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# **PATRIOTIC IAS**

**THE HINDU NEWSPAPER**

**DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS**

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**TOPICS COVERED (GS Paper I: History, Society and Geography)**

- 1. Easterine Kire: chronicler of the lives and fables of Nagas / ईस्टराइन किर्रे: नागाओं के जीवन और लोककथाओं की इतिहासकार**

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# Easterine Kire: chronicler of the lives and fables of Nagas

Shunning media stereotypes of the northeast, the Sahitya Akademi-winning novelist and poet from Nagaland writes about the cultural life of her people, who refuse to be defined by conflict. Kire has also documented their oral history and spiritual world view

GS Paper I: Society

Radhika Santhanam

Years ago, when I asked a classmate what she was reading, she simply replied, “A book from the northeast.” It was a lazy, unhelpful description. Ever heard anyone say they are reading Jerry Pinto, a “writer from the west”?

That was in 2010, but little has changed since. The northeast is still described in many everyday conversations as a homogenous region – an anthropological paradise where “strange” and “exotic” cultures thrive, and complex, ethnic conflicts play out amid natural beauty.

Easterine Kire, a novelist from Nagaland who lives in Norway, spoke of her exasperation with the broad portrayal of the region in an interview to *The Hindu* in 2019. “The media stereotype of the northeast has done so much damage that the true cultural life of the Nagas and their rights have been overlooked,” she said. In her works, Kire portrays a people who refuse to be defined by conflict. “We are saying there is more [to Nagaland],” she said in another interview to *The Hindu* in 2015. “There is great beauty, not just the breathtaking landscapes of mountains and rivers and cloud-covered villages, but the beauty of the people who live there and the stories they have to share. The spiritual world is a big part of the Naga world view and it comes naturally to me to write about it.”

## Writing about the spiritual

*Spirit Nights* (2022), which won Kire the Sahitya Akademi award in 2024, is a shining example of how the writer is a chronicler of the lives and fables of the

Nagas. The novel’s protagonist is Tola, a wise woman and the daughter of a seer. She is warned in a dream of impending doom. Dreams are the gateway to the spiritual world. When a taboo is breached in the spiritual world, intense, all-encompassing darkness descends on her village. Only one person, Tola’s grandson Namu, can bring back light. Kire’s book is inspired by the story of darkness narrated by the Rengma Naga and Chang Naga tribes. Just as the sun resuscitates a fading leaf, it is the breath of Kire’s storytelling that brings an oral tale to life.

When *the River Sleeps* (2014), which won The Hindu Prize in 2015, is also steeped in Naga folktales and myths. A middle-aged hunter named Vile lives inside a forest. He dreams that a “heart-stone” lies on the bed of a river, which will give him expansive powers. Vile sets out on his quest, encountering fellow beings, sorceresses, and spirits on the way. The poet K. Satchidanandan described the book as “a sample of how the mythopoeic imagination can work in our times”.

Kire had written elsewhere: “My generation of Nagas accept that our territories are shared between human and spirit inhabitants.” These works are rooted in the folklore of Nagaland, but Kire skilfully draws out the deeper meanings of these beliefs and they are universally instructive.

## Nagaland over the years

When Kire was a child, every night one of her grandparents would tell her a story. She grew up in an estate in Kohima, where trees were laden with fruit, wild

flowers bloomed, and she woke up to dawn chorus. Her love for the oral tradition of storytelling, and for beauty and nature, which she infuses into her writing, likely came from these early childhood experiences.

But not all of Nagaland was peaceful and picturesque. Kire recounts how the small town of Kohima was suddenly thrust on the global map when the Japanese invaded the hills in 1944. In 1958, the draconian Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act was imposed to deal with the Naga insurgency. In the 1960s and ’70s, Kire recalls in interviews how the Army would patrol the streets and clamp curfews. Nagaland came to be imagined by the rest of India as a land of trouble-makers.

In her works, Kire also traces the lives of different generations to reveal the transformation of a people and a State. For the book *Mari*, which she began writing in parts at 16 and completed in 2003, she sat with her aunt Mari, gently unspooling her memories of Kohima before and during World War II. The war cleaved the history of the region: Kire says it was “remarkable” that “people have little memory of what they were doing before the war years.” In *A Respectable Woman* (2019), too, she writes about the conflict: “Many of our people had not known any government other than the British. So, when they left our hills, many people felt orphaned...”

*A Respectable Woman* is also about another war; this time, against the Indian state. Kire says, “Even while the few educated Nagas felt that they had the right to fight for Naga sovereignty, the Indian government sent in armed police

who began a reign of terror... We were no longer safe in our own homes.”

Where there is war, there is always resilience. In *Mari*, Mari becomes a refugee in her own homeland and is nearly crushed by the weight of recurrent loss. She bounces back again and again, left with no other choice. As the grandmother says in *Bitter Wormwood*, “If life is hard to you, you simply harden yourself so its griefs are easier to bear.”

Kire’s protagonists are often women but they are not all “strong women”, which makes them relatable. Women, like men, contribute to maintaining the patriarchal order (*A Terrible Matriarchy*). They show their vulnerabilities and express their fears (*Spirit Nights*). Kire does not romanticise their fights and the journeys of their survival (*Mari*). Women assert their agency through micro-feminist acts (*A Respectable Woman*). They are ordinary women who often find themselves grappling with extraordinary circumstances.

Kire’s style is to write crisp, short, unadorned sentences and narrate unsettling parables, which reflect her love for allegories. By staying close to their roots, writers like Temsula Ao paved the way for Easterine Kire who is making the road easier for voices of the next generation like Avinuo Kire and others. If works by writers such as Kire find their way into classrooms across India, there may be greater understanding of regional literature from the States of the northeast; stories which encapsulate the tragedies, aspirations, and cultures of a people who have for too long been typecast, and which have been systemically erased from our hegemonic imagination of the nation.

## Easterine Kire: chronicler of the lives and fables of Nagas

ईस्टराइन किर्रे: नागाओं के जीवन और लोककथाओं की इतिहासकार

Shunning media stereotypes of the northeast, the Sahitya Akademi-winning novelist and poet from Nagaland writes about the cultural life of her people, who refuse to be defined by conflict.



पूर्वोत्तर भारत की मीडिया रूढ़ियों को नकारते हुए, साहित्य अकादमी पुरस्कार विजेता उपन्यासकार और कवि नागालैंड के सांस्कृतिक जीवन के बारे में लिखते हैं, जो संघर्ष से परिभाषित होने से इनकार करते हैं।

- Kire has also **documented oral history and the spiritual worldview** of the Nagas.
  - किरे ने नागाओं के मौखिक इतिहास और आध्यात्मिक दृष्टिकोण का भी दस्तावेजीकरण किया है।

### Writing about the spiritual आध्यात्मिकता पर लेखन

- *Spirit Nights (2022)*, which won Kire the **Sahitya Akademi award in 2024**, is a **chronicler of the lives and fables of the Nagas**.
  - *स्पिरिट नाइट्स (2022)*, जिसने किरे को **2024 में साहित्य अकादमी पुरस्कार** दिलाया, नागाओं के जीवन और लोककथाओं का इतिहासकार है।
- The novel's protagonist Tola, daughter of a **seer**, is warned in a dream of **impending doom**. In the story, **dreams are the gateway to the spiritual world**.





- उपन्यास की नायिका टोला, जो एक द्रष्टा की बेटी है, को एक सपने में आसन्न संकट की चेतावनी मिलती है। इस कहानी में, सपने आध्यात्मिक दुनिया का द्वार होते हैं।
- *When the River Sleeps (2014)*, which won **The Hindu Prize in 2015**, is also steeped in **Naga folktales and myths**.
  - *व्हेन द रिवर स्लीप्स (2014)*, जिसे 2015 में द हिंदू पुरस्कार मिला, नागा लोककथाओं और मिथकों से भी भरा हुआ है।

## Nagaland over the years वर्षों में नागालैंड

- Kire grew up in **Kohima**, where she was surrounded by **nature and oral storytelling traditions**.
  - किरे का बचपन कोहिमा में बीता, जहाँ वह प्रकृति और मौखिक कहानी कहने की परंपराओं से घिरी हुई थीं।
- Nagaland faced **conflicts such as the Japanese invasion in 1944** and the **Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act in 1958**.
  - नागालैंड ने 1944 में जापानी आक्रमण और 1958 में सशस्त्र बल (विशेष शक्तियां) अधिनियम जैसे संघर्षों का सामना किया।
- *Mari (2003)*, based on her aunt's memories of **World War II**, reveals how the war **cleaved the history of the region**.
  - *मारी (2003)*, जो उनकी चाची की द्वितीय विश्व युद्ध की यादों पर आधारित है, दिखाती है कि युद्ध ने क्षेत्र के इतिहास को कैसे विभाजित किया।
- *A Respectable Woman (2019)* portrays **conflict with the Indian state and the resilience of Naga people**.
  - *ए रिस्पेक्टेबल वुमन (2019)* भारतीय राज्य के साथ संघर्ष और नागा लोगों की दृढ़ता को दर्शाती है।

## Representation of women in Kire's works किरे के कार्यों में महिलाओं का प्रतिनिधित्व

- Kire's protagonists are often **women**, but not all are portrayed as "strong women."
  - किरे की नायिकाएँ अक्सर महिलाएँ होती हैं, लेकिन सभी को "मजबूत महिला" के रूप में नहीं दिखाया जाता।
- Women in her works **contribute to patriarchy (A Terrible Matriarchy)**, show **vulnerabilities (Spirit Nights)**, and assert agency (*A Respectable Woman*).
  - उनके कार्यों में महिलाएँ पितृसत्ता में योगदान देती हैं (ए टेरिबल मैट्रियार्की), कमजोरियाँ दिखाती हैं (स्पिरिट नाइट्स), और अपनी स्वतंत्रता जताती हैं (ए रिस्पेक्टेबल वुमन)।



## Kire's literary influence किरे का साहित्यिक प्रभाव

- Kire writes in **crisp, short, and unadorned sentences**, using **allegories** to convey deeper meanings.
  - किरे संक्षिप्त, सरल और बिना अलंकरण वाले वाक्यों में लिखती हैं और रूपकों के माध्यम से गहरे अर्थ प्रस्तुत करती हैं।
- Writers like **Temsula Ao** paved the way for Kire, who in turn is **opening doors for newer voices** like Avinuo Kire.
  - टेम्सुला आओ जैसी लेखिकाओं ने किरे के लिए मार्ग प्रशस्त किया, जो अब नई आवाज़ों जैसे अविनुओ किरे के लिए रास्ते खोल रही हैं।
- If works like Kire's **find a place in Indian classrooms**, it could lead to **greater understanding of northeastern literature**.
  - यदि किरे जैसे लेखकों के कार्य भारतीय कक्षाओं में स्थान पाते हैं, तो यह पूर्वोत्तर साहित्य की बेहतर समझ को बढ़ावा दे सकता है।

## TOPICS COVERED (GS Paper II: Polity, Governance, and International Relations)

1. **IMEC project gains traction as PM holds talks with Macron / IMEC परियोजना को गति मिलती है क्योंकि पीएम ने मैक्रों से बातचीत की**
2. **SC to hear pleas challenging validity of CEC appointment law on Feb. 19 / 19 फरवरी को सीईसी नियुक्ति कानून की वैधता को चुनौती देने वाली याचिकाओं पर सुप्रीम कोर्ट सुनवाई करेगा**
3. **AI dangerous tool, be it in Chinese or American hands, says Delhi HC / चीन या अमेरिका, किसी के भी हाथ में एआई एक खतरनाक उपकरण है: दिल्ली हाई कोर्ट**
4. **Wilful violation / जानबूझकर उल्लंघन**
5. **Should convicted persons contest elections? / क्या दोषी व्यक्तियों को चुनाव लड़ने की अनुमति होनी चाहिए?**



## IMEC project gains traction as PM holds talks with Macron



**Warm greetings:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi with French President Emmanuel Macron in Marseille on Wednesday. AP

**GS Paper II: IMEC**

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**  
NEW DELHI

India and France on Wednesday announced that they would continue to work closely to implement the **India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC)** project.

The project proposes to connect India to Europe through sea and land routes. A discussion on the project was held during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day visit to

France, where he spoke at the Paris AI Action summit and held talks with President Emmanuel Macron.

"The two leaders recalled the launch of the IMEC on the margins of the G-20 Summit in Delhi in September 2023 and agreed to work together more closely on implementing the initiative," said a joint statement issued after the visit.

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## IMEC project gains traction as PM holds talks with Macron

### IMEC परियोजना को गति मिलती है क्योंकि पीएम ने मैक्रों से बातचीत की

India and France on Wednesday announced that they would continue to work closely to implement the **India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC)** project.

भारत और फ्रांस ने बुधवार को घोषणा की कि वे भारत-मध्य पूर्व-यूरोप कॉरिडोर (IMEC) परियोजना को लागू करने के लिए निकट सहयोग जारी रखेंगे।

- The project proposes to connect **India to Europe** through **sea and land routes**.

यह परियोजना समुद्री और भूमि मार्गों के माध्यम से भारत को यूरोप से जोड़ने का प्रस्ताव रखती है।

- A discussion on the project was held during **Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day visit to France**, where he spoke at the **Paris AI Action summit** and held talks with **President Emmanuel Macron**.

इस परियोजना पर चर्चा प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी की दो दिवसीय फ्रांस यात्रा

के दौरान हुई, जहां उन्होंने पेरिस एआई एक्शन शिखर सम्मेलन में भाषण दिया और राष्ट्रपति इमैनुएल मैक्रों से बातचीत की।

- "The two leaders recalled the launch of the **IMEC on the margins of the G-20 Summit in Delhi in September 2023** and agreed to work together more closely on implementing the initiative," said a **joint statement** issued after the visit.

"दोनों नेताओं ने सितंबर 2023 में दिल्ली में जी-20 शिखर सम्मेलन के दौरान IMEC की शुरुआत को याद किया और इस पहल को लागू करने के लिए और निकटता से सहयोग करने पर सहमति व्यक्त की," यह बात यात्रा के बाद जारी संयुक्त बयान में कही गई।



# SC to hear pleas challenging validity of CEC appointment law on Feb. 19

GS Paper II: Election

**Krishnadas Rajagopal**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday shifted the hearing on petitions challenging the legality of a new law, which gives a dominant role to the Union government in the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners, to February 19.

Incumbent CEC Rajiv Kumar is set to retire from office on February 18.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for one of the petitioners, the NGO Association for Democratic Reforms, indicated to a Bench of Justices Surya Kant and N.K. Singh that the case was time-sensitive due to the impending



CEC Rajiv Kumar flanked by ECs Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu. The CEC is scheduled to retire on February 18. FILE PHOTO

retirement of Mr. Kumar.

Justice Kant, however, assured Mr. Bhushan that the “consequences” of the court’s decision on the validity of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service, and Term of Office) Act of 2023 would inevitably follow even if something had happened in

the interregnum.

In the previous hearing, the petitioners had told the court that they ideally wanted a decision on the law before the appointment of the next CEC.

**Court’s authority**

In January, when the case came up, Justice Kant had highlighted that the test regarding the validity of the

Act would hinge on whether the court’s authority to pronounce binding decisions under Article 141 of the Constitution could be circumvented or diluted by a law. “The real test here is between the court’s opinion and exercise of legislative powers,” he had said.

The petitions raise the pivotal legal question of whether Parliament possessed the authority to promulgate a gazette notification or ordinance to nullify or amend a Constitution Bench judgment.

The petitioners have claimed that the law was introduced in December 2023 to dilute a Constitution Bench judgment of the Supreme Court in the Anoop Baranwal case on March 2, 2023.

## SC to hear pleas challenging validity of CEC appointment law on Feb. 19

19 फरवरी को सीईसी नियुक्ति कानून की वैधता को चुनौती देने वाली याचिकाओं पर सुप्रीम कोर्ट सुनवाई करेगा

The Supreme Court on Wednesday shifted

the hearing on petitions challenging the legality of a new law, which gives a dominant role to the Union government in the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners, to February 19.

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने बुधवार को नए कानून की वैधता को चुनौती देने वाली याचिकाओं पर सुनवाई 19 फरवरी तक टाल दी, जो मुख्य चुनाव आयुक्त (CEC) और चुनाव आयुक्तों की नियुक्ति में केंद्र सरकार को प्रमुख भूमिका देता है।

- Incumbent CEC Rajiv Kumar is set to retire from office on February 18. वर्तमान सीईसी राजीव कुमार 18 फरवरी को पद से सेवानिवृत्त होने वाले हैं।
- Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for one of the petitioners, the NGO Association for Democratic Reforms, indicated to a Bench of Justices Surya Kant and N.K. Singh that the case was time-sensitive due to the impending retirement of Mr. Kumar. वकील प्रशांत भूषण, जो याचिकाकर्ता एनजीओ एसोसिएशन फॉर डेमोक्रेटिक रिफॉर्म्स की ओर से पेश हुए, ने न्यायमूर्ति सूर्यकांत और एन.के. सिंह की पीठ को बताया कि मामला समय-समवेदनशील है क्योंकि राजीव कुमार की सेवानिवृत्ति निकट है।
- Justice Kant, however, assured Mr. Bhushan that the “consequences” of the court’s decision on the validity of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election



Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service, and Term of Office) Act of 2023 would inevitably follow even if something had happened in the interregnum.

न्यायमूर्ति सूर्यकांत ने हालांकि प्रशांत भूषण को आश्वासन दिया कि मुख्य चुनाव आयुक्त और अन्य चुनाव आयुक्त (नियुक्ति, सेवा शर्तें और कार्यकाल) अधिनियम, 2023 की वैधता पर अदालत के फैसले के परिणाम निश्चित रूप से लागू होंगे, भले ही इस बीच कुछ हो जाए।

- In the previous hearing, the petitioners had told the court that they ideally wanted a decision on the law before the appointment of the next CEC.

पिछली सुनवाई में, याचिकाकर्ताओं ने अदालत से कहा था कि वे नए सीईसी की नियुक्ति से पहले इस कानून पर निर्णय चाहते हैं।

## Court's authority

### अदालत की अधिकारिता

- In January, when the case came up, Justice Kant had highlighted that the test regarding the validity of the Act would hinge on whether the court's authority to pronounce binding decisions under Article 141 of the Constitution could be circumvented or diluted by a law.

जनवरी में जब मामला आया, तो न्यायमूर्ति सूर्यकांत ने उल्लेख किया कि अधिनियम की वैधता की जांच इस बात पर निर्भर करेगी कि क्या संविधान के अनुच्छेद 141 के तहत अदालत के बाध्यकारी निर्णयों को कोई कानून टाल या कमजोर कर सकता है।

- "The real test here is between the court's opinion and the exercise of legislative powers," he had said.

उन्होंने कहा था, "मूल परीक्षा अदालत की राय और विधायी शक्तियों के प्रयोग के बीच है।"

- The petitions raise the pivotal legal question of whether Parliament possessed the authority to promulgate a gazette notification or ordinance to nullify or amend a Constitution Bench judgment.

याचिकाएं यह महत्वपूर्ण कानूनी सवाल उठाती हैं कि क्या संसद को राजपत्र अधिसूचना या अध्यादेश जारी करने का अधिकार है जिससे संवैधानिक पीठ के फैसले को शून्य या संशोधित किया जा सके।

- The petitioners have claimed that the law was introduced in December 2023 to dilute a Constitution Bench judgment of the Supreme Court in the Anoop Baranwal case on March 2, 2023.

याचिकाकर्ताओं ने दावा किया कि दिसंबर 2023 में यह कानून लाया गया ताकि 2 मार्च 2023 के अनूप बरनवाल मामले में सुप्रीम कोर्ट की संविधान पीठ के फैसले को कमजोर किया जा सके।



## AI dangerous tool, be it in Chinese or American hands, says Delhi HC

GS Paper II: Polity

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday observed that artificial intelligence (AI) is a "dangerous tool" in anybody's hand, whether Chinese or American.

The observation came while hearing a petition seeking a direction to the Centre to block access to DeepSeek, a Chinese AI chatbot providing services free of cost in India.

"AI is a dangerous tool in anybody's hand, whether Chinese or American, it does not make any difference. It is not that the government is unaware. It is very well aware," a Bench of Chief Justice D.K. Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar

**Court was hearing a petition seeking a direction to the Centre to block access to DeepSeek**

Rao Gedela said.

The Centre's counsel said the issue requires consideration and urged the court to grant some time to get instructions in the matter. The court listed the matter for February 20.

**'Instant threat'**

The petitioner's advocate Bhavna Sharma, along with advocate Nihit Dalmia, raised concerns over the alleged "inappropriate and unlawful operations" of DeepSeek, saying it

posed "instant and emergent threats that are prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of India, data security of the state, and public order".

The petitioner said DeepSeek is available for download on mobile phones and its terms of use and privacy policy "fail to protect the Right to Privacy of Indian citizens" and comply with the key provisions of the IT Rules, 2011, and Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, particularly with regard to data collection, disclosure, and security.

"Globally, multiple countries have raised similar concerns about DeepSeek's privacy and security practices," the plea stated.

## AI dangerous tool, be it in Chinese or American hands, says Delhi HC

चीन या अमेरिका, किसी के भी हाथ में एआई एक खतरनाक उपकरण है: दिल्ली हाई कोर्ट

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday observed that artificial intelligence (AI) is a "dangerous tool" in anybody's hand, whether Chinese or American.

दिल्ली हाई कोर्ट ने बुधवार को टिप्पणी की कि आर्टिफिशियल इंटेलिजेंस (एआई)

"एक खतरनाक उपकरण" है, चाहे वह चीनी हो या अमेरिकी।

- The observation came while hearing a petition seeking a direction to the Centre to block access to DeepSeek, a Chinese AI chatbot, providing services free of cost in India.

यह टिप्पणी एक याचिका की सुनवाई के दौरान आई, जिसमें केंद्र सरकार से अनुरोध किया गया था कि वह दीपसीक (DeepSeek), एक चीनी एआई चैटबॉट की भारत में मुफ्त सेवाओं तक पहुंच को रोकने का निर्देश दे।

- "AI is a dangerous tool in anybody's hand, whether Chinese or American, it does not make any difference. It is not that the government is unaware. It is very well aware," a Bench of Chief Justice D.K. Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela said.

"एआई एक खतरनाक उपकरण" है, चाहे वह "चीनी हो या अमेरिकी", इससे कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ता। सरकार इससे अनजान नहीं है, बल्कि पूरी तरह से अवगत है," यह टिप्पणी मुख्य न्यायाधीश डी.के. उपाध्याय और न्यायमूर्ति तुषार राव गेडेला की पीठ ने की।

- The Centre's counsel said the issue requires consideration and urged the court to grant some time to get instructions in the matter.

केंद्र सरकार के वकील ने कहा कि यह मुद्दा विचारणीय है और अदालत से कुछ समय देने का अनुरोध किया ताकि इस पर निर्देश प्राप्त किए जा सकें।

- The court listed the matter for February 20.

अदालत ने मामले की अगली सुनवाई के लिए 20 फरवरी की तारीख तय की।



## 'Instant threat'

## 'तत्काल खतरा'

- The petitioner's advocate Bhavna Sharma, along with advocate Nihit Dalmia, raised concerns over the alleged "inappropriate and unlawful operations" of DeepSeek, saying it posed "instant and emergent threats" that are prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of India, data security of the state, and public order.

याचिकाकर्ता की वकील भावना शर्मा और वकील निहित डालमिया ने दीपसीक (DeepSeek) के "अनुचित और अवैध संचालन" पर चिंता जताई, यह कहते हुए कि यह "तत्काल और गंभीर खतरे" उत्पन्न करता है, जो भारत की संप्रभुता और अखंडता, राज्य की डेटा सुरक्षा और सार्वजनिक व्यवस्था के लिए हानिकारक हो सकता है।

- The petitioner said DeepSeek is available for download on mobile phones and its terms of use and privacy policy "fail to protect the Right to Privacy of Indian citizens" and comply with key provisions of the IT Rules, 2011, and Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023.

याचिकाकर्ता ने कहा कि दीपसीक (DeepSeek) मोबाइल फोन पर डाउनलोड के लिए उपलब्ध है और इसकी उपयोग की शर्तें और गोपनीयता नीति "भारतीय नागरिकों के निजता के अधिकार की रक्षा करने में विफल" हैं और यह आईटी नियम, 2011 और डिजिटल व्यक्तिगत डेटा संरक्षण अधिनियम, 2023 के प्रमुख प्रावधानों का पालन नहीं करता।

- "Globally, multiple countries have raised similar concerns about DeepSeek's privacy and security practices," the plea stated.

"वैश्विक स्तर पर, कई देशों ने दीपसीक (DeepSeek) की गोपनीयता और सुरक्षा नीतियों को लेकर इसी तरह की चिंताएं व्यक्त की हैं," याचिका में कहा गया।



## HC allows poll panel probe into AIADMK leadership row

GS Paper II: Election

CHENNAI

The Madras High Court on Wednesday permitted the Election Commission (EC) to find out if there were rival groups staking claim over the AIADMK, and decide which of those groups was actually entitled to be recognised as the political party.

Third Division Bench of Justices R. Subramanian and G. Arul Murugan held that the EC could not be prevented from exercising its powers under paragraph 15 of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order of 1968 just because a few civil suits were pending against certain resolutions passed by the party's general council.

In the same breath, the judges made it clear that the interim orders passed by the Supreme Court and the High Court in those civil suits would be binding upon the EC and recorded the latter's submission, made by way of a counter affidavit, that it would certainly abide by the court orders passed in the civil



The EC cannot be prevented from exercising its powers under the 1968 order, say judges.

proceedings.

"Therefore, the apprehensions of the petitioner [the AIADMK] that there will be an attempt to overreach the orders of the civil court are not justified. We, however, make it clear that the inquiry would have to be within the four walls of Para 15 of the Election Symbols Order, 1968, and it cannot take in its sweep any other matter, which is the subject matter of the civil proceedings," the Bench ordered.

Authoring the verdict, Justice Subramanian pointed out that paragraph 15 of

the 1968 order enabled the EC to conduct an inquiry and take a call on instances of rival sections or splinter groups staking claim over a political party.

Though a senior counsel, representing the AIADMK, had argued that there was no question of rival sections or splinter groups in the party since 2,539 of the 2,665 general council members and 61 of the 65 MLAs were backing the incumbent general secretary, Edappadi K. Palaniswami, the Division Bench left those issues to be decided by the EC.

### Separate complaints

The Bench took note that as many as seven individuals, who had been reportedly expelled from the party, had lodged separate complaints regarding the party affairs before the EC between April 20, 2023 and December 4, 2024. "We therefore find that we as a constitutional court cannot examine each and every complaint and conclude whether the requirements of Para 15 are satisfied....," the judges wrote.

## HC allows poll panel probe into AIADMK leadership row

एआईएडीएमके नेतृत्व विवाद पर चुनाव आयोग की जांच को हाई कोर्ट की मंजूरी

The Madras High Court on Wednesday permitted the Election Commission (EC) to find out if there were rival groups staking claim over the AIADMK, and decide which of those groups was actually entitled to be recognized as the political party.

मद्रास हाई कोर्ट ने बुधवार को चुनाव आयोग (ईसी) को यह जांच करने की अनुमति दी कि क्या एआईएडीएमके पर दावा करने वाले प्रतिद्वंद्वी समूह मौजूद हैं, और यह तय करने की जिम्मेदारी दी कि इनमें से कौन सा समूह राजनीतिक दल के रूप में मान्यता पाने का हकदार है।

- Third Division Bench of Justices R. Subramanian and G. Arul Murugan held that the EC could not be prevented from exercising its powers under paragraph 15 of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order of 1968, just because a few civil suits were pending against certain resolutions passed by the party's general council.

न्यायमूर्ति आर. सुब्रमण्यम और न्यायमूर्ति जी. अरुल मुरुगन की तीसरी खंडपीठ ने कहा कि चुनाव आयोग को 1968 के चुनाव चिह्न (आरक्षण और आवंटन) आदेश के पैरा 15 के तहत अपनी शक्तियों का उपयोग करने से नहीं रोका जा सकता, सिर्फ इसलिए कि पार्टी की आम परिषद द्वारा पारित कुछ प्रस्तावों के खिलाफ कुछ दीवानी मुकदमे लंबित हैं।

- The judges made it clear that the interim orders passed by the Supreme Court and the High Court in those civil suits would be binding upon the EC and recorded the latter's submission that it would certainly abide by the court orders passed in the civil proceedings.

न्यायाधीशों ने स्पष्ट किया कि सुप्रीम कोर्ट और हाई कोर्ट द्वारा उन दीवानी मुकदमों में दिए



गए अंतरिम आदेश चुनाव आयोग पर बाध्यकारी होंगे, और इसी के इस बयान को दर्ज किया कि वह अदालत के आदेशों का पालन करेगा।

- "The apprehensions of the petitioner [the AIADMK] that there will be an attempt to overreach the orders of the civil court are not justified," the Bench ordered.  
"याचिकाकर्ता [एआईएडीएमके] की यह आशंका कि दीवानी अदालत के आदेशों को दरकिनार करने का प्रयास किया जाएगा, उचित नहीं है," खंडपीठ ने आदेश दिया।
- The inquiry would have to be within the four walls of Para 15 of the Election Symbols Order, 1968, and it cannot take in its sweep any other matter, which is the subject matter of the civil proceedings, the Bench added.  
जांच को 1968 के चुनाव चिह्न आदेश के पैरा 15 की सीमाओं के भीतर रहना होगा, और यह किसी अन्य मामले को शामिल नहीं कर सकता, जो दीवानी मुकदमों का विषय है, खंडपीठ ने जोड़ा।
- Justice Subramanian, who authored the verdict, pointed out that paragraph 15 of the 1968 order enables the EC to conduct an inquiry and take a call on instances of rival sections or splinter groups staking claim over a political party.  
न्यायमूर्ति सुब्रमण्यम, जिन्होंने यह फैसला लिखा, ने बताया कि 1968 के आदेश के पैरा 15 के तहत चुनाव आयोग को यह जांच करने और निर्णय लेने का अधिकार है कि क्या किसी राजनीतिक दल पर दावा करने वाले प्रतिद्वंद्वी समूह या विभाजित गुट मौजूद हैं।
- A senior counsel representing AIADMK argued that there was no question of rival sections, since 2,539 of the 2,665 general council members and 61 of the 65 MLAs supported the incumbent general secretary, Edappadi K. Palaniswami.  
एआईएडीएमके का प्रतिनिधित्व कर रहे एक वरिष्ठ वकील ने दलील दी कि प्रतिद्वंद्वी गुटों का कोई सवाल ही नहीं उठता, क्योंकि 2,665 में से 2,539 आम परिषद सदस्य और 65 में से 61 विधायक मौजूदा महासचिव, एडप्पादी के. पलानीस्वामी का समर्थन कर रहे हैं।
- The Division Bench left those issues to be decided by the EC.  
खंडपीठ ने इन मुद्दों को चुनाव आयोग के फैसले पर छोड़ दिया।

## Separate complaints

### अलग-अलग शिकायतें

- The Bench took note that seven individuals, who had been reportedly expelled from the party, had lodged separate complaints regarding party affairs before the EC between April 20, 2023, and December 4, 2024.  
खंडपीठ ने ध्यान दिया कि पार्टी से कथित रूप से निष्कासित किए गए सात व्यक्तियों ने 20 अप्रैल 2023 से 4 दिसंबर 2024 के बीच चुनाव आयोग के समक्ष पार्टी मामलों को लेकर अलग-अलग शिकायतें दर्ज कराई थीं।
- "We therefore find that we as a constitutional court cannot examine each and every complaint and conclude whether the requirements of Para 15 are satisfied...." the judges wrote.



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"इसलिए, हम यह मानते हैं कि एक संवैधानिक अदालत के रूप में हम प्रत्येक शिकायत की जांच नहीं कर सकते और यह तय नहीं कर सकते कि क्या पैरा 15 की आवश्यकताएं पूरी होती हैं...." न्यायाधीशों ने लिखा।

GS Paper II: Governor

## Wilful violation

Supreme Court's queries expose pattern of obstinacy in T.N. Governor's conduct

The Supreme Court of India's probing questions to the Tamil Nadu Governor, R.N. Ravi, have exposed a pattern of wilful violation of constitutional duty on his part. The questions related to the lawfulness of Mr. Ravi's act in referring to the President of India a set of Bills for which he had earlier "withheld assent", but was constitutionally bound to grant assent after their adoption for a second time by the State Assembly. The Bench was speaking on behalf of everyone when it asked whether Mr. Ravi had referred these Bills to the President only to avoid granting assent, as required by the first proviso to Article 200 of the Constitution. The earlier understanding that the withholding of assent puts an end to the life of a Bill was altered by the Court's judgment in 2023, holding that whenever Governors opt for that course of action, they should return the Bill to the legislature, as required in the proviso; and if passed again by the House, they were bound to grant assent. Faced with queries, the Attorney-General of India (A-G) raised the issue of possible repugnancy with central law. He argued that the Governor had rightly referred these Bills to the President due to an apparent conflict with UGC Regulations, as these Bills seek to change the manner in which university vice-chancellors are appointed. The A-G also maintained that when the Governor had earlier withheld assent, the Bills ceased to exist and the Assembly had presumed that these had been "returned" by the Governor and adopted them a second time. In a related contention, he has also argued that the requirement to return a Bill does not hold good if the issue of repugnancy is noted.

These arguments may appear fascinating in determining the right course of action to be followed by Governors in dealing with Bills, and the Bench, which has reserved its judgment, may come up with answers. However, the fact that the Governor has been using his powers to scuttle legislation is quite obvious. He had not acted on some of these Bills for a year or two or expressed his reservations relating to the repugnancy aspect while withholding assent. Also, he ignored the fact that he was bound to grant assent when the Bills were presented to him a second time, but referred them to the President. Even in a 2023 hearing, the Court had questioned whether a Governor, having chosen to withhold assent, could exercise another option by referring the same Bill to the President. Mr. Ravi appears bent on scuttling any law that does not suit his world view. It is time the Union government took note of the challenge his continuance in office poses to constitutional governance in Tamil Nadu.

## Wilful violation

### जानबूझकर उल्लंघन

Supreme Court's queries expose a pattern of obstinacy in T.N. Governor's conduct.

सुप्रीम कोर्ट के सवालोंने तमिलनाडु के राज्यपाल के रवैये में हठधर्मिता के एक पैटर्न को उजागर किया।

• The Supreme Court of India's probing questions to Tamil Nadu Governor, R.N. Ravi, have exposed a pattern of wilful violation of constitutional duty on his part.

भारत के सुप्रीम कोर्ट के तमिलनाडु के राज्यपाल, आर. एन. रवि से पूछे गए सवालोंने उनके द्वारा संविधानिक कर्तव्यों के जानबूझकर उल्लंघन का एक पैटर्न उजागर किया।

• The questions related to the lawfulness of Mr. Ravi's act in referring to the President of India a set of Bills for which he had earlier "withheld assent", but was constitutionally bound to grant assent after their adoption for a second time by the State Assembly.

ये सवाल इस बात से जुड़े थे कि क्या श्री रवि द्वारा भारत के राष्ट्रपति को कुछ विधेयकों को भेजना वैध था, जिनके लिए उन्होंने पहले "स्वीकृति रोक दी थी", लेकिन संविधान के अनुसार राज्य विधानसभा द्वारा दूसरी बार पारित किए जाने के बाद उन्हें स्वीकृति देनी थी।

• The Bench asked whether Mr. Ravi had referred these Bills to the President only to avoid granting assent, as required by the first proviso to Article 200 of the Constitution.

खंडपीठ ने पूछा कि क्या श्री रवि ने इन विधेयकों को राष्ट्रपति के पास सिर्फ इसलिए भेजा ताकि उन्हें स्वीकृति देने से बचा जा सके, जैसा कि संविधान के अनुच्छेद 200 के पहले प्रावधान में आवश्यक है।

• The earlier understanding that the withholding of assent puts an end to the life of a Bill was altered by the Court's judgment in 2023.

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पहले यह समझा जाता था कि "स्वीकृति रोकने" से विधेयक समाप्त हो जाता है, लेकिन 2023 के कोर्ट के फैसले ने इस धारणा को बदल दिया।

- The judgment stated that **Governors should return the Bill to the legislature if they withhold assent**; and if passed again by the House, they were bound to grant assent. फैसले में कहा गया कि यदि राज्यपाल स्वीकृति रोकते हैं, तो उन्हें विधेयक को विधायिका को वापस भेजना चाहिए; और यदि सदन उसे फिर से पारित करता है, तो उन्हें स्वीकृति देना अनिवार्य है।
- **Attorney-General of India (A-G)** argued that the Governor had rightly referred these Bills to the President due to an **apparent conflict with UGC Regulations** as these Bills **seek to change the manner in which university vice-chancellors are appointed**.  
\*\*भारत के अटॉर्नी-जनरल (ए-जी) ने तर्क दिया कि राज्यपाल ने इन विधेयकों को राष्ट्रपति के पास सही तरीके से भेजा क्योंकि ये विधेयक यूजीसी नियमों के साथ स्पष्ट टकराव पैदा कर सकते हैं, क्योंकि ये विश्वविद्यालय के कुलपतियों की नियुक्ति प्रक्रिया को बदलने की मांग करते हैं।
- The A-G also maintained that when the **Governor had earlier withheld assent, the Bills ceased to exist**, and the Assembly presumed that these had been "returned" by the Governor and adopted them a **second time**.  
\*\*ए-जी ने यह भी कहा कि जब राज्यपाल ने पहले स्वीकृति रोक दी, तो विधेयक समाप्त हो गए, और विधानसभा ने यह मान लिया कि राज्यपाल ने उन्हें "लौटा दिया" और उन्हें दूसरी बार पारित किया।
- He also argued that the **requirement to return a Bill does not hold good if the issue of repugnancy is noted**.  
\*\*उन्होंने यह भी तर्क दिया कि यदि विधेयक में किसी कानून से टकराव (repugnancy) की समस्या पाई जाती है, तो उसे वापस करने की आवश्यकता लागू नहीं होती।
- The **Bench, which has reserved its judgment, may come up with answers on the right course of action for Governors**.  
खंडपीठ, जिसने अपना फैसला सुरक्षित रख लिया है, इस मामले में राज्यपालों के लिए सही प्रक्रिया पर उत्तर दे सकती है।
- The fact remains that the **Governor has been using his powers to scuttle legislation**.  
\*\*तथ्य यह है कि राज्यपाल अपनी शक्तियों का उपयोग विधायी प्रक्रिया को बाधित करने के लिए कर रहे हैं।
- He had **not acted on some of these Bills for a year or two**, nor expressed his reservations regarding the repugnancy aspect while withholding assent.  
उन्होंने कुछ विधेयकों पर एक या दो वर्षों तक कोई कार्रवाई नहीं की, और न ही उन्होंने स्वीकृति रोकते समय इनके कानून से टकराव के बारे में कोई आपत्ति व्यक्त की।
- He ignored the fact that **he was bound to grant assent when the Bills were presented to him a second time**, but instead referred them to the President.  
\*\*उन्होंने इस तथ्य को नजरअंदाज किया कि जब विधेयकों को उनके पास दूसरी बार प्रस्तुत



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किया गया, तो उन्हें स्वीकृति देना अनिवार्य था, लेकिन इसके बजाय उन्होंने उन्हें राष्ट्रपति के पास भेज दिया।

- Even in a 2023 hearing, the Court had questioned whether a Governor, having chosen to withhold assent, could then refer the same Bill to the President.

\*\*2023 की एक सुनवाई में भी, कोर्ट ने सवाल उठाया था कि क्या राज्यपाल, जिसने एक बार स्वीकृति रोकने का निर्णय लिया हो, बाद में उसी विधेयक को राष्ट्रपति के पास भेज सकता है।

- Mr. Ravi appears bent on scuttling any law that does not suit his worldview.
- It is time the Union government took note of the challenge his continuance in office poses to constitutional governance in Tamil Nadu.

श्री रवि ऐसे किसी भी कानून को बाधित करने पर आमादा दिखते हैं, जो उनकी विचारधारा के अनुरूप नहीं है।  
अब समय आ गया है कि केंद्र सरकार इस चुनौती पर ध्यान दे, जो उनके पद पर बने रहने से तमिलनाडु में संवैधानिक शासन के लिए उत्पन्न हो रही है।

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# Should convicted persons contest elections?

What does the Representation of the People Act, 1951 stipulate with respect to electoral candidates convicted of criminal offences? What are the various judgments of the Supreme Court which favour the decriminalisation of politics? What is the case for a lifetime ban on convicted individuals standing for office?

GS Paper II: Election, disqualification

## EXPLAINER

Rangarajan. R

### The story so far:

The Supreme Court is hearing petitions filed by Ashwin Upadhyay and others, seeking a life time ban on convicted persons from contesting elections.

### What are the legal provisions?

Section 8(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RP Act, 1951), provides for the disqualification of a person convicted of a criminal offence and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than two years. Such a person is disqualified from contesting elections for a further period of six years from the date of release. Section 8(1) further stipulates that a person convicted under criminal laws for heinous crimes like rape; the Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) act for preaching or practice of untouchability; UAPA for unlawful association; Prevention of Corruption Act etc., will be disqualified irrespective of the period of their sentence and six years after release.

### What were past decisions?

The Supreme Court has delivered notable judgments in favour of the decriminalisation of politics. In the *Association for Democratic Reforms* (ADR) case (2002), it mandated the disclosure of criminal records of all candidates contesting elections. In the *CEC vs Jan Chaukidar* case (2013), it upheld the creative interpretation of the provisions of the RP Act, 1951 by the Patna High Court. One of the qualifications as per the act to contest elections is that a person should be an 'elector'. Section 62(5) stipulates that a person in jail is not eligible to vote in elections. The court interpreted that persons who are under trial prisoners, therefore cease to be 'electors' and hence not qualified to contest elections. However, the Parliament amended the act in 2013 to overturn this judgment



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allowing under trial prisoners to contest elections. In *Lily Thomas* (2013), the court struck down section 8(4) of the RP Act, 1951, that allowed a sitting legislator to continue as a member even after being convicted if they filed an appeal, as unconstitutional and against political justice. After this judgment, a sitting legislator is disqualified immediately after the sentencing for a conviction.

It is pertinent to note that Section 11 of the RP Act, 1951 provides that the Election Commission (EC) may remove any disqualification or reduce the period of disqualification of a convicted person. It utilised this power in September 2019, to reduce the disqualification period of Prem Singh Tamang, incumbent Chief

Minister of Sikkim, from six years to 13 months which allowed him to contest and win a byelection.

It was a questionable decision of the EC to have reduced the disqualification period of a person convicted under the Prevention of Corruption Act, considering its various recommendations to curb criminalisation of politics.

### What is the current petition?

The current petition seeks a life time ban on convicted persons from contesting elections. The petitioners argue that if a convicted person is not eligible for even a junior-grade government job, how could they become law makers six years after serving their sentence. However, the

Central government in an affidavit filed before the court in 2020 had mentioned that MPs and MLAs are not bound by any 'service conditions' unlike government servants, and hence the present disqualification period of six years after serving the sentence is adequate.

The Supreme Court has again sought the response of the Central government and the EC on the current petition.

### What can be the way forward?

A report by ADR states that 251 (46%) of the 543 elected MPs in 2024, have criminal cases against them, and 171 (31%) face serious criminal charges including rape, murder, attempt to murder and kidnapping. It added that chances of winning for a candidate with a criminal background was 15.4% as against just 4.4% for a candidate with a clean background. The Law Commission in 1999 and 2014, and the EC on various occasions have highlighted the need to curb the criminalisation of politics. They have recommended that even persons against whom charges are framed by a competent court for an offence that entails punishment of more than five years should not be allowed to contest elections.

However, there has been no consensus on this recommendation amongst political parties considering the risk of its misuse. As regards the current petition, there may be convictions that do not involve moral turpitude for which permanent disqualification would be inappropriate and disproportionate. With respect to convictions for heinous crimes and under statutes like the Prevention of Corruption Act, there may be a case for life time disqualification as it is directly linked with probity in public life.

Meanwhile, the powers vested with the EC for reducing or removing the period of disqualification of a convicted person should be reviewed by the court for its constitutional validity.

Rangarajan. R is a former IAS officer and author of 'Polity Simplified'. Views expressed are personal.

## THE GIST

Section 8(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RP Act, 1951), provides for the disqualification of a person convicted of a criminal offence and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than two years.

Petitioners argue that if a convicted person is not eligible for even a junior-grade government job, how could they become law makers six years after serving their sentence.

A report by ADR states that 251 (46%) of the 543 elected MPs in 2024, have criminal cases against them, and 171 (31%) face serious criminal charges including rape, murder, attempt to murder and kidnapping.

## Should convicted persons contest elections?

क्या दोषी व्यक्तियों को चुनाव लड़ने की अनुमति होनी चाहिए?

The Supreme Court is hearing petitions filed by Ashwin Upadhyay and others, seeking a lifetime ban on convicted persons from contesting elections.

सुप्रीम कोर्ट अश्विन उपाध्याय और अन्य द्वारा दायर याचिकाओं की सुनवाई कर



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रहा है, जिसमें दोषी व्यक्तियों पर चुनाव लड़ने पर आजीवन प्रतिबंध लगाने की मांग की गई है।

**What are the legal provisions?**

**कानूनी प्रावधान क्या हैं?**

- Section 8(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RP Act, 1951), provides for the disqualification of a person convicted of a criminal offence and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than two years.

जन प्रतिनिधित्व अधिनियम, 1951 (RP Act, 1951) की धारा 8(3) के अनुसार, किसी व्यक्ति को किसी अपराध में दोषी ठहराए जाने और कम से कम दो साल की सजा मिलने पर अयोग्य घोषित किया जाएगा।

- Such a person is disqualified from contesting elections for a further period of six years from the date of release.

ऐसा व्यक्ति जेल से रिहाई की तारीख से अगले छह वर्षों तक चुनाव लड़ने के लिए अयोग्य रहेगा।

- Section 8(1) further stipulates that a person convicted under criminal laws for heinous crimes like rape; the Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act for preaching or practice of untouchability; UAPA for unlawful association; Prevention of Corruption Act etc., will be disqualified irrespective of the period of their sentence and six years after release.

धारा 8(1) यह भी निर्धारित करती है कि यदि कोई व्यक्ति बलात्कार जैसे जघन्य अपराधों, नागरिक अधिकार संरक्षण अधिनियम (PCR) के तहत अछूत प्रथा के प्रचार या अभ्यास, गैरकानूनी गतिविधि (रोकथाम) अधिनियम (UAPA) या भ्रष्टाचार निवारण अधिनियम जैसे अपराधों में दोषी पाया जाता है, तो उसे सजा की अवधि की परवाह किए बिना अयोग्य घोषित किया जाएगा और रिहाई के बाद भी छह वर्षों तक अयोग्य रहेगा।

**What were past decisions?**

**पिछले फैसले क्या थे?**

- The Supreme Court has delivered notable judgments in favour of the decriminalisation of politics.

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने राजनीति के अपराधीकरण को रोकने के पक्ष में महत्वपूर्ण फैसले दिए हैं।

- In the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) case (2002), it mandated the disclosure of criminal records of all candidates contesting elections.

एसोसिएशन फॉर डेमोक्रेटिक रिफॉर्म्स (ADR) मामले (2002) में, सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने चुनाव लड़ने वाले सभी उम्मीदवारों के आपराधिक रिकॉर्ड का खुलासा अनिवार्य कर दिया।

- In the CEC vs Jan Chaudhary case (2013), it upheld the creative interpretation of the provisions of the RP Act, 1951 by the Patna High Court.

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CEC बनाम जन चौकीदार मामला (2013) में, सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने पटना हाईकोर्ट द्वारा RP अधिनियम, 1951 की व्याख्या को बरकरार रखा।

- One of the qualifications as per the Act to contest elections is that a person should be an 'elector.'

इस अधिनियम के अनुसार चुनाव लड़ने की एक योग्यता यह है कि व्यक्ति एक 'मतदाता' होना चाहिए।

- Section 62(5) stipulates that a person in jail is not eligible to vote in elections. धारा 62(5) के अनुसार, जेल में बंद व्यक्ति चुनाव में मतदान करने के योग्य नहीं होता।
- The court interpreted that persons who are under trial prisoners, therefore cease to be 'electors' and hence not qualified to contest elections.

कोर्ट ने यह व्याख्या की कि जो व्यक्ति विचाराधीन कैदी हैं, वे 'मतदाता' की श्रेणी में नहीं आते और इसलिए चुनाव लड़ने के योग्य नहीं होते।

- However, the Parliament amended the Act in 2013 to overturn this judgment allowing under-trial prisoners to contest elections.

हालांकि, संसद ने 2013 में इस फैसले को पलटने के लिए अधिनियम में संशोधन किया, जिससे विचाराधीन कैदियों को चुनाव लड़ने की अनुमति मिल गई।

- In Lily Thomas (2013), the court struck down Section 8(4) of the RP Act, 1951, that allowed a sitting legislator to continue as a member even after being convicted if they filed an appeal, as unconstitutional and against political justice.

लिली थॉमस मामला (2013) में, सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने RP अधिनियम, 1951 की धारा 8(4) को असंवैधानिक घोषित किया, जिसमें दोषी ठहराए गए विधायकों को अपील करने पर पद पर बने रहने की अनुमति दी गई थी। कोर्ट ने इसे राजनीतिक न्याय के खिलाफ माना।

- After this judgment, a sitting legislator is disqualified immediately after the sentencing for a conviction.

इस फैसले के बाद, किसी भी दोषी ठहराए गए मौजूदा विधायक को सजा सुनाए जाने के तुरंत बाद अयोग्य घोषित कर दिया जाता है।

## What about the Election Commission's powers?

### चुनाव आयोग की शक्तियां क्या हैं?

- Section 11 of the RP Act, 1951 provides that the Election Commission (EC) may remove any disqualification or reduce the period of disqualification of a convicted person.

RP अधिनियम, 1951 की धारा 11 के अनुसार, चुनाव आयोग (EC) किसी दोषी व्यक्ति की अयोग्यता को हटा सकता है या उसकी अयोग्यता की अवधि को कम कर सकता है।

- It utilised this power in September 2019, to reduce the disqualification period of Prem Singh Tamang, incumbent Chief Minister of Sikkim, from six years to 13 months which allowed him to contest and win a byelection.

चुनाव आयोग ने सितंबर 2019 में इस शक्ति का उपयोग किया और सिक्किम के वर्तमान



मुख्यमंत्री प्रेम सिंह तमांग की अयोग्यता की अवधि को छह वर्षों से घटाकर 13 महीने कर दिया, जिससे उन्हें उपचुनाव लड़ने और जीतने की अनुमति मिल गई।

- It was a questionable decision of the EC to have reduced the disqualification period of a person convicted under the Prevention of Corruption Act, considering its various recommendations to curb criminalisation of politics.  
यह चुनाव आयोग का एक विवादास्पद निर्णय था, क्योंकि यह एक ऐसे व्यक्ति की अयोग्यता की अवधि को कम करने से जुड़ा था, जिसे भ्रष्टाचार निवारण अधिनियम के तहत दोषी ठहराया गया था, जबकि चुनाव आयोग स्वयं राजनीति के अपराधीकरण को रोकने के लिए सिफारिशें करता रहा है।

## What is the current petition?

### वर्तमान याचिका क्या है?

- The current petition seeks a lifetime ban on convicted persons from contesting elections.  
वर्तमान याचिका दोषी व्यक्तियों पर चुनाव लड़ने पर आजीवन प्रतिबंध लगाने की मांग करती है।
- The petitioners argue that if a convicted person is not eligible for even a junior-grade government job, how could they become lawmakers six years after serving their sentence?  
याचिकाकर्ताओं का तर्क है कि यदि कोई दोषी व्यक्ति एक जूनियर स्तर की सरकारी नौकरी के लिए भी अयोग्य है, तो वह सजा पूरी करने के छह साल बाद विधायक या सांसद कैसे बन सकता है?
- However, the Central government in an affidavit filed before the court in 2020 had mentioned that MPs and MLAs are not bound by any 'service conditions' unlike government servants, and hence the present disqualification period of six years after serving the sentence is adequate.  
हालांकि, केंद्र सरकार ने 2020 में अदालत में दायर हलफनामे में कहा कि सांसद और विधायक सरकारी कर्मचारियों की तरह 'सेवा शर्तों' के तहत नहीं आते, इसलिए सजा पूरी करने के बाद छह साल की अयोग्यता की वर्तमान अवधि पर्याप्त है।
- The Supreme Court has again sought the response of the Central government and the EC on the current petition.  
सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने इस याचिका पर केंद्र सरकार और चुनाव आयोग (EC) से दोबारा जवाब मांगा है।

## What can be the way forward?

### आगे का रास्ता क्या हो सकता है?

- A report by ADR states that 251 (46%) of the 543 elected MPs in 2024 have criminal cases against them, and 171 (31%) face serious criminal charges including rape, murder, attempt to murder, and kidnapping.



ADR की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, 2024 में चुने गए 543 सांसदों में से 251 (46%) पर आपराधिक मामले हैं, और 171 (31%) पर बलात्कार, हत्या, हत्या के प्रयास, और अपहरण जैसे गंभीर आरोप हैं।

- It added that the chances of winning for a candidate with a criminal background was 15.4% as against just 4.4% for a candidate with a clean background.  
रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, आपराधिक पृष्ठभूमि वाले उम्मीदवार की जीत की संभावना 15.4% थी, जबकि स्वच्छ छवि वाले उम्मीदवार की केवल 4.4%।
- The Law Commission in 1999 and 2014, and the EC on various occasions have highlighted the need to curb the criminalisation of politics.  
कानून आयोग ने 1999 और 2014 में और चुनाव आयोग (EC) ने कई मौकों पर राजनीति के अपराधीकरण को रोकने की आवश्यकता को उजागर किया।
- They have recommended that even persons against whom charges are framed by a competent court for an offence that entails punishment of more than five years should not be allowed to contest elections.  
उन्होंने सिफारिश की कि यदि किसी सक्षम अदालत द्वारा पांच साल से अधिक की सजा वाले अपराध के लिए आरोप तय किए जाते हैं, तो ऐसे व्यक्ति को चुनाव लड़ने की अनुमति नहीं दी जानी चाहिए।
- However, there has been no consensus on this recommendation amongst political parties considering the risk of its misuse.  
हालांकि, इसके दुरुपयोग के जोखिम को देखते हुए राजनीतिक दलों के बीच इस सिफारिश पर कोई सहमति नहीं बन पाई है।

### TOPICS COVERED (GS Paper III: Economy, Science & Technology, Environment, Disaster Management, Internal Security)

1. Retail inflation eases to five-month low of 4.31% / खुदरा मुद्रास्फीति घटकर पांच महीने के निचले स्तर 4.31% पर आ गई
2. Birdwatchers and volunteers to develop Hyderabad Bird Atlas / पक्षी प्रेमी और स्वयंसेवक हैदराबाद बर्ड एटलस विकसित करेंगे
3. Nuclear energy — dangerous concessions on liability / परमाणु ऊर्जा - दायित्व पर खतरनाक रियायतें



**4. Budgeting for a gender-inclusive 'Viksit Bharat' / लिंग-समावेशी 'विकसित भारत' के लिए बजट बनाना**

**5. Implications of the AI Diffusion Framework / एआई डिसल्यूशन फ्रेमवर्क के निहितार्थ**

**6. A 11-year high of 55% urban residents report stagnant income in 2025 / 2025 में 55% शहरी निवासियों की आय स्थिर रहने की रिपोर्ट, 11 वर्षों का उच्चतम स्तर**

**7. What is contributing to the downturn in Indian markets? / भारतीय बाजारों में मंदी का कारण क्या है?**

## Retail inflation eases to five-month low of 4.31%

The rise in food prices slows for the third straight month to 6% in January; inflation for urban consumers drops to 3.87%, below the RBI's 4% median target for inflation but edible oils spike

GS Paper III: Economy

Vikas Dhoot  
NEW DELHI

India's retail inflation cooled to a five-month low of 4.31% in January, from 5.22% in December 2024, and 5.1% a year ago. The rise in food prices has decelerated for the third successive month to 6%, from 8.4% in the preceding month, but the prices of edible oils and fruits flared up sharply.

The price rise faced by urban consumers in January dropped to 3.87%, below the Central bank's 4% median target for inflation. For rural consumers, price rice remained above the median target at 4.64%, but down from December's 5.8% rise.

The latest inflation figures were reported just days after the Reserve

### Downward trend



Bank of India (RBI) move to slash interest rates by 0.25 percentage points last Friday on the premise that inflation is declining and will soften to 4.2% in 2025-26 while growth needs are more pressing.

**Rupee depreciation**  
The RBI has projected inflation to average 4.4% between January to March,

which could imply mild spikes in the price rise pace over this month and the next. Economists have flagged worries about imported inflation as the rupee's depreciation could weigh on the cost of items like **edible oils, fertilizers, and petroleum.**

"Over the past few months, edible oil has emerged as a major pres-

### At 3.2% in Dec., IIP growth skids to 4-month low

NEW DELHI  
Growth in India's Index of Industrial Production (IIP) dipped to a four-month low of 3.2% in December, with manufacturing and mining sectors rising just 3% and 2.6%, respectively. » PAGE 13

sure point for food inflation, impacted by high global prices and import duties. Since around 60% of edible oil is imported, the weakening currency also adversely impacts its price," cautioned Dharmakirti Joshi, chief economist at Crisil.

CONTINUED ON  
» PAGE 10

**Retail inflation eases to five-month low of 4.31%**

**खुदरा मुद्रास्फीति घटकर पांच महीने के निचले स्तर 4.31% पर आ गई**

The rise in food prices slows for the third straight month to 6% in January; inflation for urban consumers drops to 3.87%, below the RBI's 4% median target for inflation but edible oils spike

**जनवरी में खाद्य पदार्थों की कीमतों में वृद्धि लगातार तीसरे महीने धीमी होकर 6% पर आ गई; शहरी उपभोक्ताओं के लिए मुद्रास्फीति घटकर 3.87% रह गई, जो आरबीआई**

**के मुद्रास्फीति के 4% औसत लक्ष्य से कम है, लेकिन खाद्य तेलों की कीमतों में उछाल आया**



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India's retail inflation cooled to a five-month low of 4.31% in January, from 5.22% in December 2024, and 5.1% a year ago.

भारत की खुदरा महंगाई जनवरी में 4.31% के पांच महीने के निचले स्तर तक गिर गई, जो दिसंबर 2024 में 5.22% और एक साल पहले 5.1% थी।

- **The rise in food prices** has decelerated for the **third successive month** to 6%, from 8.4% in the preceding month.  
खाद्य कीमतों में वृद्धि तीसरे लगातार महीने में 6% तक धीमी हो गई है, जो पिछले महीने 8.4% थी।
- However, the **prices of edible oils and fruits flared up sharply**.  
हालांकि, खाद्य तेलों और फलों की कीमतों में तेजी से वृद्धि हुई।
- The price rise faced by **urban consumers in January** dropped to **3.87%**, below the **Central bank's 4% median target** for inflation.  
जनवरी में शहरी उपभोक्ताओं के लिए कीमतों में वृद्धि 3.87% तक गिर गई, जो केंद्रीय बैंक के 4% के मध्य लक्ष्य से नीचे है।
- For **rural consumers**, price rise remained above the median target at **4.64%**, but down from **December's 5.8% rise**.  
ग्रामीण उपभोक्ताओं के लिए कीमतों में वृद्धि 4.64% पर बनी रही, जो मध्य लक्ष्य से ऊपर थी, लेकिन दिसंबर में 5.8% की वृद्धि से घटकर आई।
- The latest inflation figures were reported just days after the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** moved to slash **interest rates by 0.25 percentage points** last Friday, on the premise that inflation is declining and will soften to **4.2% in 2025-26** while growth needs are more pressing.  
नवीनतम महंगाई आंकड़े भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक (आरबीआई) द्वारा पिछले शुक्रवार को ब्याज दरों को 0.25 प्रतिशत अंक घटाने के कुछ ही दिनों बाद रिपोर्ट किए गए, यह मानते हुए कि महंगाई घट रही है और 2025-26 में 4.2% तक नरम हो जाएगी, जबकि विकास की ज़रूरतें अधिक महत्वपूर्ण हैं।
- **Rupee depreciation:** The **RBI** has projected inflation to average **4.4%** between **January to March**, which could imply mild spikes in the price rise pace over this month and the next.  
**रुपया अवमूल्यन:** आरबीआई ने जनवरी से मार्च के बीच महंगाई को औसतन 4.4% रहने का अनुमान जताया है, जिससे इस महीने और अगले महीने कीमतों में हल्की बढ़ोतरी हो सकती है।
- Economists have flagged worries about **imported inflation** as the **rupee's depreciation** could weigh on the cost of items like **edible oils, fertilizers, and petroleum**.  
अर्थशास्त्रियों ने आयातित महंगाई को लेकर चिंताएं जताई हैं, क्योंकि रुपये के अवमूल्यन से खाद्य तेलों, उर्वरकों, और पेट्रोलियम जैसी वस्तुओं की कीमतों पर दबाव पड़ सकता है।
- "Over the past few months, **edible oil** has emerged as a **major pressure point** for food inflation, impacted by **high global prices and import duties**."

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“पिछले कुछ महीनों में, खाद्य तेल खाद्य महंगाई के लिए एक मुख्य दबाव बिंदु बनकर उभरा है, जो उच्च वैश्विक कीमतों और आयात शुल्कों से प्रभावित हुआ है।

- Since around **60% of edible oil is imported**, the **weakening currency** also adversely impacts its price,” cautioned **Dharmakirti Joshi**, chief economist at **Crisil**.

क्योंकि लगभग **60% खाद्य तेल आयातित है**, कमजोर होती मुद्रा इसके मूल्य पर प्रतिकूल प्रभाव डालती है,” चेतावनी दी **धर्मकीर्ति जोशी** ने, जो क्रिसिल में मुख्य अर्थशास्त्री हैं।

## Birdwatchers and volunteers to develop Hyderabad Bird Atlas

**GS Paper III: Environment**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
HYDERABAD

The exercise to develop Hyderabad Bird Atlas is under way with birdwatchers along with volunteers scanning different parts of the city to map avian fauna. The Atlas is being developed to understand bird distribution in the city, monitor changes in their population, identify important bird areas and inform authorities about land use planning.

The three-year project was rolled out on February 3, which will go on till February 23. It will be conducted in February (Winter) and July (Summer) to know birds which migrate in winters. Summer helps



A mock-survey was conducted at Nehru Zoological Park in the city to train participants about the basics of bird identification.

to know resident birds.

Prior to the launch, the volunteers were trained in the basics of bird identification. A mock-survey was conducted at Nehru Zoological Park in the city early this month.

“Following the training session, volunteers were divided into smaller groups consisting of two to

five members and assigned to randomly selected survey regions across Hyderabad,” said Sriram Reddy, core member of Hyderabad Birding Pals.

In the city, 180 survey regions were identified for the study. As of now, 51 out of 180 regions were surveyed and 170 bird species were recorded.

विभिन्न हिस्सों की स्कैनिंग कर रहे हैं ताकि पक्षियों की प्रजातियाँ मैप की जा सकें।

- The **Atlas** is being developed to understand **bird distribution** in the city, monitor changes in their **population**, identify **important bird areas** and inform authorities about **land use planning**.

यह एटलस शहर में पक्षियों के वितरण को समझने, उनकी जनसंख्या में होने वाले बदलावों की निगरानी करने, महत्वपूर्ण पक्षी क्षेत्रों की पहचान करने और भूमि उपयोग योजना के बारे में अधिकारियों को सूचित करने के लिए विकसित किया जा रहा है।

- The **three-year project** was rolled out on **February 3**, and will go on till **February 23**. यह तीन साल का परियोजना 3 फरवरी को शुरू हुआ था, जो 23 फरवरी तक चलेगा।
- It will be conducted in **February (Winter)** and **July (Summer)** to know birds which migrate in winters. **Summer helps to know resident birds**.

## Birdwatchers and volunteers to develop Hyderabad Bird Atlas

**पक्षी प्रेमी और स्वयंसेवक हैदराबाद बर्ड एटलस विकसित करेंगे**

**Development of Hyderabad Bird Atlas Underway**

**हैदराबाद बर्ड एटलस का विकास चल रहा है**

- The exercise to develop **Hyderabad Bird Atlas** is under way with **birdwatchers** along with **volunteers** scanning different parts of the city to map **avian fauna**.

**हैदराबाद बर्ड एटलस के विकास का कार्य चल रहा है** जिसमें **बर्डवाचर्स** और **स्वयंसेवक** शहर के



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यह फरवरी (सर्दी) और जुलाई (गर्मी) में किया जाएगा ताकि जो पक्षी सर्दियों में प्रवास करते हैं, उनके बारे में जानकारी मिल सके। गर्मी में यह स्थानीय पक्षियों को जानने में मदद करता है।

- Prior to the launch, the **volunteers** were trained in the basics of **bird identification**. लॉन्च से पहले, स्वयंसेवकों को पक्षी पहचान के मूल सिद्धांतों पर प्रशिक्षण दिया गया।
- A **mock-survey** was conducted at **Nehru Zoological Park** in the city early this month. इस महीने की शुरुआत में शहर के नेहरू प्राणी उद्यान में मॉक सर्वे किया गया।
- "Following the **training session**, volunteers were divided into smaller groups consisting of **two to five members** and assigned to randomly selected survey regions across **Hyderabad**," said **Sriram Reddy**, core member of **Hyderabad Birding Pals**.  
"प्रशिक्षण सत्र के बाद, स्वयंसेवकों को छोटे समूहों में बांटा गया जिसमें दो से पांच सदस्य थे और उन्हें हैदराबाद के विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में सर्वेक्षण के लिए नियुक्त किया गया," कहा सिराम रेड्डी ने, हैदराबाद बर्डिंग पल्स के मुख्य सदस्य।
- In the city, **180 survey regions** were identified for the study. शहर में, अध्ययन के लिए **180 सर्वेक्षण क्षेत्र** पहचाने गए थे।
- As of now, **51 out of 180 regions** were surveyed and **170 bird species** were recorded. अब तक, **180 में से 51 क्षेत्रों** का सर्वेक्षण किया गया और **170 पक्षी प्रजातियाँ** दर्ज की गईं।

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# Nuclear energy — dangerous concessions on liability

GS Paper III: Energy

In the Union Budget speech on February 1, the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced the government's intention to take up "amendments to the Atomic Energy Act and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act..." This announcement is likely to please Washington, where successive administrations have been unhappy that the law places some minimal responsibilities on nuclear manufacturers in the event of an accident. But, in India, any move to indemnify suppliers should be a matter of serious concern since this could undermine nuclear safety.

Moreover, the reactors that the American government is pushing India to buy are extremely expensive and their import makes no sense on economic grounds.

Any nuclear reactor carries the risk of accidents – some of which, such as the multiple reactor meltdowns at Fukushima, Japan, in 2011, can be catastrophic. Such a disaster affects three parties: the victims, the operator of the nuclear plant (which, in India, is likely to be the public sector company, Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited or NPCIL) and its supplier, which might be a large multinational corporation.

Following the Bhopal gas disaster (1984) the Supreme Court of India ruled, in 1986, in the Delhi Oleum gas leak case, that any enterprise engaged in a hazardous activity is "absolutely liable" for harm suffered by the victims. However, in 2010, the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government created a special law for nuclear accidents that diluted this principle. Under this law, primary liability is channelled to the operator and capped at ₹1,500 crore.

This is unfair to victims because the economic damage caused by an accident can be much higher. The Japan Center for Economic Research estimated that the eventual cleanup costs of the Fukushima disaster could range from ¥35 trillion to ¥80 trillion (or ₹20 lakh crore to ₹46 lakh crore) – more than a thousand times the cap on operator liability in the Indian law.

## Assigning responsibility

Despite this gross mismatch, the law did have one slightly redeeming feature. Under pressure from civil society groups and the political opposition, the UPA government was forced to include a clause called the "right of recourse". This allows the operator to recoup compensation paid to victims from the supplier if the accident was caused by "supply of equipment ... with patent or latent defects or sub-standard services".

Because of the historical monopoly enjoyed by U.S. nuclear companies, liability laws in many other countries lack this feature. Instead, they completely indemnify suppliers. This simply reflects the influence of powerful corporations and is not based on a scientific analysis of



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previous accidents. In fact, design defects have played a role in every major accident to date. A weakness in the Mark 1 containment used in the reactors at Fukushima contributed to that accident. This defect was flagged as early as 1972, when a U.S. Atomic Energy Commission official warned that General Electric (GE), the reactor's designer, had used "data from tests not applicable to accident conditions" in safety assessments. The official recommended that "such designs not be accepted for construction permits" in the future. GE simply brushed aside this concern and, because it is indemnified by the Japanese liability regime, has not paid anything for the Fukushima accident.

Indemnity removes any direct economic incentive for suppliers to ensure reactor safety once a sale is completed. This is not a hypothetical concern. Following the 1979 accident at Three Mile Island, the Kemeny Commission established by the U.S. government noted that Babcock & Wilcox, the supplier of the reactor, had identified a safety hazard in an "earlier accident, bearing strong similarities to the one at Three Mile Island". Even though an engineer at the company had "urged, in the strongest terms, that clear instructions be passed on to the operators" to mitigate this hazard, the supplier failed to do so.

## Backtracking on progress

Nuclear suppliers were furious at the idea that they might have to pay for accidents in India. To appease these companies, the UPA government made farcical attempts to dilute the right of recourse, both during and after the parliamentary debates on the law. This led the Bharatiya Janata Party leader Arun Jaitley to write that a "leopard never changes its spots."

However, after assuming power, the National Democratic Alliance government has pursued precisely the same policy of prioritising nuclear corporations over potential victims. Following U.S. President Barack Obama's visit to India in 2015, the Ministry of External Affairs issued a set of "frequently asked questions" downplaying the operator's right of recourse, and disingenuously suggesting that it could be bypassed using a contractual arrangement between the supplier and the NPCIL.

These machinations have not satisfied U.S. suppliers who are unwilling to expose themselves to any legal hazard in India. Their concerns are easy to guess. Although the current liability cap is low, a future government might rationalise it to reflect the true cost of an accident, exposing these companies to large financial risks. Moreover, accepting even minimal liability in India endangers their cosy arrangements in other countries where they have successfully demanded complete indemnity.

Finally, if the liability law mandates an assessment of the supplier's culpability, this might allow victims to hold corporate executives to account using criminal laws in the event of a disaster.

U.S. officials have actively lobbied on behalf of these politically influential companies. The outgoing U.S. Ambassador to India, Eric Garcetti, recently indicated that he had been in touch with leaders from both the ruling party and the Opposition in an effort to have the law amended. He also lamented that U.S. corporations had been unable to sell a single reactor to India nearly two decades after the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement. However, this has allowed India to avert a costly mistake as the troubled track record of these reactors in their home country shows.

The leading American reactor design on offer is called the AP1000. Electric utility companies commenced construction on four such reactors in the U.S. Two of these reactors, in South Carolina, were abandoned after repeated delays and cost escalations even though more than \$9 billion had already been spent. Two other reactors, in Georgia, were completed at an eye-popping cost of \$36.8 billion, over 250% of the \$14 billion estimate provided at the start of construction.

These high costs translate to expensive electricity. Even taking into account lower labour costs in India, the cost of electricity from such reactors would be several times higher than competing sources as the writers of this article showed in a 2013 study in the *Economic & Political Weekly*. Small modular reactor designs, such as those offered by the U.S.'s NuScale Power corporation, are likely to be even less economical since they lose out on "economies of scale".

## Hollow safety claims

The debate on liability also exposes the exaggerated safety claims made by suppliers. Westinghouse claims that a large release of radiation from an AP1000 reactor would happen only once in 50 million years. If reactors are so safe, why would nuclear vendors take extreme precautions to protect themselves from the consequences of an accident? If companies such as Westinghouse recognise that the risk of an accident is real and are unwilling to risk financial losses, why should Indian citizens who live near a reactor be willing to risk their lives and property?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi projects an image of a strong global leader. However, the government's announcement on the liability law is a revealing commentary on that message. When faced with pressure from the U.S. government, which puts the profits of U.S. corporations above all else, Mr. Modi's government seems unable to stand up for the basic rights and the safety of Indians.

The line in the Union Budget on the intent to amend the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act should be a matter of serious concern

## Nuclear energy — dangerous concessions on liability

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## परमाणु ऊर्जा - दायित्व पर खतरनाक रियायतें

### Amendments to Atomic Energy Act and Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act

एटॉमिक एनर्जी एक्ट और सिविल लाइबिलिटी फॉर न्यूक्लियर डैमेज एक्ट में संशोधन

- In the **Union Budget speech** on **February 1**, the **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** announced the government's intention to take up “**amendments** to the **Atomic Energy Act** and the **Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act**.”  
1 फरवरी को संघीय बजट भाषण में वित्त मंत्री निर्मला सीतारमण ने सरकार के “एटॉमिक एनर्जी एक्ट और सिविल लाइबिलिटी फॉर न्यूक्लियर डैमेज एक्ट में संशोधन करने के इरादे की घोषणा की।
- This announcement is likely to please **Washington**, where successive administrations have been unhappy that the law places some **minimal responsibilities** on **nuclear manufacturers** in the event of an accident.  
यह घोषणा **वॉशिंगटन** को प्रसन्न कर सकती है, जहां लगातार सरकारें इस बात से नाखुश रही हैं कि यह कानून **न्यूक्लियर निर्माताओं** पर दुर्घटना के समय कुछ **न्यूनतम जिम्मेदारियाँ** डालता है।
- But, in **India**, any move to indemnify **suppliers** should be a matter of serious concern since this could undermine **nuclear safety**.  
लेकिन, **भारत** में, **आपूर्तिकर्ताओं** को मुआवजा देने की कोई भी कोशिश **न्यूक्लियर सुरक्षा** को कमजोर कर सकती है और यह गंभीर चिंता का विषय होना चाहिए।
- Moreover, the **reactors** that the **American government** is pushing India to buy are **extremely expensive** and their import makes no sense on **economic grounds**.  
इसके अलावा, वे **रिएक्टर्स** जो **अमेरिकी सरकार** भारत को खरीदने के लिए प्रोत्साहित कर रही हैं, वे **अत्यधिक महंगे** हैं और उनका आयात **आर्थिक दृष्टिकोण** से कोई अर्थ नहीं रखता।
- Any **nuclear reactor** carries the risk of accidents — some of which, such as the **multiple reactor meltdowns** at **Fukushima**, Japan, in **2011**, can be catastrophic.  
कोई भी **न्यूक्लियर रिएक्टर** दुर्घटनाओं का खतरा लेकर आता है – जिनमें से कुछ, जैसे **फुकुशिमा**, **जापान** में **2011** में हुई **एकाधिक रिएक्टर मेल्टडाउन**, विनाशकारी हो सकते हैं।
- Such a **disaster** affects **three parties**: the **victims**, the operator of the **nuclear plant** (**NPCIL** in India), and its **supplier**, which might be a large multinational corporation.  
ऐसी एक **आपदा** तीन पक्षों को प्रभावित करती है: **पीड़ितों**, **न्यूक्लियर प्लांट** के ऑपरेटर (**भारत में NPCIL**) और इसके **आपूर्तिकर्ता**, जो एक बड़ी बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनी हो सकती है।
- Following the **Bhopal gas disaster** (**1984**), the **Supreme Court of India** ruled, in **1986**, in the **Delhi Oleum gas leak case**, that any enterprise engaged in a **hazardous activity** is “**absolutely liable**” for harm suffered by the victims.  
**भोपाल गैस दुर्घटना** (**1984**) के बाद, **भारत के सुप्रीम कोर्ट** ने **1986** में **दिल्ली ओलियम गैस लीक मामले** में यह निर्णय दिया कि कोई भी संस्था जो **खतरनाक गतिविधि** में संलिप्त हो, वह “**पूरी तरह से जिम्मेदार**” होगी, जो भी **पीड़ितों** को नुकसान होगा।



- However, in **2010**, the **United Progressive Alliance (UPA)** government created a special law for **nuclear accidents** that diluted this principle.  
हालांकि, **2010** में, **यूनाइटेड प्रोग्रेसिव अलायंस (UPA)** सरकार ने **न्यूक्लियर दुर्घटनाओं** के लिए एक विशेष कानून बनाया जिसने इस सिद्धांत को कमजोर किया।
- Under this law, **primary liability** is channeled to the **operator** and capped at **₹1,500 crore**.  
इस कानून के तहत, **प्राथमिक जिम्मेदारी** ऑपरेटर को दी जाती है और इसे **₹1,500 करोड़** तक सीमित किया जाता है।
- This is **unfair** to victims because the **economic damage** caused by an accident can be much higher.  
यह **पीड़ितों** के लिए **अन्यायपूर्ण** है क्योंकि दुर्घटना से होने वाला **आर्थिक नुकसान** बहुत अधिक हो सकता है।
- The **Japan Center for Economic Research** estimated that the eventual **cleanup costs** of the **Fukushima disaster** could range from **¥35 trillion to ¥80 trillion** (or **₹20 lakh crore to ₹46 lakh crore**) — more than a thousand times the cap on operator liability in the Indian law.  
**जापान सेंटर फॉर इकॉनॉमिक रिसर्च** ने अनुमानित किया कि **फुकुशिमा आपदा** के eventual **साफ़-सफाई के खर्च** **¥35 ट्रिलियन से ¥80 ट्रिलियन** (या **₹20 लाख करोड़ से ₹46 लाख करोड़**) हो सकते हैं — जो भारतीय कानून में ऑपरेटर जिम्मेदारी की सीमा से **हजारों गुना अधिक** है।
- Despite this gross mismatch, the law did have one slightly redeeming feature.  
इस भारी असंगति के बावजूद, कानून में एक थोड़ा सा सुधारक पहलू था।
- Under pressure from **civil society groups** and the **political opposition**, the **UPA government** was forced to include a clause called the “**right of recourse**”.  
**नागरिक समाज समूहों** और **राजनीतिक विपक्ष** के दबाव में, **UPA सरकार** को “**राइट ऑफ रेकॉर्स**” नामक एक क्लॉज़ शामिल करने के लिए मजबूर किया गया।
- This allows the **operator** to **recoup compensation** paid to victims from the **supplier** if the accident was caused by “**supply of equipment... with patent or latent defects or sub-standard services.**”  
यह **ऑपरेटर** को **आपूर्तिकर्ता** से पीड़ितों को दिए गए मुआवजे की वसूली करने की अनुमति देता है अगर दुर्घटना “**उपकरण की आपूर्ति... जिसमें पैटेंट या लुप्त दोष या सब-स्टैंडर्ड सेवाएँ**” के कारण हुई हो।
- Because of the **historical monopoly** enjoyed by **U.S. nuclear companies**, liability laws in many other countries lack this feature.  
**यू.एस. न्यूक्लियर कंपनियों** द्वारा मज़बूत ऐतिहासिक एकाधिकार के कारण, कई अन्य देशों में जिम्मेदारी के कानूनों में यह पहलू नहीं है।
- Instead, they completely **indemnify suppliers**, which simply reflects the **influence of powerful corporations** and is not based on a **scientific analysis** of previous accidents.  
इसके बजाय, वे पूरी तरह से **आपूर्तिकर्ताओं** को **मुआवजा** देते हैं, जो केवल **शक्तिशाली कंपनियों** के **प्रभाव** को दर्शाता है और यह पूर्व दुर्घटनाओं के **वैज्ञानिक विश्लेषण** पर आधारित नहीं है।



- In fact, **design defects** have played a role in **every major accident** to date.  
दरअसल, डिज़ाइन दोष ने अब तक प्रत्येक बड़े हादसे में भूमिका निभाई है।
- A **weakness** in the **Mark 1 containment** used in the reactors at **Fukushima** contributed to that accident.  
फुकुशिमा में रिएक्टरों में इस्तेमाल किए गए मार्क 1 कंटेनमेंट में कमज़ोरी ने उस हादसे में योगदान दिया।
- This defect was flagged as early as **1972**, when a **U.S. Atomic Energy Commission** official warned that **General Electric (GE)**, the reactor's designer, had used "**data from tests not applicable to accident conditions**" in safety assessments.  
इस दोष को 1972 में पहले ही चिह्नित किया गया था, जब एक यू.एस. एटॉमिक एनर्जी कमीशन के अधिकारी ने चेतावनी दी थी कि जनरल इलेक्ट्रिक (GE), जो रिएक्टर का डिज़ाइनर था, ने **\*\*सुरक्षा मूल्यांकन में "ऐसी डेटा का उपयोग किया था जो दुर्घटना स्थितियों पर लागू नहीं थी"।**
- Indemnity removes any **direct economic incentive** for suppliers to ensure **reactor safety** once a sale is completed.  
मुआवजा आपूर्तिकर्ताओं के लिए रिएक्टर सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करने के लिए कोई भी सीधा आर्थिक प्रोत्साहन हटा देता है, जब एक बिक्री पूरी हो जाती है।
- Following the **1979 accident at Three Mile Island**, the **Kemeny Commission** established by the **U.S. government** noted that **Babcock & Wilcox**, the supplier of the reactor, had identified a **safety hazard** in an "**earlier accident**" that had **strong similarities** to the one at **Three Mile Island**.  
1979 में थ्री माइल आइलैंड पर हुई दुर्घटना के बाद, यू.एस. सरकार द्वारा स्थापित केमनी कमीशन ने यह नोट किया कि बैबकॉक और विलकॉक्स, जो रिएक्टर के आपूर्तिकर्ता थे, ने "पूर्व दुर्घटना" में एक सुरक्षा खतरा पहचाना था जो थ्री माइल आइलैंड वाली घटना से सख्त समानताएँ रखता था।
- Even though an engineer at the company had "**urged, in the strongest terms, that clear instructions be passed on to the operators**" to mitigate this hazard, the supplier failed to do so.  
हालांकि कंपनी के एक इंजीनियर ने "**सबसे दृढ़ शब्दों में यह सलाह दी थी कि इस खतरे को कम करने के लिए ऑपरेटरों को स्पष्ट निर्देश दिए जाएं**", लेकिन आपूर्तिकर्ता ने ऐसा नहीं किया।

### Backtracking on Progress

#### प्रगति में पलटाव

- Nuclear suppliers were furious at the idea that they might have to pay for accidents in India.  
न्यूक्लियर आपूर्तिकर्ता इस विचार से गुस्से में थे कि उन्हें भारत में दुर्घटनाओं के लिए भुगतान करना पड़ सकता है।
- To appease these companies, the **UPA government** made farcical attempts to dilute the **right of recourse**, both during and after the parliamentary debates on the law.



इन कंपनियों को शांत करने के लिए, UPA सरकार ने “राइट ऑफ रेकॉर्स” को कमजोर करने की हास्यास्पद कोशिशें कीं, चाहे वह कानून पर संसदीय बहस के दौरान हो या उसके बाद।

- This led the **Bharatiya Janata Party** leader **Arun Jaitley** to write that a “leopard never changes its spots.”

इसके कारण भारतीय जनता पार्टी के नेता अरुण जेटली ने लिखा कि “चीतों के धब्बे कभी नहीं बदलते।”

- However, after assuming power, the **National Democratic Alliance government** has pursued precisely the same policy of prioritising **nuclear corporations** over potential victims.

हालांकि, सत्ता में आने के बाद, राष्ट्रीय जनतांत्रिक गठबंधन सरकार ने ठीक वही नीति अपनाई जिसमें न्यूक्लियर कंपनियों को संभावित पीड़ितों पर प्राथमिकता दी गई।

- Following **U.S. President Barack Obama's visit** to India in **2015**, the **Ministry of External Affairs** issued a set of “frequently asked questions” downplaying the operator’s **right of recourse**, and disingenuously suggesting that it could be bypassed using a **contractual arrangement** between the **supplier** and the **NPCIL**.

**2015 में अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति बराक ओबामा के भारत दौरे के बाद, विदेश मंत्रालय ने “अक्सर पूछे जाने वाले सवाल” का एक सेट जारी किया जिसमें ऑपरेटर के “राइट ऑफ रेकॉर्स” को कम महत्व दिया गया और यह सुझाव दिया गया कि इसे आपूर्तिकर्ता और NPCIL के बीच ठेकेदार व्यवस्था से bypass किया जा सकता है।**

- These machinations have not satisfied **U.S. suppliers** who are unwilling to expose themselves to any legal hazard in India.

इन चालबाजियों ने यू.एस. आपूर्तिकर्ताओं को संतुष्ट नहीं किया है जो भारत में किसी भी कानूनी जोखिम से खुद को उजागर करने को तैयार नहीं हैं।

- Their concerns are easy to guess.

उनके चिंताएँ अनुमान लगाने में आसान हैं।

- Although the current **liability cap** is low, a future government might rationalise it to reflect the true cost of an accident, exposing these companies to large **financial risks**.

वर्तमान जिम्मेदारी सीमा भले ही कम हो, लेकिन भविष्य में कोई सरकार इसे दुर्घटना की असली लागत को दर्शाने के लिए पुनः संतुलित कर सकती है, जिससे इन कंपनियों को बड़े आर्थिक जोखिमों का सामना करना पड़ सकता है।

- Moreover, accepting even **minimal liability** in India endangers their cosy arrangements in other countries where they have successfully demanded **complete indemnity**.

इसके अलावा, भारत में यहां तक कि न्यूनतम जिम्मेदारी स्वीकार करना उनके अन्य देशों में आरामदायक व्यवस्था को खतरे में डाल सकता है, जहां उन्होंने सफलतापूर्वक पूर्ण मुआवजा की मांग की है।

- Finally, if the **liability law** mandates an **assessment of the supplier's culpability**, this might allow victims to hold **corporate executives** to account



using **criminal laws** in the event of a disaster.

अंत में, यदि जिम्मेदारी कानून आपूर्तिकर्ता की दोषसिद्धि का मूल्यांकन करता है, तो यह पीड़ितों को कॉर्पोरेट अधिकारियों को आपदा के समय आपराधिक कानूनों के तहत जिम्मेदार ठहराने की अनुमति दे सकता है।

- **U.S. officials** have actively lobbied on behalf of these politically influential companies.  
यू.एस. अधिकारी इन राजनीतिक रूप से प्रभावशाली कंपनियों के पक्ष में सक्रिय रूप से लॉबी कर रहे हैं।

- The outgoing **U.S. Ambassador to India, Eric Garcetti**, recently indicated that he had been in touch with leaders from both the **ruling party** and the **Opposition** in an effort to have the law amended.

भारत में यू.एस. के विदाई लेने वाले राजदूत, एरिक गार्सेटी, ने हाल ही में संकेत दिया कि वह कानून में संशोधन करवाने के प्रयास में शासक दल और विपक्ष दोनों के नेताओं से संपर्क में थे।

- He also lamented that **U.S. corporations** had been unable to sell a single reactor to India nearly two decades after the **U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement**.

उन्होंने यह भी अफसोस जताया कि यू.एस. कंपनियाँ यू.एस.-भारत नागरिक परमाणु समझौते के लगभग दो दशक बाद भी भारत को एक भी रिएक्टर नहीं बेच सकी।

- However, this has allowed India to avert a costly mistake as the troubled track record of these reactors in their home country shows.

हालांकि, इसने भारत को एक महंगी गलती से बचने का मौका दिया क्योंकि इन रिएक्टरों का अपने देश में संघर्षपूर्ण रिकॉर्ड दिखाता है।

- The leading **American reactor design** on offer is called the **AP1000**.

पेशकश पर सबसे प्रमुख अमेरिकी रिएक्टर डिज़ाइन को **AP1000** कहा जाता है।

- **Electric utility companies** commenced construction on **four such reactors** in the U.S.

इलेक्ट्रिक यूटिलिटी कंपनियों ने यू.एस. में ऐसे चार रिएक्टर्स पर निर्माण कार्य शुरू किया।

- Two of these reactors, in **South Carolina**, were abandoned after repeated delays and **cost escalations** even though more than **\$9 billion** had already been spent.

इन रिएक्टरों में से दो, साउथ कैरोलिना में, बार-बार देरी और लागत में वृद्धि के बाद छोड़ दिए गए, जबकि पहले ही **\$9 बिलियन** से अधिक खर्च हो चुका था।

- Two other reactors, in **Georgia**, were completed at an eye-popping cost of **\$36.8 billion**, over **250%** of the **\$14 billion** estimate provided at the start of construction.

दो अन्य रिएक्टर, जॉर्जिया में, को **\$36.8 बिलियन** की हैरान करने वाली लागत पर पूरा किया गया, जो निर्माण की शुरुआत में दिए गए **\$14 बिलियन** के अनुमान से **250%** अधिक था।

- These high costs translate to **expensive electricity**.

इन उच्च लागतों का मतलब है महंगी बिजली।



- Even taking into account **lower labour costs in India**, the cost of electricity from such reactors would be several times higher than competing sources as the writers of this article showed in a **2013 study** in the **Economic & Political Weekly**.  
**भारत में श्रम लागत को कम ध्यान में रखते हुए**, ऐसे रिएक्टर्स से बिजली की लागत प्रतिस्पर्धी स्रोतों से कई गुना अधिक होगी जैसा कि इस लेख के लेखकों ने **2013 के अध्ययन में इकोनॉमिक एंड पॉलिटिकल वीकली** में दिखाया।
- **Small modular reactor designs**, such as those offered by the **U.S.'s NuScale Power corporation**, are likely to be even less economical since they lose out on "economies of scale".  
**स्मॉल मॉड्यूलर रिएक्टर डिज़ाइंस**, जैसे कि **यू.एस. की NuScale पावर कंपनी** द्वारा प्रस्तावित, शायद और भी कम आर्थिक होंगे क्योंकि वे "आकार की अर्थव्यवस्थाओं" से बाहर हो जाते हैं।
- **Hollow safety claims**  
**खोखली सुरक्षा दावे**
- The debate on liability also exposes the exaggerated safety claims made by suppliers. जिम्मेदारी पर बहस भी आपूर्तिकर्ताओं द्वारा किए गए अतिरंजित सुरक्षा दावों को उजागर करती है।
  - **Westinghouse** claims that a large release of radiation from an **AP1000 reactor** would happen only once in **50 million years**.  
**वेस्टिंगहाउस का दावा है कि AP1000 रिएक्टर से बड़ी मात्रा में रेडिएशन का रिलीज केवल 50 मिलियन वर्षों में एक बार ही होगा।**
  - If reactors are so safe, why would nuclear vendors take extreme precautions to protect themselves from the consequences of an accident?  
**अगर रिएक्टर्स इतनी सुरक्षित हैं, तो न्यूक्लियर विक्रेता दुर्घटना के परिणामों से बचने के लिए अत्यधिक सावधानी क्यों बरतेंगे?**
  - If companies such as **Westinghouse** recognise that the risk of an accident is real and are unwilling to risk financial losses, why should **Indian citizens** who live near a reactor be willing to risk their lives and property?  
**यदि कंपनियाँ जैसे कि वेस्टिंगहाउस यह मानती हैं कि दुर्घटना का खतरा वास्तविक है और वे आर्थिक नुकसान के जोखिम को स्वीकार नहीं करना चाहती, तो क्यों भारत के नागरिक, जो रिएक्टर के पास रहते हैं, अपनी जान और संपत्ति को खतरे में डालने के लिए तैयार होंगे?**
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** projects an image of a strong global leader.  
**प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी एक मजबूत वैश्विक नेता की छवि प्रस्तुत करते हैं।**
- However, the government's announcement on the liability law is a revealing commentary on that message.  
**हालांकि, सरकार द्वारा जिम्मेदारी कानून पर की गई घोषणा उस संदेश पर एक स्पष्ट टिप्पणी है।**



- When faced with pressure from the **U.S. government**, which puts the profits of **U.S. corporations** above all else, Mr. Modi's government seems unable to stand up for the **basic rights** and the **safety of Indians**.

जब यू.एस. सरकार के दबाव का सामना करना पड़ा, जो यू.एस. कंपनियों के मुनाफे को सभी चीजों से ऊपर रखती है, तो श्री मोदी की सरकार भारतीयों के बुनियादी अधिकारों और उनकी सुरक्षा के लिए खड़ी होती हुई नहीं दिखाई देती।

## Budgeting for a gender-inclusive 'Viksit Bharat'

GS Paper III: Budget  
GS Paper I: Society

The Union Budget 2025-26 emphasises the government's commitment to inclusive development, balanced growth and prioritising the well-being of four key population groups: the poor, youth, farmers, and women. In a welcome announcement, the Finance Minister set forth a holistic vision for Viksit Bharat (or Developed India) with 'zero poverty, universal good quality school education, 100% skilled labour with meaningful employment, 70% women in economic activities, and India as the food basket of the world.' The explicit inclusion of women as a priority group within this national development framework is commendable and reinforces the government's pledge towards women-led development.

### Gender budget allocation

One of the most notable advancements in the Budget is the increase in the gender budget to 8.8% of the total Budget, a significant jump from 6.8% in the previous year. This is the highest allocation in two decades, with ₹4.49 lakh crore spread across 49 Union Ministries and departments. It reflects a strong commitment to creating a more supportive and empowering environment for women and girls. Further strengthening this commitment, 12 additional central Ministries – many from non-conventional sectors such as railways, ports, shipping and waterways, land resources, pharmaceuticals, and food processing industries – have integrated gender budgets, reflecting a whole-of-government approach to gender mainstreaming.

As in the Periodic Labour Force Survey, India's female labour force participation rate (FLFPR) measured at usual status has steadily risen, reaching approximately 42% in 2023-24 from 33% in 2021-22. This is approaching the global average of 47%, as reported by the International Labour Organisation. However, a 37-percentage point gap remains when compared to men's labour force participation of 79%. Achieving the ambitious target of 70% women's participation in economic activities by 2047 necessitates increased investment in skilling, employment,



**Susan Ferguson**

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Gender-responsive budgeting can help India's women to become key drivers of national growth

entrepreneurship, access to productive resources, and social security entitlements – areas that the Budget has acknowledged through its various schemes. Key initiatives such as the Skill India Programme, Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (ESDP), National Skill Training Institutes, Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), PM Employment Generation Programme, PM Vishwakarma, and Krishonnati Yojana have seen a combined increased allocation from ₹1.19 lakh crore to ₹1.24 lakh crore this year. Approximately 52% of these funds are directed toward women and girls. Additionally, new schemes such as the Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana, first-time entrepreneurs' scheme, sustainable livelihood for urban workers initiative, and Centres of Excellence for Make in India, will play a critical role in fostering women's workforce participation.

### A focus on gig workers

With 90% of India's working women engaged in the informal sector, the Budget's proposal to formalise gig workers by issuing identity cards and registering them on the e-Shram portal is a significant step. This initiative has the potential to empower millions of women by providing them with formal identity, access to social security entitlements, and financial inclusion benefits.

While the gig economy has offered women financial independence and flexible work arrangements, it often comes with low wages, job insecurity, and a lack of employment rights, including maternity benefits. The enforcement of labour codes and the provision of comprehensive social security measures, including progressive parental entitlements across informal and formal sectors, will be critical to ensure women's economic security.

The establishment of a Centre of Excellence on Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the education sector and a dedicated ₹600 crore gender budget under the India AI Mission, demonstrate the

government's intent to harness AI for social good. As technological advancements redefine the future of work, investing in digital education, skills, and enterprise training for women will be imperative to ensuring equitable outcomes in the workforce and benefits for the entire economy.

### A diversity of economic roles

Financial institutions must recognise women's diverse economic roles, particularly in agriculture, entrepreneurship, and employment. For example, simplifying documentation requirements for economic and social security provisions, such as delinking Kisan Credit Cards from land ownership, would help women farmers avail loans and credit facilities that they can use to improve crop yields, productivity and expand their agricultural and allied operations. Tracking access and usage of such schemes through gender-disaggregated data would further enhance their effectiveness.

As per the government's Udyam portal, 20.5% of the micro, small and medium enterprises are women-owned employing about 27 million people. Unlocking finance for women-owned enterprises through collateral-free loans, alternative credit scoring models, and targeted financial literacy programmes will catalyse economic growth. Bain and Company, and Google, claim that establishing 30 million additional women-owned businesses could generate 150-170 million jobs, accounting for over 25% of the job creation needed for India's working-age population by 2030.

Budget 2025-26 provides a robust foundation for advancing women's economic participation. Realising the vision of Viksit Bharat requires sustained efforts in policy implementation, infrastructure development, and social norm transformation. By ensuring gender-responsive budgeting, strengthened social protection, and by fostering a labour market which includes both women and men, India can pave the way for women to become key drivers of national growth, ultimately achieving the ambitious target of 70% women in economic activities by 2047.

**Budgeting for a gender-inclusive 'Viksit Bharat'**  
**लिंग-समावेशी 'विकसित भारत' के लिए बजट बनाना**



## The Union Budget 2025-26

### संघीय बजट 2025-26

- The Union Budget 2025-26 emphasises the government's commitment to **inclusive development, balanced growth** and prioritising the well-being of four key population groups: the **poor, youth, farmers, and women**.  
संघीय बजट 2025-26 सरकार की समावेशी विकास, संतुलित वृद्धि और चार प्रमुख जनसंख्या समूहों के कल्याण – गरीब, युवाओं, किसानों, और महिलाओं — को प्राथमिकता देने की प्रतिबद्धता को रेखांकित करता है।
- The Finance Minister set forth a **holistic vision for Viksit Bharat (or Developed India)** with:  
वित्त मंत्री ने विकसित भारत (या विकसित भारत) के लिए समग्र दृष्टिकोण प्रस्तुत किया, जिसमें शामिल हैं:
  - **Zero poverty,**  
शून्य गरीबी,
  - **Universal good quality school education,**  
सार्वभौमिक अच्छी गुणवत्ता वाली स्कूल शिक्षा,
  - **100% skilled labour with meaningful employment,**  
100% कुशल श्रम और सार्थक रोजगार,
  - **70% women in economic activities,**  
आर्थिक गतिविधियों में 70% महिलाएँ,
  - **India as the food basket of the world.**  
भारत को दुनिया का खाद्य भंडार बनाना।
- The **explicit inclusion of women** as a priority group within this national development framework is commendable and reinforces the government's pledge towards **women-led development**.  
इस राष्ट्रीय विकास ढांचे में महिलाओं को एक प्राथमिकता समूह के रूप में शामिल करना सराहनीय है और यह सरकार की महिला नेतृत्व वाले विकास की प्रतिबद्धता को मजबूत करता है।

### Gender Budget Allocation

#### लिंग बजट आवंटन

- One of the most notable advancements in the Budget is the increase in the **gender budget** to **8.8%** of the total Budget, a significant jump from **6.8%** in the previous year.  
बजट में सबसे महत्वपूर्ण प्रगति यह है कि लिंग बजट को कुल बजट का **8.8%** कर दिया गया है, जो पिछले साल के **6.8%** से एक महत्वपूर्ण वृद्धि है।
- This is the highest allocation in **two decades**, with **₹4.49 lakh crore** spread across **49 Union Ministries** and departments.



यह दो दशकों में सबसे अधिक आवंटन है, जिसमें ₹4.49 लाख करोड़ 49 केंद्रीय मंत्रालयों और विभागों में फैले हैं।

- It reflects a strong commitment to creating a more supportive and empowering environment for **women and girls**.

यह महिलाओं और लड़कियों के लिए एक अधिक सहायक और सशक्त वातावरण बनाने के लिए एक मजबूत प्रतिबद्धता को दर्शाता है।

- Further strengthening this commitment, **12 additional central Ministries** — many from non-conventional sectors such as **railways, ports, shipping, waterways, land resources, pharmaceuticals, and food processing industries** — have integrated **gender budgets**, reflecting a whole-of-government approach to **gender mainstreaming**.

इस प्रतिबद्धता को और मजबूत करते हुए, **12 अतिरिक्त केंद्रीय मंत्रालयों** — जिनमें से कई अपरंपरागत क्षेत्रों जैसे रेलवे, पोर्ट्स, शिपिंग, जलमार्ग, भूमि संसाधन, फार्मास्युटिकल्स, और फूड प्रोसेसिंग उद्योगों से हैं — ने लिंग बजट को शामिल किया है, जो लिंग मुख्यधारा बनाने के लिए सरकार की समग्र दृष्टिकोण को दर्शाता है।

- India's **female labour force participation rate (FLFPR)** measured at usual status has steadily risen, reaching approximately **42%** in **2023-24** from **33%** in **2021-22**.  
भारत की महिला श्रमिक बल भागीदारी दर (FLFPR) सामान्य स्थिति में मापी गई है, जो **2021-22** में **33%** से बढ़कर **2023-24** में लगभग **42%** तक पहुँच गई है।
- This is approaching the global average of **47%**, as reported by the **International Labour Organisation**.

यह इंटरनेशनल लेबर ऑर्गनाइजेशन द्वारा रिपोर्ट किए गए **47%** के वैश्विक औसत के करीब है।

- However, a **37-percentage point gap** remains when compared to men's labour force participation of **79%**.  
हालांकि, पुरुषों की श्रमिक बल भागीदारी (**79%**) के मुकाबले **37 प्रतिशत अंकों का अंतर** अभी भी बना हुआ है।
- Achieving the ambitious target of **70% women's participation** in economic activities by **2047** necessitates increased investment in **skilling, employment, entrepreneurship, access to productive resources, and social security entitlements** — areas that the Budget has acknowledged through its various schemes.

**2047 तक आर्थिक गतिविधियों में महिलाओं की भागीदारी का 70% लक्ष्य** हासिल करने के लिए **कौशल विकास, रोजगार, उद्यमिता, उत्पादक संसाधनों तक पहुँच, और सामाजिक सुरक्षा लाभों में बढ़ी हुई निवेश की आवश्यकता है** — जिन्हें बजट ने अपनी विभिन्न योजनाओं के माध्यम से स्वीकार किया है।

- Key initiatives such as the **Skill India Programme, Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (ESDP), National Skill Training Institutes, Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), PM Employment Generation Programme, PM Vishwakarma, and Krishonnati Yojana** have seen a combined increased allocation from **₹1.19 lakh crore to ₹1.24 lakh crore**



this year.

प्रमुख पहलों जैसे स्किल इंडिया कार्यक्रम, उद्यमिता और कौशल विकास कार्यक्रम (ESDP), राष्ट्रीय कौशल प्रशिक्षण संस्थान, दींदयाल अंत्योदय योजना-राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण आजीविका मिशन (DAY-NRLM), महात्मा गांधी राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण रोजगार गारंटी योजना (MGNREGS), पीएम रोजगार सृजन कार्यक्रम, पीएम विश्वकर्मा, और कृषिओन्नति योजना को इस वर्ष ₹1.19 लाख करोड़ से बढ़कर ₹1.24 लाख करोड़ का संयुक्त आवंटन मिला है।

- Approximately **52%** of these funds are directed toward **women and girls**. इन फंडों का लगभग **52%** हिस्सा **महिलाओं** और **लड़कियों** की ओर निर्देशित किया गया है।
- Additionally, new schemes such as the **Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana**, **first-time entrepreneurs' scheme**, **sustainable livelihood for urban workers initiative**, and **Centres of Excellence for Make in India**, will play a critical role in fostering **women's workforce participation**. इसके अलावा, नई योजनाएं जैसे **प्रधानमंत्री धन-धान्य कृषि योजना**, **पहली बार उद्यमियों के लिए योजना**, **शहरी श्रमिकों के लिए स्थायी आजीविका पहल**, और **मेक इन इंडिया के लिए उत्कृष्टता केंद्र**, **महिलाओं की श्रमिक बल भागीदारी को बढ़ावा देने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाएंगी।**

#### A focus on gig workers

गिग श्रमिकों पर ध्यान केंद्रित करना

- With **90%** of India's working women engaged in the **informal sector**, the Budget's proposal to **formalise gig workers** by issuing **identity cards** and registering them on the **e-Shram portal** is a significant step. भारत की कामकाजी महिलाओं का **90%** **अनौपचारिक क्षेत्र** में संलग्न है, बजट का प्रस्ताव **गिग श्रमिकों को पहचान पत्र जारी करके और उन्हें ई-श्रम पोर्टल पर पंजीकरण कर औपचारिक बनाना** एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम है।
- This initiative has the potential to empower millions of women by providing them with **formal identity**, **access to social security entitlements**, and **financial inclusion benefits**. यह पहल लाखों महिलाओं को **औपचारिक पहचान**, **सामाजिक सुरक्षा लाभों** और **वित्तीय समावेशन लाभों** के माध्यम से सशक्त बनाने की क्षमता रखती है।
- While the **gig economy** has offered women **financial independence** and **flexible work arrangements**, it often comes with **low wages**, **job insecurity**, and a lack of **employment rights**, including **maternity benefits**. जबकि **गिग अर्थव्यवस्था** ने महिलाओं को **आर्थिक स्वतंत्रता** और **लचीले कामकाजी व्यवस्था** की पेशकश की है, यह अक्सर **कम वेतन**, **रोजगार असुरक्षा**, और **रोजगार अधिकारों की कमी** के साथ आती है, जिसमें **मातृत्व लाभ** भी शामिल हैं।
- The enforcement of **labour codes** and the provision of comprehensive **social security measures**, including **progressive parental entitlements** across **informal and formal sectors**, will be critical to ensure **women's economic security**.



श्रम संहिता का पालन और सामाजिक सुरक्षा उपायों का प्रावधान, जिसमें अग्रिम पेरेंटल लाभ शामिल हैं, अनौपचारिक और औपचारिक क्षेत्रों में, महिलाओं की आर्थिक सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करने के लिए महत्वपूर्ण होंगे।

- The establishment of a **Centre of Excellence on Artificial Intelligence (AI)** for the **education sector** and a dedicated **₹600 crore gender budget** under the **India AI Mission**, demonstrate the government's intent to harness AI for **social good**.  
शिक्षा क्षेत्र के लिए कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता (AI) पर एक उत्कृष्टता केंद्र की स्थापना और भारत AI मिशन के तहत एक समर्पित ₹600 करोड़ का लिंग बजट, सरकार के सामाजिक भलाई के लिए AI का उपयोग करने के इरादे को प्रदर्शित करता है।
- As technological advancements redefine the future of work, investing in **digital education, skills, and enterprise training for women** will be imperative to ensuring **equitable outcomes** in the workforce and benefits for the entire economy.  
जैसे-जैसे प्रौद्योगिकी में प्रगति कार्य के भविष्य को फिर से परिभाषित करती है, महिलाओं के लिए डिजिटल शिक्षा, कौशल, और उद्यमिता प्रशिक्षण में निवेश करना, कार्यबल में समता परिणाम और समग्र अर्थव्यवस्था के लिए लाभ सुनिश्चित करने के लिए आवश्यक होगा।

#### A diversity of economic roles आर्थिक भूमिकाओं का विविधीकरण

- **Financial institutions** must recognise women's **diverse economic roles**, particularly in **agriculture, entrepreneurship, and employment**.  
वित्तीय संस्थानों को महिलाओं की विविध आर्थिक भूमिकाओं को पहचानना चाहिए, विशेष रूप से कृषि, उद्यमिता, और रोजगार में।
- For example, simplifying **documentation requirements** for economic and social security provisions, such as **delinking Kisan Credit Cards from land ownership**, would help **women farmers** avail **loans and credit facilities** that they can use to improve **crop yields, productivity** and expand their **agricultural and allied operations**.  
उदाहरण के लिए, आर्थिक और सामाजिक सुरक्षा प्रावधानों के लिए **प्रलेखन आवश्यकताओं** को सरल बनाना, जैसे किसान क्रेडिट कार्ड को भूमि स्वामित्व से अलग करना, महिला किसानों को ऋण और संपत्ति सुविधाएं उपलब्ध करने में मदद करेगा, जिन्हें वे फसल उत्पादन, उत्पादकता में सुधार करने और अपनी कृषि और संबंधित संचालन का विस्तार करने के लिए उपयोग कर सकती हैं।
- Tracking access and usage of such schemes through **gender-disaggregated data** would further enhance their **effectiveness**.  
ऐसी योजनाओं तक पहुँच और उपयोग को लिंग-भेदित डेटा के माध्यम से ट्रैक करना उनकी प्रभावशीलता को और बढ़ाएगा।
- As per the government's **Udyam portal**, **20.5%** of the **micro, small, and medium enterprises** are **women-owned**, employing about **27 million people**.  
सरकार के उद्योग पोर्टल के अनुसार, **20.5%** सूक्ष्म, लघु और मध्यम उद्यम महिला स्वामित्व वाले हैं, जो लगभग **27 मिलियन लोगों** को रोजगार देते हैं।



**TELEGRAM CHANNEL:** <https://t.me/patrioticIAS>

**YOUTUBE CHANNEL:** <https://www.youtube.com/@PatrioticIAS>

**CONTACT: 9971932488**



- **Unlocking finance for women-owned enterprises through collateral-free loans, alternative credit scoring models, and targeted financial literacy programmes will catalyse economic growth.**  
महिला स्वामित्व वाले उद्यमों के लिए संपत्ति मुक्त ऋण, वैकल्पिक क्रेडिट स्कोरिंग मॉडल, और लक्षित वित्तीय साक्षरता कार्यक्रमों के माध्यम से वित्तीय प्रवाह खोलना आर्थिक विकास को गति देगा।
- **Bain and Company, and Google, claim that establishing 30 million additional women-owned businesses could generate 150-170 million jobs, accounting for over 25% of the job creation needed for India's working-age population by 2030.**  
बेन एंड कंपनी, और गूगल, का दावा है कि 30 मिलियन अतिरिक्त महिला स्वामित्व वाले व्यवसाय स्थापित करने से 150-170 मिलियन नौकरियां उत्पन्न हो सकती हैं, जो 2030 तक भारत की कार्यशील आयु जनसंख्या के लिए आवश्यक 25% नौकरी सृजन का हिसाब होगा।
- **Budget 2025-26 provides a robust foundation for advancing women's economic participation.**  
बजट 2025-26 महिलाओं की आर्थिक भागीदारी को आगे बढ़ाने के लिए एक मजबूत नींव प्रदान करता है।
- **Realising the vision of Viksit Bharat requires sustained efforts in policy implementation, infrastructure development, and social norm transformation.**  
विकसित भारत के दृष्टिकोण को साकार करने के लिए नीति कार्यान्वयन, संचार विकास, और सामाजिक मानदंडों का परिवर्तन में निरंतर प्रयासों की आवश्यकता है।
- **By ensuring gender-responsive budgeting, strengthened social protection, and by fostering a labour market which includes both women and men, India can pave the way for women to become key drivers of national growth, ultimately achieving the ambitious target of 70% women in economic activities by 2047.**  
लिंग-संवेदनशील बजटिंग, मजबूत सामाजिक सुरक्षा, और एक श्रम बाजार को बढ़ावा देकर जिसमें महिलाएँ और पुरुष दोनों शामिल हों, भारत महिलाओं को राष्ट्रीय विकास के प्रमुख चालक बनने का मार्ग प्रशस्त कर सकता है, और अंततः 2047 तक आर्थिक गतिविधियों में 70% महिलाओं का महत्वाकांक्षी लक्ष्य प्राप्त कर सकता है।



# Implications of the AI Diffusion Framework

GS Paper III: AI

The Biden-Harris administration unveiled a flurry of policies in their last week in office. The most extraordinary among them is the **Framework for Artificial Intelligence (AI) Diffusion**. It has many goals: **preserving U.S. hegemony in AI technology, balancing innovation and national security, and deterring U.S. adversaries from harvesting the strategic rewards of AI**. These goals signal the U.S.'s strategic vision for AI, heralding its transformative potential to advance **economic prowess and military dominance** in the coming years.

**Mechanism of the framework** Compute capacity using advanced AI chips is a key infrastructure necessity in developing advanced AI systems. Leveraging the U.S.'s dominance in chips and the AI supply chain, the framework extends the prevailing export controls to cover the entire gamut of AI technology stack, including AI chips, chip-making tools, and closed AI model weights – the key to a trained AI system's learning and decision-making abilities.

Countries are placed in three tiers, each subject to different levels of restrictions. The first tier comprises key allies, irreplaceable in the AI supply chain. They are unconstrained in their freedom to import AI technology. The third tier covers key adversaries such as Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran. The framework perpetuates the entire spectrum of export controls and prevents the diffusion of advanced AI systems to these countries. The second tier encompasses the rest of the world, including India. The framework establishes a system of limited access to these countries. Companies from the U.S. can tap into the commercial opportunities of AI in these countries as long as they maintain only a tiny share of their total compute capacity there and safeguard against unauthorised access.

The prevailing export controls



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The Framework for AI Diffusion evaluates India solely by its technological capabilities in AI, while ignoring the strategic value of the India-U.S. partnership

have always been restrictive against U.S. adversaries. At first glance, this framework seems to extend some of these restrictions on all but closest allies and partners. Indeed, major allies such as Austria and Israel and other strategic partners such as India are not exempt from the rules. However, the limits and caps imposed are free-handed in satisfying any near-term demand for AI chips from anyone but the countries of concern. Even the export restrictions on model weights are for closed models that far exceed any existing advanced AI systems. So, it will be business as usual in the short term.

The entire system is designed to ensure that if advanced AI systems that are more powerful and capable than the prevailing ones are ever developed, it will happen only in trusted American geographies. The framework will likely succeed in its objectives in the short term and accrue the benefits of cutting-edge AI to the U.S. and its closest allies. But it will influence and reshape the global technological and strategic landscape in the long term.

Through a series of executive actions, the U.S. has mandated the concentration of global AI technological capabilities within its borders and those of allied countries. American companies seeking to establish frontier-scale AI capabilities outside the U.S. – whether motivated by lower costs or more favourable policies – will now face significant barriers. Even among key allies exempt from export controls, this policy sets a concerning precedent of unilateral American executive action that could potentially deny them their strategic priorities in the future.

These allies and American corporations will likely hedge against such possibilities, developing contingency plans to protect their technological interests and maintain competitive advantages. In fact, as AI technology advances in the long term, the likelihood increases that America's plans may yield

unintended consequences. Countries, including U.S. allies, will become more motivated to develop independent supply chains and sovereign AI innovation to circumvent U.S. technological constraints. This could fragment the global AI ecosystem that the U.S. currently dominates.

## Eroding goodwill with India

The policy framework disadvantages India, positioning it less favourably than anticipated. By discouraging the development of cutting-edge AI systems beyond U.S. borders, the framework may disincentivise investments and operations of Indian subsidiaries of leading American AI companies. This could create conditions that risk drawing away India's pool of top AI talent and impeding knowledge transfer and technological innovation within the country. This could be a major point of contention for India, given the implications on its technological and economic interests.

The framework evaluates India solely by its technological capabilities in AI, while ignoring the strategic value of the India-U.S. partnership. It also disregards the substantial social capital built between the two countries through recent technology cooperation, including advances in semiconductor manufacturing collaboration. Instead, it serves as a stark reminder of the U.S.-led technology denial regimes that restricted India's access to nuclear technologies for three decades following its nuclear tests.

There is a disconnect between America's export control policies and its strategic partnership with India regarding Indo-Pacific cooperation and shared goals of countering Chinese influence in the region. This misalignment risks undermining the bilateral relationship both nations have carefully cultivated in recent years. It could compel India to hedge against its technological and economic dependence on the U.S.



## Implications of the AI Diffusion Framework

### एआई डिसल्यूशन फ्रेमवर्क के निहितार्थ

#### The Biden-Harris Administration's AI Framework

##### बाइडन-हैरिस प्रशासन का ए.आई. ढांचा

- The **Biden-Harris administration** unveiled a flurry of policies in their **last week in office**.  
बाइडन-हैरिस प्रशासन ने अपने आखिरी हफ्ते में कार्यालय में कई नीतियों का खुलासा किया।
- The most extraordinary among them is the **Framework for Artificial Intelligence (AI) Diffusion**.  
इनमें से सबसे असाधारण है कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता (ए.आई.) प्रसार के लिए ढांचा।
- It has many goals: preserving **U.S. hegemony in AI technology**, balancing **innovation and national security**, and deterring **U.S. adversaries** from harvesting the **strategic rewards of AI**.  
इसके कई लक्ष्य हैं: ए.आई. प्रौद्योगिकी में यू.एस. की प्रभुत्व को बनाए रखना, नवोन्मेष और राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा के बीच संतुलन स्थापित करना, और यू.एस. विरोधियों को ए.आई. के रणनीतिक पुरस्कारों से रोकना।
- These goals signal the **U.S.'s strategic vision for AI**, heralding its **transformative potential** to advance **economic prowess** and **military dominance** in the coming years. ये लक्ष्य यू.एस. के ए.आई. के लिए रणनीतिक दृष्टिकोण को दर्शाते हैं, जो आने वाले वर्षों में आर्थिक शक्ति और सैन्य प्रभुत्व को बढ़ाने की परिवर्तनकारी क्षमता का संकेत देते हैं।

#### Mechanism of the framework

##### ढांचे की प्रक्रिया

- **Compute capacity** using advanced **AI chips** is a key infrastructure necessity in developing advanced AI systems.  
उन्नत ए.आई. चिप्स का उपयोग करके संगणना क्षमता उन्नत ए.आई. प्रणालियों को विकसित करने के लिए एक प्रमुख बुनियादी ढांचा आवश्यकता है।
- Leveraging the U.S.'s dominance in **chips** and the **AI supply chain**, the framework extends the prevailing **export controls** to cover the entire gamut of **AI technology stack**, including **AI chips**, **chip-making tools**, and **closed AI model weights** — the key to a trained AI system's **learning** and **decision-making** abilities.  
चिप्स और ए.आई. आपूर्ति श्रृंखला में यू.एस. की प्रभुत्व का लाभ उठाते हुए, यह ढांचा मौजूदा निर्यात नियंत्रणों को विस्तारित करता है, जो ए.आई. प्रौद्योगिकी स्टैक के संपूर्ण क्षेत्र को कवर करता है, जिसमें ए.आई. चिप्स, चिप बनाने के उपकरण, और बंद ए.आई. मॉडल वेट्स शामिल हैं - जो एक प्रशिक्षित ए.आई. प्रणाली की सीखने और निर्णय लेने की क्षमताओं की कुंजी है।



- **Countries** are placed in three **tiers**, each subject to different levels of **restrictions**.  
देशों को तीन स्तरों में रखा गया है, प्रत्येक पर प्रतिबंधों के विभिन्न स्तर लागू होते हैं।
- The **first tier** comprises key **allies**, irreplaceable in the **AI supply chain**. They are unconstrained in their freedom to import **AI technology**.  
पहला स्तर प्रमुख सहयोगियों से बना है, जो ए.आई. आपूर्ति श्रृंखला में अनुप replacement हैं। उन्हें ए.आई. प्रौद्योगिकी आयात करने की स्वतंत्रता में कोई रोक नहीं है।
- The **third tier** covers key **adversaries** such as **Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran**. The framework perpetuates the entire spectrum of **export controls** and prevents the diffusion of advanced AI systems to these countries.  
तीसरा स्तर प्रमुख विरोधियों जैसे रूस, चीन, उत्तर कोरिया, और ईरान को कवर करता है। यह ढांचा निर्यात नियंत्रणों के संपूर्ण क्षेत्र को स्थायी बनाता है और इन देशों में उन्नत ए.आई. प्रणालियों के प्रसार को रोकता है।
- The **second tier** encompasses the rest of the world, including **India**. The framework establishes a system of **limited access** to these countries.  
दूसरा स्तर बाकी दुनिया को शामिल करता है, जिसमें भारत भी है। यह ढांचा इन देशों के लिए सीमित पहुंच का एक प्रणाली स्थापित करता है।
- Companies from the **U.S.** can tap into the commercial opportunities of **AI** in these countries as long as they maintain only a tiny share of their total **compute capacity** there and safeguard against **unauthorised access**.  
यू.एस. की कंपनियां इन देशों में ए.आई. के व्यापारिक अवसरों का लाभ उठा सकती हैं, बशर्ते वे अपनी कुल संगणना क्षमता का केवल एक छोटा हिस्सा वहां बनाए रखें और अनधिकृत पहुंच से सुरक्षा करें।

### The prevailing export controls

#### प्रवृत्त निर्यात नियंत्रण

- The prevailing **export controls** have always been **restrictive** against U.S. **adversaries**.  
मौजूदा निर्यात नियंत्रण हमेशा यू.एस. विरोधियों के खिलाफ नियामक रहे हैं।
- At first glance, this framework seems to extend some of these restrictions on all but closest **allies** and **partners**.  
पहली नजर में, यह ढांचा इन प्रतिबंधों को केवल निकटतम सहयोगियों और भागीदारों के अलावा सभी पर विस्तारित करता हुआ प्रतीत होता है।
- Indeed, major **allies** such as **Austria** and **Israel** and other **strategic partners** such as **India** are not exempt from the rules.  
वास्तव में, प्रमुख सहयोगी जैसे ऑस्ट्रिया और इज़राइल और अन्य रणनीतिक साझेदार जैसे भारत इन नियमों से मुक्त नहीं हैं।
- However, the **limits** and **caps** imposed are free-handed in satisfying any near-term demand for **AI chips** from anyone but the **countries of concern**.



हालांकि, लगाए गए सीमाएँ और कैप्स ए.आई. चिप्स की किसी भी तात्कालिक मांग को चिंता वाले देशों को छोड़कर किसी से भी संतुष्ट करने में उदार हैं।

- Even the **export restrictions on model weights** are for closed models that far exceed any existing advanced AI systems.  
यहां तक कि **मॉडल वेट्स पर निर्यात प्रतिबंध** ऐसे बंद मॉडल्स पर हैं जो किसी भी मौजूदा उन्नत ए.आई. प्रणालियों से कहीं अधिक हैं।
- So, it will be **business as usual** in the short term.  
तो, यह **सामान्य व्यापार** रहेगा, कम से कम निकट भविष्य में।

### Long-term impact of the framework

#### ढांचे का दीर्घकालिक प्रभाव

- The entire system is designed to ensure that if **advanced AI systems** that are more powerful and capable than the prevailing ones are ever developed, it will happen only in **trusted American geographies**.  
पूरा सिस्टम इस उद्देश्य से डिज़ाइन किया गया है कि यदि कभी भी उन्नत ए.आई. प्रणालियाँ विकसित होती हैं जो मौजूदा प्रणालियों से अधिक शक्तिशाली और सक्षम हैं, तो वह केवल **विश्वसनीय अमेरिकी भौगोलिक क्षेत्रों** में ही संभव होगी।
- The framework will likely succeed in its objectives in the **short term** and accrue the benefits of **cutting-edge AI** to the **U.S.** and its closest **allies**.  
यह ढांचा अपने उद्देश्यों में **निकट अवधि** में संभवतः सफल होगा और यू.एस. और इसके निकटतम **सहयोगियों** को सर्वोत्तम ए.आई. के लाभ प्राप्त होंगे।
- But it will influence and reshape the global **technological** and **strategic landscape** in the **long term**.  
लेकिन यह **वैश्विक प्रौद्योगिकी** और **रणनीतिक परिप्रेक्ष्य** को दीर्घकालिक में प्रभावित करेगा और पुनर्निर्मित करेगा।

### Concentration of Global AI Technological Capabilities within U.S. Borders

#### वैश्विक ए.आई. प्रौद्योगिकी क्षमताओं का यू.एस. की सीमाओं में संकेंद्रण

- Through a series of **executive actions**, the U.S. has mandated the **concentration** of global **AI technological capabilities** within its borders and those of **allied countries**.  
**कार्यकारी आदेशों** के माध्यम से, यू.एस. ने वैश्विक ए.आई. प्रौद्योगिकी क्षमताओं को अपनी सीमाओं और सहयोगी देशों की सीमाओं में संकेंद्रित करने का आदेश दिया है।
- **American companies** seeking to establish **frontier-scale AI capabilities** outside the U.S.—whether motivated by **lower costs** or more **favourable policies**—will now face **significant barriers**.  
यू.एस. की कंपनियां, जो यू.एस. के बाहर **सीमा-स्तरीय ए.आई. क्षमताओं** की स्थापना करना



चाहती हैं - चाहे वह कम लागतों या अनुकूल नीतियों द्वारा प्रेरित हों - अब उन्हें महत्वपूर्ण बाधाओं का सामना करना पड़ेगा।

- Even among key **allies exempt** from **export controls**, this policy sets a concerning precedent of **unilateral American executive action** that could potentially deny them their **strategic priorities** in the future.

यहां तक कि प्रमुख सहयोगी जो निर्यात नियंत्रणों से मुक्त हैं, यह नीति एकतरफा अमेरिकी कार्यकारी कार्रवाई का एक चिंताजनक उदाहरण स्थापित करती है, जो भविष्य में उन्हें उनकी रणनीतिक प्राथमिकताएं न देने का कारण बन सकती है।

- These **allies** and **American corporations** will likely **hedge** against such possibilities, developing **contingency plans** to protect their **technological interests** and maintain **competitive advantages**.

ये सहयोगी और यू.एस. कंपनियां संभवतः ऐसी संभावनाओं के खिलाफ सुरक्षा कवच बनाएंगी, तकनीकी हितों की रक्षा करने और प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक लाभ बनाए रखने के लिए आपातकालीन योजनाएं विकसित करेंगी।

- In fact, as **AI technology** advances in the **long term**, the likelihood increases that America's plans may yield **unintended consequences**.

वास्तव में, जैसे-जैसे ए.आई. प्रौद्योगिकी दीर्घकालिक में उन्नत होगी, संभावना बढ़ती है कि अमेरिका की योजनाएं अनजाने परिणाम दे सकती हैं।

- Countries, including U.S. **allies**, will become more motivated to develop **independent supply chains** and **sovereign AI innovation** to circumvent **U.S. technological constraints**.

यू.एस. सहयोगियों सहित देशों को स्वतंत्र आपूर्ति श्रृंखलाओं और संप्रभु ए.आई. नवाचार के विकास के लिए और यू.एस. प्रौद्योगिकी प्रतिबंधों से बचने के लिए और अधिक प्रेरित किया जाएगा।

- This could fragment the global **AI ecosystem** that the U.S. currently dominates. यह वैश्विक ए.आई. पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र को विभाजित कर सकता है, जिस पर वर्तमान में यू.एस. का प्रभुत्व है।

### Eroding goodwill with India

भारत के साथ अच्छे संबंधों का क्षय

- The **policy framework** disadvantages **India**, positioning it less favourably than anticipated.

नीति ढांचा भारत को नुकसान पहुंचाता है, इसे अपेक्षाकृत कम अनुकूल स्थिति में रखता है।

- By discouraging the development of **cutting-edge AI systems** beyond U.S. borders, the framework may **disincentivise investments** and **operations** of **Indian subsidiaries** of leading **American AI companies**.

यू.एस. की सीमाओं के बाहर सर्वोत्तम ए.आई. प्रणालियों के विकास को हतोत्साहित करके, यह ढांचा भारतीय सहायक कंपनियों के निवेशों और संचालन को निरुत्साहित कर सकता है, जो प्रमुख अमेरिकी ए.आई. कंपनियों के हैं।



- This could create conditions that risk drawing away India's pool of **top AI talent** and impeding **knowledge transfer** and **technological innovation** within the country.  
इससे ऐसी परिस्थितियाँ उत्पन्न हो सकती हैं जो भारत की श्रेष्ठ ए.आई. प्रतिभा को खींचने और देश के भीतर ज्ञान हस्तांतरण और प्रौद्योगिकी नवाचार में रुकावट डालने का खतरा पैदा करें।
- This could be a major point of **contention for India**, given the implications on its **technological** and **economic interests**.  
यह भारत के लिए एक प्रमुख विवाद का बिंदु हो सकता है, क्योंकि यह इसके प्रौद्योगिकीय और आर्थिक हितों पर प्रभाव डाल सकता है।
- The framework evaluates **India** solely by its **technological capabilities** in AI, while ignoring the **strategic value** of the **India-U.S. partnership**.  
यह ढांचा भारत का मूल्यांकन केवल इसके प्रौद्योगिकीय क्षमताओं के आधार पर करता है, जबकि भारत-यू.एस. साझेदारी के रणनीतिक मूल्य को नज़रअंदाज करता है।
- It also disregards the substantial **social capital** built between the two countries through recent **technology cooperation**, including advances in **semiconductor manufacturing collaboration**.  
यह दोनों देशों के बीच हालिया प्रौद्योगिकी सहयोग के माध्यम से बनाए गए महत्वपूर्ण सामाजिक पूंजी को भी नज़रअंदाज करता है, जिसमें संपत्ति निर्माण सहयोग में प्रगति शामिल है।
- Instead, it serves as a stark reminder of the **U.S.-led technology denial regimes** that restricted India's access to **nuclear technologies** for three decades following its nuclear tests.  
इसके बजाय, यह यू.एस.-नेतृत्व वाले प्रौद्योगिकी अस्वीकृति शासन का स्पष्ट अनुस्मारक है, जिसने भारत की परमाणु प्रौद्योगिकियों तक पहुंच को उसके परमाणु परीक्षणों के बाद तीन दशकों तक प्रतिबंधित किया।
- There is a disconnect between America's **export control policies** and its **strategic partnership** with India regarding **Indo-Pacific cooperation** and shared goals of countering **Chinese influence** in the region.  
अमेरिका की निर्यात नियंत्रण नीतियों और भारत के साथ इसकी रणनीतिक साझेदारी के बीच एक असंगति है, जो इंडो-पैसिफिक सहयोग और क्षेत्र में चीनी प्रभाव का मुकाबला करने के साझा लक्ष्यों के बारे में है।
- This **misalignment** risks undermining the **bilateral relationship** both nations have carefully cultivated in recent years.  
यह असंगति दोनों देशों के बीच हाल के वर्षों में सावधानी से पोषित द्विपक्षीय संबंध को कमजोर करने का खतरा पैदा करती है।
- It could compel **India** to **hedge** against its **technological** and **economic dependence** on the U.S.  
यह भारत को अपनी प्रौद्योगिकीय और आर्थिक निर्भरता को यू.एस. पर सुरक्षा कवच बनाने के लिए प्रेरित कर सकता है।



# A 11-year high of 55% urban residents report stagnant income in 2025

GS Paper III: Employment and Livelihood

Concerns over stagnant income levels overshadowed optimism about reduced expenses among urban consumers

**DATA POINT**

**Vignesh Radhakrishnan**

Urban consumers in India began the new year with both hope and concern. On the one hand, India's retail inflation eased to a five-month low of 4.31% in January, providing some relief to consumers by reducing the pressure on their household expenses. On the other, worries about the employment scenario continued to weigh on them. Income levels too have been stagnant – in January, 55% of urban consumers reported that their income levels had remained unchanged compared to the same period last year. This is the highest such share in nearly 11 years.

As concerns over stagnant income levels overshadowed any optimism about reduced expenses, a growing share of urban consumers remained pessimistic about the broader economic outlook as the new year began, says the Reserve Bank of India's Consumer Confidence Survey, which was conducted across 19 major cities in January. It covered 6,081 respondents, of which 52.4% were women.

**Chart 1** shows the share of respondents who said that the prices of commodities had increased/decreased/stayed the same in January 2025 compared to a year ago. The share of respondents who reported an increase in prices in January this year (93%) was the lowest since July last year. Around 1% of the respondents said that prices had declined, which has been the case since the pandemic. An increasing share said that prices had continued to remain the same.

**Chart 2** shows the spending perception on essential items. The 87.6% who said that spending on essential items had increased was the lowest since September 2024. Less than 2% of the respondents felt that spending on essential items had declined, aligning with the past trend. Close to 11% felt that

it had remained the same.

**Chart 3** shows perceptions of spending on non-essential items. There was a slight increase in the share of respondents who reported that their spending on non-essential items had remained unchanged compared to a year ago. The share of those who stated that their spending had increased declined marginally in January 2025.

Overall, on the spending front, conditions have slightly improved or have at least not deteriorated further, as reflected in Charts 1, 2, and 3.

**Chart 4** shows perceptions of income levels. The share of respondents who reported that their income levels had remained unchanged compared to a year ago reached a record high in January. There was a decrease in the share of respondents who indicated a decline or an increase in their income.

**Chart 5** shows urban consumers' perceptions of employment. About 42.7% reported a decline in job opportunities compared to a year ago. Following the sharp drop in the employment sentiment during the pandemic, there had been a steady recovery since, with an increasing share of respondents reporting improved job opportunities. However, this trend reversed in mid-2024, as pessimism about the job market began to grow. This pessimism has deepened further in the current year.

**Charts 4 and 5** reveal growing challenges on the income front. Job opportunities are becoming increasingly scarce, and those who are employed are grappling with stagnant income levels, highlighting the mounting financial pressures faced by urban consumers.

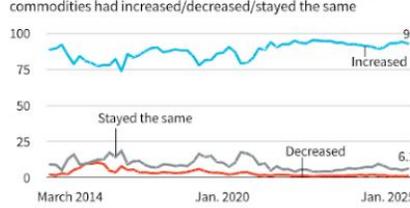
Pessimism over stagnant income levels has had a significant impact on consumers, with 43% of them stating that the overall economic situation had worsened in January compared to the same period last year. This is the highest such share in at least a year (**Chart 6**).

## Mixed feelings

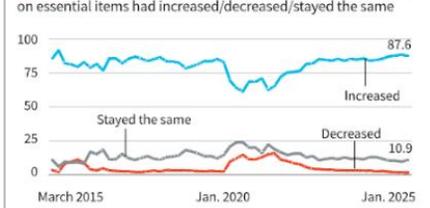
The data for the charts were sourced from the RBI's Consumer Confidence Survey - January 2025



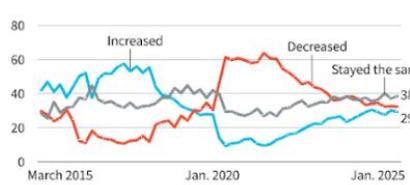
**Chart 1:** Share of respondents (%) who said that the prices of commodities had increased/decreased/stayed the same



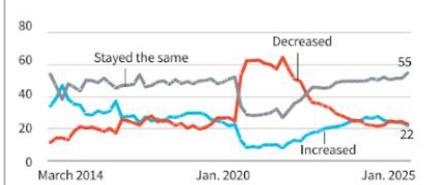
**Chart 2:** Share of respondents (%) who said that the spending on essential items had increased/decreased/stayed the same



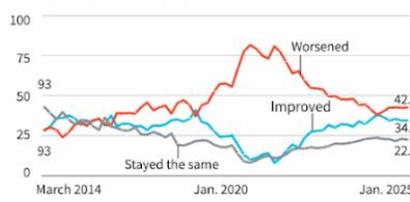
**Chart 3:** Share of respondents (%) who said that spending on non-essential items had increased/decreased/stayed the same



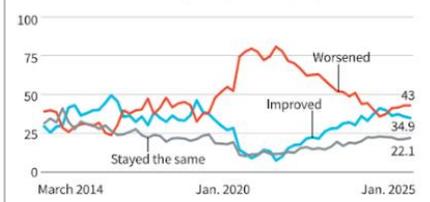
**Chart 4:** Share of respondents (%) who said that their income levels had increased/decreased/stayed the same



**Chart 5:** Share of respondents (%) who said that job opportunities had improved/worsened/stayed the same



**Chart 6:** Share of respondents (%) who said that general economic situation had improved/worsened/stayed the same



## A 11-year high of 55% urban residents report stagnant income in 2025



## 2025 में 55% शहरी निवासियों की आय स्थिर रहने की रिपोर्ट, 11 वर्षों का उच्चतम स्तर

Concerns over stagnant income levels overshadowed optimism about reduced expenses among urban consumers

शहरी उपभोक्ताओं के बीच स्थिर आय स्तर की चिंताओं ने खर्चों में कमी के बारे में आशावाद को दबा दिया

Urban Consumers in India Begin the New Year with Hope and Concern

भारत में शहरी उपभोक्ता नए वर्ष की शुरुआत आशा और चिंता के साथ करते हैं

- Urban consumers in India began the new year with both **hope** and **concern**.  
भारत में शहरी उपभोक्ता नए वर्ष की शुरुआत आशा और चिंता के साथ करते हैं।
- On the one hand, **India's retail inflation eased** to a **five-month low of 4.31%** in January, providing some relief to consumers by reducing the pressure on their household expenses.  
एक ओर, भारत की खुदरा महंगाई जनवरी में पाँच महीने के निचले स्तर 4.31% तक कम हो गई, जिससे उपभोक्ताओं को उनके घरेलू खर्चों पर दबाव कम होने के कारण कुछ राहत मिली।
- On the other hand, **worries about the employment scenario** continued to weigh on them.  
दूसरी ओर, रोजगार परिदृश्य को लेकर चिंताएँ उनके ऊपर बनी रहीं।
- Income levels** too have been stagnant — in January, **55% of urban consumers** reported that their income levels had remained unchanged compared to the same period last year.  
आय स्तर भी स्थिर रहे हैं — जनवरी में, **55% शहरी उपभोक्ताओं** ने रिपोर्ट किया कि उनका आय स्तर पिछले साल की समान अवधि की तुलना में अपरिवर्तित रहा।
- This is the highest such share in nearly **11 years**.  
यह लगभग **11 वर्षों** में इस तरह का सबसे उच्चतम हिस्सा है।
- As concerns over stagnant income levels overshadowed any optimism about reduced expenses, a growing share of urban consumers remained **pessimistic about the broader economic outlook** as the new year began, says the **Reserve Bank of India's Consumer Confidence Survey**, which was conducted across **19 major cities** in January.

स्थिर आय स्तरों को लेकर चिंताओं ने खर्चों में कमी पर किसी भी आशावाद को ढक दिया, और शहरी उपभोक्ताओं का बढ़ता हिस्सा नए वर्ष की शुरुआत में व्यापक आर्थिक दृष्टिकोण के बारे में निराशावादी बना रहा, ऐसा भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक के उपभोक्ता विश्वास सर्वेक्षण में कहा गया है, जो जनवरी में 19 प्रमुख शहरों में आयोजित किया गया था।



**TELEGRAM CHANNEL:** <https://t.me/patrioticIAS>

**YOUTUBE CHANNEL:** <https://www.youtube.com/@PatrioticIAS>

**CONTACT: 9971932488**



- It covered **6,081 respondents**, of which **52.4% were women**.  
इस सर्वेक्षण में 6,081 उत्तरदाताओं को कवर किया गया, जिनमें से 52.4% महिलाएँ थीं।

### Commodity Price Changes in January 2025

#### जनवरी 2025 में वस्तु मूल्य परिवर्तनों की स्थिति

- The share of respondents who reported an **increase in prices** in January this year (93%) was the **lowest** since **July last year**.  
इस साल जनवरी में उन उत्तरदाताओं का हिस्सा जिन्होंने मूल्यों में वृद्धि की रिपोर्ट दी (93%) वह जुलाई पिछले साल के बाद सबसे कम था।
- Around **1% of respondents** said that prices had declined, which has been the case since the **pandemic**.  
लगभग 1% उत्तरदाताओं ने कहा कि मूल्य घट गए हैं, जो महामारी से लेकर अब तक का रुझान रहा है।
- An increasing share said that prices had continued to remain the same.  
बढ़ता हुआ हिस्सा यह कहता है कि मूल्य जैसे थे वैसे ही बने रहे।

### Spending Perception on Essential Items

#### आवश्यक वस्तुओं पर खर्च का अनुमान

- **87.6%** who said that spending on essential items had increased was the **lowest** since **September 2024**.  
87.6% ने कहा कि आवश्यक वस्तुओं पर खर्च बढ़ा था, जो सितंबर 2024 के बाद सबसे कम था।
- Less than **2%** of the respondents felt that spending on essential items had declined, aligning with the past trend.  
2% से कम उत्तरदाताओं ने महसूस किया कि आवश्यक वस्तुओं पर खर्च घटा था, जो पिछले रुझान के अनुरूप है।
- Close to **11%** felt that it had remained the same.  
लगभग 11% ने महसूस किया कि यह वैसा का वैसा ही रहा।

### Perceptions of Spending on Non-Essential Items

#### गैर-आवश्यक वस्तुओं पर खर्च के अनुमान

- There was a slight increase in the share of respondents who reported that their spending on **non-essential items** had remained unchanged compared to a year ago.  
उन उत्तरदाताओं का हिस्सा, जिन्होंने रिपोर्ट किया कि उनका खर्च गैर-आवश्यक वस्तुओं पर पिछले साल की तुलना में अपरिवर्तित रहा, में हल्की वृद्धि हुई है।
- The share of those who stated that their spending had increased declined marginally in **January 2025**.  
जिन लोगों ने कहा कि उनका खर्च बढ़ा है, उनका हिस्सा जनवरी 2025 में हल्का सा घटा है।



- Overall, on the spending front, conditions have slightly improved or have at least not deteriorated further, as reflected in **Charts 1, 2, and 3**.  
कुल मिलाकर, खर्च के मामले में परिस्थितियाँ थोड़ी बेहतर हुई हैं या कम से कम आगे और खराब नहीं हुई हैं, जैसा कि चार्ट 1, 2, और 3 में देखा गया है।

### Perceptions of Income Levels

#### आय स्तरों का अनुमान

- The share of respondents who reported that their income levels had remained unchanged compared to a year ago reached a **record high** in January.  
उन उत्तरदाताओं का हिस्सा, जिन्होंने रिपोर्ट किया कि उनका आय स्तर पिछले साल की तुलना में अपरिवर्तित रहा, जनवरी में **रिकॉर्ड उच्चतम** स्तर पर पहुँच गया।
- There was a decrease in the share of respondents who indicated a **decline** or an **increase** in their income.  
उन उत्तरदाताओं का हिस्सा जिन्होंने अपने आय में **घटाव** या **वृद्धि** की रिपोर्ट दी, उसमें कमी आई।

### Perceptions of Employment

#### रोजगार के बारे में अनुमान

- About **42.7%** reported a decline in job opportunities compared to a year ago.  
लगभग **42.7%** ने रिपोर्ट किया कि पिछले साल की तुलना में नौकरी के अवसरों में गिरावट आई है।
- Following the sharp drop in the employment sentiment during the **pandemic**, there had been a steady recovery since, with an increasing share of respondents reporting improved job opportunities.  
**महामारी** के दौरान रोजगार भावना में तेज गिरावट के बाद, उसके बाद से स्थिर सुधार हुआ है, जिसमें बढ़ते हुए हिस्से ने नौकरी के अवसरों में सुधार की रिपोर्ट की है।
- However, this trend reversed in **mid-2024**, as pessimism about the job market began to grow.  
हालांकि, यह रुझान **मध्य-2024** में पलट गया, जब नौकरी बाजार के बारे में निराशावाद बढ़ने लगा।
- This pessimism has deepened further in the current year.  
इस निराशावाद में इस साल और वृद्धि हुई है।

### Income and Employment Challenges

#### आय और रोजगार चुनौतियाँ

- Charts 4 and 5** reveal growing challenges on the income front.  
**चार्ट 4 और 5** आय के मोर्चे पर बढ़ती चुनौतियाँ उजागर करते हैं।
- Job opportunities** are becoming increasingly **scarce**, and those who are employed are grappling with **stagnant income levels**, highlighting the mounting **financial pressures**



faced by urban consumers.

नौकरी के अवसर दिन-ब-दिन कम होते जा रहे हैं, और जो लोग नौकरी कर रहे हैं वे स्थिर आय स्तरों से जूझ रहे हैं, जो शहरी उपभोक्ताओं द्वारा सामना की जा रही बढ़ती आर्थिक दबावों को उजागर करता है।

## Pessimism on Economic Situation

### आर्थिक स्थिति पर निराशावाद

- **43%** of consumers stated that the overall **economic situation** had worsened in **January** compared to the same period last year.  
**43%** उपभोक्ताओं ने कहा कि **आर्थिक स्थिति** पिछले साल की समान अवधि की तुलना में **जनवरी** में बिगड़ गई है।
- This is the highest such share in at least a year (**Chart 6**).  
यह कम से कम एक साल में ऐसा सबसे उच्चतम हिस्सा है (**चार्ट 6**)।

# What is contributing to the downturn in Indian markets?

How are U.S. President Donald Trump's recent directives affecting Indian stock markets? What is the relationship between bond yields and stock markets? Will the rupee strengthen?

#### GS Paper III: Economy

Saptaparno Ghosh

#### The story so far:

For the sixth consecutive day, BSE Sensex closed lower on Wednesday reflective of a major sell-off among foreign institutional investors and portfolio investors (FIIs/FPIs), mixed earnings and apprehensions about the tightening of the (imports) tariff regime in the U.S.

#### Why is Trump affecting markets?

On Tuesday, U.S. President Donald Trump issued directives to restore tariff on steel and elevate the tariff on aluminium to 25%. The White House held these were to protect America's industries which "have been harmed by unfair trade practices and global excess capacity".

However, the directive was not well received in the Indian markets. This is primarily due to apprehensions about a

potential dumping of Asian exports to India, potentially culminating into downward revision of prices and increased competition. Indian steel manufacturers are already amidst a revision in steel prices. For perspective, Indian manufacturer JSW Steel stated in its Q3 earnings about its Net Smelting Return (NSR) in India falling by close to ₹1,800 compared to the preceding quarter. Additionally, with respect to the alleged dumping, India's Directorate General for Trade Remedies (DGTR) has an ongoing investigation into the imports of 'non-alloy and alloy steel flat products'.

#### Why is foreign money moving away?

FII and FPIs have been increasingly moving towards U.S. bonds, seeking a haven away from the current modest Indian markets with potentially lesser returns. According to Devarsh Vakil, Head of Prime Research at HDFC Securities, the

current situation in the market emanates from tepid domestic earnings growth, elevated valuations in mid and small cap segments, and persistent inflation exceeding the RBI's lower threshold of 4%, and uncertainty around trade and tariffs. It is imperative to note here that bond yield and stock markets have an inverse relationship. This is because both vie for investor funds, aspiring to outdo the other by offering more returns. Therefore, when U.S. bond yield rises, foreign investors transit from Indian equities to U.S. bonds. Domestic, economic and political certainty alongside monetary policies are other contributing factors. All in all, the entire paradigm contributes to making the dollar stronger and the rupee weaker because of the flow of money. V.K. Vijaykumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial observed that while the downturn in markets has been because of

a combination of factors, the major among them has been the "relentless FII selling". He told *The Hindu* about FIIs having sold in the cash market every day, except for two days, so far this year – totalling to ₹93,907 crore. He further noted that while domestic institutional investors have been compensating for the FII outflows, "market sentiments have been impacted." Apurva Sheth, Head of Market Perspectives & Research at SAMCO Securities pointed out that dollar denominated returns of Indian equities "have not been impressive at all".

Mid and small caps stocks are also experiencing a correction due to the sell-off spree.

#### What is outlook for the near-term?

Tightening of trade policies with the probability of a trade war under Trump, geopolitical tensions and slowing global growth could influence markets going forward. According to Mr. Vijaykumar, "FIIs will return to India, only the timing is uncertain." He further adds, "Indications of a growth and earnings recovery in India and dollar decline – we do not know when it will happen, will make FIIs buyers in India." Additionally, Mr. Vakil holds that deep uncertainty about President Trump's tariffs plans may keep investors on the "defensive". As for the outflow, he contends SIP flows are likely to remain strong and should be able to absorb bulk of the selling.

#### THE GIST

On Tuesday, U.S. President Donald Trump issued directives to restore tariff on steel and elevate the tariff on aluminium to 25%.

FIIs and FPIs have been increasingly moving towards U.S. bonds, seeking a haven away from the current modest Indian markets with potentially lesser returns.

Tightening of trade policies with the probability of a trade war under the Trump administration, geopolitical tensions and slowing global growth could influence markets going forward.

## What is contributing to the downturn in Indian markets?

### भारतीय बाजारों में मंदी का कारण क्या है?

How are U.S. President Donald Trump's recent directives affecting Indian stock markets? What is the relationship between bond yields and stock markets? Will the rupee strengthen?



अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप के हालिया निर्देशों का भारतीय शेयर बाजारों पर क्या असर पड़ रहा है? बॉन्ड यील्ड और शेयर बाजारों के बीच क्या संबंध है? क्या रुपया मजबूत होगा?

**BSE Sensex Declines for Sixth Consecutive Day**

**BSE सेंसेक्स छह दिन लगातार गिरा**

- For the **sixth consecutive day**, **BSE Sensex closed lower** on **Wednesday**, reflective of a major **sell-off** among foreign institutional investors and portfolio investors (FIIs/FPIs), mixed earnings, and apprehensions about the **tightening of the imports' tariff regime** in the **U.S.**

छह दिन लगातार, BSE सेंसेक्स बुधवार को गिरा, जो विदेशी संस्थागत निवेशकों और पोर्टफोलियो निवेशकों (FIIs/FPIs) द्वारा भारी बिकवाली, मिश्रित आय और अमेरिका में आयात शुल्क शासन के कड़े होने को दर्शाता है।

**Why is Trump Affecting Markets?**

ट्रंप बाजारों को क्यों प्रभावित कर रहे हैं?

- On **Tuesday**, **U.S. President Donald Trump** issued directives to restore **tariffs on steel** and elevate the tariff on **aluminium to 25%**.  
मंगलवार को, अमेरिका के राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप ने स्टील पर शुल्क पुनः लागू करने और एल्यूमिनियम पर शुल्क 25% तक बढ़ाने के आदेश दिए।
- The White House held these were to protect **America's industries** which "have been harmed by **unfair trade practices** and **global excess capacity**."  
व्हाइट हाउस ने कहा कि ये आदेश अमेरिका के उद्योगों की रक्षा के लिए हैं, जिन्हें "अनुचित व्यापार प्रथाओं और वैश्विक अधिशेष क्षमता" से नुकसान हुआ है।
- However, the directive was not well received in the **Indian markets**.  
हालांकि, यह आदेश भारतीय बाजारों में अच्छी तरह से नहीं लिया गया।
- This is primarily due to apprehensions about a potential **dumping of Asian exports to India**, potentially culminating into downward revision of prices and increased competition.  
यह मुख्य रूप से भारत में एशियाई निर्यातों के डंपिंग को लेकर चिंताओं के कारण है, जिससे मूल्य में गिरावट और बढ़ती प्रतिस्पर्धा हो सकती है।
- **Indian steel manufacturers** are already amidst a revision in **steel prices**.  
भारतीय स्टील निर्माता पहले ही स्टील की कीमतों में संशोधन के दौर में हैं।
- For perspective, **JSW Steel**, an Indian manufacturer, stated in its **Q3 earnings** about its **Net Smelting Return (NSR)** in India falling by close to **₹1,800** compared to the preceding quarter.  
संदर्भ के लिए, **JSW Steel**, एक भारतीय निर्माता, ने अपनी **Q3 आय** में बताया कि भारत में उसका **नेट स्मेल्टिंग रिटर्न (NSR)** पिछले तिमाही की तुलना में लगभग **₹1,800** गिर गया।



- Additionally, with respect to the alleged dumping, **India's Directorate General for Trade Remedies (DGTR)** has an ongoing investigation into the imports of 'non-alloy and alloy steel flat products'.

इसके अतिरिक्त, भारत के निदेशालय जनरल फॉर ट्रेड रेमेडीज (DGTR) 'नॉन-एलॉय और एलॉय स्टील फ्लैट उत्पादों' के आयातों की जांच कर रहा है।

### Why is Foreign Money Moving Away?

विदेशी पैसे क्यों जा रहे हैं?

- **FII**s and **FPI**s have been increasingly moving towards **U.S. bonds**, seeking a haven away from the current modest Indian markets with potentially lesser returns.  
**FII**s और **FPI**s अमेरिकी बॉन्ड्स की ओर बढ़ रहे हैं, जो वर्तमान भारतीय बाजारों से बाहर कम लाभ वाले सुरक्षित विकल्प की तलाश कर रहे हैं।
- According to **Devarsh Vakil**, Head of Prime Research at **HDFC Securities**, the current situation in the market emanates from **tepid domestic earnings growth**, **elevated valuations** in mid and small cap segments, and **persistent inflation** exceeding the **RBI's lower threshold of 4%**, and uncertainty around **trade and tariffs**.  
**HDFC** सिक्योरिटीज के प्राइम रिसर्च प्रमुख देवर्ष वैकिल के अनुसार, बाजार की वर्तमान स्थिति धीमी घरेलू आय वृद्धि, मध्यम और स्मॉल कैप सेगमेंट में उच्च मूल्यांकन, और स्थिर मुद्रास्फीति जो **RBI** की **4%** की न्यूनतम सीमा से ऊपर है, और व्यापार और टैरिफ के आसपास की अनिश्चितता से उत्पन्न होती है।
- It is imperative to note here that **bond yield** and **stock markets** have an **inverse relationship**.  
यहाँ यह ध्यान देना महत्वपूर्ण है कि **बॉन्ड यील्ड** और **स्टॉक मार्केट्स** के बीच एक विपरीत संबंध है।
- This is because both vie for investor funds, aspiring to outdo the other by offering more returns.  
इसका कारण यह है कि दोनों निवेशकों के फंड के लिए प्रतिस्पर्धा करते हैं, और अधिक रिटर्न देने की कोशिश करते हैं।
- Therefore, when **U.S. bond yield rises**, foreign investors transit from **Indian equities** to **U.S. bonds**.  
इसलिए, जब अमेरिकी बॉन्ड यील्ड बढ़ती है, तो विदेशी निवेशक भारतीय शेयरों से अमेरिकी बॉन्ड्स की ओर रुख करते हैं।
- **Domestic, economic and political certainty** alongside **monetary policies** are other contributing factors.  
घरेलू आर्थिक और राजनीतिक स्थिरता के साथ-साथ मुद्रास्फीति नीति अन्य योगदान देने वाले कारक हैं।
- All in all, the entire paradigm contributes to making the **dollar stronger** and the **rupee weaker** because of the flow of money.



कुल मिलाकर, समग्र परिप्रेक्ष्य डॉलर को मजबूत और रुपये को कमजोर बनाता है क्योंकि पैसों का प्रवाह होता है।

- **V.K. Vijaykumar**, Chief Investment Strategist at **Geojit Financial** observed that while the downturn in markets has been because of a combination of factors, the major among them has been the “relentless **FII selling.**”

वी.के. विजयकुमार, जियोजीट फाइनेंशियल के मुख्य निवेश रणनीतिकार ने कहा कि जबकि बाजारों में गिरावट विभिन्न कारकों का संयोजन है, उनमें से प्रमुख कारण है “निरंतर **FII बिक्री।**”

- He told **The Hindu** about **FIIs** having sold in the cash market every day, except for **two days**, so far this year — totaling to **₹93,907 crore.**

उन्होंने **द हिंदू** को बताया कि **FIIs** ने इस साल अब तक दो दिन को छोड़कर हर दिन **कैश मार्केट** में बेचा है — कुल मिलाकर **₹93,907 करोड़।**

- He further noted that while **domestic institutional investors** have been compensating for the **FII outflows**, “**market sentiments** have been impacted.”

उन्होंने आगे बताया कि जबकि **घरेलू संस्थागत निवेशक** **FII** के बहिर्वाह की भरपाई कर रहे हैं, “**बाजार की भावना** प्रभावित हुई है।”

- **Apurva Sheth**, Head of Market Perspectives & Research at **SAMCO Securities** pointed out that **dollar denominated returns** of **Indian equities** “**have not been impressive at all.**”

अपूर्वा शेट, **SAMCO** सिक्योरिटीज में मार्केट परिप्रेक्ष्य और अनुसंधान प्रमुख ने बताया कि भारतीय शेयरों के डॉलर मूल्यांकन में रिटर्न “पूरी तरह से **प्रभावशाली नहीं रहे हैं।**”

- **Mid and small cap stocks** are also experiencing a **correction** due to the **sell-off spree.**

मध्यम और स्मॉल कैप स्टॉक्स भी बिकवाली की लहर के कारण **सुधार** का सामना कर रहे हैं।

### What is Outlook for the Near-Term?

निकट भविष्य के लिए दृष्टिकोण क्या है?

- **Tightening of trade policies** with the probability of a **trade war** under **Trump**, **geopolitical tensions**, and **slowing global growth** could influence markets going forward.

व्यापार नीतियों का कड़ा होना, ट्रंप के तहत व्यापार युद्ध की संभावना, भूराजनीतिक तनाव, और वैश्विक वृद्धि में मंदी भविष्य में बाजारों को प्रभावित कर सकती है।

- According to Mr. **Vijaykumar**, “**FIIs will return to India**, only the timing is uncertain.”

**विजयकुमार** के अनुसार, “**FIIs** भारत वापस लौटेंगे, केवल समय अनिश्चित है।”

- He further adds, “**Indications of a growth and earnings recovery** in India and **dollar decline** — we do not know when it will happen, will make **FIIs** buyers in India.”

वह आगे कहते हैं, “**भारत में विकास और आय पुनःसुधार** के संकेत और **डॉलर में गिरावट** — हम नहीं जानते कि यह कब होगा, इससे **FIIs** को भारत में खरीदार बनाएंगे।”

- Additionally, Mr. **Vakil** holds that deep uncertainty about **President Trump’s tariff plans** may keep investors on the “defensive.”



**TELEGRAM CHANNEL:** <https://t.me/patrioticIAS>

**YOUTUBE CHANNEL:** <https://www.youtube.com/@PatrioticIAS>

**CONTACT: 9971932488**



इसके अतिरिक्त, श्री वकिल का मानना है कि राष्ट्रपति ट्रंप की शुल्क योजनाओं के बारे में गहरी अनिश्चितता निवेशकों को "रक्षात्मक" बनाए रख सकती है।

- As for the outflow, he contends **SIP flows** are likely to remain strong and should be able to absorb bulk of the selling.

बहिर्वाह के बारे में, उनका मानना है कि **SIP प्रवाह** मजबूत बने रहेंगे और बिकवाली के अधिकांश हिस्से को अवशोषित करने में सक्षम होंगे।

### TOPICS COVERED (GS Paper IV and Essay)

- 1. 1984 anti-Sikh riots: Delhi court convicts former Cong. MP in double-murder case / 1984 सिख विरोधी दंगे: दिल्ली की अदालत ने पूर्व कांग्रेस सांसद को दोहरे हत्याकांड में दोषी ठहराया**

PATRIOTIC IAS



# 1984 anti-Sikh riots: Delhi court convicts former Cong. MP in double-murder case

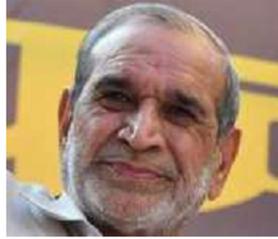
GS Paper IV: Ethics  
Essay

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Wednesday convicted former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar, 79, in a double-murder case related to the 1984 anti-Sikh riots. He faces a maximum sentence of death penalty and a minimum of life imprisonment.

“The prosecution has been able to prove its case against the accused [Kumar] beyond reasonable doubt,” Special Judge Kaveri Baweja said, convicting Kumar of offences such as murder, rioting, dacoity, and arson.

The judge then posted the arguments for sentencing on February 18.



Sajjan Kumar

The case relates to the murder of S. Jaswant Singh and his son S. Tarundeep Singh, residents of Raj Nagar, Delhi, at the hands of a mob during the riots.

It is the case of the prosecution that Kumar was leading the mob and it was upon his instigation and abetment that it burnt alive the two men, damaged and looted their house,

burnt it down, and inflicted severe injuries on their family members.

Though the Punjabi Bagh police station registered the case initially, a Special Investigation Team later took over the probe. It was stated that no member of the mob could be identified at that time by the victims as they were new to the area, having shifted there only around one and a half months earlier.

#### Identified photograph

Later, the complainant in the case, Jaswant's wife, saw the photograph of Kumar, who was an MP from the Congress, in a news magazine and identified it to be of “the same bearded

man who was leading the mob on the day of the incident”.

The judge noted that through the evidence, both oral and documentary, brought on record during the course of the trial, “the prosecution has been able to bring home the guilt of the accused”.

The court held that Kumar instigated the mob and members of the “unlawful assembly” were armed with iron rods, lathis, bricks, etc., which proves that the alleged offences were committed after having made preparations. It said the mob used force and violence as part of its common object of looting and rioting.

## 1984 anti-Sikh riots: Delhi court convicts former Cong. MP in double-murder case

## 1984 सिख विरोधी दंगे: दिल्ली की अदालत ने पूर्व कांग्रेस सांसद को दोहरे हत्याकांड में दोषी ठहराया

### Delhi Court Convicts Former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar in 1984 Anti-Sikh Riots Case

दिल्ली कोर्ट ने 1984 के anti-Sikh दंगों के मामले में कांग्रेस के पूर्व सांसद सज्जन कुमार को दोषी ठहराया

- A Delhi court on Wednesday convicted former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar, 79, in a double-murder case related to the 1984 anti-Sikh riots.

दिल्ली कोर्ट ने बुधवार को कांग्रेस के पूर्व सांसद सज्जन कुमार, 79, को 1984 के anti-Sikh दंगों से जुड़े डबल मर्डर केस में दोषी ठहराया।



- He faces a **maximum sentence of death penalty** and a **minimum of life imprisonment**.  
उन्हें मौत की सजा और जीवनभर की सजा का सामना करना पड़ सकता है।
- **Special Judge Kaveri Baweja** said, “The prosecution has been able to prove its case against the accused [Kumar] beyond reasonable doubt,” convicting Kumar of offenses such as **murder, rioting, dacoity, and arson**.  
**विशेष न्यायाधीश कावेरी बावेजा** ने कहा, “अभियोजन पक्ष ने आरोपित [कुमार] के खिलाफ अपना मामला **संदेह से परे** साबित कर दिया है,” कुमार को **हत्या, दंगा, डकैती, और आगजनी** जैसे अपराधों का दोषी ठहराते हुए।
- The judge then posted the arguments for **sentencing on February 18**.  
न्यायाधीश ने फिर **सजा पर बहस** के लिए **18 फरवरी** की तारीख तय की।
- The case relates to the **murder of S. Jaswant Singh** and his son **S. Tarundeep Singh**, residents of **Raj Nagar, Delhi**, at the hands of a **mob** during the riots.  
यह मामला **राज नगर, दिल्ली** के निवासियों **एस. जसवंत सिंह** और उनके बेटे **एस. तरुंदीत सिंह** की **भीड़** द्वारा **दंगों** के दौरान हत्या से संबंधित है।
- The prosecution claims that **Kumar was leading the mob**, and it was upon his **instigation and abetment** that the two men were **burnt alive**, their house was damaged, looted, and burnt down, and severe injuries were inflicted on their family members.  
अभियोजन पक्ष का कहना है कि **कुमार भीड़ का नेतृत्व कर रहे थे**, और उनके **उत्तेजना और मदद** से दोनों पुरुषों को **जिंदा जलाया गया**, उनका घर **नष्ट**, लूटा गया, और आग के हवाले कर दिया गया, और उनके परिवार के सदस्यों को गंभीर चोटें आईं।
- Initially, the case was registered by **Punjabi Bagh police station**, but a **Special Investigation Team (SIT)** later took over the probe.  
शुरू में यह मामला **पंजाबी बाग पुलिस स्टेशन** में दर्ज किया गया था, लेकिन बाद में **विशेष जांच दल (SIT)** ने इसकी जांच शुरू की।
- It was stated that no member of the mob could be identified at that time by the victims as they had shifted to the area only around **one and a half months earlier**.  
यह कहा गया था कि उस समय **भीड़ के किसी सदस्य** को पीड़ितों द्वारा पहचाना नहीं जा सका क्योंकि वे सिर्फ **डेढ़ महीने पहले** ही इलाके में शिफ्ट हुए थे।
- Later, the complainant, **Jaswant’s wife**, saw the photograph of **Kumar**, an MP from Congress, in a news magazine and identified it as “the same bearded man who was leading the mob on the day of the incident.”  
बाद में, **जसवंत की पत्नी**, ने **कुमार** का एक फोटो एक समाचार पत्रिका में देखा, जो कांग्रेस के सांसद थे, और उसे पहचान लिया कि वह “वही दाढ़ी वाला आदमी था जो घटना के दिन भीड़ का नेतृत्व कर रहा था।”
- The judge noted that through both **oral and documentary evidence**, the prosecution has proven **Kumar’s guilt**.



न्यायाधीश ने कहा कि मौखिक और दस्तावेजी सबूतों के माध्यम से अभियोजन पक्ष ने कुमार की दोषिता को साबित किया है।

- The court held that Kumar instigated the mob, and members of the **unlawful assembly** were armed with **iron rods, lathis, bricks**, etc., proving that the alleged offences were committed after preparations.

कोर्ट ने कहा कि कुमार ने भीड़ को उकसाया और गैरकानूनी सभा के सदस्य लोहा छड़, लाठी, ईंटें आदि से लैस थे, जो यह साबित करता है कि आरोपित अपराधों को तैयारी करने के बाद अंजाम दिया गया।

- The court stated that the mob used **force and violence** as part of its common objective of **looting and rioting**.

कोर्ट ने कहा कि भीड़ ने बल और हिंसा का इस्तेमाल लूटपाट और दंगे के सामान्य उद्देश्य के हिस्से के रूप में किया।

PATRIOTIC IAS