययन ने दक्षिण-पूर्व एशिया की मुख्यभूमि के **'हिटन माल' समुदाय**, जो एक **ऑस्ट्रोएशियाटिक भाषा** बोलते हैं, और निकोबारी लोगों के **सामान्य जीन संबंध** को उजागर किया।

- The **'Htin Mal' community** has maintained remarkable **ethnic distinctness** over time, exhibiting a pronounced **genetic drift** from the Nicobarese, said **CCMB's top scientist Kumarasamy Thangaraj**.

  'हिटन माल' समुदाय ने समय के साथ **उल्लेखनीय जातीय विशिष्टता** बनाए रखी है और निकोबारी लोगों से एक स्पष्ट **जीन परिवर्तन** दिखाया है, ऐसा **CCMB के वरिष्ठ वैज्ञानिक कुमारासामी थंगराज** ने कहा।

- **Gyaneshwer Chaubey** from **Banaras Hindu University (BHU)** led the group of researchers from **nine institutions** for a detailed genetic analysis, using **DNA markers** inherited exclusively from mothers and fathers respectively, and those from both parents among the Nicobarese people.

  ग्यानेश्वर चौबे, **बनारस हिंदू विश्वविद्यालय (BHU)** से, ने **नौ संस्थानों** के शोधकर्ताओं के समूह का नेतृत्व किया और निकोबारी लोगों के **डीएनए मार्कर्स**, जो मां और पिता से विशेष रूप से प्राप्त होते हैं, का विस्तृत जीनोमिक विश्लेषण किया।

- This analysis aimed to explore their **ancestry and genetic affinities** with **South and Southeast Asian populations**.

  इस विश्लेषण का उद्देश्य उनके **पूर्वजों और जीन संबंधों** को **दक्षिण और दक्षिण-पूर्व एशियाई जनसंख्या** के साथ खोजना था।

- The **Nicobar Islands**, situated in the **eastern Indian Ocean** and **south of the Andaman Islands**, consist of **seven large islands**, including **Car Nicobar and Great Nicobar**, and numerous smaller ones.

  निकोबार द्वीप, जो **पूर्वी हिंद महासागर** और **अंडमान द्वीपों के दक्षिण** में स्थित हैं, में **सात बड़े द्वीप** शामिल हैं, जैसे **कार निकोबार और ग्रेट निकोबार**, और कई छोटे द्वीप।

- Previous theories suggested that the linguistic ancestors of the Nicobarese settled in the Nicobar archipelago during the **early Holocene**, about **11,700 years ago**.

पूर्ववर्ती सिद्धांतों ने संकेत दिया कि निकोबारी लोगों के भाषाई पूर्वज **प्रारंभिक होलोसीन** के दौरान, लगभग **11,700 वर्ष पहले**, निकोबार द्वीपसमूह में बसे।

- The new genetic research, involving **1,559 individuals** from **South and Southeast Asia**, showed that they settled only about **5,000 years ago**, said **Dr. Thangaraj**.

  नए जीनोमिक शोध, जिसमें **दक्षिण और दक्षिण-पूर्व एशिया** के **1,559 व्यक्ति** शामिल थे, ने दिखाया कि वे केवल **5,000 वर्ष पहले** बसे थे, ऐसा **डॉ. थंगराज** ने कहा।

- **Genomic regions shared across linguistic groups** suggest an **ancient distribution** of **Austroasiatic populations** in Southeast Asia, said **Prof. Chaubey**, the lead author.

  भाषाई समूहों के बीच साझा जीनोमिक क्षेत्र दक्षिण-पूर्व एशिया में **ऑस्ट्रोएशियाटिक जनसंख्या के प्राचीन वितरण** का सुझाव देते हैं, ऐसा **प्रो. चौबे**, मुख्य लेखक ने कहा।

- "Our findings argue that the Nicobarese and the 'Htin Mal' represent valuable **genetic proxies** for understanding ancient Austroasiatic heritage," he added.

  "हमारे निष्कर्ष बताते हैं कि निकोबारी और **'हिटन माल'** प्राचीन **ऑस्ट्रोएशियाटिक विरासत** को समझने के लिए मूल्यवान **जीनोमिक प्रतिनिधि** हैं," उन्होंने जोड़ा।

Major Linguistic Families in India
- India is a linguistically diverse nation, where multiple linguistic families coexist.
- These families are classified based on their historical and structural characteristics.

Indo-Aryan Family (Approx. 75%)
- The Indo-Aryan family is the largest linguistic group in India, with roots in the Indo-European language family. It evolved from Sanskrit and includes prominent languages such as Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi, and Urdu.

  भारत में इंडो-आर्यन परिवार सबसे बड़ा भाषाई समूह है, जो इंडो-यूरोपीय भाषा परिवार से संबंधित है।

  यह संस्कृत से विकसित हुआ है और इसमें हिंदी, बंगाली, मराठी, गुजराती, पंजाबी और उर्दू जैसी प्रमुख भाषाएं शामिल हैं।

- **States Dominated:** Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Punjab, Gujarat.

  प्रमुख राज्य: उत्तर प्रदेश, बिहार, महाराष्ट्र, पश्चिम बंगाल, पंजाब, गुजरात।

- **Historical Background:** This family arrived with the Indo-Aryan migrations around 1500 BCE.

  ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठभूमि: यह परिवार लगभग 1500 ईसा पूर्व इंडो-आर्यन प्रवासों के साथ भारत आया।

Dravidian Family (Approx. 20%)
- **Explanation:** The Dravidian family is primarily spoken in South India and includes Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam.

  द्रविड़ परिवार मुख्य रूप से दक्षिण भारत में बोला जाता है और इसमें तमिल, तेलुगु, कन्नड़ और मलयालम शामिल हैं।

- **States Dominated:** Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala.

  प्रमुख राज्य: तमिलनाडु, आंध्र प्रदेश, कर्नाटक, केरल।

- **Historical Background:** Dravidian languages are indigenous to the Indian subcontinent, with evidence from the Harappan Civilization.

  ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठभूमि: द्रविड़ भाषाएं भारतीय उपमहाद्वीप की मूल भाषाएं हैं, जिनका प्रमाण हड़प्पा सभ्यता से मिलता है।

Austro-Asiatic Family (Approx. 1.2%)

- **Explanation:** This family includes the Munda and Mon-Khmer branches, spoken in tribal regions of central and eastern India.

  यह परिवार मुंडा और मॉन-खमेर शाखाओं को शामिल करता है, जो भारत के मध्य और पूर्वी क्षेत्रों में बोली जाती हैं।

- **Languages:** Santali, Ho, Mundari.

  भाषाएं: संथाली, हो, मुंडारी।

- **States Dominated:** Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh.

  प्रमुख राज्य: झारखंड, ओडिशा, पश्चिम बंगाल, छत्तीसगढ़।

- **Historical Background:** It is one of the oldest language families, with links to Southeast Asia.

  ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठभूमि: यह सबसे पुराने भाषा परिवारों में से एक है, जिसका संबंध दक्षिण-पूर्व एशिया से है।

Tibeto-Burman Family (Approx. 0.7%)

- **Explanation:** Spoken in the Himalayan and northeastern regions, this family includes Manipuri, Bodo, and several other tribal languages.

  यह परिवार हिमालय और पूर्वोत्तर क्षेत्रों में बोला जाता है, जिसमें मणिपुरी, बोडो और कई अन्य जनजातीय भाषाएं शामिल हैं।

- **States Dominated:** Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Assam.

  प्रमुख राज्य: अरुणाचल प्रदेश, मणिपुर, नागालैंड, मिजोरम, असम।

- **Historical Background:** These languages reflect the cultural diversity of the Himalayan belt.

  ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठभूमि: ये भाषाएं हिमालयी क्षेत्र की सांस्कृतिक विविधता को दर्शाती हैं।

Other Families (Approx. 3%)

- **Explanation:** Other linguistic families include Andamanese (Great Andamanese, Onge, Jarawa) and isolates like Burushaski.

  अन्य भाषाई परिवारों में अंडमानीज़ (ग्रेट अंडमानीज़, ओंगे, जरावा) और अलग-थलग भाषाएं जैसे बुरुशस्की शामिल हैं।

- **States Dominated:** Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Jammu & Kashmir.

  प्रमुख राज्य: अंडमान और निकोबार द्वीपसमूह, जम्मू और कश्मीर।

Key Facts and Recent Updates:

- **Constitutional Recognition:** The Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution lists 22 officially recognized languages.

  संवैधानिक मान्यता: भारतीय संविधान की आठवीं अनुसूची में 22 आधिकारिक भाषाएं सूचीबद्ध हैं।

- **Linguistic Surveys:** The Census of India provides detailed data on language distribution.

  भाषाई सर्वेक्षण: भारत की जनगणना भाषाओं के वितरण पर विस्तृत डेटा प्रदान करती है।

Staying the course
नीति पर कायम रहना

The Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has maintained the benchmark interest rate at 6.50% for the eleventh consecutive time during its latest bi-monthly review.

भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक (RBI) की मौद्रिक नीति समिति (MPC) ने अपनी नवीनतम द्विमासिक समीक्षा में बेंचमार्क ब्याज दर 6.50% पर बनाए रखी है, यह ग्यारहवीं बार लगातार है।

- RBI Governor **Shaktikanta Das** highlighted that the **last mile of disinflation** is proving to be **prolonged and arduous**, impacting both emerging and developed economies.

  RBI के गवर्नर **शक्तिकांत दास** ने बताया कि **मुद्रास्फीति में अंतिम कमी लंबी और कठिन** साबित हो रही है, जो उभरती और विकसित अर्थव्यवस्थाओं दोनों को प्रभावित कर रही है।

- India's **retail inflation**, which was below the median **4% target** for the first time in **five years** for two months, spiked in **September and October**, driven by **food prices**.

  भारत की **खुदरा मुद्रास्फीति**, जो **पांच वर्षों** में पहली बार दो महीनों के लिए **मध्य 4% लक्ष्य** से नीचे थी, **सितंबर और अक्टूबर** में बढ़ी, जिसका मुख्य कारण **खाद्य पदार्थों की कीमतें** थीं।

- At its **October meeting**, the MPC had voted **5:1** to hold interest rates, citing a well-balanced inflation-growth scenario.

  अक्टूबर की बैठक में MPC ने **5:1** के वोट से ब्याज दरों को बनाए रखने का निर्णय लिया, जिसमें मुद्रास्फीति और वृद्धि का संतुलन उचित बताया गया।

- However, the situation changed with **inflation surging** and **GDP growth dropping to 5.4%** in the **second quarter**, lower than the **7% estimate** by RBI.

  हालांकि, स्थिति बदल गई जब **मुद्रास्फीति बढ़ गई** और **दूसरी तिमाही में GDP वृद्धि 5.4%** पर आ गई, जो RBI के **7% अनुमान** से कम थी।

- The government called the **growth blip transient**, while Ministers advocated for **interest rate cuts** even before the GDP data was released.

  सरकार ने **विकास में गिरावट** को अस्थायी बताया, जबकि मंत्रियों ने **ब्याज दरों में कटौती** की मांग GDP डेटा जारी होने से पहले ही की।

- The MPC's voting pattern changed to **4:2** this time, with Governor Das acknowledging **adverse short-term inflation and growth outcomes**.

इस बार MPC का वोटिंग पैटर्न **4:2** हो गया, जिसमें गवर्नर दास ने **अल्पकालिक मुद्रास्फीति और विकास पर प्रतिकूल प्रभाव** को स्वीकार किया।

- Das reiterated that the RBI is bound by the **flexible inflation targeting framework**, which mandates addressing **headline inflation**.
  दास ने दोहराया कि RBI **लचीले मुद्रास्फीति लक्ष्य निर्धारण ढांचे** से बंधा हुआ है, जो **मुख्य मुद्रास्फीति** का समाधान अनिवार्य बनाता है।

- Persistently **high inflation** impacts **households' spending power**, already visible in **urban consumption patterns**, as noted by Das.
  लगातार **उच्च मुद्रास्फीति घरों की खर्च करने की क्षमता** को प्रभावित करती है, जो पहले से ही **शहरी उपभोग पैटर्न** में दिखाई दे रही है, जैसा कि दास ने बताया।

- The **RBI revised its 2024-25 GDP growth projection to 6.6%** (down from **7.2%**) and **inflation projection to 4.8%** (up from **4.5%**).
  RBI ने 2024-25 के लिए GDP वृद्धि का अनुमान **6.6% (7.2% से कम)** और मुद्रास्फीति का अनुमान **4.8% (4.5% से अधिक)** कर दिया।

- Experts consider even these revised projections **optimistic**, suggesting measures like **rolling back import duty hikes on edible oils** to spur consumption.
  विशेषज्ञ इन संशोधित अनुमानों को भी **आशावादी** मानते हैं और उपभोग को प्रोत्साहित करने के लिए **खाद्य तेलों पर आयात शुल्क बढ़ोतरी को वापस लेने** जैसे कदमों की सिफारिश करते हैं।

Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)

- The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) was constituted in **2016** under Section **45ZB** of the **Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934**.
  मॉनेटरी पॉलिसी कमेटी (MPC) की स्थापना 2016 में **भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक अधिनियम, 1934** की धारा 45ZB के तहत की गई थी।

- It was set up to **fix the benchmark policy rate (repo rate)** required to achieve the inflation target.
  इसे मुद्रास्फीति लक्ष्य को प्राप्त करने के लिए **बेंचमार्क पॉलिसी दर (रेपो रेट)** निर्धारित करने के लिए स्थापित किया गया।

2. Composition of MPC

- The MPC consists of **6 members**:
  - **3 officials** from the Reserve Bank of India, including the Governor, who acts as the Chairperson.
    MPC में 6 सदस्य होते हैं:
    - **3 अधिकारी** भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक के होते हैं, जिसमें गवर्नर अध्यक्ष के रूप में कार्य करते हैं।

- o **3 external members** nominated by the Government of India.
  - **3 बाहरी सदस्य** भारत सरकार द्वारा नामित किए जाते हैं।
- Decisions are made by **majority vote**. In case of a tie, the Governor has the **casting vote**.

  निर्णय बहुमत से लिया जाता है। यदि मत बराबर होते हैं, तो गवर्नर का **निर्णायक मत** होता है।

3. Mandate of MPC

- The primary objective is to **maintain price stability** while ensuring **economic growth**.

  इसका मुख्य उद्देश्य **मूल्य स्थिरता बनाए रखना** और साथ ही **आर्थिक विकास सुनिश्चित करना** है।

- The **inflation target** is set at **4% (+/-2%)** for the period from **August 5, 2016, to March 31, 2026**.

  मुद्रास्फीति लक्ष्य **4% (+/-2%)** निर्धारित किया गया है, जो **5 अगस्त 2016 से 31 मार्च 2026** तक प्रभावी है।

4. Repo Rate

- The **repo rate** is the interest rate at which the RBI lends money to commercial banks against securities.

  रेपो रेट वह ब्याज दर है जिस पर आरबीआई वाणिज्यिक बैंकों को प्रतिभूतियों के बदले धन उधार देता है।

- It is a tool to control **liquidity, inflation, and economic stability**.

  यह **तरलता, मुद्रास्फीति और आर्थिक स्थिरता** को नियंत्रित करने का एक साधन है।

5. Decision-Making Process

- The MPC meets **at least 4 times a year**, with the decision announced after the meeting.

  MPC **वर्ष में कम से कम 4 बार** बैठक करती है, और निर्णय बैठक के बाद घोषित किया जाता है।

- Recent decisions focus on balancing **inflation control** with **economic growth**, especially post-pandemic.

  हालिया निर्णयों का उद्देश्य विशेष रूप से महामारी के बाद **मुद्रास्फीति नियंत्रण** और **आर्थिक विकास** में संतुलन बनाए रखना है।

Public health — insights from the 1896 Bombay Plague

GS Paper I: History

Understanding how public health crises intersect with surveillance, control, and governance is crucial for addressing modern challenges. Historical epidemics, such as the 1896 Bombay Plague, reveal how authorities have navigated these issues. In colonial India, mapping and policing were not just disease management tools; they served as instruments of surveillance and control. Examining these strategies offers insights relevant to contemporary public health policy and practice.

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The colonial state's response

The Bombay Plague of 1896-97 devastated colonial India. Introduced into Bombay through Far Eastern trade networks, it quickly spread throughout the subcontinent, causing hundreds of thousands of deaths by 1899. It exposed the inadequacies of the existing public health infrastructure. In response, the colonial administration created the Indian Plague Commission in 1898, led by T.R. Fraser of the University of Edinburgh, to investigate the outbreak. The Commission conducted extensive inquiries, recording testimonies and producing voluminous documentation. Yet, it struggled to identify the plague's precise origin or the nature of its transmission. This difficulty emerged partly because the colonial authorities saw the plague less as a communal health issue and more as a problem of maintaining order through surveillance and control.

Unlike John Snow's 1854 cholera map in London that pinpointed affected individuals and led to epidemiological breakthroughs, the Indian Plague Commission's maps focused on railways, inspection points, camps, and police cordons rather than the homes of plague victims. These maps highlighted where people could be stopped, inspected, or confined. They used unusual colour and detail, suggesting a desire to project efficiency and obscure the epidemic's severity. By emphasising where the disease could infiltrate rather than who was affected, these maps reframed the epidemic. Instead of illuminating the distribution of cases, they underscored the colonial state's need to monitor and restrict movement, reflecting the belief that control of mobility equalled control of disease.

Policing lay at the heart of plague management. Quarantine measures, inspections, and confinements relied on police enforcement rather than on community trust or public health education. Observation camps near railway stations became key sites where populations were scrutinised. Military ward orderlies were introduced into hospitals and municipalities, legitimising the idea that force would curb disease.

Police stations, not just medical establishments, were primary data nodes, with local watchmen reporting deaths to the police, who then relayed them to higher authorities. This integration of policing into the health apparatus solidified the notion that health crises demanded a top-down, coercive response. Over time, professionalisation gradually shifted such duties toward medical professionals, but the historical precedent reminds us how policing once defined the architecture of disease surveillance.

Plague maps and power dynamics

The design of the plague maps and their emphasis on railway lines, inspection stations, and cordons influenced both perception and action. Vibrant colours and meticulous detail conveyed a sense of order and efficacy, directing attention to the state's interventions rather than the epidemic's victims. The maps downplayed the suffering of communities and masked the real scale of the crisis by focusing on surveillance infrastructure. They thus reinforced power dynamics, showing how data and its representation can serve dominant interests. Instead of illustrating the human toll, the maps suggested that proper control would triumph over chaos, reinforcing the colonial narrative that disease was best managed through discipline rather than empathy.

This historical episode offers insights for the present. The legacy of integrating policing and surveillance into public health efforts persists, though it now takes different forms. Modern systems often rely on medical professionals for data collection and patient tracking, reflecting shifting ethical standards and professional practices.

Yet, the question remains of how public health measures are framed. The 1896 plague response shows that framing can reshape policy, determining whether the emphasis lies on caring for individuals or exercising authority over them.

This historical episode offers insights for the present as contemporary public health strategies should be rooted in empathy, equity, and evidence

Recognising this dynamic helps ensure that today's health policies do not uncritically reproduce the inequities or heavy-handed tactics of the past.

The issue of oversight and ethics

Ethical considerations arise when public health responses privilege control over community well-being. The history of the Bombay Plague exemplifies how data collection and mapping techniques, if guided by oppressive frameworks, can become tools for enforcing power rather than improving health. The past invites us to consider more humane and participatory approaches, ensuring transparency and respect for individual rights. Authorities must resist the temptation to treat populations as objects of surveillance rather than partners in safeguarding public health. Balancing effective oversight with ethical obligations remains a core challenge, as does acknowledging that representation – be it in maps or databases – shapes how problems are understood and addressed.

This episode also signals that while surveillance mechanisms have evolved, their underlying logic may still influence decision-making. Today, advanced data collection methods can render entire populations visible to the state, raising critical questions about privacy, trust, and the fair distribution of resources. Reflecting on the colonial response to the plague helps us understand that data should be a means to enhance health and safety rather than reinforce existing hierarchies or curtail freedoms. We must remain vigilant that new technologies and methodologies serve the collective good.

In learning from the Bombay Plague's history, we see that health crises often lay bare existing power structures. The authorities in the late 19th century chose to rely on policing and surveillance, shaping the way the epidemic was understood and managed. By studying these choices, we can recognise the importance of framing health challenges in ways that affirm human dignity. We can strive to ensure that contemporary public health strategies, while leveraging sophisticated tools, remain rooted in empathy, equity, and evidence. Awareness of past missteps can guide future governance, inspiring policies that foster cooperation rather than fear, and that earn the trust and collaboration of the communities they are meant to protect.

Public health — insights from the 1896 Bombay Plague

सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य – 1896 के बॉम्बे प्लेग से प्राप्त जानकारियां

- Understanding how public health crises intersect with **surveillance, control, and governance** is crucial for addressing modern challenges.

सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य संकटों का **निगरानी, नियंत्रण और शासन** से कैसे संबंध है, इसे समझना आधुनिक चुनौतियों का समाधान करने के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है।

- Historical epidemics, such as the **1896 Bombay Plague**, reveal how authorities have navigated these issues.
  1896 के बॉम्बे प्लेग जैसे ऐतिहासिक महामारियां यह दिखाती हैं कि अधिकारियों ने इन मुद्दों को कैसे प्रबंधित किया।

The colonial state's response
औपनिवेशिक शासन की प्रतिक्रिया

- The **Bombay Plague of 1896–97** devastated colonial India, spreading through **Far Eastern trade networks**, causing **hundreds of thousands of deaths by 1899**.
  1896–97 का बॉम्बे प्लेग ने औपनिवेशिक भारत को तबाह कर दिया, यह **फार ईस्ट के व्यापार नेटवर्क** के माध्यम से फैला और **1899 तक लाखों मौतें** हुईं।
- The outbreak exposed the **inadequacies of public health infrastructure**.
  इस महामारी ने **सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य ढांचे की खामियों** को उजागर किया।
- The colonial administration established the **Indian Plague Commission in 1898**, led by **T.R. Fraser**, to investigate the outbreak.
  औपनिवेशिक प्रशासन ने महामारी की जांच के लिए **1898 में इंडियन प्लेग कमीशन** की स्थापना की, जिसका नेतृत्व **टी.आर. फ्रेजर** ने किया।
- Despite extensive inquiries, the Commission struggled to determine the **plague's origin or transmission nature**, treating it more as a problem of **order through surveillance and control** than communal health.
  व्यापक जांच के बावजूद, कमीशन **प्लेग के स्रोत या प्रसारण के स्वरूप** का पता लगाने में असमर्थ रहा और इसे सामुदायिक स्वास्थ्य से अधिक **निगरानी और नियंत्रण द्वारा व्यवस्था बनाए रखने की समस्या** माना।

Mapping and policing as tools
मानचित्रण और पुलिसिंग के उपकरण

- Unlike **John Snow's 1854 cholera map** in London that pinpointed affected individuals, the **Indian Plague Commission maps** focused on **railways, inspection points, camps, and police cordons**.
  जॉन स्नो के 1854 के हैजा मानचित्र के विपरीत, जिसने प्रभावित व्यक्तियों को चिन्हित किया, **इंडियन प्लेग कमीशन के मानचित्र** ने **रेलवे, निरीक्षण बिंदु, शिविर और पुलिस घेराबंदी** पर ध्यान केंद्रित किया।
- These maps emphasized **control of mobility** rather than the **distribution of cases**, reflecting the belief that controlling movement controlled the disease.
  इन मानचित्रों ने **मामलों के वितरण** के बजाय **आवागमन पर नियंत्रण** को प्राथमिकता दी, जो यह मान्यता दर्शाता है कि आवागमन को नियंत्रित करना बीमारी को नियंत्रित करना है।

Role of policing in plague management
प्लेग प्रबंधन में पुलिसिंग की भूमिका

- Policing played a central role, with **quarantine measures, inspections, and confinements** enforced through police rather than community trust or health education.
  पुलिसिंग ने एक केंद्रीय भूमिका निभाई, जिसमें **संगरोध उपाय, निरीक्षण और बंदीकरण** पुलिस द्वारा लागू किए गए, न कि सामुदायिक विश्वास या स्वास्थ्य शिक्षा के माध्यम से।

- **Observation camps** near railway stations scrutinized populations, and **military ward orderlies** were introduced to hospitals and municipalities to enforce control.
  रेलवे स्टेशनों के पास **निरीक्षण शिविरों** में आबादी की जांच की गई, और नियंत्रण लागू करने के लिए **सैन्य वार्ड कर्मियों** को अस्पतालों और नगरपालिकाओं में लाया गया।

- Police stations, rather than medical establishments, acted as **primary data nodes**, with local watchmen reporting deaths to police, who relayed them to higher authorities.
  पुलिस थानों ने, चिकित्सा संस्थानों के बजाय, **प्राथमिक डेटा केंद्र** के रूप में कार्य किया, जहां स्थानीय चौकीदार मौतों की रिपोर्ट पुलिस को देते थे, जो इसे उच्च अधिकारियों तक पहुंचाते थे।

- This integration of **policing into health apparatus** solidified the notion that health crises demanded a **top-down, coercive response**.
  स्वास्थ्य उपकरण में **पुलिसिंग का समावेश** इस धारणा को मजबूत करता है कि स्वास्थ्य संकटों के लिए **शीर्ष-से-नीचे जबरदस्ती प्रतिक्रिया** की आवश्यकता होती है।

- Over time, professionalization shifted duties toward **medical professionals**, but the precedent highlights how **policing once defined disease surveillance**.
  समय के साथ, कर्तव्यों को **चिकित्सा पेशेवरों** की ओर स्थानांतरित कर दिया गया, लेकिन यह पूर्वधारणा दिखाती है कि **कभी पुलिसिंग ने रोग निगरानी को परिभाषित किया था।**

Plague maps and power dynamics
प्लेग मानचित्र और शक्ति संरचनाएँ

- The design of the plague maps and their emphasis on **railway lines**, **inspection stations**, and **cordons** influenced both perception and action.
  प्लेग मानचित्रों का डिज़ाइन और उनका **रेलवे लाइनों**, **निरीक्षण स्टेशनों**, और **कॉर्डन** पर जोर, दृष्टिकोण और क्रियावली को प्रभावित करता था।

- Vibrant colours and meticulous detail conveyed a sense of **order** and **efficacy**, directing attention to the **state's interventions** rather than the epidemic's victims.
  चमकदार रंग और सूक्ष्म विवरण ने **व्यवस्था** और **प्रभावशीलता** की भावना व्यक्त की, ध्यान को महामारी के पीड़ितों के बजाय **राज्य की हस्तक्षेपों** पर केंद्रित किया।

- The maps downplayed the suffering of **communities** and masked the real scale of the crisis by focusing on **surveillance infrastructure**.
  मानचित्रों ने **समुदायों** के दुःख को कम किया और संकट के वास्तविक पैमाने को **निगरानी ढांचे** पर ध्यान केंद्रित करके छुपा दिया।

- They reinforced **power dynamics**, showing how **data** and its **representation** can serve dominant interests.

इन मानचित्रों ने **शक्ति संरचनाओं** को सुदृढ़ किया, यह दिखाते हुए कि कैसे **डेटा** और उसकी **प्रस्तुति** प्रभुत्वशाली हितों की सेवा कर सकती है।

- Instead of illustrating the human toll, the maps suggested that **proper control** would triumph over **chaos**, reinforcing the **colonial narrative** that disease was best managed through **discipline** rather than **empathy**.

  मानचित्रों ने मानव पीड़ा को दर्शाने के बजाय यह सुझाव दिया कि **सही नियंत्रण अराजकता** पर विजय प्राप्त करेगा, और यह **औपनिवेशिक कथा** को सुदृढ़ करता था कि बीमारी को **अनुशासन** के माध्यम से ही सबसे अच्छा प्रबंधित किया जा सकता था, न कि **सहानुभूति** के।

This historical episode offers insights for the present.
यह ऐतिहासिक घटना वर्तमान के लिए जानकारी प्रदान करती है।

- The legacy of integrating **policing** and **surveillance** into public health efforts persists, though it now takes different forms.

  पुलिसिंग और **निगरानी** को सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य प्रयासों में शामिल करने की विरासत बनी रहती है, हालांकि अब यह विभिन्न रूपों में दिखाई देती है।

- Modern systems often rely on **medical professionals** for **data collection** and **patient tracking**, reflecting shifting **ethical standards** and **professional practices**.

  आधुनिक प्रणालियाँ अक्सर **चिकित्सा पेशेवरों** पर **डेटा संग्रह** और **रोगी ट्रैकिंग** के लिए निर्भर करती हैं, जो बदलते हुए **नैतिक मानकों** और **पेशेवर प्रथाओं** को दर्शाती हैं।

- Yet, the question remains of how **public health measures** are framed.

  फिर भी, सवाल यह है कि **सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य उपायों** को किस प्रकार से फ्रेम किया जाता है।

- The 1896 plague response shows that framing can reshape **policy**, determining whether the emphasis lies on **caring for individuals** or exercising **authority over them**.

  1896 का प्लेग प्रतिक्रिया दिखाती है कि फ्रेमिंग **नीति** को फिर से आकार दे सकती है, यह तय करते हुए कि जोर **व्यक्तियों की देखभाल** पर होता है या उनके ऊपर **प्राधिकरण** का प्रयोग होता है।

- Recognizing this dynamic helps ensure that today's health policies do not uncritically reproduce the **inequities** or **heavy-handed tactics** of the past.

  इस गतिशीलता को पहचानना यह सुनिश्चित करने में मदद करता है कि आज की स्वास्थ्य नीतियाँ अतीत की **असमानताओं** या **कठोर रणनीतियों** को बिना आलोचना किए पुनः उत्पन्न न करें।

The issue of oversight and ethics
निगरानी और नैतिकता का मुद्दा

- Ethical considerations arise when **public health responses** privilege **control** over **community well-being**.

  सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य प्रतिक्रियाओं में **नियंत्रण** को **समुदाय की भलाई** पर प्राथमिकता दी जाती है, तो नैतिक मुद्दे उठते हैं।

- The history of the **Bombay Plague** exemplifies how **data collection** and **mapping techniques**, if guided by **oppressive frameworks**, can become tools for enforcing

power rather than improving health.

बॉम्बे प्लेग का इतिहास यह उदाहरण प्रस्तुत करता है कि कैसे **डेटा संग्रह** और **मानचित्रण तकनीकें**, यदि **दमनकारी ढांचे** से मार्गदर्शित होती हैं, तो ये **स्वास्थ्य में सुधार** करने के बजाय **शक्ति** लागू करने के उपकरण बन सकती हैं।

- The past invites us to consider more **humane** and **participatory approaches**, ensuring **transparency** and respect for **individual rights**.

  अतीत हमें अधिक **मानवता** और **सहभागी दृष्टिकोण** पर विचार करने के लिए प्रेरित करता है, यह सुनिश्चित करते हुए कि **पारदर्शिता** और **व्यक्तिगत अधिकारों** का सम्मान हो।

- Authorities must resist the temptation to treat **populations** as objects of **surveillance** rather than **partners** in safeguarding public health.

  अधिकारियों को **जनसंख्याओं** को **निगरानी** के वस्तु के रूप में देखने के बजाय सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य की सुरक्षा में **साझेदारों** के रूप में देखने की प्रलोभन से बचना चाहिए।

- Balancing **effective oversight** with **ethical obligations** remains a core challenge, as does acknowledging that **representation** — be it in **maps** or **databases** — shapes how problems are understood and addressed.

  प्रभावी निगरानी को **नैतिक दायित्वों** के साथ संतुलित करना एक प्रमुख चुनौती बनी रहती है, जैसा कि यह स्वीकार करना कि **प्रस्तुति** — चाहे वह **मानचित्रों** या **डेटाबेसों** में हो – यह निर्धारित करता है कि समस्याओं को कैसे समझा और हल किया जाता है।

This episode also signals that while surveillance mechanisms have evolved, their underlying logic may still influence decision-making.

यह घटना यह भी संकेत देती है कि जबकि निगरानी तंत्र विकसित हो गए हैं, उनकी अंतर्निहित तर्कशक्ति अभी भी निर्णय लेने को प्रभावित कर सकती है।

- Today, advanced **data collection methods** can render entire populations visible to the **state**, raising critical questions about **privacy**, **trust**, and the **fair distribution of resources**.

  आजकल, उन्नत **डेटा संग्रह विधियाँ** संपूर्ण जनसंख्या को **राज्य** के लिए दृश्य बना सकती हैं, जो **गोपनीयता**, **विश्वास**, और **संसाधनों के उचित वितरण** के बारे में महत्वपूर्ण सवाल उठाती हैं।

- Reflecting on the colonial response to the plague helps us understand that **data** should be a means to enhance **health** and **safety** rather than to reinforce existing **hierarchies** or **curtail freedoms**.

  प्लेग पर औपनिवेशिक प्रतिक्रिया पर विचार करते हुए हम समझ सकते हैं कि **डेटा** को **स्वास्थ्य** और **सुरक्षा** बढ़ाने का एक साधन होना चाहिए, न कि मौजूदा **पदक्रमों** को सुदृढ़ करने या **स्वतंत्रताओं** को सीमित करने का।

- We must remain vigilant that new **technologies** and **methodologies** serve the **collective good**.

  हमें सतर्क रहना चाहिए कि नई **प्रौद्योगिकियाँ** और **पद्धतियाँ सामूहिक भलाई** की सेवा करें।

In learning from the Bombay Plague's history, we see that health crises often lay bare existing power structures.

बॉम्बे प्लेग के इतिहास से सीखते हुए हम देखते हैं कि स्वास्थ्य संकट अक्सर मौजूदा शक्ति संरचनाओं को उजागर करते हैं।

- The authorities in the late **19th century** chose to rely on **policing** and **surveillance**, shaping the way the epidemic was understood and managed.
  19वीं शताब्दी के अंत में अधिकारियों ने **पुलिसिंग** और **निगरानी** पर निर्भर होने का निर्णय लिया, जिससे महामारी को समझने और प्रबंधित करने का तरीका आकार लिया।

- By studying these choices, we can recognize the importance of **framing health challenges** in ways that affirm **human dignity**.
  इन निर्णयों का अध्ययन करके, हम यह पहचान सकते हैं कि **स्वास्थ्य चुनौतियों** को इस प्रकार से फ्रेम करना महत्वपूर्ण है जो **मानव गरिमा** की पुष्टि करता है।

- We can strive to ensure that contemporary **public health strategies**, while leveraging **sophisticated tools**, remain rooted in **empathy**, **equity**, and **evidence**.
  हम यह सुनिश्चित करने की कोशिश कर सकते हैं कि समकालीन **सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य रणनीतियाँ**, जबकि **उन्नत उपकरणों** का लाभ उठाते हुए,

GS Paper III: Mining/Disaster Management

Silica scars
Mine workers need early diagnosis and treatment of silicosis

India's growth aspirations have spurred the national mining industry to extract more minerals for use in construction. One such mineral is silicon dioxide, or silica, an important component of sand and stone. Mine workers exposed to silica dust for many years have a heightened risk of developing silicosis, wherein microscopic silica particles are lodged in lung tissue, hampering their normal function. The risk of silicosis is age-agnostic and determined by exposure, and is chronic after onset. Thus it threatens millions of workers, many of them young. In 1999, the Indian Council of Medical Research reported that more than eight million people in the country were highly exposed to silica dust; this population could only have increased since the national government has opened new mines and expanded old ones. On November 29, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) directed the Central Pollution Control Board to draft new guidelines vis-à-vis "granting permission for [silica] mining and washing plants", and the Uttar Pradesh government and Pollution Control Board to set up health-care facilities in areas with silica mines. The NGT is well-intentioned but mine workers are desperate for action.

The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code 2020 requires mine workers' employers to notify threats of bodily harm to workers and workers developing specific diseases, including silicosis. But operators often do not notify the Directorate General of Mines Safety, preventing the state from developing an actionable awareness of mine operators' workplace practices; nor have States of their own initiative strived to collect this data. The potential for special hospitals to ameliorate this situation is also unclear: the Code obligates qualified medical practitioners to notify silicosis cases to the Chief Inspector-cum-Facilitator, yet it already required operators to provide free annual health check-ups, which have failed to reveal silicosis cases. Health-care providers have even been known to misrecord silicosis as tuberculosis. The NGT also noted that "concerned authorities" are not living up to the law. The state's passivity is thus the principal roadblock to mine workers' welfare, which guidelines are unlikely to surmount. The passivity also flies in the face of climate justice, an idea India has ironically wielded in multilateral fora to demand concessions on emissions and adaptation financing. The nation's mineral resources are concentrated in 'resource frontier' States that have low literacy and health-care coverage, a disorganised labour force, and where mining provides crucial revenue. When the state diverts the concessions to suppliers of cheap silica, workers tolerate bad working conditions and delay seeking medical or legal recourse until the silicosis has become life-threatening.

Silica Scars
सिलिका के निशान

Mine workers need early diagnosis and treatment of silicosis.
खनन श्रमिकों को सिलिकोसिस के लिए प्रारंभिक निदान और उपचार की आवश्यकता है।

• India's growth aspirations have increased the demand for minerals like **silicon dioxide (silica),** used in construction.
भारत की विकास आकांक्षाओं ने निर्माण में उपयोग होने वाले खनिज जैसे **सिलिकॉन डाइऑक्साइड (सिलिका)** की मांग बढ़ा दी है।

• **Silicosis** occurs when microscopic **silica particles** lodge in lung tissue, hampering normal lung function.
सिलिकोसिस तब होता है जब सूक्ष्म **सिलिका कण** फेफड़ों के ऊतकों में फंस जाते हैं।

• In **1999**, the **Indian Council of Medical Research** reported that over **8 million people** in India were highly exposed to silica dust.
1999 में, **भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान अनुसंधान परिषद** ने बताया कि भारत में **80 लाख** से अधिक लोग सिलिका धूल के संपर्क में थे।

• On **November 29**, the **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** directed the **Central Pollution Control Board** to draft new guidelines for **silica mining and washing plants.**
29 नवंबर को, **राष्ट्रीय हरित अधिकरण (NGT)** ने केंद्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड को सिलिका खनन और वाशिंग प्लांट्स के लिए नए दिशा-निर्देश तैयार करने का निर्देश दिया।

• The **Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code 2020** requires employers to notify specific diseases, including **silicosis.**
सुरक्षा, स्वास्थ्य और कार्य शर्तें संहिता 2020 के तहत नियोक्ताओं को **सिलिकोसिस** सहित विशिष्ट बीमारियों की सूचना देना आवश्यक है।

• **NGT** noted that authorities are failing to comply with existing laws.
NGT ने उल्लेख किया कि अधिकारी मौजूदा कानूनों का पालन करने में विफल हो रहे हैं।

• **India**'s focus on **climate justice** in international forums contrasts with the neglect of workers in **resource frontier states.**
अंतर्राष्ट्रीय मंचों पर **जलवायु न्याय** पर भारत का ध्यान संसाधन सीमांत राज्यों में श्रमिकों की उपेक्षा के विपरीत है।

• **Workers** tolerate poor conditions and delay seeking medical help until **silicosis** becomes life-threatening.

श्रमिक खराब परिस्थितियों को सहन करते हैं और **सिलिकोसिस** जानलेवा होने तक चिकित्सा सहायता लेने में देरी करते हैं।

Building on the revival of the manufacturing sector

GS Paper III: Manufacturing Sector

India's journey to becoming a global manufacturing hub has gained momentum with the government's strategic policy initiatives, particularly the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme. This scheme has been instrumental in transforming the manufacturing landscape in sectors such as mobile manufacturing, electronics, pharmaceuticals, automobile, and textiles, among others, through enhanced production, exports and job creation.

The scheme's impressive performance has been mirrored by the results of the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) for 2022-23, released recently, which reveals a positive correlation between PLI scheme incentives and sectoral performance. In the ASI data, manufacturing output registered a robust growth rate of 21.5%, while gross value added (GVA) grew by 7.3%. This expansion comes on the back of the PLI scheme's success, showcasing that many sectors benefiting from the scheme have performed particularly well. Basic metal manufacturing, coke and refined petroleum products, food products, chemicals and chemical products, and motor vehicles – many of which are covered under the PLI scheme – collectively contributed 58% to the total manufacturing output and registered an output growth of 24.5% in 2022-23.

Recovery of the manufacturing sector
ASI surveys are a vital source of data on the registered, organised manufacturing sector in the economy. They include factories with 10 or more workers using power, and those with 20 or more workers, without power. The results of the ASI 2022-23 show a healthy double-digit expansion in the growth rate of manufacturing sector output – at 21.5% – despite a high base of 2021-22 which saw a sharp rebound as the economy emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic-induced slump. The impressive growth in output and value added in 2022-23, as compared to the pre-pandemic period, indicates that the manufacturing sector is slowly but steadily turning the corner after the disruptions in recent years.

The performance of the manufacturing sector shows that the stage is set for India to become a

Chandrajit Banerjee

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Strong reforms are needed for India to fully capitalise on its manufacturing potential

global manufacturing powerhouse. However, strong reforms are needed to fully capitalise on the manufacturing potential.

The success of the PLI scheme underscores the need to expand its scope beyond the traditional industries where manufacturing activity is concentrated. Extending PLI incentives to labour-intensive sectors such as apparel, leather, footwear and furniture, as well as sunrise industries such as aerospace, space technology and MRO could unlock new growth frontiers. There are also sectors with high import dependency but untapped domestic capabilities such as capital goods. This can help in reducing vulnerability to global demand fluctuations and supply chain disruptions. Promoting green manufacturing and incentivising research and development in advanced manufacturing technologies can further enhance India's manufacturing competitiveness.

The striking gap between manufacturing output growth (21.5%) and GVA growth (7.3%) – as the ASI data show – is largely driven by soaring input prices, which surged by 24.4% in 2022-23. This divergence suggests that while production volumes are rising, industries are grappling with elevated input prices, which have eroded their value addition. With bulk of the inputs being imported, it is pivotal to bring down their landing costs in the country. To bring this to fruition, a more streamlined import regime that simplifies tariffs into a three-tier system, with 0 - 2.5% for raw materials, 2.5% - 5% for intermediates, and 5% - 7.5% for finished goods, could help mitigate these input costs, enhance competitiveness, and improve India's integration into global value chains.

A concentration of industrial activity
The regional imbalance in manufacturing activity, with Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Uttar Pradesh, collectively accounting for over 54% of total manufacturing GVA and 55% of employment, highlights the concentration of industrial activity in a few States. This regional imbalance not only hinders equitable development across the country but

also limits the sector's overall growth potential. For India to fully capitalise on its manufacturing capacity, it is essential for States to be an active participant in India's growth story by implementing the fundamental factor market reforms in areas such as land, labour and power in addition to developing infrastructure, and promoting investments.

Focus must move to MSMEs and women
For manufacturing to serve as a true catalyst for inclusive growth, special attention must be given to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) and increasing women's participation in the workforce. MSMEs contribute around 45% of India's manufacturing GDP and employ about 60 million people. Tailoring PLI incentives to accommodate MSMEs, by lowering capital investment thresholds and reducing production targets, would empower these enterprises to scale up, innovate and integrate more effectively into value chains.

Enhancing female workforce participation is an untapped opportunity for boosting manufacturing growth. The World Bank's latest South Asia Development Update estimates that India's manufacturing output could rise by 9% if more women join the workforce. Developing supportive infrastructure such as hostels, dormitories, and childcare facilities near factories could significantly boost women's participation in manufacturing, driving output and inclusive development.

To transform the Indian economy into a developed economy by 2047, the manufacturing sector ought to play a critical role. As in the CII's own estimations, its share in the GVA has a potential to rise from the current 17% to over 25% by 2030-31, and to 27% by 2047-48 if sustained efforts to boost domestic manufacturing capabilities and domestic value addition continue. Apart from boosting its competitiveness by improving ease of doing business and bringing down cost of doing business, seizing the current moment by leveraging on the slew of policy measures will be imperative for the manufacturing sector.

Building on the Revival of the Manufacturing Sector
निर्माण क्षेत्र के पुनरुद्धार पर निर्माण

- **India's journey** to becoming a **global manufacturing hub** has gained momentum with the government's **strategic policy initiatives, particularly the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme.**
  भारत की यात्रा को वैश्विक निर्माण केंद्र बनने की दिशा में गति मिली है, सरकार की **रणनीतिक नीतिगत पहल, विशेष रूप से उत्पादन से जुड़े प्रोत्साहन (PLI) योजना** के कारण।
- The scheme has transformed sectors like **mobile manufacturing, electronics, pharmaceuticals, automobile, and textiles** by enhancing **production, exports, and**

job creation.

इस योजना ने **मोबाइल निर्माण, इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स, फार्मास्यूटिकल्स, ऑटोमोबाइल और वस्त्र** जैसे क्षेत्रों को **उत्पादन, निर्यात और रोजगार सृजन** के माध्यम से बदल दिया है।

- The Annual Survey of Industries (**ASI**) for **2022-23** shows a **positive correlation** between **PLI scheme incentives** and **sectoral performance.**

  2022-23 के लिए वार्षिक उद्योग सर्वेक्षण (**ASI**) ने **PLI योजना प्रोत्साहनों** और **क्षेत्रीय प्रदर्शन** के बीच एक **सकारात्मक संबंध** दिखाया।

- Manufacturing output registered a robust **growth rate of 21.5%,** while **Gross Value Added (GVA)** grew by **7.3%.**

  निर्माण उत्पादन ने **21.5% की वृद्धि दर** दर्ज की, जबकि **सकल मूल्य वर्धित (GVA)** में **7.3%** की वृद्धि हुई।

- Key sectors like **basic metals, coke, refined petroleum products, food products, chemicals, motor vehicles** contributed **58% to total manufacturing output** and saw **24.5% growth** in **2022-23**.

  मूल धातु, कोक, परिष्कृत पेट्रोलियम उत्पाद, खाद्य उत्पाद, रसायन, मोटर वाहन जैसे प्रमुख क्षेत्रों ने **कुल निर्माण उत्पादन में 58% योगदान** दिया और **2022-23 में 24.5% की वृद्धि** दर्ज की।

Recovery of the Manufacturing Sector
निर्माण क्षेत्र की पुनर्बहाली

- **ASI surveys** provide data on the **registered, organised manufacturing sector** including factories with **10+ workers using power** or **20+ workers without power.**

  ASI सर्वेक्षण संगठित निर्माण क्षेत्र का डेटा प्रदान करता है जिसमें **10+ श्रमिकों के साथ (बिजली उपयोग करते हुए)** या **20+ श्रमिकों (बिना बिजली के)** वाले कारखाने शामिल हैं।

- The **2022-23 ASI** results show a **21.5% double-digit growth rate** despite a high base from **2021-22,** indicating recovery post-COVID-19 slump.

  2022-23 ASI के परिणाम **21.5% की दो अंकों की वृद्धि दर** दिखाते हैं, **2021-22** की उच्च आधार स्थिति के बावजूद, जो COVID-19 मंदी के बाद पुनर्बहाली को इंगित करता है।

- The data shows that **India** is steadily moving towards becoming a **global manufacturing powerhouse.**

  डेटा से पता चलता है कि **भारत** धीरे-धीरे **वैश्विक निर्माण शक्ति केंद्र** बनने की ओर बढ़ रहा है।

Expanding PLI Scheme and Reforms
PLI योजना का विस्तार और सुधार

- To maximise potential, **PLI incentives** should extend to **labour-intensive sectors** like **apparel, leather, footwear, furniture,** and **sunrise industries** like **aerospace and space technology.**

  अधिकतम क्षमता का उपयोग करने के लिए, **PLI प्रोत्साहन** को **परिधान, चमड़ा, जूते, फर्नीचर** जैसे श्रम-प्रधान क्षेत्रों और **एयरोस्पेस और अंतरिक्ष प्रौद्योगिकी** जैसे उदयशील उद्योगों तक विस्तारित किया जाना चाहिए।

- Focus on **green manufacturing** and incentivising **research in advanced technologies** can improve **India's competitiveness.**

  हरित निर्माण पर ध्यान केंद्रित करना और उन्नत प्रौद्योगिकियों में **अनुसंधान को प्रोत्साहित करना** भारत की **प्रतिस्पर्धा क्षमता** को बढ़ा सकता है।

Addressing Input Cost Challenges
इनपुट लागत चुनौतियों का समाधान

- A gap between **manufacturing output growth (21.5%)** and **GVA growth (7.3%)** is due to soaring **input prices (24.4%) in 2022-23.**

  निर्माण उत्पादन वृद्धि (21.5%) और **GVA वृद्धि (7.3%)** के बीच का अंतर **2022-23 में इनपुट कीमतों (24.4%)** में वृद्धि के कारण है।

- A streamlined import regime with **three-tier tariffs (0-2.5% for raw materials, 2.5-5% for intermediates, 5-7.5% for finished goods)** can reduce costs and enhance **global value chain integration.**

  तीन-स्तरीय टैरिफ (कच्चे माल के लिए 0-2.5%, मध्यवर्ती उत्पादों के लिए 2.5-5%, तैयार माल के लिए 5-7.5%) के साथ एक सुव्यवस्थित आयात व्यवस्था लागत को कम कर सकती है और **वैश्विक मूल्य श्रृंखला एकीकरण** को बढ़ा सकती है।

A concentration of industrial activity
औद्योगिक गतिविधि का संकेंद्रण

- The regional imbalance in manufacturing activity is evident, with **Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Uttar Pradesh** collectively accounting for over **54% of total manufacturing GVA** and **55% of employment**.

  महाराष्ट्र, गुजरात, तमिलनाडु, कर्नाटक, और उत्तर प्रदेश संयुक्त रूप से **कुल मैन्युफैक्चरिंग GVA का 54%** और **रोजगार का 55%** प्रदान करते हैं, जिससे विनिर्माण गतिविधि में क्षेत्रीय असंतुलन स्पष्ट है।

- This concentration in a few States limits **equitable development** and reduces the sector's overall growth potential.

  कुछ राज्यों में यह संकेंद्रण **समान विकास** में बाधा डालता है और क्षेत्र की समग्र वृद्धि की क्षमता को कम करता है।

- For India to fully capitalize on its manufacturing capacity, States must implement **factor market reforms** in areas such as **land, labor, power**, along with developing **infrastructure** and promoting **investments**.

  भारत को अपनी विनिर्माण क्षमता का पूर्ण लाभ उठाने के लिए राज्यों को **भूमि, श्रम, बिजली** जैसे क्षेत्रों में **बुनियादी बाजार सुधार** लागू करने चाहिए, साथ ही **इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर** विकसित करना और **निवेश को प्रोत्साहित करना** चाहिए।

Focus must move to MSMEs and women
MSMEs और महिलाओं पर ध्यान केंद्रित करना आवश्यक

- MSMEs contribute around **45% of India's manufacturing GDP** and employ about **60 million people**.

  MSMEs भारत के **निर्माण GDP का लगभग 45%** योगदान देते हैं और **60 मिलियन लोगों** को रोजगार प्रदान करते हैं।

- Tailoring **PLI incentives** to accommodate MSMEs by lowering **capital investment thresholds** and reducing **production targets** can empower these enterprises to scale up and integrate into value chains.

  PLI प्रोत्साहनों को MSMEs के लिए अनुकूल बनाते हुए **पूंजी निवेश सीमा को कम करना** और **उत्पादन लक्ष्य घटाना** इन उद्यमों को विस्तार और वैल्यू चेन में शामिल होने में सक्षम बनाएगा।

- Enhancing **female workforce participation** is an untapped opportunity for boosting manufacturing growth.

  महिला कार्यबल की भागीदारी बढ़ाना विनिर्माण वृद्धि को बढ़ाने के लिए एक अप्रयुक्त अवसर है।

- The **World Bank's South Asia Development Update** estimates that India's manufacturing output could rise by **9%** if more women join the workforce.

  विश्व बैंक के दक्षिण एशिया विकास अपडेट के अनुसार, यदि अधिक महिलाएं कार्यबल में शामिल हों, तो भारत का विनिर्माण उत्पादन **9%** तक बढ़ सकता है।

- Developing **supportive infrastructure** such as **hostels, dormitories, childcare facilities** near factories could significantly boost women's participation.

  कारखानों के पास **छात्रावास, डॉरमिटरी, चाइल्डकेयर सुविधाएं** जैसी **सहायक इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर** विकसित करना महिलाओं की भागीदारी को बढ़ा सकता है।

Path to developed economy by 2047
2047 तक विकसित अर्थव्यवस्था की ओर

- The **CII estimates** that the share of manufacturing in GVA could rise from the current **17%** to over **25% by 2030-31** and to **27% by 2047-48** with sustained efforts.

  CII के अनुमान के अनुसार, GVA में मैन्युफैक्चरिंग का हिस्सा वर्तमान **17% से 2030-31 तक 25%** और **2047-48 तक 27%** हो सकता है यदि लगातार प्रयास किए जाएं।

- Boosting **domestic manufacturing capabilities** and **domestic value addition** is essential for this transformation.

  इस परिवर्तन के लिए **घरेलू विनिर्माण क्षमताओं** और **घरेलू मूल्य वर्धन** को बढ़ावा देना आवश्यक है।

- Improving the **ease of doing business**, bringing down the **cost of doing business**, and leveraging current policy measures will be critical for the manufacturing sector.

  व्यवसाय करने में आसानी, **लागत में कमी** और मौजूदा नीतिगत उपायों का लाभ उठाना विनिर्माण क्षेत्र के लिए महत्वपूर्ण होगा।

A landslide killed seven people in VOC Nagar in Tiruvannamalai district of Tamil Nadu. The rescue operation involved 170 personnel, including members of the National Disaster Response Force. C. VENKATACHALAPATHY

The cyclone that battered Tamil Nadu

Cyclone Fengal has wreaked havoc in Puducherry and Tamil Nadu, claiming 12 lives and affecting 14 districts. While the Tamil Nadu government says it was prepared for heavy rainfall, the complex and slow-moving cyclone posed a challenge to weather experts and the administration alike. **K. Lakshmi** and **D. Madhavan** report on how the cyclone changed course, leaving a trail of destruction

GS Paper I: Geography   GS Paper III: Disaster Management

> We need to map landslide susceptibility in all the districts so that we are better prepared for such disasters
>
> **G. SUNDARARAJAN**
> Poovulangin Nanbargal

On the evening of December 1, a family of four and three of their neighbours huddled together under a metal roofed single-room house, in VOC Nagar, a residential area at the foot of the Arunachala hill in Tiruvannamalai district. They listened as torrential rains brought by Cyclone Fengal pounded the district in interior Tamil Nadu.

S. Meenakshi, 27, who lives opposite the house, recalls the tragedy that occurred shortly after. Her sister, R. Meena, 26, and Meena's husband, N. Rajkumar, 32, both brick kiln workers, had returned home the previous evening as their workplace, located 20 kilometres from the temple town, had flooded. Meenakshi says the couple had been working in the brick kiln for a few years and had often stayed there for weeks to complete tasks before returning to VOC Nagar.

That Sunday was special for Rajkumar as he had come back to his children – 9-year-old Goutham and 7-year-old Iniya – after working tirelessly for a month at the kiln, she says. Meenakshi's daughter, Ramya, 13, had also gone to Rajkumar's house along with two neighbours – Vinothini, 14, and Maha, 10.

"Around 4.30 p.m., we heard a deafening sound. Meena called out to me and I rushed out," says Meenakshi. "The next few moments were a blur. A heap of mud, boulders, and debris came rolling down the hill. Meena rushed inside to bring the children out but it was too late. My sister's home was buried," she says, sobbing.

All the seven occupants were instantly killed. Other houses in the neighbourhood were completely or partially destroyed. Relatives searched for loved ones in the slush amid relentless rains until a rescue team, led by Tiruvannamalai Collector D. Baskara Pandian, reached the site. They evacuated nearly 250 families from the hills, moved them to community halls in Tiruvannamalai town, and gave them food and medicines.

The seven bodies were recovered after a nearly 20-hour operation by a 170-member team, including 35 personnel of the National Disaster Response Force, and a sniffer dog the next evening. "When the team retrieved two bodies from the spot, they saw that Rajkumar had been holding Iniya tightly," recalls a senior official.

A trail of destruction

While heavy rainfall during the northeast monsoon is common at this time of the year in Tamil Nadu, the State and the Union Territory of Puducherry did not expect Cyclone Fengal to cause such widespread devastation when it crossed the eastern coast on the night of November 30. On December 1, unusually heavy rainfall (40 cm to 50 cm) was recorded in many places in Puducherry and the northern and northwestern parts of Tamil Nadu. Among the coastal districts, Chennai was less affected.

The cyclone then slowly drifted westward, dumping rains, causing floods, submerging acres of crops, damaging civic infrastructure, and displacing thousands of people. When it later moved inland, it pummelled several districts. Mailan in Villupuram district received 51 cm of rainfall on December 1 and Uthangarai in Krishnagiri district received 50 cm on December 2. Some areas of Villupuram such as Kedar and Soorapattu received more than 33 cm of rainfall on a single day.

D. Vasanthkumar, 51, of Muthu Nagar in Nellikuppam, Cuddalore district, spent an entire night on the stairway leading to his terrace as floodwater had entered his house. "Local officials gave us flood alerts at 8 p.m. asking us to evacuate the street. But the water level rose rapidly in the area and a few of us were stranded. It took two days for the floodwater to recede," he says. While Vasanthkumar managed to salvage important documents that were lying in his loft, he lost most of his electronic devices.

In his letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi this week, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said 12 lives were lost in the cyclonic storm that had wreaked havoc in 14 districts. Villupuram, Tiruvannamalai, and Kallakurichi received more than 50 cm of rainfall in a single day, which was equal to an entire season's share. He noted that more than 2.11 lakh hectares of agricultural and horticultural land had been inundated and nearly 963 cattle had died. About 9,500 km of roads, 1,847 culverts, and 417 tanks had been damaged. Stalin said that the cyclone had overwhelmed the State's resources and requested the Centre to release ₹2,000 crore from the National Disaster Response Fund to assist rehabilitation efforts.

Besides compensation for damaged crops, the Tamil Nadu government announced relief of ₹2,000 per family in the districts of Villupuram, Cuddalore, and Kallakurichi on December 3. Stalin also donated one month's salary towards the Chief Minister's Relief Fund to execute relief measures in the six worst-affected districts. On December 6, the Union Home Ministry approved the release of ₹944.80 crore to the Tamil Nadu government as the Central share from the State Disaster Response Fund to help the people affected by the cyclone.

Puducherry Chief Minister N. Rangaswamy announced relief assistance of ₹5,000 to all ration cardholders affected by the cyclone in the UT and ₹30,000 per hectare to affected farmers.

Crops under water

Four days after the rains subsided, Villupuram, a predominant agricultural district, is struggling to return to regular life. Nearly 80,520 hectares of crops are damaged, many lakes have breached their banks, and the Malattaru and Then Pennai rivers are brimming with floodwater.

V. Tamilarasi, 64, of Fillur village in Villupuram taluk, is searching for someone to help her clear the deposits of sludge that cover her agricultural land. Flash floods in the Then Pennai river submerged crops. She has also lost two goats.

"I cultivated black gram and casuarina plantations in three acres. The crop is submerged under six feet of water. I spent ₹2 lakh for cultivation. I don't know how I am going to manage the loss," she worries.

Villages such as Pillaiyarkuppam and Arasamangalam have become small islands. They did not have power and communication networks for three days, which left many stranded or confined to their houses without water or food.

"The district previously experienced such large-scale floods in 1972. This time, I was caught unawares. While village administrative officers helped us, officials and elected representatives came much later," Tamilarasi says.

The situation was no different in the urban stretches of Villupuram. S. Neela, 55, of Ashakulam, spent nearly a day cleaning the muck and waste that floodwater had brought into her house on December 1.

"Our street had waist-deep water. My family of four managed with 20 litres of packaged water for three days. We had to put up with the sewage that had mixed with the stagnant water for three days. We all worked together to drain the water as we didn't get immediate help," she says.

R.T. Murugan, district secretary, Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam (All India Kisan Sabha), says, "Crops in various parts were on the verge of drying for want of water until the downpour. We have not seen such water flow in the Malattaru and Then Pennai rivers in December. I was preparing for paddy harvest for Pongal and recently

Vehicles in the Uthangarai area of Krishnagiri following heavy rainfall on December 2. PTI

> Flood warnings did not reach the villages close to the riverbanks. Residents assumed it would be another normal rain spell. Many left behind their belongings and cattle to save their lives
>
> **G. JAYAKUMAR**
> Pananhuppam, Villupuram district

sowed black gram in an acre. I face a loss of ₹50,000 as floodwater marooned my land. Poorly maintained water bodies in villages too led to quick damage."

Several residents say they want Villupuram to be declared as a disaster-affected district.

Floodwaters in Puducherry

Puducherry heaved a sigh of relief after the storm passed through the region on December 1, but was hit by another disaster when water was discharged from the brimming dams of Tamil Nadu, particularly the Sathanur dam in Tiruvannamalai on December 2.

The discharge of 1.68 lakh cubic feet per second (cusecs) of floodwater from the Sathanur dam sparked a political debate. The Opposition parties blamed the ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam government for the deluge in the northern districts without prior notice. Refuting the claims of a self-created disaster, Water Resources Minister Duraimurugan noted that sufficient flood warnings had been given and flood discharge was planned considering the safety of the dam and the lives of the people.

The Water Resources Department noted that uncontrolled flow in Then Pennai river catchment worsened the flood situation. Record-breaking rainfall in Krishnagiri and flash flood in tributaries such as Koraiyar and Kallar accelerated flow in the river that was already in spate. There is no mechanism to gauge rainfall or the floodwater generated in the Then Pennai's tributaries.

A senior Water Resources Department official says Sathanur reservoir received an inflow of 40,000 cusecs within four hours from December 1 night. The reservoir did not have sufficient storage capacity to store the entire inflow, the official adds. "We adhered to the rules and there was no lag in flood warning. After 1972, when the dam discharged nearly 2.57 lakh cusecs, this is the second time that such a high quantum of surplus water was released," the official says.

However, G. Jayakumar of Pananhuppam, Villupuram district, who helped people reach relief camps, says, "Flood warnings did not reach the villages (A.K. Kuchipalayam and Kallipattu) close to the riverbanks. Residents assumed it would be another normal rain spell. Many left behind their belongings and cattle to save their lives."

When the Water Resources Department team visited Villupuram, they were aghast at the damage. "We could not identify boundaries of water bodies and roads. The district is generally mostly dry in December. The teams are now assessing the damage," the official says.

In Sathanur village, S. Arul, president of the village panchayat, rescued several elderly residents from huts that were submerged in floodwater and shifted them to a school. "They also lost important documents in the floods," he says.

Predicting the path of a cyclone

Many officials say it is difficult to be fully prepared for a cyclone that causes such extensive damage. This is especially because it is difficult for weather models to pick up extreme weather events at a particular place, according to meteorologists.

Cyclone Fengal remained a low-pressure system after forming in the far eastern Indian Ocean on November 14 and became a depression in the Bay of Bengal only after 10 days. It moved relatively slowly for another week before the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said it had become a cyclone. On November 28, the IMD announced that Cyclone Fengal would cross the north Tamil Nadu-Puducherry coasts on the morning of November 30. The cyclone moved at a leisurely pace. While fast-moving cyclones tend to retreat quickly, slow-moving ones weaken into a deep depression, dumping unprecedented amounts of rainfall.

S. Balachandran, Additional Director General of Meteorology, Regional Meteorological Centre, Chennai, says the cyclone had undergone changes in its intensity over the ocean due to multiple factors. "The Regional Meteorological Centre had given sufficient forecasts and rainfall alerts for north Tamil Nadu on November 30 and December 1. Most of the forecasts were accurate. But in Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri, the prediction on rainfall intensity went off the mark," he says.

The storm remained stalled over the ocean for six hours. It moved slowly towards the north and then slightly towards the east before moving towards the west and crossing the coast.

"The reason for the cyclone remaining stationary is a bit obscure and there are no immediate explanations for it," says Y.E.A. Raj, former Deputy Director General of Meteorology, Chennai. "Though the clouds associated with the cyclonic storm were floating over the land, the centre of the cyclonic storm was close to the ocean and was able to draw a lot of moisture from the ocean. Since it got fed with all that moisture, it retained its intensity. This triggered a high amount of rainfall."

Pointing out that the global warming and climate variability are likely to increase such unpredictable local weather patterns, G. Sundararajan of Poovulangin Nanbargal, a group advocating environmental protection in Tamil Nadu, says, "There is an urgent need to bridge gaps in last mile communication on flood warnings and weather alerts. We also need to map landslide susceptibility in all the districts so that we are better prepared for such disasters."

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The Cyclone That Battered Tamil Nadu
तमिलनाडु पर कहर ढाने वाला चक्रवात

Cyclone Fengal wreaked havoc in Puducherry and Tamil Nadu, claiming 12 lives and affecting 14 districts.

चक्रवात फेंगल ने पुड्डुचेरी और तमिलनाडु में तबाही मचाई, 12 लोगों की जान ली और 14 जिलों को प्रभावित किया।

- The Tamil Nadu government claimed preparedness for heavy rainfall, but the **complex and slow-moving cyclone** posed challenges for weather experts and administration alike.

  तमिलनाडु सरकार ने भारी बारिश के लिए तैयार होने का दावा किया, लेकिन **जटिल और धीमी गति वाले चक्रवात** ने मौसम विशेषज्ञों और प्रशासन के सामने चुनौती खड़ी कर दी।

Impact of the Cyclone
चक्रवात का प्रभाव

- On **December 1**, seven people, including **four children**, were buried under debris in VOC Nagar, Tiruvannamalai district, following a mudslide caused by the cyclone.

  1 दिसंबर को, तिरुवन्नामलाई जिले के वीओसी नगर में चक्रवात से हुई मिट्टी की ढलान में **चार बच्चों** समेत सात लोग मलबे में दब गए।

- Rescue teams, including **170 personnel** and **35 NDRF members**, retrieved all bodies after a **20-hour operation**.

  170 कर्मियों और **35 एनडीआरएफ सदस्यों** की बचाव टीम ने **20 घंटे के ऑपरेशन** के बाद सभी शव निकाले।

- Villages in **Villupuram, Tiruvannamalai, and Kallakurichi** districts recorded over **50 cm of rainfall** in a single day, equivalent to an entire season's share.

  विल्लुपुरम, तिरुवन्नामलाई, और कल्लाकुरिची जिलों में एक ही दिन में **50 सेंटीमीटर से अधिक बारिश** हुई, जो पूरे सीजन की बारिश के बराबर थी।

- Over **2.11 lakh hectares** of agricultural and horticultural land were inundated, and **963 cattle** died.

  2.11 लाख हेक्टेयर कृषि और बागवानी भूमि डूबी, और **963 मवेशियों** की मौत हुई।

Relief and Compensation
राहत और मुआवजा

- Chief Minister **M.K. Stalin** requested **₹2,000 crore** from the National Disaster Response Fund for rehabilitation.

मुख्यमंत्री **एम.के. स्टालिन** ने पुनर्वास के लिए राष्ट्रीय आपदा प्रतिक्रिया कोष से **₹2,000 करोड़** की मांग की।

- Tamil Nadu announced **₹2,000 relief per family** in the affected districts and provided compensation for crop damage.
  तमिलनाडु ने प्रभावित जिलों में प्रति परिवार **₹2,000 की राहत** और फसल क्षति के लिए मुआवजा घोषित किया।

- On **December 6**, the Union Home Ministry approved the release of **₹944.80 crore** from the State Disaster Response Fund.
  6 दिसंबर को केंद्रीय गृह मंत्रालय ने राज्य आपदा प्रतिक्रिया कोष से **₹944.80 करोड़** जारी करने की मंजूरी दी।

- Puducherry Chief Minister **N. Rangaswamy** announced **₹5,000 relief** for affected ration cardholders and **₹30,000 per hectare** for affected farmers.
  पुडुचेरी के मुख्यमंत्री **एन. रंगास्वामी** ने प्रभावित राशन कार्ड धारकों के लिए **₹5,000 की राहत** और प्रभावित किसानों के लिए **₹30,000 प्रति हेक्टेयर** की घोषणा की।

Crops under Water
फसलें पानी के नीचे

- Four days after **rains subsided**, Villupuram, a predominant **agricultural district**, is struggling to return to regular life. Nearly **80,520 hectares** of crops are damaged, many lakes have breached their banks, and the **Malattaru and Then Pennai rivers** are brimming with floodwater.
  बारिश थमने के **चार दिन बाद**, कृषि प्रधान जिला **विल्लुपुरम** सामान्य जीवन में लौटने के लिए संघर्ष कर रहा है। लगभग **80,520 हेक्टेयर** फसलें बर्बाद हो गई हैं, कई झीलों के तट टूट गए हैं, और **मलट्टारू और थें पन्नई नदियां** बाढ़ के पानी से भर गई हैं।

- **V. Tamilarasi**, 64, of Pillur village in Villupuram taluk, is searching for someone to help her clear the deposits of sludge that cover her agricultural land. Flash floods in the **Then Pennai river** submerged crops, and she lost **two goats**.
  विलुपुरम तालुक के पिल्लूर गांव की **वी. तमिलारसी (64)** अपनी कृषि भूमि पर जमी गाद को हटाने में मदद के लिए किसी को ढूंढ रही हैं। **थें पन्नई नदी** में अचानक आई बाढ़ ने फसलें डुबो दीं और उन्होंने **दो बकरियां** खो दीं।

- "I cultivated **black gram and casuarina plantations** in three acres. The crop is submerged under six feet of water. I spent ₹2 lakh for cultivation. I don't know how I am going to manage the loss," she worries.
  "मैंने **तीन एकड़** में **उड़द** और **कैसुरिना के पेड़** लगाए थे। फसल **छह फीट पानी** में डूबी हुई है। मैंने खेती पर ₹2 लाख खर्च किए। मुझे नहीं पता कि मैं नुकसान कैसे संभालूंगी," वह चिंतित हैं।

- Villages such as **Pillaiyarkuppam and Arasamangalam** have become small islands. They did not have **power and communication networks** for three days, leaving many stranded without water or food.
  पिल्लैयारकुप्पम और अरसमंगलम जैसे गांव छोटे द्वीप बन गए हैं। वहां तीन दिन तक **बिजली और संचार नेटवर्क** नहीं था, जिससे कई लोग पानी और भोजन के बिना फंसे रहे।

- "The district previously experienced such large-scale **floods in 1972**. This time, I was caught unawares. While **village administrative officers** helped us, officials and elected representatives came much later," Tamilarasi says.
  "जिले ने पहले **1972 में** इतनी बड़ी बाढ़ देखी थी। इस बार मुझे चेतावनी नहीं मिली। जबकि **ग्राम प्रशासनिक अधिकारियों** ने हमारी मदद की, अधिकारी और चुने गए प्रतिनिधि काफी देर से आए," तमिलारसी कहती हैं।

Urban Challenges in Villupuram
विल्लुपुरम के शहरी क्षेत्रों की समस्याएं

- In urban stretches of Villupuram, residents like **S. Neela**, 55, of Ashakulam, spent nearly a day cleaning muck and waste brought by floodwater.
  विल्लुपुरम के शहरी क्षेत्रों में, **अशाकुलम** की **एस. नीला (55)** ने बाढ़ के पानी से आए कचरे और गंदगी को साफ करने में लगभग एक दिन बिताया।
- "Our street had **waist-deep water**. My family of four managed with **20 litres of packaged water** for three days and dealt with stagnant water mixed with sewage," Neela recalls.
  "हमारी गली में **कमर तक पानी** था। मेरे परिवार ने तीन दिन तक **20 लीटर पैकेज्ड पानी** से काम चलाया और सीवेज मिले स्थिर पानी से निपटना पड़ा," नीला याद करती हैं।

Impact on Farmers
किसानों पर प्रभाव

- **R.T. Murugan**, district secretary of Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam, says crops were drying due to water shortage before the rains. The sudden downpour caused losses of up to ₹50,000 for many farmers like him.
  आर.टी. मुरुगन, तमिलनाडु विवसायगल संगम के जिला सचिव, कहते हैं कि बारिश से पहले फसलें पानी की कमी से सूख रही थीं। अचानक बारिश ने उनके जैसे कई किसानों को ₹50,000 तक का नुकसान पहुंचाया।
- Poor maintenance of **village water bodies** aggravated the damage.
  गांव के **जल निकायों की खराब देखभाल** ने क्षति को बढ़ा दिया।

Call for Action
कार्रवाई की मांग

- Several residents have demanded Villupuram to be declared as a **disaster-affected district**.
  कई निवासियों ने विल्लुपुरम को **आपदा प्रभावित जिला** घोषित करने की मांग की है।

Floodwaters in Puducherry
पुडुचेरी में बाढ़ का पानी

Website: patrioticias.in
Telegram Channel: https://t.me/patrioticIAS

- On **December 2**, Puducherry faced flooding due to **1.68 lakh cusecs of water** discharged from the **Sathanur dam** in Tamil Nadu.

  2 दिसंबर को, पुडुचेरी में **सतनूर बांध** से **1.68 लाख क्यूसेक पानी** छोड़े जाने के कारण बाढ़ आ गई।

- Opposition parties blamed the ruling **DMK government**, while officials cited safety protocols for the discharge.

  विपक्षी पार्टियों ने **द्रमुक सरकार** को दोषी ठहराया, जबकि अधिकारियों ने पानी छोड़ने के लिए सुरक्षा प्रोटोकॉल का हवाला दिया।

Indira Gandhi Peace Prize to be conferred on Michelle Bachelet

इंदिरा गांधी शांति पुरस्कार मिशेल बाचेलेट को प्रदान किया जाएगा

PCS
GS Paper II: India-South America

NEW DELHI

The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2024 will be conferred on former Chilean President and prominent human rights voice Michelle Bachelet, a statement issued by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust said on Friday.

The international jury for the award was chaired by former National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon.

"President Michelle Bachelet is one of the world's most prominent voices for human rights, peace, and equality. In her various roles as the founding director of UN Women, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and as President of Chile, she has spoken strongly for gender equality and the rights of the most vulnerable sections of the population at home

Michelle Bachelet

and across the world," the statement read.

"Her personal courage and example in standing for peace and the rights of marginalised people continue to inspire men and women around the world," it added.

The prize honours her work to improve gender equality, human rights, democracy and development in difficult circumstances, the statement said, also noting her contributions towards fostering India's relations with Chile.

- The **Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2024** will be conferred on former **Chilean President Michelle Bachelet**, a prominent human rights voice, according to a statement by the **Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust**.

  2024 के लिए इंदिरा गांधी शांति, निरस्त्रीकरण और विकास पुरस्कार चिली की पूर्व राष्ट्रपति **मिशेल बाचेलेट** को प्रदान किया जाएगा, जो मानवाधिकारों की एक प्रमुख आवाज हैं, यह बयान **इंदिरा गांधी मेमोरियल ट्रस्ट** द्वारा जारी किया गया।

- The international jury for the award was chaired by former **National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon**.

  इस पुरस्कार के लिए अंतर्राष्ट्रीय जूरी की अध्यक्षता **पूर्व राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा सलाहकार शिवशंकर मेनन** ने की।

- **Michelle Bachelet** is recognized as one of the world's most **prominent voices for human rights, peace, and equality**.

  मिशेल बाचेलेट को दुनिया में **मानवाधिकार, शांति और समानता की प्रमुख आवाजों** में से एक के रूप में पहचाना गया है।

- In her roles as the founding director of **UN Women**, **UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**, and **President of Chile**, she has consistently spoken for **gender equality** and the rights of vulnerable populations.

  UN Women की संस्थापक निदेशक, **UN मानवाधिकार उच्चायुक्त**, और **चिली की राष्ट्रपति** के रूप में अपनी भूमिकाओं में, उन्होंने हमेशा **लैंगिक समानता** और कमजोर वर्गों के अधिकारों के लिए आवाज उठाई।

- Her **personal courage and example** in standing for **peace and marginalized people's rights** continue to inspire individuals worldwide.

शांति और हाशिए पर मौजूद लोगों के अधिकारों के लिए उनके **व्यक्तिगत साहस और उदाहरण** से दुनिया भर में लोग प्रेरित होते हैं।

- The prize honors her efforts to advance **gender equality, human rights, democracy, and development**, often in challenging circumstances.

यह पुरस्कार उनके प्रयासों को सम्मानित करता है जो उन्होंने **लैंगिक समानता, मानवाधिकार, लोकतंत्र और विकास** को कठिन परिस्थितियों में आगे बढ़ाने के लिए किए।

- The statement also acknowledges her contributions to **fostering India's relations with Chile**.

इस बयान में **भारत और चिली के संबंधों को मजबूत करने में** उनके योगदान का भी उल्लेख किया गया।

Lok Sabha sees chaos as BJP MP reiterates Soros-Congress 'link'

GS Paper II: Polity

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Friday's Lok Sabha proceedings were washed out as BJP MP Nishikant Dubey, for the second time in two days, accused the Congress of being in league with U.S.-based billionaire investor George Soros to derail India's success story under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Congress, in turn, asked the government if it really wanted the House to function, as it allowed Mr. Dubey to speak even after the Opposition members met Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Thursday, seeking an apology from the BJP MP.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Congress general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal said, "In a parliamentary democracy, the government has its way but the Opposition has its say. It's quite unfortunate that the Speaker isn't willing to even listen to our views."

On Friday, during the Zero Hour, Mr. Dubey was allowed by BJP MP Dilip Saikia, who was presiding over the proceedings at noon, to raise the issue again to complete the "unfinished" parts of his speech.

MPs resent remarks
As Mr. Dubey said, "*Congress ka haath Soros ke saath* [Congress's hand is with Mr. Soros]," the Lok Sabha plunged into chaos, with the Congress members trooping into the Well of the House. In support of the Congress, Samajwadi Party (SP) member Dharmendra Yadav and Trinamool Congress MP Saugata Roy were also up on their feet. The House was then adjourned for the day.

When the Lok Sabha met at 11 a.m., the proceedings lasted for less than a minute as Congress's Deputy Leader Gaurav Gogoi and Mr. Venugopal tried raising the issue of "objectionable remarks" made by BJP leaders against Mr. Gandhi. "You don't want to allow the Question Hour to continue? The House has high standards and I can't allow it to be lowered. I can't allow the dignity of the House to be lowered," the Speaker said, adjourning the House until noon.

"I don't understand whether or not the government wants to run the House. If they do, then why are they allowing Nishikant Dubey to level baseless allegations and in violation of all parliamentary conventions," senior Lok Sabha member Shashi Tharoor asked.

"He [Mr. Dubey] is using defamatory language. Parliamentary rules state that before making any allegation, you have to give notice to the person. He hasn't given any such notice so far, he even violated parliamentary privilege. The Speaker stopped him once but even after that, the presiding officer gave him the floor. This means the government doesn't want to run the House," he said.

Lok Sabha sees chaos as BJP MP reiterates Soros-Congress 'link

संसद में हंगामा: बीजेपी सांसद ने फिर दोहराया सोरोस-कांग्रेस 'संबंध'

- **Friday's Lok Sabha proceedings** were disrupted as **BJP MP Nishikant Dubey**, for the second time in two days, accused the Congress of being in league with **U.S.-based billionaire investor George Soros** to derail India's success story under **Prime Minister Narendra Modi.**

शुक्रवार को लोकसभा की कार्यवाही बाधित हो गई क्योंकि **बीजेपी सांसद निशिकांत दुबे** ने दो दिनों में दूसरी बार कांग्रेस पर **अमेरिकी अरबपति निवेशक जॉर्ज सोरोस** के साथ मिलकर **प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी** के तहत भारत की सफलता की कहानी को पटरी से उतारने का आरोप लगाया।

- The **Congress questioned the government**, asking if it really wanted the House to function as it allowed Mr. Dubey to speak even after **Opposition members met Speaker Om Birla on Thursday** seeking an apology.

कांग्रेस ने सरकार से सवाल किया, यह पूछते हुए कि क्या वह सच में सदन को चलाना चाहती है, क्योंकि **गुरुवार को विपक्षी सदस्यों ने स्पीकर ओम बिड़ला से मुलाकात** कर माफी की मांग की थी, फिर भी दुबे को बोलने की अनुमति दी गई।

- Congress General Secretary **K.C. Venugopal** remarked, "In a **parliamentary democracy**, the government has its way but the Opposition has its say. The Speaker isn't willing to even listen to our views."

कांग्रेस महासचिव **के.सी. वेणुगोपाल** ने कहा, "एक **संसदीय लोकतंत्र** में,

सरकार का मार्ग होता है, लेकिन विपक्ष की आवाज भी होती है। स्पीकर हमारी बात सुनने को भी तैयार नहीं हैं।"

- During **Zero Hour on Friday**, Mr. Dubey was allowed by **BJP MP Dilip Saikia**, who was presiding at noon, to complete the "unfinished" parts of his speech.

  शुक्रवार को शून्यकाल के दौरान, **बीजेपी सांसद दिलीप सैकिया** ने, जो दोपहर की कार्यवाही की अध्यक्षता कर रहे थे, दुबे को उनके भाषण के "अधूरे" हिस्से को पूरा करने की अनुमति दी।

- As Mr. Dubey remarked, "**Congress ka haath Soros ke saath** [Congress's hand is with Soros]," **Lok Sabha descended into chaos**, with Congress members and SP MP **Dharmendra Yadav** and TMC MP **Saugata Roy** joining the protest.

  जैसे ही दुबे ने कहा, "**कांग्रेस का हाथ सोरोस के साथ**," **लोकसभा में हंगामा** हो गया, जिसमें कांग्रेस सदस्य, **सपा सांसद धर्मेंद्र यादव** और **टीएमसी सांसद सौगत राय** भी विरोध में शामिल हो गए।

- The House was adjourned for the day after **Congress MPs trooped into the Well** of the House.

  सदन को पूरे दिन के लिए स्थगित कर दिया गया जब **कांग्रेस सांसद वेल में आ गए।**

- Earlier, at **11 a.m.**, the session lasted less than a minute, as Congress leaders **Gaurav Gogoi** and **K.C. Venugopal** tried raising objections to BJP leaders' remarks about Rahul Gandhi.

  इससे पहले, **सुबह 11 बजे**, सत्र एक मिनट से भी कम समय के लिए चला, क्योंकि कांग्रेस नेताओं **गौरव गोगोई** और **के.सी. वेणुगोपाल** ने राहुल गांधी पर भाजपा नेताओं की टिप्पणियों पर आपत्ति उठाने की कोशिश की।

- Speaker **Om Birla** stated, "The House has high standards, and I cannot allow the dignity to be lowered." He adjourned the session until noon.

  स्पीकर **ओम बिड़ला** ने कहा, "सदन के उच्च मानक हैं, और मैं इसकी गरिमा को कम होने नहीं दे सकता।" उन्होंने सत्र को दोपहर तक स्थगित कर दिया।

- Senior Congress MP **Shashi Tharoor** alleged that the government didn't want the House to function, citing **baseless allegations** made by Dubey against parliamentary conventions.

  वरिष्ठ कांग्रेस सांसद **शशि थरूर** ने आरोप लगाया कि सरकार सदन को चलाना नहीं चाहती, क्योंकि दुबे ने **संसदीय परंपराओं** के खिलाफ **बेबुनियाद आरोप** लगाए।

- Mr. Tharoor emphasized that **no notice** was given before making allegations, violating **parliamentary privilege**.

  थरूर ने इस बात पर जोर दिया कि आरोप लगाने से पहले **कोई नोटिस** नहीं दिया गया, जिससे **संसदीय विशेषाधिकार** का उल्लंघन हुआ।

- He further accused the presiding officer of allowing such remarks, implying that the government was complicit in disrupting the House.

  उन्होंने यह भी आरोप लगाया कि अध्यक्ष ने ऐसी टिप्पणियों की अनुमति दी, जिससे यह स्पष्ट होता है कि सरकार सदन में बाधा डालने में शामिल है।

Kolambkar sworn in as pro tem Speaker
कोलंबकर ने प्रो-टेम स्पीकर के रूप में शपथ ली

- **Senior BJP MLA Kalidas Sulochana Kolambkar** took oath as the **pro tem Speaker of the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly** at the **Raj Bhavan on Friday**.
वरिष्ठ बीजेपी विधायक कालीदास सुलोचना कोलंबकर ने शुक्रवार को राजभवन में महाराष्ट्र विधानसभा के प्रो-टेम स्पीकर के रूप में शपथ ली।

- **Maharashtra Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan** administered the **oath of office** to Mr. Kolambkar.
महाराष्ट्र के राज्यपाल सी.पी. राधाकृष्णन ने श्री कोलंबकर को **पद की शपथ** दिलाई।

Pro Tem Speaker

- The Pro Tem Speaker is a temporary Speaker appointed to preside over the first meeting of a newly elected Lok Sabha or State Legislative Assembly.
प्रो टेम स्पीकर एक अस्थायी स्पीकर होता है जिसे नई चुनी गई लोकसभा या राज्य विधान सभा की पहली बैठक की अध्यक्षता करने के लिए नियुक्त किया जाता है।

  The primary duty is to conduct the swearing-in of the newly elected members and oversee the election of the regular Speaker.
इसका मुख्य कर्तव्य नए चुने गए सदस्यों को शपथ दिलाना और नियमित स्पीकर के चुनाव की देखरेख करना है।

- **Constitutional Provision:** Article 94 and Article 95 of the Indian Constitution provide for the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha but do not explicitly mention the Pro Tem Speaker. However, the concept is derived from parliamentary traditions and conventions.
भारतीय संविधान के अनुच्छेद 94 और 95 लोकसभा के स्पीकर और डिप्टी स्पीकर का प्रावधान करते हैं, लेकिन प्रो टेम स्पीकर का स्पष्ट उल्लेख नहीं करते। हालांकि, यह अवधारणा संसदीय परंपराओं और प्रथाओं से ली गई है।

- **Appointment Process**
  o The President of India appoints the Pro Tem Speaker in consultation with the council of ministers, usually selecting the senior-most member of the Lok Sabha.
भारत के राष्ट्रपति, मंत्रिपरिषद से परामर्श के बाद, आमतौर पर लोकसभा के वरिष्ठतम सदस्य को प्रो टेम स्पीकर नियुक्त करते हैं।
  o In State Assemblies, the Governor performs a similar role.
राज्य विधान सभाओं में, राज्यपाल यह भूमिका निभाते हैं।

- **Historical Background:** The concept of Pro Tem Speaker dates back to the early parliamentary practices in India and has been institutionalized since the first Lok Sabha in 1952.

प्रो टेम स्पीकर की अवधारणा भारत की प्रारंभिक संसदीय प्रथाओं से जुड़ी है और इसे 1952 में पहली लोकसभा से संस्थागत रूप दिया गया।

- **Powers and Limitations**
    - The Pro Tem Speaker enjoys all powers of a regular Speaker but only for a limited duration.

    प्रो टेम स्पीकर को एक नियमित स्पीकर की सभी शक्तियां प्राप्त होती हैं, लेकिन यह केवल सीमित अवधि के लिए होती हैं।

    - Their role is procedural and does not include taking decisions on substantive matters.

    इनकी भूमिका प्रक्रियात्मक होती है और इसमें मौलिक मामलों पर निर्णय लेना शामिल नहीं होता।

No plans for de-dollarisation: Das
डॉलर से मुक्ति की कोई योजना नहीं: दास

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said India has no plans for de-dollarisation in response to U.S. President-elect Donald Trump's threat to slap 100% tariffs on BRICS nations planning a common currency to challenge the U.S. dollar.

आरबीआई गवर्नर शक्तिकांत दास ने कहा कि भारत के पास डॉलर से मुक्ति की कोई योजना नहीं है, यह प्रतिक्रिया अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति-चुनाव डोनाल्ड ट्रंप के 100% शुल्क लगाने की धमकी पर थी।

- **BRICS currency** was an idea raised by one member of BRICS countries and discussed.
  ब्रिक्स मुद्रा एक विचार था जो ब्रिक्स देशों में से एक सदस्य द्वारा उठाया गया था और इसे चर्चा में लाया गया था।
- No decision has been taken.
  कोई निर्णय नहीं लिया गया है।
- **BRICS countries are spread all over**, unlike the **Eurozone** with a single currency and geographical continuity.
  ब्रिक्स देश सभी जगह फैले हुए हैं, जबकि **यूरोजोन** में एकल मुद्रा और भौगोलिक निरंतरता है।
- **India has not taken steps to de-dollarise.** Agreements with a couple of countries have been made for local currency-denominated trade.
  भारत ने डॉलर से मुक्ति के लिए कोई कदम नहीं उठाया है। कुछ देशों के साथ स्थानीय मुद्रा में व्यापार के लिए समझौते किए गए हैं।
- **Dependence on one currency** can be problematic. The objective is to **de-risk trade**, not de-dollarisation.

एक मुद्रा पर निर्भरता समस्याग्रस्त हो सकती है। उद्देश्य **व्यापार को जोखिम से बचाना** है, डॉलर से मुक्ति नहीं है।

- **If the tariff war happens**, it will not be isolated. Other events like **currency devaluation by China** or retaliatory tariffs may occur.

  अगर शुल्क युद्ध होता है, तो यह अलग घटना नहीं होगी। अन्य घटनाएँ जैसे **चीन द्वारा मुद्रा अवमूल्यन** या पलटवार शुल्क हो सकते हैं।

- India's **forex reserves** are **robust** and **adequate**.

  भारत के **विदेशी मुद्रा भंडार मजबूत** और **पर्याप्त** हैं।

- India will take actions as per requirement. No concern at the moment.

  भारत आवश्यकतानुसार कार्रवाई करेगा। इस समय कोई चिंता नहीं है।

RBI's MuleHunter to prevent digital fraud

GS Paper III: Cyber Crime

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has introduced an Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) based MuleHunter AITM to prevent and mitigate digital frauds through the use of mule accounts.

Developed by the Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH), Bengaluru, this public infrastructure facility will help banks to deal with the issue of mule bank accounts expeditiously and cut digital frauds, said RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das.

Elaborating, Deputy Governor T. Rabi Sankar said, "The MuleHunter is basically an infrastructure level set-up which will use the databases from all banks, all other payment system operators. Its AI engine will be trained to be able to identify frauds much more effectively in the financial system.

"If you look at frauds, the number of frauds are increasing, the amount involved in frauds are increasing although the number of frauds per transaction is coming down over the years. But the number is enough for us to be concerned about it."

RBI's MuleHunter to prevent digital fraud
आरबीआई का म्यूलहंटर डिजिटल धोखाधड़ी को रोकने के लिए

• The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has introduced an **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** and **Machine Learning (ML)** based **MuleHunter AI** to prevent and mitigate **digital frauds** through the use of **mule accounts**.

भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक (आरबीआई) ने आर्टिफिशियल इंटेलिजेंस (एआई) और मशीन लर्निंग (एमएल) आधारित म्यूलहंटर एआई पेश किया है, जो म्यूल अकाउंट्स के उपयोग के माध्यम से डिजिटल धोखाधड़ी को रोकने और निवारण करने के लिए है।

• Developed by the **Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH), Bengaluru**, this public infrastructure facility will help **banks** deal with mule bank accounts and cut down digital frauds.

आरबीआई इनोवेशन हब (आरबीआईएच), बेंगलुरु द्वारा विकसित यह सार्वजनिक इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर सुविधा बैंकों को म्यूल बैंक अकाउंट्स से निपटने में मदद करेगी और डिजिटल धोखाधड़ी को कम करेगी।

- **RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das** highlighted the importance of this initiative.

  आरबीआई गवर्नर शक्तिकांत दास ने इस पहल के महत्व को उजागर किया।

- **Deputy Governor T. Rabi Sankar** elaborated that MuleHunter will use databases from all banks and payment system operators.

  आरबीआई के डिप्टी गवर्नर टी. रवी शंकर ने विस्तार से बताया कि म्यूलहंटर सभी बैंकों और भुगतान प्रणाली ऑपरेटरों के डाटाबेस का उपयोग करेगा।

- The AI engine will be trained to **identify frauds more effectively** in the financial system.

  एआई इंजन को **वित्तीय प्रणाली में धोखाधड़ी** को अधिक प्रभावी ढंग से पहचानने के लिए प्रशिक्षित किया जाएगा।

- The number of frauds and the amount involved are increasing, though the number of frauds per transaction is decreasing.

  धोखाधड़ी की संख्या और इसमें शामिल राशि बढ़ रही है, हालांकि प्रति लेन-देन धोखाधड़ी की संख्या घट रही है।

- The RBI is concerned about the increasing frauds in the system.

  आरबीआई प्रणाली में बढ़ती धोखाधड़ी को लेकर चिंतित है।

Small finance banks allowed to transfer loan amounts via UPI

GS Paper III: Banking System

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to permit small finance banks to extend pre-sanctioned credit lines through the UPI.

"This will further deepen financial inclusion and enhance formal credit, particularly for 'new to credit' customers," Governor Shaktikanta Das said while announcing additional measures after his monetary policy statement.

In September 2023, the scope of UPI was expanded by enabling pre-sanctioned credit lines to be linked through UPI and used as a funding account by commercial banks excluding payments banks, small finance banks (SFBs) and regional rural banks.

SFBs leverage a high-tech, low-cost model to reach the last-mile customer and can play an enabling role in expanding the reach of credit on UPI. Necessary guidelines will be issued shortly, the RBI said on Friday.

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has decided to permit **small finance banks** to extend **pre-sanctioned credit lines** through the **UPI**.

  भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक (आरबीआई) ने स्मॉल फाइनेंस बैंक को पूर्व-स्वीकृत क्रेडिट लाइनों को यूपीआई के माध्यम से बढ़ाने की अनुमति देने का निर्णय लिया है।

- **Governor Shaktikanta Das** stated that this decision will deepen **financial inclusion** and enhance **formal credit**, particularly for **'new to credit' customers**.

  गवर्नर शक्तिकांत दास ने कहा कि यह निर्णय **वित्तीय समावेशन** को बढ़ावा देगा और **औपचारिक क्रेडिट** को बढ़ाएगा, विशेष रूप से **'नए क्रेडिट' ग्राहकों** के लिए।

- In **September 2023**, the scope of **UPI** was expanded to enable **pre-sanctioned credit lines** to be linked through UPI and used as a funding account by **commercial banks**, excluding **payments banks**, **small finance banks (SFBs)**, and **regional rural banks**.

सितंबर 2023 में **यूपीआई** का दायरा बढ़ाया गया, जिससे **पूर्व-स्वीकृत क्रेडिट लाइनों** को यूपीआई के माध्यम से जोड़ा जा सकता है और **वाणिज्यिक बैंकों**, **भुगतान बैंकों**, **स्मॉल फाइनेंस बैंकों (SFBs)**, और **क्षेत्रीय ग्रामीण बैंकों** को छोड़कर इन्हें एक फंडिंग खाता के रूप में इस्तेमाल किया जा सकता है।

- **SFBs** use a **high-tech, low-cost model** to reach the **last-mile customer** and can play a key role in expanding the reach of credit on **UPI**.

  SFBs उच्च तकनीकी, कम लागत वाले मॉडल का उपयोग करके **आखिरी-mile ग्राहक** तक पहुंचते हैं और **यूपीआई** पर क्रेडिट के पहुंच को बढ़ाने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा सकते हैं।

- **Necessary guidelines** will be issued shortly by the RBI.

  आवश्यक दिशानिर्देश जल्द ही आरबीआई द्वारा जारी किए जाएंगे।

Balance between growth and inflation is unsettled, says RBI Governor Das

'The RBI will use its various policy instruments to create the conditions for restoring the inflation-growth balance; the flexible inflation targeting framework's credibility needs to be preserved.' Edited excerpts from the Governor's press meet

GS Paper III

ECONOMY IN FOCUS

Shaktikanta Das and Michael Patra

Lalatendu Mishra

The five observations

The MPC (Monetary Policy Committee) is committed to restoring balance between inflation and growth, which has got unsettled over the past few months.

The RBI will use its various policy instruments to create the conditions for restoring the inflation growth balance. The credibility of the flexible inflation targeting framework needs to be reserved.

Inflation has to be brought down in the interest of sustainable growth.

Prudence, practicality and timing, will continue to be the guiding principles for the Reserve Bank's future actions. Timing of actions is the key.

On FY25 growth projections being pared to 6.6%from 7.2%

There is a slowdown in GDP growth in the second quarter due to a special set of factors. Now, it's not appropriate to make a judgment on the trend rate on one data point. So, what was expressed as 8% was not a trend. It was just the average from 2021-22 to 2023-2024. And all over the world, for every country, the projections that are be-
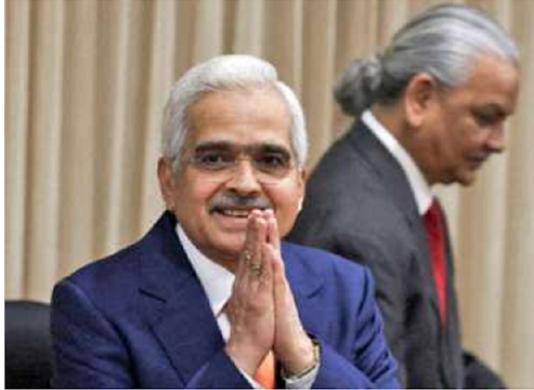
Focus on rates: RBI Govenor Shaktikanta Das and Deputy Governor Michael Patra after the MPC meeting in Mumbai. REUTERS

ing made for 2024-25 and 2025-26 are implicitly correcting cyclically for the rebound from the pandemic, for all countries in the world. So, even when we made our initial projections, they were not at 8%, they were 7.2%. And also, in the monetary policy report, we gave a projection for 2019-20, which was the same cyclical correction, after which, after this correction is over, it will revert back to a trend, and we are yet to see the data points of that trend. Now, if you see the second half of the year's projections, there is a reversion back towards an upper rate of growth, 6.9%, 7.3%, and that continues into 2025-26. So, we are hopeful that we will reach that level again.

Liquidity Concerns

In the next few months, we expect tight liquidity. We expect the tax-related outflows from the system, both direct tax in the middle of December and thereafter the GST. Together

with that, there is a possibility of likelihood of increase in currency in circulation because the busy credit season, agricultural activity has now picked up and that requires cash. That will overlap into the harvest season also, which requires cash. So, the currency in circulation is also likely to go up. And then, there have been significant amount of capital outflows in the months of October and November. Outflow forex has happened because of FPIs exiting. Our assessment is that liquidity conditions will remain tight.

And let us also bear in mind the fact that the cash reserve ration increase was done sometime back. It was a temporary measure. It has served its purpose. It was time to normalise it.

On the growth and inflation dynamic

Now, the balance is unsettled. Last time we had said that growth-inflation balance was well-poised, which means the growth

looked good for that quarter as well as for the whole year. Inflation outlook also, we were aware that September and October inflation prints will be higher.

But as you know, September and October, because of weather factor and other factors, food inflation went up very steeply. September numbers were broadly a little higher than estimated. In October also, we had expected it to be high, but the actual number came little higher than what we had estimated. So therefore, inflation was more than what we had expected, little more. And growth also has moderated the numbers.

We have given the numbers. So, the well-poised character of the dynamics between growth and inflation, that has got somewhat unsettled. Our effort is now to restore that balance, which basically means that we want inflation to be brought down closer to the target.

On discussions with the Government to delink food inflation from inflation goals

I cannot share what discussions happen with the government. We are in regular internal discussions with the government regarding inflation.

On the difference in RBI's GDP growth estimate and Q2 data

Michael Patra: There is a lot of commentary on that already in the press. If you look at the demand side,

the main problem is investment. On the supply side, the main problem is manufacturing and the two worlds intertwined. In manufacturing, the biggest issue is the slump in the sales growth and that is reflecting inflation hitting the urban consumer.

So, when sales growth is down, companies do not want to invest in new assets because they see demand as moderate and it can be met from existing capacity. Integration investment is down, so the underlying slowdown in growth is due to inflation.

Secured Overnight Rupee Rate

So as of now, we have two benchmarks set out by the Financial Benchmarks India Ltd. One is the MIBOR which concerns uncollateralised transactions and MROR (Market Repo Overnight Rate) based on market repo. But the TREPS (treasury bill repurchase), which is 60% of the market, is not in that index. So, this index we have now will capture all secure transactions. That's the limit.

Tariff war

Hypothetically, if it happens, it will not be an isolated event. There will be other events around it like for instance, they say, that perhaps, China may react by devaluing the currency or they might bring retaliatory tariffs.

So, at this point, it is very difficult to say what will be an unilateral move and unilateral effect.

Balance between growth and inflation is unsettled, says RBI Governor Das

विकास और महंगाई के बीच संतुलन अनिश्चित है, कहते हैं आरबीआई गवर्नर दास

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is committed to restoring the balance between inflation and growth, which has become unsettled in recent months.

मौद्रिक नीति समिति (MPC) महंगाई और विकास के बीच संतुलन पुनर्स्थापित करने के लिए प्रतिबद्ध है, जो हाल के महीनों में अस्थिर हो गया है।

- The **RBI** will use its various policy instruments to create conditions for restoring the inflation-growth balance.

  आरबीआई अपने विभिन्न नीति उपकरणों का उपयोग करके महंगाई-विकास संतुलन को पुनः स्थापित करने के लिए परिस्थितियाँ तैयार करेगा।

- The credibility of the **flexible inflation targeting framework** needs to be preserved.

  लचीला महंगाई लक्ष्य निर्धारण ढांचा की विश्वसनीयता को बनाए रखना आवश्यक है।

- **Inflation** has to be brought down in the interest of **sustainable growth**.

  महंगाई को स्थिर विकास के हित में घटाना होगा।

- **Prudence, practicality, and timing** will continue to be the guiding principles for **RBI's future actions**.

  विवेक, व्यावहारिकता और समय आरबीआई की भविष्य की क्रियाओं के लिए मार्गदर्शक सिद्धांत बने रहेंगे।

- **Timing of actions** is key in managing inflation and growth.

  क्रियाओं का समय महंगाई और विकास को प्रबंधित करने में महत्वपूर्ण है।

- On **FY25 growth projections**, RBI has revised growth down to **6.6% from 7.2%** due to **a slowdown in GDP growth in Q2**.

  FY25 विकास प्रक्षेपण में **आरबीआई** ने **7.2% से 6.6%** तक के विकास अनुमानों में गिरावट की है क्योंकि **Q2 में GDP विकास में मंदी आई है।**

- Projections for **2024-25 and 2025-26** globally are implicitly correcting for the **pandemic rebound** cycle.

  2024-25 और 2025-26 के लिए वैश्विक प्रक्षेपण **महामारी पुनरुद्धार** चक्र के लिए स्वचालित रूप से सुधार रहे हैं।

- Initial projections by **RBI** were at **7.2%**, not **8%**.

  आरबीआई के प्रारंभिक प्रक्षेपण **8%** नहीं थे, वे **7.2%** थे।

- The **second half** of the year shows a **reversion towards an upper rate of growth** (6.9%, 7.3%) expected to continue into **2025-26**.

वर्ष के **दूसरे भाग** में **विकास दर की ऊपरी सीमा की ओर वापसी** (6.9%, 7.3%) दिखाई दे रही है, जो **2025-26** तक जारी रहने की उम्मीद है।

- **Liquidity concerns** are expected due to **tax-related outflows** and increased **currency circulation**.
  लिक्विडिटी संबंधी चिंताएँ कर-संबंधी बहिर्वाह और बढ़े हुए **मुद्रा संचलन** के कारण अपेक्षित हैं।

- There has been significant **capital outflows** in **October** and **November** due to **FPIs exiting**.
  अक्टूबर और **नवंबर** में एफपीआई के **निकासी** के कारण **पूंजी बहिर्वाह** हुआ है।

- **Liquidity conditions** are expected to remain tight due to these factors.
  इन कारकों के कारण **लिक्विडिटी की स्थिति** सख्त रहने की उम्मीद है।

- **Cash reserve ratio** was increased temporarily, and now it is time to **normalize** it.
  कैश रिजर्व रेशियो को अस्थायी रूप से बढ़ाया गया था, और अब इसे **सामान्य** करने का समय है।

On the growth and inflation dynamic
वृद्धि और महंगाई के बीच का संतुलन

- Now, the balance is unsettled. Last time we had said that growth-inflation balance was well-poised, which means the growth looked good for that quarter as well as for the whole year.
  अब संतुलन अस्थिर हो गया है। पिछली बार हमने कहा था कि वृद्धि-महंगाई का संतुलन अच्छा था, जिसका मतलब है कि वृद्धि उस तिमाही और पूरे वर्ष के लिए अच्छी दिख रही थी।

- Inflation outlook also, we were aware that **September** and **October** inflation prints will be higher.
  महंगाई का अनुमान भी था कि **सितंबर** और **अक्टूबर** में महंगाई के आंकड़े ऊंचे होंगे।

- But as you know, **September** and **October**, because of weather factors and other factors, food inflation went up very steeply.
  लेकिन जैसा कि आप जानते हैं, **सितंबर** और **अक्टूबर** में मौसम और अन्य कारणों से खाद्य महंगाई बहुत तेजी से बढ़ी।

- **September** numbers were broadly a little higher than estimated.
  सितंबर के आंकड़े अनुमान से थोड़ा अधिक थे।

- In **October** also, we had expected it to be high, but the actual number came little higher than what we had estimated.
  अक्टूबर में भी हमने इसे ऊंचा अनुमानित किया था, लेकिन वास्तविक आंकड़ा हमारे अनुमान से थोड़ा अधिक आया।

- So therefore, inflation was more than what we had expected, little more.
  इसलिए, महंगाई हमारे अनुमान से अधिक थी, थोड़ा अधिक।

- And growth also has moderated the numbers. We have given the numbers.
  और वृद्धि ने भी आंकड़ों को प्रभावित किया है। हमने आंकड़े दिए हैं।

- So, the well-poised character of the dynamics between growth and inflation, that has got somewhat unsettled.

इसलिए, वृद्धि और महंगाई के बीच संतुलन का जो अच्छा माहौल था, वह अब कुछ अस्थिर हो गया है।

- Our effort is now to restore that balance, which basically means that we want inflation to be brought down closer to the target.

  हमारा प्रयास अब उस संतुलन को बहाल करना है, जिसका मतलब है कि हम महंगाई को लक्ष्य के करीब लाना चाहते हैं।

On discussions with the Government to delink food inflation from inflation goals
सरकार के साथ खाद्य महंगाई को महंगाई लक्ष्यों से अलग करने पर चर्चा

- I cannot share what discussions happen with the government. We are in regular internal discussions with the government regarding inflation.

  मैं सरकार के साथ हुई चर्चाओं को साझा नहीं कर सकता। हम सरकार के साथ महंगाई के बारे में नियमित आंतरिक चर्चा करते रहते हैं।

On the difference in RBI's GDP growth estimate and Q2 data
आरबीआई के जीडीपी वृद्धि अनुमान और दूसरी तिमाही के आंकड़ों में अंतर

- **Michael Patra**: There is a lot of commentary on that already in the press. If you look at the demand side, the main problem is investment.

  माइकल पात्रा: इस पर पहले ही प्रेस में बहुत सारी टिप्पणियाँ हो चुकी हैं। अगर आप मांग पक्ष को देखें, तो मुख्य समस्या निवेश है।

- On the supply side, the main problem is manufacturing and the two worlds intertwined.

  आपूर्ति पक्ष पर, मुख्य समस्या निर्माण है और ये दोनों क्षेत्र आपस में जुड़े हुए हैं।

- In manufacturing, the biggest issue is the slump in the sales growth and that is reflecting inflation hitting the urban consumer.

  निर्माण क्षेत्र में, सबसे बड़ी समस्या बिक्री वृद्धि में गिरावट है और यह महंगाई के रूप में शहरी उपभोक्ता पर असर डाल रही है।

- So, when sales growth is down, companies do not want to invest in new assets because they see demand as moderate and it can be met from existing capacity.

  तो, जब बिक्री वृद्धि कम होती है, कंपनियां नए संसाधनों में निवेश नहीं करना चाहतीं क्योंकि वे मांग को मध्यम देखती हैं और यह मौजूदा क्षमता से पूरी की जा सकती है।

- Integration investment is down, so the underlying slowdown in growth is due to inflation.

  संविलन निवेश में गिरावट आई है, इसलिए वृद्धि में मंदी का कारण महंगाई है।

Secured Overnight Rupee Rate
सुरक्षित ओवरनाइट रुपी दर

- So as of now, we have two benchmarks set out by the **Financial Benchmarks India Ltd.** One is the **MIBOR** which concerns uncollateralized transactions and **MROR**

(Market Repo Overnight Rate) based on market repo.

तो अभी तक, हमारे पास **फाइनेंशियल बेंचमार्क्स इंडिया लिमिटेड** द्वारा दो बेंचमार्क निर्धारित किए गए हैं। एक **MIBOR** है, जो बिना कोई संपार्श्विक संपत्ति के लेन-देन से संबंधित है और दूसरा **MROR** (मार्केट रपो ओवरनाइट रेट) है, जो बाजार रपो पर आधारित है।

- But the **TREPS** (treasury bill repurchase), which is **60%** of the market, is not in that index.

  लेकिन **TREPS** (ट्रेजरी बिल पुनर्खरीद), जो बाजार का **60%** है, उस सूचकांक में नहीं है।

- So, this index we have now will capture all secure transactions. That's the limit.

  इसलिए, अब हमारे पास यह सूचकांक सभी सुरक्षित लेन-देन को कैप्चर करेगा। यही सीमा है।

Tariff war
टैरिफ युद्ध

- Hypothetically, if it happens, it will not be an isolated event. There will be other events around it like for instance, they say, that perhaps, **China** may react by devaluing the currency or they might bring retaliatory tariffs.

  काल्पनिक रूप से, अगर यह होता है, तो यह एक एकल घटना नहीं होगी। इसके चारों ओर अन्य घटनाएँ होंगी, जैसे उदाहरण के लिए, वे कहते हैं कि शायद, **चीन** मुद्रा को अवमूल्यित करके प्रतिक्रिया कर सकता है या वे प्रतिशोधी शुल्क ला सकते हैं।

- So, at this point, it is very difficult to say what will be an unilateral move and unilateral effect.

  इसलिए, इस समय यह कहना बहुत मुश्किल है कि कौन सा एकतरफा कदम होगा और इसका एकतरफा प्रभाव क्या होगा।

After capturing Hama, Syrian insurgents advance to Homs

Militants have entered two towns just north of Homs; the central city lies on an important intersection between Damascus and Syria's coastal provinces where Assad enjoys wide support

GS Paper II: IR

Associated Press
BEIRUT

Thousands of people fled the central Syrian city of Homs, the country's third-largest, as Islamist militants seized two towns on the outskirts on Friday, positioning themselves for an assault on a potentially major prize in their march against President Bashar Assad.

The move, reported by pro-government media and an opposition war monitor, was the latest in the stunning advances by militants over the past week that have so far met little resistance from Mr. Assad's forces. A day ear-

Choosing sides: People gather as a person holds the Syrian opposition flag in Hama on Friday.

lier, fighters captured the central city of Hama, Syria's fourth-largest, after the Army said it withdrew to avoid fighting inside the city and spare the lives of civilians. The insurgents, led by the jihadist Hayat Tahrir al-Sham HTS), have vowed to march to Homs and the capital, Damascus, Mr. Assad's seat of power.

Videos circulating online showed a highway jammed with cars full of people fleeing Homs, a city with a large population belonging to Mr. Assad's Alawite sect, seen as his core supporters.

Crippling blow
If Mr. Assad's military loses Homs, it could be a crippling blow. The city, parts of which were controlled by insurgents until 2014, lies on an important intersection between Damascus and Syria's coastal provinces of Latakia and Tartus, where Mr. Assad enjoys wide support. Homs province is Syria's largest in size and borders Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan.

important intersection between Damascus and Syria's coastal provinces where Assad enjoys wide support.

विद्रोहियों ने होम्स के उत्तर में दो शहरों में प्रवेश किया है; यह केंद्रीय शहर दमिश्क और सीरिया के तटीय प्रांतों के बीच एक महत्वपूर्ण चौराहे पर स्थित है, जहां असद को व्यापक समर्थन प्राप्त है।

- Thousands of people fled the central Syrian city of **Homs**, the country's third-largest, as **Islamist militants** seized two towns on the outskirts on **Friday**, positioning themselves for an assault on a potentially major prize in their march against **President Bashar Assad**.

  होंस, सीरिया का तीसरा सबसे बड़ा शहर, से हजारों लोग **शुक्रवार** को भाग गए, जब **इस्लामिक विद्रोहियों** ने बाहरी इलाकों में दो शहरों पर कब्जा कर लिया, अपनी स्थिति को **राष्ट्रपति बशर अल-असद** के खिलाफ उनकी यात्रा में एक महत्वपूर्ण लक्ष्य पर हमले के लिए मजबूत किया।

- The move, reported by pro-government media and an opposition war monitor, was the latest in the stunning advances by militants over the past week that have so far met little resistance from **Mr. Assad's forces**.

  यह कदम, जिसे सरकारी मीडिया और विपक्षी युद्ध निगरानी से रिपोर्ट किया गया, विद्रोहियों द्वारा पिछले सप्ताह की **चमत्कारी** प्रगति में नवीनतम था, जिसमें **असद के बलों** से अब तक बहुत कम प्रतिरोध का सामना करना पड़ा।

- A day earlier, fighters captured the central city of **Hama**, Syria's fourth-largest, after the Army said it withdrew to avoid fighting inside the city and spare the lives of civilians.

  एक दिन पहले, **हामा** के केंद्रीय शहर को विद्रोहियों ने कब्जा कर लिया था, जो सीरिया का चौथा सबसे बड़ा शहर है, जब सेना ने कहा कि उसने शहर के अंदर संघर्ष से बचने और नागरिकों की जान बचाने के लिए पीछे हटने का निर्णय लिया।

- The insurgents, led by the jihadist **Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)**, have vowed to march to **Homs** and the capital, **Damascus**, Mr. Assad's seat of power.

  विद्रोही, जिनका नेतृत्व जिहादी संगठन **हयात तहरीर अल-शाम (HTS)** कर रहा है, ने **होंस** और राजधानी **दमिश्क**, **असद** के सत्ता केंद्र की ओर मार्च करने की शपथ ली है।

- Videos circulating online showed a highway jammed with cars full of people fleeing **Homs**, a city with a large population belonging to Mr. Assad's **Alawite sect**, seen as his core supporters.

  ऑनलाइन प्रसारित हो रही वीडियो में एक राजमार्ग पर भीड़ दिखी, जिसमें लोग **होंस** से भाग रहे थे, यह एक ऐसा शहर है जिसकी बड़ी जनसंख्या **असद के अलवाइट संप्रदाय** से संबंधित है, जिन्हें उनके मुख्य समर्थक माना जाता है।

- If Mr. Assad's military loses **Homs**, it could be a **crippling blow**.

  यदि **असद** की सेना **होंस** को खो देती है, तो यह एक **भारी झटका** हो सकता है।

- The city, parts of which were controlled by insurgents until **2014**, lies on an important intersection between **Damascus** and Syria's coastal provinces of **Latakia** and **Tartus**, where Mr. Assad enjoys wide support.

  यह शहर, जिसका कुछ हिस्सा **2014** तक विद्रोहियों के नियंत्रण में था, **दमिश्क** और सीरिया के

तटीय प्रांतों **लताकिया** और **तर्तुस** के बीच एक महत्वपूर्ण चौराहे पर स्थित है, जहां **असद** को व्यापक समर्थन प्राप्त है।

- **Homs** province is Syria's largest in size and borders **Lebanon**, **Iraq**, and **Jordan**.
  होम्स प्रांत सीरिया का सबसे बड़ा प्रांत है और यह **लेबनान**, **इराक** और **जॉर्डन** से सीमा साझा करता है।

Synagogue comes under arson attack in Australia

GS Paper I: A&C

Agence France-Presse
JERUSALEM

The police in the Australian city of Melbourne said mask-wearing arsonists attacked a synagogue before dawn on Friday. They were still searching for the suspects and said they did not know why the premises had been targeted.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Friday linked the incident to what he called Canberra's "anti-Israel sentiment".

Mr. Netanyahu said that "this heinous act cannot be separated from the anti-Israel sentiment emanating from the Australian Labor government."

Mr. Netanyahu argued that "anti-Israel sentiment is anti-Semitism".

Synagogue comes under arson attack in Australia
ऑस्ट्रेलिया में सिनागोग पर आगजनी हमला

- The police in the Australian city of **Melbourne** said mask-wearing **arsonists** attacked a **synagogue** before dawn on **Friday**.
  ऑस्ट्रेलिया के शहर **मेलबर्न** में पुलिस ने कहा कि **मास्क पहने हुए आगजनी करने वालों** ने **शुक्रवार** को सुबह से पहले एक **सिनागोग** पर हमला किया।

- They were still searching for the suspects and said they did not know why the premises had been targeted.
  वे अभी भी संदिग्धों की तलाश कर रहे थे और कहा कि उन्हें यह नहीं पता कि इन स्थानों को क्यों निशाना बनाया गया था।

- **Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu** on **Friday** linked the incident to what he called Canberra's "**anti-Israel sentiment**".
  इज़राइली प्रधानमंत्री बेंजामिन नेतन्याहू ने **शुक्रवार** को इस घटना को कैनबरा की "anti-Israel sentiment" से जोड़ा।

- Mr. Netanyahu said that "this **heinous act** cannot be separated from the **anti-Israel sentiment** emanating from the **Australian Labor government**."
  नेतन्याहू ने कहा कि "यह **घिनौना कृत्य ऑस्ट्रेलियाई श्रमिक सरकार** से निकलने वाले **anti-Israel sentiment** से अलग नहीं किया जा सकता।"

- Mr. Netanyahu argued that "**anti-Israel sentiment** is **anti-Semitism**."
  नेतन्याहू ने तर्क दिया कि "**anti-Israel sentiment anti-Semitism** है।"