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THE HINDU NEWSPAPER
DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS
(27 FEBRUARY 2025)

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27_02_2025 DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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

1. Love for each other defies State borders

एक-दूसरे के लिए प्यार ने राज्य की सीमाओं को किया पार

2. A leap backward for maternity entitlements

मातृत्व लाभों के लिए एक कदम पीछे

3. Why are PwDs worried about DPDP rules?

विकलांग व्यक्तियों को DPDP नियमों को लेकर क्यों चिंता है?

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Love for each other defies State borders

Mohammad Galib and Asha Verma got married at Kayamkulam in Kerala early this month; hailing from Chitarpur in Jharkhand, they fled to southern State following threats, allegations of 'love jihad'

GS Paper I:

Sam Communalism

ALAPPUZHA

A young interfaith couple from Jharkhand, Mohammad Galib, 30, and Asha Verma, 27, got married at Kayamkulam in Kerala's Alappuzha district early this month after reportedly facing threats and allegations of 'love jihad' in their home State.

Hailing from Chitarpur in Ramgarh district, they fled to Kerala this month following death threats.

According to Gaya S. Latha, the couple's counsel, Mr. Galib and Ms. Verma first married as per Islamic customs at a masjid at Kayamkulam on February 11.

Later on February 16, they got married again at a temple following Hindu customs.



Mohammad Galib and Asha Verma have filed a writ petition in the Kerala High Court seeking police protection. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Speaking to reporters on Wednesday, the couple said their relationship dates back over a decade. "We got married of our own free will. Jharkhand Police has filed cases against me, accusing me of kidnapping Asha. We have been asked to appear in a Jharkhand police station," Mr. Galib said.

He added that after "registering the false case,

Jharkhand Police came and recorded our statements on February 14". "We want to thank our counsel and others for all their help and for ensuring our safety," he said.

Friend's advice

Earlier this month, Ms. Verma's relatives reached Kayamkulam but she refused to go with them. The couple arrived in

Kerala on the advice of a friend from Kayamkulam who worked with Mr. Galib in West Asia.

Ms. Latha said Ms. Verma's family had arranged her marriage to a man in his 40s. On learning this, Mr. Galib returned to India.

"Protests erupted, mainly led by leaders and members of Asha's community. Subsequently, allegations of 'love jihad' were raised against Mohammad, leading to tensions and prompting the couple to flee," Ms. Latha said.

The couple have filed a writ petition in the Kerala High Court seeking police protection fearing that Ms. Verma might become a victim of "honour killing". The police said protection will be provided to the couple upon request.

Love for each other defies State borders

एक-दूसरे के लिए प्यार ने राज्य की सीमाओं को किया पार

Mohammad Galib (30) and Asha Verma (27), a young interfaith couple from Jharkhand, got married at Kayamkulam in Kerala's Alappuzha district early this month after facing threats and allegations of 'love jihad' in their home State.



मोहम्मद ग़ालिब (30) और आशा वर्मा (27), झारखंड के एक युवा अंतरधार्मिक जोड़े ने इस महीने की शुरुआत में केरल के अल्पपुञ्जा जिले के कयमकुलम में शादी की, जब उन्हें अपने राज्य में धमकियों और 'लव जिहाद' के आरोपों का सामना करना पड़ा।

- Hailing from Chitarpur in Ramgarh district, they fled to Kerala this month following death threats.
रामगढ़ जिले के चितरपुर से ताल्लुक रखने वाले इस जोड़े ने मौत की धमकियों के कारण इस महीने केरल की ओर रुख किया।
- According to Gaya S. Latha, the couple's counsel, Galib and Verma first married as per Islamic customs at a masjid in Kayamkulam on February 11.
गया एस. लता, जोड़े की वकील के अनुसार, ग़ालिब और वर्मा ने पहले 11 फरवरी को कयमकुलम की एक मस्जिद में इस्लामिक रीति-रिवाजों के अनुसार शादी की।
- Later, on February 16, they got married again at a temple following Hindu customs.
बाद में, 16 फरवरी को उन्होंने एक मंदिर में हिंदू रीति-रिवाजों के अनुसार दोबारा शादी की।
- Speaking to reporters on Wednesday, the couple said their relationship dates back over a decade.
बुधवार को पत्रकारों से बात करते हुए, जोड़े ने कहा कि उनका रिश्ता दस साल से अधिक पुराना है।
- Galib stated, "We got married of our own free will. Jharkhand Police has filed cases against me, accusing me of kidnapping Asha. We have been asked to appear in a Jharkhand police station."
ग़ालिब ने कहा, "हमने अपनी मर्जी से शादी की है। झारखंड पुलिस ने मुझ पर आशा के अपहरण का आरोप लगाकर मामला दर्ज किया है। हमें झारखंड पुलिस स्टेशन में पेश होने के लिए कहा गया है।"
- He added that after registering the false case, Jharkhand Police recorded their statements on February 14.
उन्होंने कहा कि झूठा मामला दर्ज करने के बाद, झारखंड पुलिस ने 14 फरवरी को उनके बयान दर्ज किए।
- "We want to thank our counsel and others for all their help and for ensuring our safety," said Galib.
"हम अपनी वकील और अन्य लोगों का धन्यवाद करना चाहते हैं जिन्होंने हमारी मदद की और हमारी सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित की," ग़ालिब ने कहा।

Friend's advice

दोस्त की सलाह

- Earlier this month, Asha Verma's relatives reached Kayamkulam, but she refused to go with them.
इस महीने की शुरुआत में, आशा वर्मा के रिश्तेदार कयमकुलम पहुंचे, लेकिन उन्होंने उनके साथ जाने से इनकार कर दिया।



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- The couple arrived in Kerala on the advice of a friend from Kayamkulam, who worked with Galib in West Asia.
यह जोड़ा कयमकुलम के एक दोस्त की सलाह पर केरल पहुंचा, जो ग़ालिब के साथ पश्चिम एशिया में काम करता था।
- Ms. Latha said that **Asha Verma's family had arranged her marriage to a man in his 40s**. Upon learning this, Galib returned to India.
सुश्री लता ने बताया कि आशा वर्मा के परिवार ने उनकी शादी एक 40 वर्षीय व्यक्ति से तय कर दी थी। जब ग़ालिब को यह पता चला, तो वह भारत लौट आए।
- “Protests erupted, mainly led by leaders and members of Asha’s community. Subsequently, **allegations of ‘love jihad’ were raised against Mohammad**, leading to tensions and prompting the couple to flee,” said Ms. Latha.
“आशा के समुदाय के नेताओं और सदस्यों के नेतृत्व में विरोध प्रदर्शन हुए। बाद में, मोहम्मद पर ‘लव जिहाद’ के आरोप लगाए गए, जिससे तनाव बढ़ा और जोड़े को भागने के लिए मजबूर होना पड़ा,” सुश्री लता ने कहा।
- The couple have filed a writ petition in the Kerala High Court seeking police protection, fearing that Asha Verma might become a victim of ‘honour killing’.
इस जोड़े ने केरल उच्च न्यायालय में एक याचिका दायर की, जिसमें पुलिस सुरक्षा की मांग की गई है, क्योंकि उन्हें डर है कि आशा वर्मा ‘ऑनर किलिंग’ (सम्मान हत्या) का शिकार हो सकती हैं।
- The police stated that protection will be provided to the couple upon request.
पुलिस ने कहा कि जोड़े को उनकी मांग पर सुरक्षा प्रदान की जाएगी।



A leap backward for maternity entitlements

GS Paper I: Society

Even as State after State is splurging on cash transfers for women, the most vulnerable among them, pregnant women, continue to be deprived of their legal right to maternity benefits. Worse, whatever little used to be paid to them seems to be shrinking. The main responsibility for this lies with the central government.

Under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013, all pregnant women (except those already covered in the formal sector) are entitled to maternity benefits of ₹6,000 a child. At today's prices, this would mean ₹12,000 at the very least. Even that, of course, is a pittance. Still, affirming the principle of universal maternity entitlements was a groundbreaking feature of the NFSA. Even in relatively well-off households, pregnant women are often deprived of nutritious food, health care or rest time. Maternity benefits can help them to look after themselves and the newborn child.

Meagre as they are, maternity benefits under the NFSA are yet to be delivered. The central government is making a pretence of doing so under the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY). The PMMVY's benefits, however, are restricted to one child a family, recently extended to a second child if it is a girl. This restriction is a blatant violation of the Act. Further, the benefits have been arbitrarily reduced to ₹5,000 for the first child.

Scant information

Even these restricted and reduced benefits are



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All pregnant women in India are entitled to maternity benefits, but most of them have not got a single rupee in recent years

being denied to large numbers of entitled women. This failure is well hidden, because the Ministry of Women and Child Development discloses very little information on the PMMVY. The Ministry seems unaware of Section 4 of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, which calls for pro-active disclosure of basic information. Even the simplest of the PMMVY's statistics are not in the public domain.

The Ministry, however, did respond to our RTI queries, on the PMMVY. Based on this information, we have estimated the PMMVY's effective coverage, defined as the proportion of pregnant women who receive at least one instalment of PMMVY benefits. This is a broad definition: the first instalment is just ₹3,000, and strict conditionalities apply to the second instalment (front-loaded for second-child girls). The estimates are sobering: effective coverage peaked at an unimpressive 36% in 2019-20 and declined sharply after that, except for a partial revival in 2022-23. In 2023-24, effective coverage crashed to just 9% (see graph).

This crash is also visible in the Budget's figures. Central government spending on the PMMVY was at an all-time low of ₹870 crore in 2023-24 – barely one third of the corresponding figure five years earlier, that too in money terms. To cover 90% of all births at just ₹6,000 a birth, the PMMVY would require a total budget of at least ₹12,000 crore.

The official line

We discussed these figures with the officials concerned in the Department of Women and Child Development, at the central and State levels. They did not deny that the PMMVY had come to a virtual standstill in 2023-24. They blamed this on major changes in software and implementation processes that were introduced in late 2023. Further scrutiny of the data suggests that the main problem was not a reduction in applications, but a reduced disbursement rate. According to one official, there were software problems "every day".

The problem, however, did not begin in 2023-24. The PMMVY, launched in 2017, has been plagued with complications all along. More than a few of them are related to Aadhaar-based payments and digital tyranny. There have been numerous reports that have drawn attention to these complications and their exclusionary effects. Instead of responding to these ground reports, however, the central government created

more complications in 2023-24, with disastrous consequences for Indian women. For the government, of course, the reduction in PMMVY expenditure is a good deal. Could this be one reason why the tendency to create hurdles is so resilient?

The examples of Tamil Nadu and Odisha

Meanwhile, States such as Tamil Nadu and Odisha have shown the possibility of designing simple and effective maternity-benefit schemes, from 1987 and 2009 onwards, respectively. The monetary support offered by them is more substantial than under the PMMVY – ₹10,000 a child in Odisha and ₹18,000 a child in Tamil Nadu. In Odisha, the amount was doubled ahead of the 2024 general election. In Tamil Nadu, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) promised to increase it to ₹24,000 in its 2021 election manifesto, and the party appears to be waiting for the next election to implement this promise. The PMMVY benefits, for their part, have never been raised, despite being lower than NFSA norms in the first place.

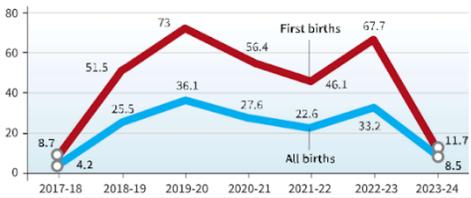
Not only are the amounts higher in Odisha and Tamil Nadu, but their implementation is also much better. Figures reported in Odisha's Economic Survey suggest that maternity benefits covered about 64% of all births there in 2021-22 (the latest year for which data are available). In Tamil Nadu, coverage was 84% in 2023-24, when the all-India coverage under the PMMVY was below 10%. The contrast could hardly be sharper.

In the formal sector, Indian women enjoy a full 26 weeks of paid maternity leave (based on a 2017 amendment of the Maternity Benefits Act 1961), compared with a World Health Organization norm of 14 weeks. In the unorganised sector, they get a flat ₹5,000 if they are lucky enough to survive all the hoops they have to jump through for PMMVY benefits. These double standards are mind-boggling.

The time has come to admit that the PMMVY is a flop show. The central government seems to be more concerned with saving money than with helping pregnant women. As a result, it has ruined a programme that could have proved very useful and popular. It also stands in flagrant violation of the NFSA. The entire programme needs to be revamped in line with the letter and spirit of the Act. The benefits should also be raised and indexed to the price level. The entire society stands to gain from better public support for pregnant women.

Estimated coverage of Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana

Percentage of pregnant women who received at least one PMMVY instalment



Source: Official PMMVY data obtained under RTI; birth numbers were estimated from birth rates and projected population.

A leap backward for maternity entitlements

मातृत्व लाभों के लिए एक कदम पीछे

- Even as States are spending heavily on cash transfers for women, pregnant women continue to be deprived of their legal right to maternity benefits.

जब कई राज्य महिलाओं के लिए नकद हस्तांतरण पर भारी खर्च कर रहे हैं, तब भी गर्भवती महिलाएं अपने मातृत्व लाभों के कानूनी अधिकार से वंचित हैं।

- The situation is worsening as even the small payments that were previously provided are shrinking.

स्थिति और खराब हो रही है क्योंकि पहले दिए जाने वाले छोटे भुगतान भी घटते जा रहे हैं।

- The central government bears the main responsibility for this failure.

इस असफलता की मुख्य जिम्मेदारी केंद्र सरकार की है।



NFSA and legal entitlement

एनएफएसए और कानूनी अधिकार

- Under the **National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013**, all **pregnant women (except those in the formal sector)** are entitled to **maternity benefits of ₹6,000 per child**.
राष्ट्रीय खाद्य सुरक्षा अधिनियम (NFSA) 2013 के तहत, सभी गर्भवती महिलाओं (जो औपचारिक क्षेत्र में नहीं हैं) को प्रति बच्चे ₹6,000 का मातृत्व लाभ मिलने का अधिकार है।
- At today's prices, this amount should be at least **₹12,000**, yet even this is a **meager sum**.
मौजूदा कीमतों के अनुसार, यह राशि कम से कम ₹12,000 होनी चाहिए, लेकिन फिर भी यह बहुत कम है।
- Despite being **inadequate**, the **universal maternity entitlement in the NFSA** was a **groundbreaking provision**.
यह अपर्याप्त होने के बावजूद, एनएफएसए में मातृत्व लाभों का सार्वभौमिक अधिकार एक क्रांतिकारी प्रावधान था।
- **Even in well-off households, pregnant women often lack nutritious food, healthcare, and rest**.
समृद्ध परिवारों में भी गर्भवती महिलाओं को अक्सर पौष्टिक भोजन, स्वास्थ्य देखभाल और आराम नहीं मिल पाता।
- **Maternity benefits can help women take care of themselves and their newborns**.
मातृत्व लाभ महिलाओं को स्वयं और अपने नवजात शिशु की देखभाल करने में सहायता कर सकते हैं।

Issues with PMMVY

पीएमएमवीवाई से जुड़ी समस्याएं

- The **NFSA's maternity benefits have not been implemented properly**. Instead, the government **pretends** to provide them under the **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)**.
एनएफएसए के तहत मातृत्व लाभों को सही तरीके से लागू नहीं किया गया। इसके बजाय, सरकार प्रधानमंत्री मातृ वंदना योजना (PMMVY) के तहत इन्हें देने का दिखावा करती है।
- The **PMMVY benefits are restricted to one child per family, recently extended to the second child if it is a girl**.
पीएमएमवीवाई के लाभ केवल एक बच्चे तक सीमित हैं और हाल ही में यह दूसरे बच्चे (अगर लड़की हो) तक बढ़ाया गया है।
- This restriction is a **blatant violation** of the **NFSA**.
यह प्रतिबंध एनएफएसए का खुला उल्लंघन है।
- Additionally, the **benefits have been arbitrarily reduced to ₹5,000 for the first child**.
इसके अलावा, पहले बच्चे के लिए लाभ को मनमाने ढंग से घटाकर ₹5,000 कर दिया गया है।



Lack of transparency

पारदर्शिता की कमी

- Even these limited and reduced benefits are being denied to many eligible women. ये सीमित और घटाए गए लाभ भी कई पात्र महिलाओं को नहीं दिए जा रहे हैं।
- The Ministry of Women and Child Development does not disclose enough information on the PMMVY's implementation. महिला और बाल विकास मंत्रालय पीएमएमवीवाई के कार्यान्वयन पर पर्याप्त जानकारी जारी नहीं करता।
- The Ministry appears unaware of Section 4 of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, which mandates proactive disclosure of basic information. मंत्रालय सूचना के अधिकार (RTI) अधिनियम की धारा 4 से अनभिज्ञ प्रतीत होता है, जो मूलभूत जानकारी के स्वचालित प्रकटीकरण का प्रावधान करता है।
- Even the simplest statistics related to PMMVY are not publicly available. पीएमएमवीवाई से संबंधित सामान्य आंकड़े भी सार्वजनिक रूप से उपलब्ध नहीं हैं।

Declining coverage and budget cuts

कवरेज में गिरावट और बजट में कटौती

- Based on RTI responses, estimates show that effective coverage (women receiving at least one installment) peaked at 36% in 2019-20 but declined sharply afterward. आरटीआई प्रतिक्रियाओं के आधार पर, आंकड़े दिखाते हैं कि 2019-20 में प्रभावी कवरेज 36% तक पहुंचा, लेकिन इसके बाद तेजी से गिर गया।
- In 2023-24, effective coverage dropped to just 9%. 2023-24 में, प्रभावी कवरेज घटकर केवल 9% रह गया।
- This decline is also reflected in the Budget figures, as central government spending on PMMVY was at an all-time low of ₹870 crore in 2023-24. यह गिरावट बजट आंकड़ों में भी स्पष्ट है, क्योंकि 2023-24 में पीएमएमवीवाई पर केंद्र सरकार का खर्च ₹870 करोड़ के ऐतिहासिक निचले स्तर पर था।
- This amount is barely one-third of what was spent five years ago, even in nominal terms. यह राशि पांच साल पहले खर्च की गई राशि का केवल एक-तिहाई है, वह भी मौजूदा मूल्य पर।
- To cover 90% of births at ₹6,000 per child, PMMVY would require at least ₹12,000 crore. 90% जन्मों को ₹6,000 प्रति बच्चा के हिसाब से कवर करने के लिए, पीएमएमवीवाई को कम से कम ₹12,000 करोड़ के बजट की आवश्यकता होगी।

The official line

सरकारी पक्ष



- Discussions with **officials from the Department of Women and Child Development** at the **central and state levels** confirmed that **PMMVY had almost come to a standstill in 2023-24.**

केंद्र और राज्य स्तरों पर महिला एवं बाल विकास विभाग के अधिकारियों से बातचीत में पुष्टि हुई कि **2023-24 में पीएमएमवीवाई लगभग बंद हो गया था।**

- Officials blamed this on **major software and implementation changes** introduced in **late 2023.**

अधिकारियों ने इसका कारण **2023 के अंत में किए गए प्रमुख सॉफ्टवेयर और कार्यान्वयन में बदलाव** को बताया।

- The real issue was **not fewer applications**, but a **decline in disbursement rates.** असली समस्या आवेदनों की संख्या में कमी नहीं, बल्कि भुगतान दर में गिरावट थी।
- One official admitted that there were **software issues every day.** एक अधिकारी ने स्वीकार किया कि हर दिन सॉफ्टवेयर की समस्याएँ थीं।

Longstanding issues with PMMVY

पीएमएमवीवाई से जुड़ी दीर्घकालिक समस्याएँ

- **PMMVY, launched in 2017**, has faced **complications since its inception.** 2017 में शुरू की गई पीएमएमवीवाई को शुरू से ही कई समस्याओं का सामना करना पड़ा है।
- Many issues stem from **Aadhaar-based payments and digital hurdles.** कई समस्याएँ आधार-आधारित भुगतान और डिजिटल जटिलताओं से उत्पन्न हुई हैं।
- Various reports have highlighted **exclusionary effects**, but instead of addressing them, the **government added new complications in 2023-24.** विभिन्न रिपोर्टों ने बहिष्करण प्रभावों पर ध्यान दिलाया, लेकिन सरकार ने उन्हें सुधारने के बजाय **2023-24 में नई जटिलताएँ जोड़ दीं।**
- The **government's focus seems to be on saving money** rather than **helping pregnant women**, leading to disastrous consequences. सरकार का ध्यान गर्भवती महिलाओं की मदद करने के बजाय धन बचाने पर केंद्रित दिखता है, जिससे गंभीर परिणाम हुए हैं।

The examples of Tamil Nadu and Odisha

तमिलनाडु और ओडिशा के उदाहरण

- **Tamil Nadu (since 1987) and Odisha (since 2009)** have implemented **simpler and more effective maternity benefit schemes.** तमिलनाडु (1987 से) और ओडिशा (2009 से) ने सरल और प्रभावी मातृत्व लाभ योजनाएँ लागू की हैं।
- The **monetary support** under these schemes is **much higher than PMMVY:** इन योजनाओं के तहत वित्तीय सहायता पीएमएमवीवाई से कहीं अधिक है:



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- ₹10,000 per child in Odisha
ओडिशा में प्रति बच्चा ₹10,000
- ₹18,000 per child in Tamil Nadu, with a promise to increase it to ₹24,000.
तमिलनाडु में प्रति बच्चा ₹18,000, जिसे ₹24,000 तक बढ़ाने का वादा किया गया है।
- Before the 2024 general elections, Odisha doubled its maternity benefit amount.
2024 के आम चुनावों से पहले, ओडिशा ने मातृत्व लाभ राशि को दोगुना कर दिया।
- Better implementation:
 - Odisha covered 64% of all births in 2021-22.
ओडिशा ने 2021-22 में कुल जन्मों का 64% कवर किया।
 - Tamil Nadu covered 84% in 2023-24, while PMMVY's national coverage was below 10%.
तमिलनाडु ने 2023-24 में 84% कवरेज प्राप्त किया, जबकि पीएमएमवीवाई का राष्ट्रीय कवरेज 10% से भी कम था।

Double standards in maternity benefits

मातृत्व लाभों में दोहरे मानदंड

- Formal sector women get 26 weeks of paid maternity leave (as per 2017 amendment of the Maternity Benefits Act 1961).
औपचारिक क्षेत्र की महिलाओं को 26 सप्ताह का सवैतनिक मातृत्व अवकाश मिलता है (1961 के मातृत्व लाभ अधिनियम में 2017 के संशोधन के अनुसार)।
- This is higher than the World Health Organization (WHO) norm of 14 weeks.
यह विश्व स्वास्थ्य संगठन (WHO) के 14 सप्ताह के मानक से अधिक है।
- Women in the unorganized sector get just ₹5,000, if they manage to overcome bureaucratic hurdles in the PMMVY process.
असंगठित क्षेत्र की महिलाओं को केवल ₹5,000 मिलते हैं, वह भी अगर वे पीएमएमवीवाई की नौकरशाही बाधाओं को पार कर लें।

Time to revamp PMMVY

पीएमएमवीवाई को पुनः सुधारने की जरूरत

- PMMVY has failed; it is a flop show.
पीएमएमवीवाई असफल हो चुका है; यह एक विफल योजना है।
- The government seems more interested in cost-cutting than supporting pregnant women.
सरकार गर्भवती महिलाओं की मदद करने से ज्यादा धन बचाने में रुचि रखती है।
- A program that could have been useful and popular has been ruined.
जो योजना बहुत उपयोगी और लोकप्रिय हो सकती थी, उसे बर्बाद कर दिया गया।

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- The government is violating the NFSA, which guarantees universal maternity benefits.
सरकार एनएफएसए का उल्लंघन कर रही है, जो सार्वभौमिक मातृत्व लाभों की गारंटी देता है।
- The entire program needs restructuring to align with the NFSA's provisions and spirit.
पूरी योजना को पुनः संरचित करने की जरूरत है, ताकि यह एनएफएसए के प्रावधानों और मूल उद्देश्य के अनुरूप हो।
- Maternity benefits should be increased and linked to inflation rates.
मातृत्व लाभों में वृद्धि होनी चाहिए और इन्हें मुद्रास्फीति दर से जोड़ा जाना चाहिए।
- Better public support for pregnant women will benefit the entire society.
गर्भवती महिलाओं के लिए बेहतर सार्वजनिक समर्थन से पूरे समाज को लाभ होगा।

Maternity Benefit Act, 1961

प्रसूति लाभ अधिनियम, 1961

- The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, is a legislation enacted by the Government of India to regulate the employment of women during the period of childbirth and to provide maternity benefits.
- प्रसूति लाभ अधिनियम, 1961, भारत सरकार द्वारा महिलाओं के प्रसव अवधि के दौरान रोजगार को विनियमित करने और प्रसूति लाभ प्रदान करने के लिए अधिनियमित एक कानून है।

Key Features:

- **Applicability:** The Act applies to all establishments employing 10 or more persons, including factories, mines, plantations, and shops.
- **लागू क्षेत्र:** यह अधिनियम उन सभी संस्थानों पर लागू होता है जो 10 या उससे अधिक व्यक्तियों को रोजगार देते हैं, जिसमें कारखाने, खदानें, बागान, और दुकानें शामिल हैं।
- **Maternity Leave:** Women are entitled to 12 weeks of paid maternity leave, with up to 6 weeks before the expected delivery date and 6 weeks post-delivery.
- **प्रसूति अवकाश:** महिलाओं को 12 सप्ताह के सवेतन प्रसूति अवकाश का अधिकार है, जिसमें अपेक्षित प्रसव तिथि से पहले 6 सप्ताह और प्रसव के बाद 6 सप्ताह शामिल हैं।
- **Wage Protection:** During maternity leave, women are entitled to receive average daily wages for the period of their actual absence.
- **वेतन सुरक्षा:** प्रसूति अवकाश के दौरान, महिलाओं को उनकी वास्तविक अनुपस्थिति की अवधि के लिए औसत दैनिक वेतन प्राप्त करने का अधिकार है।
- **Prohibition of Dismissal:** Employers are prohibited from dismissing or discharging a woman employee on account of her pregnancy.



- निष्कासन पर प्रतिबंध: नियोक्ताओं को गर्भावस्था के कारण किसी महिला कर्मचारी को बर्खास्त करने या निकालने से मना किया गया है।

Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017

प्रसूति लाभ (संशोधन) अधिनियम, 2017

- **Extended Maternity Leave:**
 - The amendment increased the duration of paid maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks for women employees.
 - संशोधन ने महिला कर्मचारियों के लिए सवेतन प्रसूति अवकाश की अवधि 12 सप्ताह से बढ़ाकर 26 सप्ताह कर दी।
 - For women with two or more surviving children, the entitlement remains 12 weeks.
 - जिन महिलाओं के दो या अधिक जीवित बच्चे हैं, उनके लिए अधिकार 12 सप्ताह ही रहता है।
- **Maternity Leave for Adoptive and Commissioning Mothers:**
 - Introduced 12 weeks of maternity leave for adoptive mothers adopting a child below the age of three months and for commissioning mothers (biological mothers using surrogacy).
 - तीन महीने से कम उम्र के बच्चे को गोद लेने वाली माताओं और कमीशनिंग माताओं (सरोगेसी का उपयोग करने वाली जैविक माताओं) के लिए 12 सप्ताह का प्रसूति अवकाश पेश किया गया।
- **Crèche Facility:**
 - Mandates that establishments with 50 or more employees provide crèche facilities within a prescribed distance.
 - 50 या उससे अधिक कर्मचारियों वाले संस्थानों को निर्धारित दूरी के भीतर क्रेच सुविधाएं प्रदान करना अनिवार्य है।
 - Women employees are allowed four visits to the crèche in a day.
 - महिला कर्मचारियों को एक दिन में चार बार क्रेच जाने की अनुमति है।
- **Work from Home Option:**
 - Enables women to avail a "work from home" option after the expiry of maternity leave, based on mutual agreement with the employer.
 - महिलाओं को नियोक्ता के साथ आपसी सहमति के आधार पर प्रसूति अवकाश की समाप्ति के बाद "वर्क फ्रॉम होम" विकल्प का लाभ उठाने की सुविधा देता है।
- **Employer's Obligation:**
 - Employers are required to inform women employees about their rights under the Act at the time of appointment.
 - नियोक्ताओं को नियुक्ति के समय महिला कर्मचारियों को अधिनियम के तहत उनके अधिकारों के बारे में सूचित करना आवश्यक है।



Recent Updates:

- **Code on Social Security, 2020:**
 - The Code on Social Security, 2020, consolidates provisions of various labor laws, including the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961.
 - सामाजिक सुरक्षा संहिता, 2020, विभिन्न श्रम कानूनों के प्रावधानों को समेकित करता है, जिसमें प्रसूति लाभ अधिनियम, 1961 शामिल है।
 - This Code aims to simplify and modernize labor regulations.
 - यह संहिता श्रम विनियमों को सरल और आधुनिक बनाने का उद्देश्य रखती है।

Important Considerations:

- **Financial Implications for Employers:**
 - Employers bear the cost of extended maternity leave, which may impact hiring decisions.
 - नियोक्ता विस्तारित प्रसूति अवकाश की लागत वहन करते हैं, जो भर्ती निर्णयों को प्रभावित कर सकता है।
- **Awareness and Implementation:**
 - Ensuring that both employers and employees are aware of the provisions is crucial for effective implementation.
 - यह सुनिश्चित करना कि नियोक्ता और कर्मचारी दोनों प्रावधानों से अवगत हैं, प्रभावी कार्यान्वयन के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है।



Why are PwDs worried about DPDP rules?

Why are persons with disabilities concerned about a certain provision in the draft Rules of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023? Who are data fiduciaries and data principals? How are legal guardians defined under the draft rules?

GS Paper I: Society

EXPLAINER

Abhinav Lakshman

The story so far:

With the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) looking to wrap up public consultations on the draft Rules for the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 by March 5, disability rights activists are trying to get a key provision of the Act amended or dropped, pointing out that it infantilises Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), negates their decision-making capabilities, and comes from a misunderstood notion of how guardianship works for PwDs.

What does this provision state? Section 9(i), in clubbing children with PwDs, has mandated that even in cases of adult PwDs who have legal guardians, consent for use of any personal data must be obtained from the guardian concerned. While government officials have said that the draft Rules have tried to address the issue by limiting the number of disabilities the provision would apply to, activists and experts maintain that there remain significant challenges in its implementation.

What do the draft Rules say?

The Union government has said that it brought the DPDP Act, 2023 to govern the processing of digital personal data in a way that "recognises both the right of individuals to protect their personal data and the need to process such personal data for lawful purposes and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto". Section 9(i) of the Act says, "The Data Fiduciary shall, before processing any personal data of a child or a person with disability who has a lawful guardian obtain verifiable consent of the parent of such child or the lawful guardian, as the case may be, in such manner as may be prescribed."

The Act's language defines data fiduciaries as those parties processing the personal data and data principals as the users whose data is being collected. But in Section 2(j)(ii), for PwDs, the Act has included "lawful guardian" within the meaning of data principal.

In the draft Rules notified by the MeitY on January 2 this year, the government has proceeded to set out the rules that will govern the Act. In these Rules, Rule 10 deals with the governing of Section 9(i) of the Act. Rule 10(2) says, "A Data Fiduciary, while obtaining verifiable consent from an individual identifying himself as the lawful guardian of a person with disability, shall observe due diligence to verify that such guardian is appointed by a court of law, a designated authority or a local level committee, under the law applicable to guardianship." In the next sub-section, the Rules provide for considering guardianship under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPWD Act) and the National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999 (NT Act).

It also goes on to define PwDs, for whom the consent clause of Section 9(i) would apply to, as: "(i) an individual who has long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with barriers, hinders her full and effective participation in society equally with others and who, despite being provided adequate and appropriate support, is unable to take legally binding decisions. And (ii) an individual who is



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suffering from any of the conditions related to autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation or a combination of any two or more of such conditions and includes an individual suffering from severe multiple disability."

But while the Rule on how to take the consent of the parents of children contains detailed explanations in the form of illustrations that highlight different scenarios and how the consent procedure would work in each, there is no similar illustrations presented for the sub-section that deals with taking consent of the guardian of a person with disability.

This has led disability rights activists and experts alike to question how the consent clause would apply to PwDs, details of procedures for different disabilities and degrees of severity, and whether it would apply uniformly to guardians appointed under different laws.

How do guardianships for PwDs work?

The legal guardianship for PwDs, while not mandatory, is governed by two laws in India – the RPWD Act, 2016 and the NT Act, 1999 – both of which mandate different roles for the guardians appointed under it for adult PwDs.

The NT Act's guardianship clauses apply to people who are "diagnosed with conditions related to autism, cerebral palsy, intellectual disability (previously categorised as mental retardation), or any combined occurrence of two or more of these conditions". It provides for full guardianship of the PwD. In contrast, the RPWD Act's guardianship clauses apply to people "experiencing long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which, when interacting with various barriers, hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others". This provides for a "limited guardianship", which allows for support in making specific legal decisions when the individual's capacity is deemed insufficient.

While the NT Act goes against the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) by making "decision-making capacity" a metric for guardianship without adequately defining

it, the RPWD Act, drafted to keep up with the UNCRPD, frames guardianship as support to PwDs in exercising their own decision-making rights.

Where does the conflict arise?

A small survey among 91 PwDs by policy thinktank PACTA and Saksham Disability has shown that about 27.4% of them had legal guardians. Amongst those respondents who knew which law their guardianship was governed by, most said theirs were under the RPWD Act's provision for "limited guardianship". But despite this, the practicalities of guardianship are different, a report by Saksham and PACTA noted, adding that most of the PwDs with guardians maintained that their legal guardian ends up managing all their affairs. This report, released last month, noted that while the Act and the draft Rules are sound "in theory" if the guardianship is under the RPWD Act, the realities of how this guardianship works would mean that "a guardian is likely to deprive the autonomy and personhood of the individual".

On the other hand, in cases of guardians appointed under the NT Act, this would be in "direct conflict" with the autonomy of persons with disabilities under the UNCRPD, the report argued. The report noted that a plain reading of Section 9(i) of the DPDP Act "appears to presume" that just because a PwD might have a legal guardian, this in itself would be indicative of their "inability to take decisions in the digital sphere".

In addition, it said the law does not consider intersectionality of gender and disability. It cites a situation where a PwD woman may not be able to buy sanitary napkins from an online platform because it may now require their guardian's consent for them to be able to access the platform itself.

Nipun Malhotra, of the Nipman Foundation, who is leading efforts to lobby the government on these provisions, has said that Section 9(i) of the DPDP Act, 2023 itself has caused enough chaos on how it would apply, to whom, and under what circumstances. As for the government's attempts to address the issue with the law by limiting the definition of PwDs in the draft Rules, Mr.

Malhotra told *The Hindu*, "Instead of simplifying how it would apply, the definitions have further complicated the issue." Citing one example of the definition, he explained that "physical impairment" has been included. "But there is no provision for people with just physical disability to have legal guardians. This will only confuse people more."

What are the concerns being raised?

Given the way the consent clause has been structured for PwDs in the DPDP Act, 2023 and the draft Rules, some of the principal concerns that have emerged include those of what legal obligations would the guardian of a PwD face; how the consent clause can be implemented in cases where guardianship law is in dissonance with the UNCRPD; and whether the legal guardian can opt out of consenting on behalf of the user with respect to specific platforms.

Another issue highlighted by Saksham in their report has been that of concerns among PwDs about what the fate of their personal data will be. For instance, the rights body has posited that to comply with Section 9(i) of the Act, any data fiduciary would have to ask at least two questions: (i) Whether the user has a disability? (ii) Whether the user had a legal guardian. In cases where the answer to the first question is yes but the second is not, the platform will still have data on the person's disability with no purpose to process it.

Further, Saksham has questioned that if the definition of data principal includes the legal guardian of a PwD, would that then mean that they must take on the full legal responsibility and face penal consequences under the Act? It has been argued that if this is the case, the legal guardian may, at times, be acting in their own interest, instead of the PwD they are caring for. Moreover, experts working in the disability sector have pointed out that beyond all of this, the primary barrier to PwDs' digital rights remains that of inaccessible platforms and applications. According to a 2023 accessibility evaluation conducted by the Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy of the 10 most used apps, platforms like Paytm, Swiggy, Zomato, and Flipkart had low accessibility scores.

THE GIST

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Why are PwDs worried about DPDP rules?



विकलांग व्यक्तियों को DPDP नियमों को लेकर क्यों चिंता है?

With the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** set to conclude public consultations on the **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023** draft Rules by March 5, disability rights activists are urging amendments.

इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स और सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्रालय (MeitY) 5 मार्च तक डिजिटल व्यक्तिगत डेटा संरक्षण (DPDP) अधिनियम, 2023 के मसौदा नियमों पर सार्वजनिक परामर्श समाप्त करने वाला है, जिससे विकलांगता अधिकार कार्यकर्ता संशोधन की मांग कर रहे हैं।

- They argue that a **key provision infantilizes Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)**, denies them **decision-making rights**, and is based on a **misconception of guardianship**.
वे तर्क देते हैं कि एक मुख्य प्रावधान विकलांग व्यक्तियों (PwDs) को बालसुलभ बना देता है, उनके निर्णय लेने के अधिकारों को नकारता है, और अभिभावकता की गलत अवधारणा पर आधारित है।

What does this provision state?

यह प्रावधान क्या कहता है?

- **Section 9(1) of the DPDP Act clubs children with PwDs** and mandates that if an **adult PwD has a legal guardian**, consent for their **personal data usage** must be obtained from the guardian.
धारा 9(1) में बच्चों और विकलांग व्यक्तियों (PwDs) को एक साथ रखा गया है, और यदि एक वयस्क PwD का कानूनी अभिभावक है, तो उनके व्यक्तिगत डेटा के उपयोग के लिए अभिभावक की सहमति आवश्यक होगी।
- The government claims to have **limited the disabilities** this applies to, but **activists and experts say there are significant implementation challenges**.
सरकार का दावा है कि यह नियम केवल कुछ निश्चित विकलांगताओं तक सीमित किया गया है, लेकिन कार्यकर्ता और विशेषज्ञ इसे लागू करने में गंभीर चुनौतियाँ देखते हैं।

What do the draft Rules say?

मसौदा नियम क्या कहते हैं?

- The **DPDP Act, 2023** was introduced to regulate **digital personal data processing while balancing privacy rights and lawful data use**.
DPDP अधिनियम, 2023 को डिजिटल व्यक्तिगत डेटा प्रसंस्करण को नियंत्रित करने के लिए लाया गया, ताकि गोपनीयता अधिकारों और कानूनी डेटा उपयोग के बीच संतुलन बनाया जा सके।
- **Section 9(1)** states:
 - **A Data Fiduciary (entity processing personal data) must obtain verifiable consent from the parent of a child or the lawful guardian of a PwD before processing personal data.**



- डेटा फिड्यूशियरी (जो व्यक्तिगत डेटा संसाधित करता है) को बच्चे के माता-पिता या PwD के कानूनी अभिभावक से प्रमाणित सहमति लेनी होगी।
- **Section 2(j)(ii)** defines PwDs' lawful guardians as data principals (individuals whose data is collected).
धारा 2(j)(ii) के अनुसार, PwDs के कानूनी अभिभावकों को डेटा प्रिंसिपल (डेटा से संबंधित व्यक्ति) माना गया है।

How do the draft Rules define guardianship?

मसौदा नियमों में अभिभावकता को कैसे परिभाषित किया गया है?

- **Rule 10** of the draft Rules governs **Section 9(1)** and states:
 - A **Data Fiduciary** must verify if a person claiming to be a **lawful guardian of a PwD** is **appointed by a court, designated authority, or local level committee** under applicable guardianship laws.
 - डेटा फिड्यूशियरी को यह सत्यापित करना होगा कि जो व्यक्ति PwD का कानूनी अभिभावक होने का दावा कर रहा है, उसे न्यायालय, अधिकृत प्राधिकरण, या स्थानीय समिति द्वारा नियुक्त किया गया है।
- Guardianship is considered under:
 - **Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act, 2016**
 - विकलांग व्यक्तियों के अधिकार अधिनियम, 2016 (RPWD Act)
 - **National Trust Act (NT Act), 1999**
 - नेशनल ट्रस्ट अधिनियम, 1999 (NT Act)

Which PwDs fall under Section 9(1)?

धारा 9(1) किन PwDs पर लागू होती है?

- Individuals who:
 - Have **long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments** that hinder **full and effective participation in society**, even **with support**.
 - दीर्घकालिक शारीरिक, मानसिक, बौद्धिक, या संवेदी विकारों से पीड़ित हों, जिससे वे समाज में पूर्ण और प्रभावी भागीदारी करने में असमर्थ हों, भले ही उन्हें पर्याप्त सहायता मिल रही हो।
 - Have conditions such as **autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation, or severe multiple disabilities**.
 - ऑटिज़्म, सेरेब्रल पाल्सी, मानसिक मंदता, या गंभीर बहु-विकलांगता से ग्रसित हों।

Lack of clarity in implementation

कार्यान्वयन में अस्पष्टता



- The Rules explain how to take parental consent for children, using illustrations, but no such clarity exists for PwDs.
नियमों में बच्चों के माता-पिता की सहमति लेने की प्रक्रिया को उदाहरणों के माध्यम से स्पष्ट किया गया है, लेकिन PwDs के लिए ऐसी कोई स्पष्टीकरण नहीं दिया गया है।
- Disability rights activists and experts question the lack of clarity on:
 - How consent will be obtained from PwDs.
 - PwDs से सहमति लेने की प्रक्रिया क्या होगी।
 - Which disabilities will require guardianship consent.
 - किन विकलांगताओं के लिए अभिभावक की सहमति आवश्यक होगी।
 - Whether all guardians will be treated equally under different laws.
 - क्या विभिन्न कानूनों के तहत सभी अभिभावकों को समान माना जाएगा।

Concerns raised by activists

कार्यकर्ताओं की चिंताएँ

- **Lack of autonomy:** The provision assumes that PwDs cannot make their own decisions, which violates their fundamental rights.
स्वायत्तता की कमी: यह प्रावधान माना जाता है कि PwDs स्वयं निर्णय नहीं ले सकते, जो उनके मौलिक अधिकारों का उल्लंघन करता है।
- **Implementation issues:** No clear guidelines exist on how guardianship consent will work across different disabilities.
कार्यान्वयन की समस्याएँ: यह स्पष्ट नहीं किया गया है कि विभिन्न विकलांगताओं के लिए अभिभावक की सहमति कैसे लागू होगी।
- **Legal ambiguity:** Different laws recognize different forms of guardianship, leading to confusion in enforcement.
कानूनी अस्पष्टता: अलग-अलग कानूनों में अभिभावकता की अलग-अलग परिभाषाएँ हैं, जिससे लागू करने में कठिनाई होगी।

Conclusion

निष्कर्ष

- **Disability rights activists** demand that **Section 9(1)** be amended or removed, ensuring that PwDs retain their right to make decisions.
विकलांगता अधिकार कार्यकर्ता चाहते हैं कि धारा 9(1) को संशोधित या हटाया जाए, ताकि PwDs के निर्णय लेने के अधिकार बने रहें।
- The DPDP Act must recognize that not all PwDs require guardianship and should avoid overgeneralization.
DPDP अधिनियम को यह स्वीकार करना चाहिए कि सभी PwDs को अभिभावक की आवश्यकता नहीं होती, और सामान्यीकरण से बचना चाहिए।



- Greater clarity and procedural details are needed to ensure that PwDs' rights are not violated.

PwDs के अधिकारों का उल्लंघन न हो, इसके लिए बेहतर स्पष्टता और विस्तृत प्रक्रियाएँ आवश्यक हैं।

How do guardianships for PwDs work?

PwDs के लिए अभिभावकता कैसे काम करती है?

- Legal guardianship for PwDs is not mandatory but is governed by two laws in India:
 - Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act, 2016
 - National Trust (NT) Act, 1999

PwDs के लिए कानूनी अभिभावकता अनिवार्य नहीं है, लेकिन भारत में दो कानूनों द्वारा संचालित होती है:

- विकलांग व्यक्तियों के अधिकार अधिनियम (RPWD) 2016
 - राष्ट्रीय ट्रस्ट अधिनियम (NT) 1999
- NT Act, 1999 applies to individuals diagnosed with autism, cerebral palsy, intellectual disability (formerly called mental retardation), or a combination of these conditions and provides full guardianship.

NT अधिनियम, 1999 उन व्यक्तियों पर लागू होता है जिन्हें ऑटिज़्म, सेरेब्रल पाल्सी, बौद्धिक

विकलांगता (पहले मानसिक मंदता), या इन स्थितियों के संयोजन का निदान किया गया हो, और यह पूर्ण अभिभावकता प्रदान करता है।

- RPWD Act, 2016 applies to those with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments that hinder full and equal participation in society. It provides limited guardianship, allowing support in specific legal decisions.

RPWD अधिनियम, 2016 उन व्यक्तियों पर लागू होता है जिनमें दीर्घकालिक शारीरिक, मानसिक,

बौद्धिक या संवेदी विकलांगता हो, जो उन्हें समाज में पूर्ण और समान भागीदारी से रोकती है। यह सीमित अभिभावकता प्रदान करता है, जिससे वे विशिष्ट कानूनी निर्णयों में सहायता प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।

- NT Act contradicts the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) by defining guardianship based on decision-making capacity without properly defining it.

NT अधिनियम संयुक्त राष्ट्र विकलांगता अधिकार सम्मेलन (UNCRPD) के सिद्धांतों के खिलाफ

जाता है, क्योंकि यह निर्णय लेने की क्षमता को बिना स्पष्ट परिभाषा के अभिभावकता का आधार बनाता है।

- RPWD Act aligns with UNCRPD, as it treats guardianship as support for PwDs rather than a replacement for their decision-making rights.

RPWD अधिनियम UNCRPD के अनुरूप है, क्योंकि यह अभिभावकता को PwDs के निर्णय लेने के अधिकारों के समर्थन के रूप में मानता है, न कि उनके अधिकारों के प्रतिस्थापन के रूप में।

Where does the conflict arise?

विवाद कहाँ उत्पन्न होता है?



- A survey of 91 PwDs by PACTA and Saksham Disability found that 27.4% had legal guardians.
PACTA और सक्षम डिसएबिलिटी द्वारा 91 PwDs पर किए गए सर्वेक्षण में पाया गया कि 27.4% के पास कानूनी अभिभावक थे।
- **Most PwDs had guardians under the RPWD Act's "limited guardianship" provision, but in reality, many legal guardians controlled all aspects of their lives.**
अधिकांश PwDs के अभिभावक RPWD अधिनियम की "सीमित अभिभावकता" प्रावधान के तहत थे, लेकिन व्यावहारिक रूप से कई अभिभावक उनके पूरे जीवन को नियंत्रित कर रहे थे।
- PwDs under NT Act guardianship faced direct conflicts with UNCRPD, as they had no decision-making rights.
NT अधिनियम के तहत अभिभावकता प्राप्त PwDs को UNCRPD के साथ सीधे टकराव का सामना करना पड़ा, क्योंकि उन्हें निर्णय लेने का कोई अधिकार नहीं था।
- DPDP Act, Section 9(1) assumes that if a PwD has a legal guardian, they cannot make decisions about their personal data.
DPDP अधिनियम, धारा 9(1) यह मानता है कि यदि किसी PwD का कानूनी अभिभावक है, तो वह अपने व्यक्तिगत डेटा पर निर्णय नहीं ले सकता।
- The law ignores the intersectionality of gender and disability, potentially restricting a PwD woman from buying sanitary products online without guardian consent.
यह कानून लिंग और विकलांगता के अंतर्संबंध की अनदेखी करता है, जिससे PwD महिला ऑनलाइन सेनेटरी उत्पाद खरीदने से वंचित हो सकती है यदि अभिभावक की सहमति की आवश्यकता हो।
- Activist Nipun Malhotra argues that Section 9(1) is vague, leading to confusion about whom it applies to and under what circumstances.
कार्यकर्ता निपुण मल्होत्रा का कहना है कि धारा 9(1) अस्पष्ट है, जिससे यह भ्रम पैदा होता है कि यह किन व्यक्तियों पर लागू होगी और किन परिस्थितियों में।
- Example: The definition includes "physical impairment", but physical disabilities do not require legal guardians, making the law even more confusing.
उदाहरण: परिभाषा में "शारीरिक विकलांगता" शामिल है, लेकिन शारीरिक विकलांगता के लिए कानूनी अभिभावक की आवश्यकता नहीं होती, जिससे यह कानून और भी भ्रमित करने वाला हो जाता है।

What are the concerns being raised?

क्या चिंताएँ उठाई जा रही हैं?

- **Legal obligations of guardians:** Would legal guardians be held accountable for decisions made on behalf of PwDs?
अभिभावकों की कानूनी जिम्मेदारियाँ: क्या कानूनी अभिभावकों को PwDs के लिए किए गए निर्णयों के लिए उत्तरदायी ठहराया जाएगा?
- **Conflicts with UNCRPD:** How will the consent clause be implemented when guardianship laws contradict UNCRPD's principles?



UNCRPD के साथ टकराव: जब अभिभावकता कानून UNCRPD के सिद्धांतों के खिलाफ जाते हैं, तो सहमति खंड को कैसे लागू किया जाएगा?

- **Opting out of consent:** Can a legal guardian refuse to provide consent for certain online platforms?

सहमति से बाहर निकलने का विकल्प: क्या कानूनी अभिभावक कुछ ऑनलाइन प्लेटफार्मों के लिए सहमति देने से इनकार कर सकता है?

Concerns about personal data

व्यक्तिगत डेटा को लेकर चिंताएँ

- Saksham's report highlights that to comply with Section 9(1), platforms would have to ask two key questions:
 - (i) Does the user have a disability?
 - (ii) Does the user have a legal guardian?

सक्षम की रिपोर्ट दर्शाती है कि धारा 9(1) का पालन करने के लिए, प्लेटफॉर्म को दो महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न पूछने होंगे:

 - (i) क्या उपयोगकर्ता विकलांगता से ग्रसित है?
 - (ii) क्या उपयोगकर्ता का कोई कानूनी अभिभावक है?
- If the answer to question (i) is "yes" but (ii) is "no", the platform still has the disability data with no reason to process it.

यदि प्रश्न (i) का उत्तर "हाँ" लेकिन (ii) का उत्तर "नहीं" है, तो प्लेटफॉर्म के पास फिर भी विकलांगता डेटा रहेगा, लेकिन उसे संसाधित करने का कोई कारण नहीं होगा।
- Data principals include guardians, so would guardians face legal penalties if they misuse personal data?

डेटा प्रिंसिपल में अभिभावक भी शामिल हैं, तो क्या यदि वे व्यक्तिगत डेटा का दुरुपयोग करते हैं, तो उन्हें कानूनी दंड मिलेगा?

Accessibility barriers for PwDs

PwDs के लिए डिजिटल पहुंच में बाधाएँ

- The Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy (2023) evaluated accessibility in India's 10 most used apps.

विधि सेंटर फॉर लीगल पॉलिसी (2023) ने भारत में 10 सबसे ज्यादा उपयोग किए जाने वाले ऐप्स की पहुंच का मूल्यांकन किया।
- Paytm, Swiggy, Zomato, and Flipkart scored low on accessibility.

Paytm, Swiggy, Zomato, और Flipkart की पहुंच के स्कोर कम थे।
- Primary issue: Platforms are not designed for PwDs, limiting their digital participation.



मुख्य समस्या: प्लेटफॉर्म PwDs के लिए अनुकूलित नहीं हैं, जिससे उनकी डिजिटल भागीदारी सीमित हो जाती है।

Why the south of India is no longer impervious to the saffron march

A case study of Kerala shows how the last frontier of Hindutva is being breached in the south. A new book edited by Nissim Mannathukkaren examines the rise of Hindutva in relation to the State's history, caste, culture, post-truth, ideology, gender, politics and the Indian national space

Ziya Us Salam

GS Paper I: History

Trajectories of north and south Indian history have moved at different levels. Unlike north India, where history is often a recollection of invasions and wars, massacres and destruction, the south's has been more about accommodation, assimilation and affirmation. As recounted by historian Romila Thapar in her landmark work, *History of Early India*, "The Arabs settled permanently in the coastal regions of the west and the south from about the eighth and ninth centuries. They were welcomed, given land for trading stations and left free to practise their religion, as had been the convention with Christians earlier in south India....Among the more interesting aspects of Arab settlements along the west coast is that each group adopted some of the customary law, and even some forms of worship, from the local community with whom they had the closest contact." It is in stark contrast to what happened in north India with the invasion of Sindh by Mohammed bin Qasim in 712 CE, and later the raids of Mahmud of Ghazni.

The dichotomy continues to this day. For instance, while north India has been awash with resurgent Hindutva since the time of the Ayodhya dispute, and the consequent othering of fellow citizens of other faiths, large tracts of south India have consistently resisted the march of Hindutva forces. In the general elections last summer, the **Bharatiya Janata Party failed to gain even one seat in Tamil Nadu, and won one seat in Kerala.**

'A real force'

But the limited electoral success does not necessarily mean that the south is impervious to the saffron march. Arguing that Hindutva is a real force which needs

GS Paper II: Electoral Shift

to be concerned with theoretical and empirical terms, journalist and writer Nissim Mannathukkaren and several other writers including **Christophe Jaffrelot, T.T. Sreekumar, Anil M. Varughese, J. Devika** and others examine the rise of Hindu nationalism in Kerala in a new book, *Hindu Nationalism in South India* (Routledge). Placing Kerala in the context of south India, several essays examine the rise of Hindutva in relation to the State's history, caste, culture, post-truth, ideology, gender, politics and the Indian national space.

"Hindu nationalism appears 'more confident, proud, brazen and belligerent than ever before,'" Mannathukkaren writes in the Introduction, quoting Edward Anderson and Arkotong Longkumer. **But the expansion is not just electoral, it is also socio-cultural, he says.** That is why despite the lack of comparable electoral success in Kerala and south India, "it is vital to map the tectonic changes that are happening at a discursive level across India," he writes. Mannathukkaren explains how despite the absence of seats on the electoral charts, **the BJP's vote share has been on the upswing in Kerala, and to a lesser extent in Tamil Nadu.**

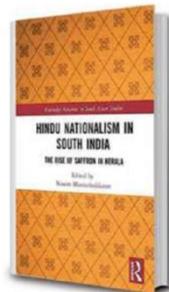
"An electoral analysis of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the BJP in Kerala shows that they increased the vote share from 6.31% in 2009 to 10.83% in 2014, and further to 15.20% in 2019. While the increase in votes has not been enough to win any seats, the changes are very important considering that the Hindu population is only around 55% in the State," he notes. In the 2024

Lok Sabha elections, the BJP won one seat in Kerala with actor-turned-politician Suresh Gopi winning from Thrissur, while the Congress-led United Democratic Front bagged 18 of 20 Lok Sabha seats.

In Telangana, the BJP won four parliamentary seats in 2019. In the 2023 Assembly Elections, it increased its vote share from 6.9% (2018) to 13.90%, its total votes from 14.43 lakh to 32.51 lakh and its seats from one to eight. Effectively, every seventh voter had bought the BJP's narrative of Hindu nationalism. **The saffron gains in the south are real, and could in the foreseeable future, be tangible too.**

Surge in Karnataka

The most significant saffron gains have been in Karnataka where the BJP made an electoral breakthrough as early as 1991. According to Mannathukkaren, "South India as a whole cannot be generalised for there are regional variations among States, such as the **significant advancement of Hindutva in Karnataka.** But crucially, there are variations even within States (thus, **there are frontiers within States**); for example, in coastal



Karnataka, the BJP has won all three seats since 2000. Unique demographic and sociocultural factors gave rise to a virulent Hindutva much before many other places."

But Kerala has drawn a lot of attention as it is perceived as a Left stronghold. Explains Mannathukkaren, "Arguably, no State in India in recent times has drawn the ire of Hindutva groups as much as Kerala. This

has been amplified by traditional media as well as social media networks doing the bidding for the Hindutva dispensation. Thus, the Prime Minister compares Kerala with Somalia (in terms of development), prominent television channels refer to the State as 'Pakistan', WhatsApp forwards and Facebook posts talk of Kerala's 'killing fields' (of Hindutva activists) and its 'jihadi terror' factories...."

Deep roots

A socio-cultural change is taking hold, as Jaffrelot points out in his essay: "It happens through a couple of processes: firstly, the denigration of secularism, religious figures wielding state power, new laws targeting conversion, a ban on beef, the Hinduisation of street/city names, the rewriting of textbooks, etc., which give legitimacy to Hindu nationalism, and secondly, the previously-covert-but now-visible forms of discrimination against religious minorities." While the rise of Hindutva politics has touched almost every part of the country, its roots go back all the way to the time of Jawaharlal Nehru. As Jaffrelot notes, "Nehru fought against all forms of communalism (whether Hindu, Muslim or Sikh), not against religion per se...He never intended to separate politics and religion....Nehru outlined his views on the subject in 1961, when he said, 'We talk about a secular state in India. It is perhaps not very easy even to find a good word in Hindi for 'secular.' Some people think it means something opposed to religion. That obviously is not correct. What it means is that it is a state which honours all faiths equally and gives them equal opportunities."

Thus, it is critical to remember what Nayantra Sahgal said: "We are not all Hindus but we are all Hindustani," from Kerala to Kashmir.



Turning tides: C Krishna



Why the south of India is no longer impervious to the saffron march



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

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

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भारत का दक्षिण अब भगवा लहर के प्रति अजेय नहीं रहा

Historical Differences Between North and South India

उत्तर और दक्षिण भारत के ऐतिहासिक अंतर

- **North Indian history** is marked by **invasions, wars, and destruction**, whereas **South Indian history** has been about **accommodation, assimilation, and affirmation**.
उत्तर भारतीय इतिहास में आक्रमणों, युद्धों और विनाश का उल्लेख अधिक है, जबकि दक्षिण भारतीय इतिहास में समायोजन, आत्मसात करने और स्वीकार्यता पर जोर दिया गया है।
- Historian **Romila Thapar** notes that **Arabs settled permanently in South India in the 8th-9th centuries**, were **welcomed**, given **land for trade**, and allowed to **practice their religion freely**.
इतिहासकार रोमिला थापर के अनुसार, अरब 8वीं-9वीं शताब्दी में दक्षिण भारत में स्थायी रूप से बसे, उनका स्वागत किया गया, व्यापार के लिए भूमि दी गई, और उन्हें स्वतंत्र रूप से अपने धर्म का पालन करने की अनुमति दी गई।
- This contrasts sharply with North India, where **Mohammed bin Qasim's invasion of Sindh in 712 CE** and **Mahmud of Ghazni's raids** led to **conflict and destruction**.
यह उत्तर भारत से बिल्कुल अलग था, जहाँ 712 ईस्वी में मोहम्मद बिन कासिम का सिंध पर आक्रमण और महमूद गजनी के हमले संघर्ष और विनाश का कारण बने।

Current Political Landscape

वर्तमान राजनीतिक परिदृश्य

- **North India** has been experiencing a **rise in Hindutva** since the **Ayodhya dispute**, leading to the **marginalization of non-Hindus**.
उत्तर भारत में अयोध्या विवाद के बाद से हिंदुत्व की लहर तेज हुई है, जिससे गैर-हिंदुओं का हाशिए पर जाना बढ़ा है।
- **South India** has largely **resisted Hindutva forces**, with **BJP failing to secure seats** in several states.
दक्षिण भारत ने हिंदुत्व की ताकतों का विरोध किया है, और बीजेपी कई राज्यों में सीटें जीतने में असफल रही।
- In the **2019 General Elections**, **BJP won only one seat in Kerala** and **none in Tamil Nadu**.
2019 के आम चुनावों में, बीजेपी ने केरल में सिर्फ एक सीट जीती और तमिलनाडु में कोई सीट नहीं मिली।

Hindutva's Growing Influence in South India

दक्षिण भारत में हिंदुत्व का बढ़ता प्रभाव

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- Journalist **Nissim Mannathukkaren** and other scholars, including **Christophe Jaffrelot**, **T.T. Sreekumar**, **Anil M. Varughese**, and **J. Devika**, analyze Hindutva's rise in Kerala in their book "Hindu Nationalism in South India".
पत्रकार निस्सिम मनाथुक्कारेन और अन्य विद्वान, जैसे क्रिस्टोफ जैफरलॉट, टी.टी. श्रीकुमार, अनिल एम. वरुघेसे और जे. देविका, ने अपनी पुस्तक "हिंदू नेशनलिज्म इन साउथ इंडिया" में केरल में हिंदुत्व के उदय का विश्लेषण किया है।
- **Mannathukkaren** argues that while **Hindutva's electoral success is limited**, its **social and cultural impact is growing**.
मनाथुक्कारेन का तर्क है कि हालांकि हिंदुत्व की चुनावी सफलता सीमित है, लेकिन इसका सामाजिक और सांस्कृतिक प्रभाव बढ़ रहा है।
- **BJP's vote share in Kerala has steadily increased:**
 - 2009: 6.31%
 - 2014: 10.83%
 - 2019: 15.20%बीजेपी का केरल में वोट शेयर लगातार बढ़ा है:
 - 2009: 6.31%
 - 2014: 10.83%
 - 2019: 15.20%
- In the **2024 Lok Sabha elections**, **BJP won one seat in Kerala** (actor-politician **Suresh Gopi** from Thrissur), while the **Congress-led UDF won 18 out of 20 seats**.
2024 के लोकसभा चुनावों में, बीजेपी ने केरल में एक सीट जीती (अभिनेता-राजनीतिज्ञ सुरेश गोपी ने त्रिशूर से जीत हासिल की), जबकि कांग्रेस-नेतृत्व वाले UDF ने 20 में से 18 सीटें जीतीं।

BJP's Rise in Telangana

तेलंगाना में बीजेपी का उदय

- **2019 General Elections:** **BJP won four parliamentary seats in Telangana**.
2019 के आम चुनावों में बीजेपी ने तेलंगाना में चार लोकसभा सीटें जीतीं।
- **2023 Assembly Elections:**
 - BJP's vote share increased from **6.9% (2018) to 13.90%**.
 - BJP's total votes grew from **14.43 lakh to 32.51 lakh**.
 - BJP's seats increased from **one to eight**.2023 के विधानसभा चुनावों में:
 - बीजेपी का वोट शेयर **6.9% (2018) से बढ़कर 13.90% हो गया**।
 - कुल वोट **14.43 लाख से बढ़कर 32.51 लाख हो गए**।
 - सीटों की संख्या **एक से बढ़कर आठ हो गई**।
- **Every seventh voter in Telangana now supports BJP's Hindu nationalist narrative**.
तेलंगाना में हर सातवां मतदाता अब बीजेपी के हिंदू राष्ट्रवादी दृष्टिकोण का समर्थन करता है।

The Social and Cultural Expansion of Hindutva



हिंदुत्व का सामाजिक और सांस्कृतिक विस्तार

- **Hindutva in South India** is not just about **electoral politics**; it is influencing **caste, culture, and ideological discourses**.
दक्षिण भारत में हिंदुत्व सिर्फ चुनावी राजनीति तक सीमित नहीं है, बल्कि यह जाति, संस्कृति और विचारधारा को भी प्रभावित कर रहा है।
- **BJP's increasing vote share** in Kerala and Tamil Nadu suggests a **slow but steady ideological shift**.
केरल और तमिलनाडु में बीजेपी के बढ़ते वोट शेयर से पता चलता है कि वैचारिक बदलाव धीरे-धीरे हो रहा है।
- **Social and religious festivals** are being used as **platforms to promote Hindutva**.
सामाजिक और धार्मिक त्योहारों का हिंदुत्व के प्रचार के लिए उपयोग किया जा रहा है।

Conclusion: The Future of Hindutva in South India

निष्कर्ष: दक्षिण भारत में हिंदुत्व का भविष्य

- While **South India** has historically resisted **Hindutva**, the **BJP's growing influence** in states like **Kerala, Telangana, and Tamil Nadu** signals a **changing political landscape**.
हालांकि दक्षिण भारत ने ऐतिहासिक रूप से हिंदुत्व का विरोध किया है, लेकिन केरल, तेलंगाना और तमिलनाडु जैसे राज्यों में बीजेपी के बढ़ते प्रभाव से पता चलता है कि राजनीतिक परिदृश्य बदल रहा है।
- **BJP's electoral gains** remain **limited**, but its **social and ideological expansion** is **significant**.
बीजेपी की चुनावी बढ़त सीमित है, लेकिन इसका सामाजिक और वैचारिक विस्तार महत्वपूर्ण है।
- In the coming years, **Hindutva forces** may gain more **tangible success** in **South India** through **persistent ideological and cultural engagement**.
आने वाले वर्षों में, हिंदुत्व की ताकतें दक्षिण भारत में अधिक प्रभावशाली सफलता हासिल कर सकती हैं, खासकर वैचारिक और सांस्कृतिक प्रचार के माध्यम से।

Surge in Karnataka

कर्नाटक में भगवा लहर का उभार

- **Karnataka** has seen the **most significant Hindutva gains** in South India, with **BJP** making an **electoral breakthrough** as early as **1991**.
कर्नाटक दक्षिण भारत में सबसे महत्वपूर्ण हिंदुत्व वृद्धि का गवाह रहा है, जहाँ बीजेपी ने 1991 में ही चुनावी सफलता हासिल कर ली थी।
- **Nissim Mannathukkaren** states that **South India cannot be generalized**, as there are **regional variations**.



निस्सिम मनाथुक्कारेन कहते हैं कि पूरे दक्षिण भारत को एक समान नहीं माना जा सकता, क्योंकि यहाँ क्षेत्रीय भिन्नताएँ हैं।

- Even within Karnataka, there are variations:
 - In coastal Karnataka, BJP has won all three seats since 2000.
 - Unique demographic and socio-cultural factors have led to an early rise of aggressive Hindutva.
- कर्नाटक के भीतर भी भिन्नताएँ हैं:
- तटीय कर्नाटक में, बीजेपी 2000 से लगातार तीनों सीटें जीत रही है।
 - विशिष्ट जनसांख्यिकीय और सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक कारकों ने यहाँ हिंदुत्व के आक्रामक उभार को बढ़ावा दिया।

Hindutva's Focus on Kerala

केरल पर हिंदुत्व का फोकस

- Kerala is perceived as a Left stronghold, making it a key target for Hindutva forces. केरल को वामपंथ का गढ़ माना जाता है, जिससे यह हिंदुत्व शक्तियों के लिए एक प्रमुख लक्ष्य बन गया है।
 - Mannathukkaren explains that no state in India has faced as much Hindutva hostility as Kerala. मनाथुक्कारेन बताते हैं कि भारत में कोई अन्य राज्य केरल जितना हिंदुत्व विरोध का शिकार नहीं हुआ।
 - Media and social media narratives have fueled this perception:
 - PM Modi compared Kerala to Somalia in terms of development.
 - TV channels referred to Kerala as 'Pakistan'.
 - WhatsApp forwards and Facebook posts labeled Kerala as a hub of "jihadi terror" and "Hindutva activist killings".
- मीडिया और सोशल मीडिया ने इस धारणा को बढ़ावा दिया:
- प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने केरल की तुलना सोमालिया से की (विकास के संदर्भ में)।
 - टीवी चैनलों ने केरल को 'पाकिस्तान' कहा।
 - व्हाट्सएप फॉरवर्ड और फेसबुक पोस्ट्स में केरल को "जिहादी आतंक" और "हिंदुत्व कार्यकर्ताओं की हत्या का केंद्र" बताया गया।

Deep Roots of Hindutva's Expansion

हिंदुत्व के विस्तार की गहरी जड़ें

- Christophe Jaffrelot identifies two main processes driving Hindutva's rise:
- क्रिस्टोफ जैफरलॉट ने हिंदुत्व के विस्तार के दो मुख्य कारण बताए:
- Denigration of secularism:
 - Religious figures in state power.
 - New laws targeting conversion and beef bans.

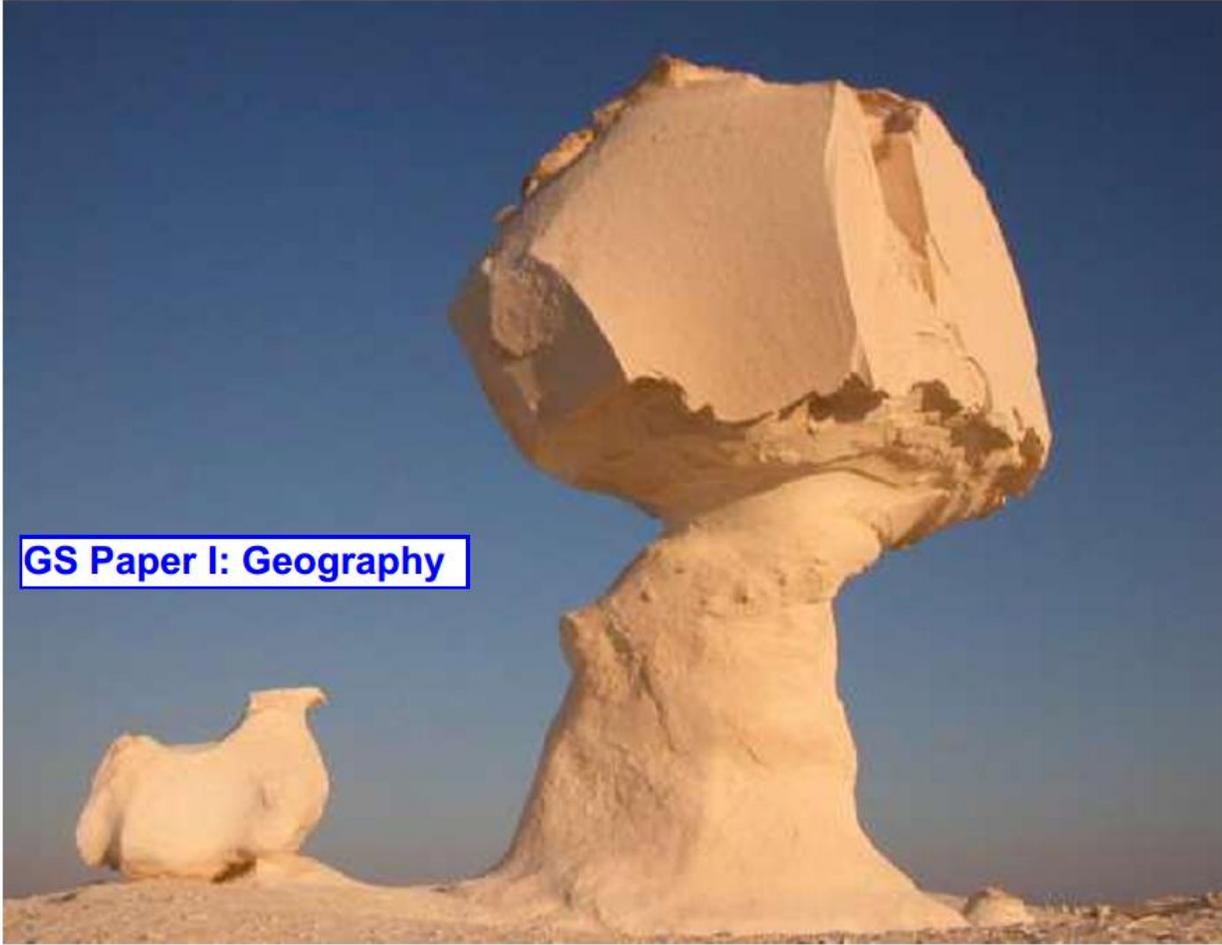


- Hinduisation of city and street names.
- Textbook rewriting to support Hindu nationalism.
- धर्मनिरपेक्षता का अपमान:
 - धार्मिक नेताओं का राज्य सत्ता में आना।
 - धर्म परिवर्तन विरोधी कानून और गौमांस पर प्रतिबंध।
 - शहरों और सड़कों के नाम हिंदूकरण की ओर बढ़ना।
 - हिंदू राष्ट्रवाद को बढ़ावा देने के लिए पाठ्यपुस्तकों का पुनर्लेखन।
- Previously hidden discrimination against minorities is now openly visible.
पहले छिपा हुआ धार्मिक भेदभाव अब खुलकर सामने आ रहा है।

Historical Context of Hindutva's Rise

हिंदुत्व के उदय का ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ

- Jaffrelot traces Hindutva's expansion back to Nehru's era.
जैफरलॉट हिंदुत्व के विस्तार को नेहरू के युग तक वापस ले जाते हैं।
- Nehru fought against all forms of communalism (Hindu, Muslim, Sikh) but did not intend to separate politics and religion entirely.
नेहरू ने सभी प्रकार के सांप्रदायिकता (हिंदू, मुस्लिम, सिख) के खिलाफ संघर्ष किया, लेकिन राजनीति और धर्म को पूरी तरह अलग करने का उद्देश्य नहीं रखा।
- In 1961, Nehru explained secularism in India:
- 1961 में नेहरू ने भारत में धर्मनिरपेक्षता को समझाया:
 - "A secular state is not opposed to religion. It honors all faiths equally and gives them equal opportunities."
 - "एक धर्मनिरपेक्ष राज्य धर्म के विरोध में नहीं होता। यह सभी धर्मों को समान सम्मान देता है और उन्हें समान अवसर प्रदान करता है।"
- Writer **Nayantara Sahgal's quote** summarizes India's pluralism:
 - "We are not all Hindus, but we are all Hindustani."
लेखिका नयनतारा सहगल के अनुसार भारत की विविधता का सार:
 - "हम सभी हिंदू नहीं हैं, लेकिन हम सभी हिंदुस्तानी हैं।"



GS Paper I: Geography

Visual: This is a limestone rock formation in the White Desert National Park in Egypt. What are such rocks, which are faceted by sand and ice crystals carried in wind, called? CREDIT: PUBLIC DOMAIN

Ventifacts: Wind-Sculpted Rock Formations

वेंटिफैक्ट्स: पवन द्वारा तराशित शैल संरचनाएँ

- Ventifacts are rocks that have been shaped, polished, or faceted by the abrasive action of wind-driven particles such as sand or ice crystals. These



natural formations are predominantly found in arid regions where strong winds and loose sediments prevail.

- वेंटिफैक्ट्स वे शैल होते हैं जो हवा द्वारा उड़ाए गए कणों जैसे रेत या बर्फ के क्रिस्टल की घर्षण क्रिया से आकार, पॉलिश या चमकदार होते हैं। ये प्राकृतिक संरचनाएँ मुख्यतः शुष्क क्षेत्रों में पाई जाती हैं जहाँ तेज़ हवाएँ और ढीले अवसाद प्रचलित होते हैं।

Formation Process

निर्माण प्रक्रिया

- **Abrasion by Wind-Driven Particles:** In desert environments, minimal vegetation allows winds to carry sand particles at high velocities. When these particles collide with rock surfaces, they erode the rock through a process called abrasion, gradually wearing it down and creating smooth, polished facets.
- **हवा द्वारा कणों की घर्षण:** रेगिस्तानी वातावरण में, न्यूनतम वनस्पति हवाओं को उच्च गति से रेत कणों को ले जाने की अनुमति देती है। जब ये कण शैल सतहों से टकराते हैं, तो वे घर्षण नामक प्रक्रिया के माध्यम से शैल को क्षीण करते हैं, धीरे-धीरे इसे घिसकर चिकनी, पॉलिश सतहें बनाते हैं।
- **Role of Wind Direction:** Consistent wind patterns cause erosion on specific sides of rocks, leading to the development of distinct facets aligned with prevailing wind directions.
- **हवा की दिशा की भूमिका:** नियमित हवा के पैटर्न शैलों के विशिष्ट पक्षों पर अपरदन का कारण बनते हैं, जिससे प्रमुख हवा की दिशाओं के साथ संरेखित विशिष्ट सतहों का विकास होता है।

Types of Ventifacts

वेंटिफैक्ट्स के प्रकार

- **Einkanters:** Rocks with a single polished facet.
- **Einkanters:** एकल पॉलिश सतह वाले शैल।
- **Zweikanters:** Rocks featuring two polished facets.
- **Zweikanters:** दो पॉलिश सतहों वाले शैल।
- **Dreikanters:** Rocks possessing three polished facets that converge at sharp edges.
- **Dreikanters:** तीन पॉलिश सतहों वाले शैल जो तीव्र किनारों पर मिलते हैं।
- These classifications are derived from German terms: "ein" meaning one, "zwei" meaning two, and "drei" meaning three.



- ये वर्गीकरण जर्मन शब्दों से लिए गए हैं: "ein" का अर्थ एक, "zwei" का अर्थ दो, और "drei" का अर्थ तीन होता है।

Notable Examples

उल्लेखनीय उदाहरण

- **White Desert National Park, Egypt:** This park is renowned for its ventifacts, including mushroom-shaped rock formations sculpted by wind-driven sand.
- **व्हाइट डेजर्ट नेशनल पार्क, मिस्र:** यह पार्क अपने वेंटिफैक्ट्स के लिए प्रसिद्ध है, जिसमें हवा द्वारा तराशित मशरूम के आकार की शैल संरचनाएँ शामिल हैं।
- **Ventifact Ridge, Death Valley, USA:** A ridge in Death Valley covered with numerous ventifacts, showcasing the erosive power of wind in desert landscapes.
- **वेंटिफैक्ट रिज, डेथ वैली, यूएसए:** डेथ वैली में एक रिज जो कई वेंटिफैक्ट्स से ढका हुआ है, जो रेगिस्तानी परिदृश्यों में हवा की अपरदन शक्ति को दर्शाता है।

Significance

महत्व

- **Paleo-Wind Indicators:** Ventifacts serve as historical records of wind patterns. The orientation of their facets can reveal the direction and intensity of ancient winds.
- **प्राचीन हवा के संकेतक:** वेंटिफैक्ट्स हवा के पैटर्न के ऐतिहासिक रिकॉर्ड के रूप में कार्य करते हैं। उनकी सतहों का संरेखण प्राचीन हवाओं की दिशा और तीव्रता को प्रकट कर सकता है।
- **Martian Ventifacts:** Similar formations have been identified on Mars, providing insights into the planet's atmospheric conditions. Notably, some Martian ventifacts have caused damage to rover equipment, highlighting their sharpness and the erosive processes on Mars.
- **मंगल ग्रह के वेंटिफैक्ट्स:** समान संरचनाएँ मंगल पर पहचानी गई हैं, जो ग्रह की वायुमंडलीय स्थितियों में अंतर्दृष्टि प्रदान करती हैं। विशेष रूप से, कुछ मंगल वेंटिफैक्ट्स ने रोवर उपकरणों को नुकसान पहुँचाया है, जो उनकी तीक्ष्णता और मंगल पर अपरदन प्रक्रियाओं को दर्शाता है।



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

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

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

1. South will not lose LS seats on delimitation, says Shah

दक्षिण भारत अपनी लोकसभा सीटें परिसीमन में नहीं खोएगा, शाह ने कहा

2. Govt. questions petitions in apex court for lifetime ban on convicted politicians

सरकार ने दोषी राजनेताओं पर आजीवन प्रतिबंध लगाने की याचिकाओं पर सवाल उठाए

3. Trump's Russia-Ukraine policy hangs over EU-India talks

ट्रंप की रूस-यूक्रेन नीति ने यूरोपीय संघ-भारत वार्ता को प्रभावित किया

4. Two Board exams aimed to provide a chance to improve performance: CBSE Chair

दो बोर्ड परीक्षाएं प्रदर्शन सुधारने का अवसर प्रदान करने के लिए: सीबीएसई अध्यक्ष



South will not lose LS seats on delimitation, says Shah

Home Minister says PM has ensured no seat is going to be cut on a pro rata basis; DMK's A. Raja terms the stance 'confusing,' asking if pro rata is based on population or existing number of seats

**GS Paper II:
Parliamentary
Representation**

Southern States will not be affected by the delimitation exercise, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi has ensured that not a single Lok Sabha seat is going to be "reduced on a pro rata basis", Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Wednesday. He said the southern States would get their rightful share if the number of Lok Sabha seats were to be increased.

Mr. Shah was attempting to dismiss the concerns raised by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, who recently warned that the State could lose eight Lok Sabha seats on delimitation if it is based on population changes recorded in the Census. Mr. Stalin has



Union Home Minister Amit Shah during the inauguration of the new office building of the BJP in Coimbatore on Wednesday. M. PERIASAMY

called for an all-party meeting on March 5, claiming that the State's successful implementation of family planning policies has now placed it at a disadvantage in terms of electoral representation.

Speaking at the inauguration of new buildings for BJP offices in Coimbatore, Ramanathapuram, and Ti-

ruvannamalai districts, Mr. Shah reiterated the assurance given by Mr. Modi in Parliament that the southern States would not lose a single seat to delimitation.

However, the DMK said the Union Home Minister's assurance was "confusing". DMK MP A. Raja told presspersons that the key question had not been an-

swered. "There is no clear answer to the question of whether the pro rata basis will be on the basis of the existing number of constituencies or the population," he said. Tamil Nadu should not be punished for achieving population control, Mr. Raja said.

Mr. Stalin's stand is that delimitation based on population is not acceptable, Mr. Raja said.

"We are not just against the reduction of seats. It is an injustice even if they retain our existing seats and increase seats for north Indian States on the basis of population. Pro rata basis should be based on the 1971 census and the existing number of MPs," the DMK leader said.

**CONTINUED ON
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South will not lose LS seats on delimitation, says Shah

दक्षिण भारत अपनी लोकसभा सीटें परिसीमन में नहीं खोएगा, शाह ने कहा

Southern States will not be affected by the delimitation exercise, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi has ensured that not a single Lok Sabha seat is going to be reduced on a pro rata basis, said Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

दक्षिणी राज्य परिसीमन प्रक्रिया से प्रभावित नहीं होंगे, क्योंकि प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने



सुनिश्चित किया है कि प्रत्येक लोकसभा सीट को प्रो राटा आधार पर नहीं घटाया जाएगा, केंद्रीय गृह मंत्री अमित शाह ने कहा।

- **Shah** stated that **southern States** would get their **rightful share** if the number of **Lok Sabha seats** were to be **increased**.

शाह ने कहा कि अगर लोकसभा सीटों की संख्या बढ़ाई जाती है, तो दक्षिणी राज्यों को उनका उचित हिस्सा मिलेगा।

- **Shah** dismissed concerns raised by **Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin**, who warned that the State could **lose eight Lok Sabha seats** if **delimitation** is based on **population changes** recorded in the **Census**.

शाह ने तमिलनाडु के मुख्यमंत्री एम.के. स्टालिन द्वारा उठाई गई चिंताओं को खारिज किया, जिन्होंने चेतावनी दी थी कि यदि जनसंख्या परिवर्तनों के आधार पर परिसीमन किया जाता है, तो राज्य आठ लोकसभा सीटें खो सकता है।

- **Stalin** has called for an **all-party meeting on March 5**, stating that Tamil Nadu's successful **family planning policies** have placed it at a **disadvantage** in **electoral representation**.

स्टालिन ने 5 मार्च को सर्वदलीय बैठक बुलाई है, यह दावा करते हुए कि तमिलनाडु की सफल परिवार नियोजन नीतियों ने इसे चुनावी प्रतिनिधित्व में नुकसान में डाल दिया है।

- Speaking at the inauguration of **BJP offices in Coimbatore, Ramanathapuram, and Tiruvannamalai districts**, **Shah** reiterated **Modi's assurance in Parliament** that **southern States** would **not lose** a single seat to **delimitation**.

कोयंबटूर, रामनाथपुरम और तिरुवन्नामलाई जिलों में भाजपा कार्यालयों के उद्घाटन पर बोलते हुए, शाह ने संसद में मोदी के आश्वासन को दोहराया कि दक्षिणी राज्यों को परिसीमन के कारण एक भी सीट नहीं खोनी पड़ेगी।

- **DMK** found **Shah's assurance confusing**. **DMK MP A. Raja** stated that the key question remains unanswered: whether **pro rata basis** will be based on **existing constituencies** or **population**.

डीएमके ने शाह के आश्वासन को भ्रमित करने वाला बताया। डीएमके सांसद ए. राजा ने कहा कि मुख्य प्रश्न का उत्तर नहीं दिया गया है: क्या प्रो राटा आधार मौजूदा निर्वाचन क्षेत्रों या जनसंख्या पर आधारित होगा?

- **Tamil Nadu** should not be **punished** for achieving **population control**, said **Raja**. **Tamil Nadu** को **जनसंख्या नियंत्रण** प्राप्त करने के लिए **दंडित नहीं किया जाना चाहिए**, राजा ने कहा।

- **Stalin's stand** is that **delimitation based on population is not acceptable**, said **Raja**. **स्टालिन का रुख** है कि **जनसंख्या के आधार पर परिसीमन स्वीकार्य नहीं है**, राजा ने कहा।

- **DMK** opposes not only the **reduction of seats** but also any **increase in seats for northern States** based on **population**.

डीएमके सिर्फ सीटों में कमी का ही विरोध नहीं कर रही, बल्कि जनसंख्या के आधार पर उत्तर भारतीय राज्यों के लिए सीटों में वृद्धि का भी विरोध कर रही है।



- **Pro rata basis** should be based on the **1971 Census** and the **existing number of MPs**, said **Raja**.

प्रो राटा आधार 1971 की जनगणना और मौजूदा सांसदों की संख्या पर आधारित होना चाहिए, राजा ने कहा।

Govt. questions petitions in apex court for lifetime ban on convicted politicians

GS Paper II: RPA

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Centre has questioned the logic behind the demand for a lifetime ban on convicted politicians from contesting elections or being nominated to Parliament or State legislatures.

It said that prison sentences or punishments under penal law are for a specific period, say a few years, after which convicts regain their rights and are prompted to rejoin society.

The Centre was responding to pleas, including one by advocate A.K. Upadhyay, seeking a lifetime ban on convicted politicians from contesting elections.

It had filed a similar affidavit in December 2020, maintaining that disqualification under Section 8 of



The Centre reasoned that penal punishments largely tend to be finite in quantum and time.

the Representation of the People Act of 1951 for the period of prison sentence and six years thereafter was enough punishment for errant or criminal legislators. But, on February 10, the top court said there was an apparent conflict of interest if people found guilty of breaking the law return as lawmakers.

"Once convicted, how can people come back to Parliament and legisla-

tures? There is an apparent conflict of interest," Justice Dipankar Datta, heading a Bench comprising Justice Manmohan, had observed.

'Unduly harsh'

In its latest affidavit filed on February 24, the Centre reasoned that penal laws impose a restriction on freedoms and rights of persons only for a specific period, that is, the time of prison sentence. These restrictions cease to operate automatically. The Centre indicated that banning a person, who has served his time in jail for an offence, from contesting elections or re-entering politics for life would be unduly harsh, disproportionate and excessive.

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Govt. questions petitions in apex court for lifetime ban on convicted politicians

सरकार ने दोषी राजनेताओं पर

आजीवन प्रतिबंध लगाने की याचिकाओं पर सवाल उठाए

The Centre has questioned the logic behind the demand for a lifetime ban on convicted politicians from contesting elections or being nominated to Parliament or State legislatures.

केंद्र सरकार ने चुनाव लड़ने या संसद और राज्य विधानमंडलों में नामांकित होने से दोषी राजनेताओं पर आजीवन प्रतिबंध लगाने की तर्कसंगतता पर सवाल उठाया है।

- It said that **prison sentences** or **punishments under penal law** are for a **specific period**, after which **convicts** regain their rights and are encouraged to **rejoin society**. सरकार ने कहा कि कैद की सजा या दंड संहिता के तहत दी गई सजाएँ एक निश्चित अवधि के लिए होती हैं, जिसके बाद दोषियों को उनके अधिकार वापस मिल जाते हैं और उन्हें समाज में फिर से शामिल होने के लिए प्रोत्साहित किया जाता है।
- The **Centre** was responding to **pleas**, including one by **advocate A.K. Upadhyay**, seeking a **lifetime ban on convicted politicians** from contesting elections. केंद्र सरकार ने एडवोकेट ए.के. उपाध्याय सहित कई याचिकाओं पर प्रतिक्रिया दी, जो दोषी राजनेताओं पर आजीवन प्रतिबंध लगाने की मांग कर रही थीं।
- It had filed a **similar affidavit in December 2020**, maintaining that **disqualification under Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951** for the period of **prison sentence** and **six years thereafter** was enough punishment.



सरकार ने दिसंबर 2020 में एक समान हलफनामा दायर किया था, जिसमें कहा गया था कि 1951 के जनप्रतिनिधित्व अधिनियम की धारा 8 के तहत कैद की सजा और उसके बाद के छह वर्षों के लिए अयोग्यता ही पर्याप्त दंड है।

- On **February 10**, the **Supreme Court** observed that there was an **apparent conflict of interest** if people **found guilty of breaking the law** return as lawmakers.
10 फरवरी को **सुप्रीम कोर्ट** ने कहा कि यदि **कानून तोड़ने के दोषी पाए गए लोग फिर से विधायक या सांसद बनते हैं**, तो यह **स्पष्ट हितों का टकराव** होगा।
- **Justice Dipankar Datta**, heading a **Bench comprising Justice Manmohan**, questioned, **“Once convicted, how can people come back to Parliament and legislatures?”**

न्यायमूर्ति दीपांकर दत्ता, जो **न्यायमूर्ति मनमोहन** की पीठ की अध्यक्षता कर रहे थे, ने पूछा, **“एक बार दोषी ठहराए जाने के बाद लोग फिर से संसद और विधानमंडल में कैसे आ सकते हैं?”**

‘Unduly harsh’

‘अनुचित रूप से कठोर’

- In its **latest affidavit filed on February 24**, the **Centre** reasoned that **penal laws** impose restrictions on **freedoms and rights** only for a **specific period**, i.e., the **time of prison sentence**.
24 फरवरी को दायर अपने नवीनतम हलफनामे में, **केंद्र सरकार** ने तर्क दिया कि **दंड कानून** केवल एक **निश्चित अवधि**, यानी **कैद की सजा की अवधि तक स्वतंत्रता और अधिकारों पर प्रतिबंध** लगाते हैं।
- These **restrictions cease to operate automatically** after the sentence is completed. ये प्रतिबंध **सजा पूरी होने के बाद स्वतः समाप्त हो जाते हैं**।
- The **Centre** indicated that banning a person, who has **served his time in jail**, from **contesting elections or re-entering politics for life** would be **unduly harsh, disproportionate, and excessive**.

केंद्र सरकार ने संकेत दिया कि किसी व्यक्ति को, जिसने अपनी सजा पूरी कर ली है, **आजीवन चुनाव लड़ने या राजनीति में फिर से प्रवेश करने से रोकना अनुचित रूप से कठोर, असंगत और अत्यधिक** होगा।



Trump's Russia-Ukraine policy hangs over EU-India talks

GS Paper II: India-EU

Suhasini Haidar
MADRID/NEW DELHI

Stung by the shifts in U.S. foreign policy, particularly on the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the two-day visit by the President of the European Commission (EU), Ursula von der Leyen, and 21 EU Commissioners beginning Thursday will send the message that Europe is shoring up other partners, including India, as much as they focus on the task of resetting EU-India ties.

The College of Commissioners' travel is "unprecedented", a EU statement said, as they have never travelled to any country in such strength before. According to EU officials who briefed European and India media this week, the visit has been planned for some months, and was announced by Ms. von der Leyen at Davos on January 21. The policy changes wrought by U.S. President

Donald Trump since then hang over the meetings in Delhi.

"A new push for greater cooperation, to be clear, was already identified and planned quite a while ago," an EU official said, adding: "But the timing of this visit is, of course, particularly interesting given the global developments that we are facing."

The European delegation comes just after the third anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which was marked by a moment of solidarity with the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and the presence of more than a dozen European and Western leaders, including Ms. von der Leyen, in Kyiv for commemorative ceremonies. The EU also imposed a 16th round of sanctions on Russia, even as the U.S. broke with it at the United Nations by voting with Russia against an EU reso-



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen along with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at a security summit. AP

lution calling for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine.

Their meetings with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and many members of the Union Cabinet will coincide with Mr. Zelenskyy's travel to Washington to sign a "mineral deal" and discuss a Russia-Ukraine ceasefire proposal with Mr. Trump, seen as a significant climbdown by the Ukrainian President, even after Mr. Trump

called him a "dictator" with "4% approval ratings". The EU visit to Delhi will also come days before an extraordinary European summit on March 6.

"One specific point that I expect President Leyen to raise in the context of that conversation is not just our support for Ukraine, but also our sanctions that we are maintaining on Russia," the EU official said, indicating that despite the setback from the U.S.'s U-

turn, the EU would continue "intensifying enforcement of its sanctions against Moscow".

New Delhi, which has rejected all sanctions against Russia thus far, and increased its oil imports from the Russian Ural multi-fold since 2022, is unlikely to change its position, especially in the revised circumstances.

The substance of the visit, then, will come from a restart in EU-India relations that have been somewhat cast in the shade over the Ukraine conflict. There has been no EU-India annual summit since 2020, although they held a 'Leader's Summit' in 2021, and are now preparing for a summit later in 2025.

Despite relaunching the long-pending EU-India Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) talks in 2022, the two sides have not made much headway over tariff issues on

cars, wine and spirits, and on non-tariff barriers, officials conceded, and will hope for a political push during the Delhi visit ahead of the next round of trade talks on March 10-14 in Brussels.

The visit will begin with a meeting of the Trade and Technology Council (TTC), which is expected to work on aligning AI policies as well as cooperation on semiconductors, quantum computing, and green technology areas. This will be followed by bilateral meetings between EU Commissioners and Indian Ministers, a plenary with Mr. Modi, Ms. von der Leyen and their Cabinets, as well as meetings with key Indian industry leaders. The two sides are expected to hold broad discussions on updating the EU-India Strategic Roadmap (2020-2025), including cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

Trump's Russia-Ukraine policy hangs over EU-India talks

ट्रंप की रूस-यूक्रेन नीति ने यूरोपीय संघ-भारत वार्ता को प्रभावित किया

EU's Strategic Visit to India

भारत की यात्रा पर यूरोपीय संघ का रणनीतिक कदम

- **European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and 21 EU Commissioners** are on a **two-day visit to India from Thursday**.

यूरोपीय आयोग की अध्यक्ष उर्सुला वॉन डेर लेयेन और 21 यूरोपीय संघ के आयुक्त गुरुवार से भारत की दो दिवसीय यात्रा पर हैं।

- The visit signals that **Europe is seeking stronger partnerships, including with India, amidst uncertainty in U.S. foreign policy on Russia-Ukraine conflict.**

यह यात्रा दर्शाती है कि यूरोप अमेरिका की रूस-यूक्रेन नीति में बदलाव के बीच भारत सहित अन्य भागीदारों को मजबूत करना चाहता है।

- **EU officials** described the visit as **"unprecedented"**, as no **EU delegation has ever traveled to a country in such strength.**

यूरोपीय संघ के अधिकारियों ने इस यात्रा को "अभूतपूर्व" बताया, क्योंकि इससे पहले इतनी बड़ी संख्या में ईयू प्रतिनिधि मंडल किसी भी देश की यात्रा पर नहीं गया।



Impact of U.S. Policy on EU's India Ties

अमेरिकी नीति का यूरोपीय संघ-भारत संबंधों पर प्रभाव

- The visit follows the **third anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine**, marked by **solidarity events with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy**.
यह यात्रा रूस द्वारा यूक्रेन पर आक्रमण की तीसरी वर्षगांठ के बाद हो रही है, जिसे यूक्रेनी राष्ट्रपति वलोडिमिर ज़ेलेन्स्की के साथ एकजुटता कार्यक्रमों द्वारा चिह्नित किया गया।
- The EU imposed its 16th round of sanctions on Russia, while the U.S. voted against an EU-backed UN resolution calling for Russia's troop withdrawal.
यूरोपीय संघ ने रूस पर 16वें दौर के प्रतिबंध लगाए, जबकि अमेरिका ने रूस के सैनिकों की वापसी की मांग करने वाले ईयू समर्थित संयुक्त राष्ट्र प्रस्ताव के खिलाफ मतदान किया।
- PM Modi's meetings with EU officials will coincide with Zelenskyy's Washington visit, where he will discuss a Russia-Ukraine ceasefire proposal with Donald Trump.
यूरोपीय संघ के अधिकारियों के साथ प्रधानमंत्री मोदी की बैठकें तब होंगी जब ज़ेलेन्स्की वाशिंगटन में ट्रंप के साथ रूस-यूक्रेन युद्धविराम प्रस्ताव पर चर्चा करेंगे।
- The EU will push for continued sanctions on Russia, despite the U.S. stepping back from supporting them.
यूरोपीय संघ रूस पर प्रतिबंध जारी रखने के लिए जोर देगा, भले ही अमेरिका ने इससे पीछे हटने का संकेत दिया हो।

India's Position on Russia

रूस पर भारत का रुख

- India has rejected all Western sanctions on Russia and increased its oil imports from Russia since 2022.
भारत ने रूस पर सभी पश्चिमी प्रतिबंधों को अस्वीकार कर दिया है और 2022 से रूस से तेल आयात में वृद्धि की है।
- Given the current global dynamics, India is unlikely to change its stance on Russia.
वर्तमान वैश्विक परिस्थितियों को देखते हुए, भारत अपने रूस-नीति में बदलाव करने की संभावना नहीं रखता।

EU-India Relations: Key Issues and Trade Talks

यूरोपीय संघ-भारत संबंध: प्रमुख मुद्दे और व्यापार वार्ता

- EU-India relations have been strained due to Ukraine conflict, with no annual summit since 2020.
यूक्रेन संघर्ष के कारण यूरोपीय संघ-भारत संबंध प्रभावित हुए हैं, और 2020 के बाद कोई वार्षिक शिखर सम्मेलन नहीं हुआ।



- The last EU-India Leader's Summit was held in 2021, and a new summit is planned for 2025.
आखिरी यूरोपीय संघ-भारत नेताओं का शिखर सम्मेलन 2021 में हुआ था, और 2025 में नया शिखर सम्मेलन आयोजित होने की योजना है।
- The EU-India Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) talks, revived in 2022, have not made much progress due to tariff issues on cars, wine, and spirits.
यूरोपीय संघ-भारत द्विपक्षीय व्यापार और निवेश समझौता (BTIA) 2022 में पुनः शुरू हुआ, लेकिन कार, शराब और अन्य उत्पादों पर शुल्क मुद्दों के कारण ज्यादा प्रगति नहीं हुई।
- The next round of trade talks will be held in Brussels from March 10-14, and the EU hopes for a political push during the Delhi visit.
व्यापार वार्ता का अगला दौर ब्रसेल्स में 10-14 मार्च के बीच होगा, और यूरोपीय संघ दिल्ली यात्रा के दौरान राजनीतिक समर्थन की उम्मीद कर रहा है।

Trade and Technology Council (TTC) Meeting

व्यापार और प्रौद्योगिकी परिषद (TTC) बैठक

- The visit will begin with a TTC meeting, focusing on:
 - Aligning AI policies.
 - Cooperation on semiconductors and quantum computing.
 - Green technology collaborations.यह यात्रा TTC बैठक से शुरू होगी, जिसमें मुख्य रूप से चर्चा होगी:
 - एआई नीतियों को समायोजित करने पर।
 - सेमीकंडक्टर और क्वांटम कंप्यूटिंग में सहयोग पर।
 - हरित प्रौद्योगिकी सहयोग पर।
- Bilateral meetings will be held between EU Commissioners and Indian Ministers.
यूरोपीय संघ के आयुक्तों और भारतीय मंत्रियों के बीच द्विपक्षीय बैठकें होंगी।
- A plenary session with PM Modi and Ursula von der Leyen will be held.
प्रधानमंत्री मोदी और उर्सुला वॉन डेर लेयेन के साथ पूर्ण सत्र आयोजित होगा।
- Discussions will focus on updating the EU-India Strategic Roadmap (2020-2025), including Indo-Pacific cooperation.
चर्चा यूरोपीय संघ-भारत रणनीतिक रोडमैप (2020-2025) को अपडेट करने और इंडो-पैसिफिक सहयोग पर केंद्रित होगी।

Conclusion: Strengthening EU-India Ties Amid Global Shifts

निष्कर्ष: वैश्विक परिवर्तनों के बीच यूरोपीय संघ-भारत संबंधों को मजबूत करना

- EU's visit to India is a strategic move to diversify its alliances amid uncertainties in U.S. foreign policy.



यूरोपीय संघ की भारत यात्रा एक रणनीतिक कदम है, जो अमेरिकी विदेश नीति में अनिश्चितताओं के बीच अपने गठबंधनों को विविधता देने का प्रयास कर रहा है।

- Despite India's neutrality on Russia, the EU will push for cooperation in trade, technology, and strategic affairs.

हालांकि भारत रूस के प्रति तटस्थ है, लेकिन यूरोपीय संघ व्यापार, प्रौद्योगिकी और रणनीतिक मामलों में सहयोग को बढ़ावा देगा।

- Trade negotiations and strategic roadmap updates will be key outcomes of the visit. इस यात्रा के मुख्य परिणाम व्यापार वार्ता और रणनीतिक रोडमैप अपडेट होंगे।

Two Board exams aimed to provide a chance to improve performance: CBSE Chair

GS Paper II: Education Sector

Maitri Porecha

NEW DELHI

On the draft proposal of conducting Board exams twice a year, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Chairperson Rahul Singh said on Wednesday that its salient feature is the continuance of the current scheme of examination while providing an opportunity to appear in a second examination in as many subjects as the student desires.

"This is aimed to provide another opportunity for students to improve their performance," Mr. Singh said. The draft policy for the conduct of two Board examinations in Class 10 has been issued by the CBSE as per the recommendations of the National Education Policy, 2020.

While the first phase of the exam is slated to be held from February 17 to March 6, the second phase will be from May 5 to 20.

'No change in subjects' Mr. Singh's response comes after Punjab's Edu-



The first phase of the Board exam is slated to be held from February 17 to March 6.

cation Minister Harjot Bains asked why the Punjabi language was not being included in the draft policy.

CBSE officials clarified that there was no change in subjects offered, and the list of languages published in the draft policy was indicative.

"Presently, the Board offers 16 academic subjects, 23 skill subjects, and 45 languages in Classes 9 and 10. Students may offer any two languages and three elective subjects from the list of academic subjects. In addition, students can also offer any

skill subject as the sixth subject and one more language as the seventh subject. Accordingly, a student can offer a maximum of seven subjects in Class 10," he further said.

"This scheme of subjects and the choices shall remain unchanged for the 2026 Board examinations as well. Thus, the same set of academic subjects, languages, and skill subjects shall continue for the 2026 Board examinations," Mr. Singh added.

The candidates with special needs will also continue to avail themselves of the same facilities as extended presently. Similarly, any relaxation extended to any institution presently shall continue, the CBSE has further clarified.

"With the feedback received from stakeholders and the public, the scheme shall be further refined. Accordingly, all interested stakeholders are encouraged to furnish their feedback on the CBSE website within the schedule specified therein," Mr. Singh said.

Two Board exams aimed to provide a chance to improve performance: CBSE Chair

दो बोर्ड परीक्षाएं प्रदर्शन

सुधारने का अवसर प्रदान

करने के लिए: सीबीएसई

अध्यक्ष

Introduction of Two Board Exams

दो बोर्ड परीक्षाओं की शुरुआत

• On the draft proposal of conducting Board exams twice a year, CBSE Chairperson Rahul Singh stated that the current scheme of examination will continue, while allowing students to appear for a second examination in as many subjects as they desire.

बोर्ड परीक्षाएं वर्ष में दो बार कराने के मसौदा प्रस्ताव पर, सीबीएसई अध्यक्ष राहुल सिंह ने कहा कि वर्तमान परीक्षा प्रणाली जारी रहेगी,



जबकि छात्रों को किसी भी विषय में दूसरी परीक्षा देने का अवसर मिलेगा।

- The main objective is to provide another opportunity for students to improve their performance.

इसका मुख्य उद्देश्य छात्रों को अपना प्रदर्शन सुधारने का एक और अवसर प्रदान करना है।

- The draft policy for two Board exams in Class 10 has been issued as per the recommendations of the National Education Policy, 2020.

दसवीं कक्षा में दो बोर्ड परीक्षाओं के लिए मसौदा नीति राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति, 2020 की सिफारिशों के अनुसार जारी की गई है।

Exam Schedule for 2026

2026 के लिए परीक्षा कार्यक्रम

- The first phase of the exam is scheduled from February 17 to March 6.
पहले चरण की परीक्षा 17 फरवरी से 6 मार्च तक आयोजित की जाएगी।
- The second phase will be conducted from May 5 to May 20.
दूसरा चरण 5 मई से 20 मई तक आयोजित किया जाएगा।

Clarification on Subjects Offered

विषयों को लेकर स्पष्टीकरण

- Punjab's Education Minister Harjot Bains questioned why the Punjabi language was not included in the draft policy.
पंजाब के शिक्षा मंत्री हरजोत बैंस ने पूछा कि पंजाबी भाषा को मसौदा नीति में शामिल क्यों नहीं किया गया।
- CBSE officials clarified that there was no change in subjects offered, and the list of languages in the draft was only indicative.
सीबीएसई अधिकारियों ने स्पष्ट किया कि विषयों में कोई बदलाव नहीं किया गया है, और मसौदे में प्रकाशित भाषाओं की सूची केवल सांकेतिक थी।

Subjects and Choices for Class 10

दसवीं कक्षा के लिए विषय और विकल्प

- The Board currently offers:
 - 16 academic subjects
 - 23 skill subjects
 - 45 languagesबोर्ड वर्तमान में प्रदान करता है:
 - 16 शैक्षणिक विषय
 - 23 कौशल विषय



- 45 भाषाएं
- Students can opt for:
 - Any two languages
 - Three elective subjects
 - One skill subject as the sixth subject
 - One additional language as the seventh subjectछात्र निम्नलिखित का चयन कर सकते हैं:
 - कोई दो भाषाएं
 - तीन वैकल्पिक विषय
 - छठे विषय के रूप में एक कौशल विषय
 - सातवें विषय के रूप में एक अतिरिक्त भाषा
- A maximum of seven subjects can be taken in Class 10.
दसवीं कक्षा में अधिकतम सात विषयों को चुना जा सकता है।
- This scheme of subjects and choices will remain unchanged for the 2026 Board exams.
2026 की बोर्ड परीक्षाओं के लिए विषयों और विकल्पों की यह योजना अपरिवर्तित रहेगी।

Facilities for Special Needs Candidates

विशेष आवश्यकता वाले उम्मीदवारों के लिए सुविधाएं

- Students with special needs will continue to receive the same facilities as currently provided.
विशेष आवश्यकता वाले छात्र पहले की तरह ही सभी सुविधाओं का लाभ उठा सकेंगे।
- Any relaxation extended to institutions currently will also continue.
किसी भी संस्थान को वर्तमान में दी गई छूट जारी रहेगी।

Feedback and Further Refinement

प्रतिक्रिया और आगे सुधार

- The CBSE has invited feedback from stakeholders and the public to further refine the scheme.
सीबीएसई ने हितधारकों और जनता से प्रतिक्रिया आमंत्रित की है ताकि योजना में और सुधार किया जा सके।
- Stakeholders are encouraged to submit their feedback on the CBSE website within the specified schedule.
हितधारकों को अपनी प्रतिक्रिया सीबीएसई की वेबसाइट पर निर्दिष्ट समय सीमा के भीतर देने के लिए प्रोत्साहित किया गया है।

(GS Paper III: Economy, S&T, Environment, DM, IS)



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

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

CONTACT: 9971932488



1. Trees axed for Kanwar Yatra route by U.P. govt. without final approval, FSI tells NGT

एफएसआई ने एनजीटी को बताया: यूपी सरकार ने अंतिम मंजूरी के बिना कांवड़ यात्रा मार्ग के लिए पेड़ काटे

2. ED conducts searches at five places against 'fake' visa consultants

ईडी ने 'फर्जी' वीजा सलाहकारों के खिलाफ पांच स्थानों पर छापेमारी की

3. Water blight: Scientific risk assessment prior to undertaking tunnel work is a must

जल संकट: सुरंग निर्माण से पहले वैज्ञानिक जोखिम आकलन अनिवार्य

4. The bigger tragedy is the Railways and its systemic inertia

बड़ी त्रासदी रेलवे और उसकी प्रणालीगत जड़ता है



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Trees axed for Kanwar Yatra route by U.P. govt. without final approval, FSI tells NGT

GS Paper III:

Nikhil M Babu
NEW DELHI

Thousands of trees were axed in Uttar Pradesh to make way for a new Kanwar Yatra route “not as per rules” and without “final approval”, according to a report submitted to the **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** by the **Forest Survey of India (FSI)**.

A total of 17,607 trees have been cut in Ghaziabad, Meerut, and Muzaffarnagar districts of Uttar Pradesh to make way for the new 111-km Kanwar Yatra route, as per data provided by the Public Works Department of the U.P. government.

The FSI was part of a four-member joint committee constituted by the NGT last year to ascertain whether trees were cut illegally for the project. The FSI's report dated February

A total of 17,607 trees have been cut so far in Ghaziabad, Meerut, and Muzaffarnagar districts: PWD data

20 said its opinion was not included in a ‘final report’ of a joint committee submitted to the NGT by the Meerut District Magistrate (DM), one of the panel members and the coordination point person, on January 17.

“Communication has been received from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change confirming that final approval has not been accorded to the project, as is necessary before any commencement of tree felling operations,” the February 20 FSI report said.

The joint committee re-

port had found no illegality in the felling of the trees. “No excess or illegal tree felling was noticed by the Joint Committee during the field visits and its inquiry thereon,” the January 17 report stated.

On January 20, the NGT noted that the committee report was not signed by FSI Joint Director Meera Iyer and said she could submit a separate report in case her stand was different.

Ms. Iyer's response filed on February 20 stated that the FSI's opinion was not incorporated by the Meerut DM in the report submitted to the green panel.

Last year, the NGT had taken suo motu cognisance of a newspaper report that the U.P. government was planning to cut 1,12,722 trees for the project across the three districts for the proposed route.

thousands of trees were cut in Uttar Pradesh for the Kanwar Yatra route without final approval.

वन सर्वेक्षण ऑफ इंडिया (FSI) ने राष्ट्रीय हरित अधिकरण (NGT) को बताया कि उत्तर प्रदेश में कांवड़ यात्रा मार्ग के लिए हजारों पेड़ बिना अंतिम मंजूरी के काटे गए।

Trees axed for Kanwar Yatra route by U.P. govt. without final approval, FSI tells NGT

एफएसआई ने

एनजीटी को

बताया: यूपी

सरकार ने अंतिम

मंजूरी के बिना

कांवड़ यात्रा मार्ग

के लिए पेड़ काटे

Unauthorized Tree Felling in Uttar Pradesh

उत्तर प्रदेश में बिना

अनुमति पेड़ों की

कटाई

• **Forest Survey of India (FSI)** reported to the **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** that



- A total of 17,607 trees were cut in the Ghaziabad, Meerut, and Muzaffarnagar districts for the 111-km-long Kanwar Yatra route.
कुल 17,607 पेड़ गाजियाबाद, मेरठ और मुजफ्फरनगर जिलों में 111 किलोमीटर लंबे कांवड़ यात्रा मार्ग के लिए काटे गए।
- The data was provided by the Public Works Department (PWD) of the U.P. government.
इस डेटा को उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार के लोक निर्माण विभाग (PWD) ने प्रस्तुत किया।

FSI's Exclusion from Final Report

अंतिम रिपोर्ट से एफएसआई की राय को नजरअंदाज किया गया

- The FSI was part of a four-member joint committee formed by the NGT to investigate whether trees were cut illegally.
एफएसआई चार-सदस्यीय संयुक्त समिति का हिस्सा था, जिसे एनजीटी ने यह जांचने के लिए गठित किया था कि क्या पेड़ों की कटाई अवैध थी।
- FSI's report dated February 20 stated that its opinion was not included in the final report submitted by Meerut District Magistrate (DM) on January 17.
एफएसआई की 20 फरवरी की रिपोर्ट में कहा गया कि उसकी राय को 17 जनवरी को मेरठ जिलाधिकारी (DM) द्वारा प्रस्तुत अंतिम रिपोर्ट में शामिल नहीं किया गया।
- The Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change confirmed that final approval was not granted, which is mandatory before tree cutting.
पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय ने पुष्टि की कि परियोजना को अंतिम मंजूरी नहीं दी गई थी, जो कि पेड़ों की कटाई से पहले अनिवार्य है।

Contradiction in Reports

रिपोर्टों में विरोधाभास

- The joint committee's January 17 report stated that no excess or illegal felling of trees was found during inspections.
संयुक्त समिति की 17 जनवरी की रिपोर्ट में कहा गया कि निरीक्षण के दौरान कोई अवैध या अतिरिक्त पेड़ों की कटाई नहीं पाई गई।
- However, the FSI report of February 20 contradicts this, emphasizing that proper approvals were not obtained.
हालांकि, एफएसआई की 20 फरवरी की रिपोर्ट इससे अलग राय रखती है, जिसमें अनुचित स्वीकृति की बात कही गई है।
- NGT noted on January 20 that the committee report was not signed by FSI Joint Director Meera Iyer, and she was allowed to submit a separate report.
एनजीटी ने 20 जनवरी को ध्यान दिया कि एफएसआई की संयुक्त निदेशक मीरा अय्यर ने समिति की रिपोर्ट पर हस्ताक्षर नहीं किए थे, और उन्हें अलग रिपोर्ट प्रस्तुत करने की अनुमति दी गई।



NGT's Suo Motu Cognizance

एनजीटी ने स्वयं संज्ञान लिया

- Last year, NGT took suo motu cognizance of a newspaper report stating that the U.P. government planned to cut 1,12,722 trees for the Kanwar Yatra route across three districts.

पिछले वर्ष, एनजीटी ने स्वयं संज्ञान लिया जब एक समाचार रिपोर्ट में कहा गया कि उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार तीन जिलों में कांवड़ यात्रा मार्ग के लिए 1,12,722 पेड़ काटने की योजना बना रही थी।

ED conducts searches at five places against 'fake' visa consultants

GS Paper III: Internal Security

Devesh K Pandey
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate has conducted searches on five business and residential premises in Chandigarh and Ludhiana in connection with a case regarding 'fraudulent' activities perpetrated by visa consultants. The accused were involved in arranging forged documents to facilitate U.S. visas for the aspirants.



During the search operations, various incriminating documents, digital devices, and ₹19 lakh in cash were seized, the ED said

The premises are linked to Red Leaf Immigration Private Limited, Overseas Partner Education Consultants, and Infowiz Software Solution, and others, said the agency on Wednesday.

Under PMLA
The case is being investigated under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, based on the FIRs registered by the police in Delhi and Punjab.

"During the search operations, various incriminating documents, digital devices, and ₹19 lakh in cash were seized," the ED said.

The police cases were filed on a complaint from the Office of the Overseas Criminal Investigations, U.S. Embassy (Delhi), regarding alleged fraudulent activities perpetrated by the visa consultants, Red Leaf Immigration Private Limited, Overseas Partner Education Consultants, and others.

"ED investigation revealed that the accused persons/entities had forged the education cer-

tificates/experience letters of ineligible visa applicants and transferred funds to the accounts of various visa applicants to show minimum account balance for visa application in lieu of wrongful commission/charges..," ED said.

The accused persons helped various visa applicants to show their eligibility for visa of the U.S. by manipulating various facts and circumstances.

"By such criminal activities, the accused persons/entities charged hefty amounts from visa applicants and the Proceeds of Crime (PoC) generated through such criminal activities were further invested in the purchase of movable and immovable properties, and diverted in various banks accounts," it said.

ED conducts searches at five places against 'fake' visa consultants

ईडी ने 'फर्जी' वीज़ा सलाहकारों के खिलाफ पांच स्थानों पर छापेमारी की

Search Operations in Chandigarh and Ludhiana चंडीगढ़ और लुधियाना में तलाशी अभियान

- The Enforcement Directorate (ED) conducted searches at five business and residential premises in Chandigarh and Ludhiana. प्रवर्तन निदेशालय (ईडी) ने चंडीगढ़ और लुधियाना में पांच व्यावसायिक और आवासीय परिसरों पर छापेमारी की।

• The case involves fraudulent visa consultants who arranged forged documents to facilitate U.S. visas for applicants. यह मामला फर्जी वीज़ा सलाहकारों से जुड़ा है, जिन्होंने यू.एस. वीज़ा के लिए जाली दस्तावेज तैयार किए।

- The targeted firms include:
 - Red Leaf Immigration Private Limited
 - Overseas Partner Education Consultants
 - Infowiz Software Solution

जिन कंपनियों पर कार्रवाई की गई:

- रेड लीफ़ इमिग्रेशन प्राइवेट लिमिटेड
- ओवरसीज पार्टनर एजुकेशन कंसल्टेंट्स
- इंफोविज़ सॉफ्टवेयर सॉल्यूशन

Case Under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)

मनी लॉन्ड्रिंग रोकथाम अधिनियम (PMLA) के तहत मामला



- The case is being investigated under PMLA, based on FIRs registered by the police in Delhi and Punjab.
यह मामला मनी लॉन्ड्रिंग रोकथाम अधिनियम (PMLA) के तहत जांच में है, और दिल्ली व पंजाब पुलिस द्वारा दर्ज एफआईआर पर आधारित है।
- During the searches, the ED seized various incriminating documents, digital devices, and ₹19 lakh in cash.
तलाशी के दौरान, ईडी ने कई आपत्तिजनक दस्तावेज, डिजिटल डिवाइस और ₹19 लाख नकद जब्त किए।

U.S. Embassy Complaint Against Visa Consultants

यू.एस. एंबेसी द्वारा वीजा सलाहकारों के खिलाफ शिकायत

- The Office of Overseas Criminal Investigations, U.S. Embassy (Delhi) filed a complaint about fraudulent activities by visa consultants.
यू.एस. एंबेसी (दिल्ली) के ओवरसीज क्रिमिनल इन्वेस्टिगेशन कार्यालय ने वीजा सलाहकारों की धोखाधड़ी गतिविधियों की शिकायत दर्ज की।
- The accused manipulated documents to falsely show visa applicants as eligible for U.S. visas.
आरोपियों ने दस्तावेजों में हेरफेर कर, वीजा आवेदकों को अमेरिकी वीजा के लिए योग्य साबित करने का प्रयास किया।

Forgery and Money Laundering Activities

धोखाधड़ी और मनी लॉन्ड्रिंग गतिविधियां

- The accused forged education certificates and experience letters of ineligible applicants.
आरोपियों ने अयोग्य आवेदकों के शैक्षणिक प्रमाणपत्र और अनुभव पत्र जाली बनाए।
- Funds were transferred to applicants' accounts to meet the minimum balance requirement for visa applications.
वीजा आवेदन के न्यूनतम बैलेंस आवश्यकता को पूरा करने के लिए आवेदकों के खातों में धनराशि स्थानांतरित की गई।
- Large sums of money were illegally collected from applicants and later invested in properties and bank accounts.
आवेदकों से अवैध रूप से बड़ी धनराशि वसूली गई, जिसे संपत्तियों और बैंक खातों में निवेश किया गया।



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GS Paper III: Disaster Management

Water blight

Scientific risk assessment prior to undertaking tunnel work is a must

Barely a week after the remains of nine coal miners were recovered at the end of a 44-day operation, from a coal mine that had flooded in Assam in early January, a disaster of similar contours, this time in Nagarkurnool, Telangana, is in the making. A portion of the Srisailem Left Bank Canal tunnel, which is under construction, collapsed on February 22, leaving eight workers trapped. What is known so far is that a three-metre section of the roof collapsed due to water seepage. The roof collapse eventually led to the tunnel crumbling over a stretch of eight metres. Despite nine specialised rescue teams, drawn from the Centre and the State governments, working round-the-clock, no significant progress has been made so far on ascertaining the condition of the workers and in devising an optimal rescue plan. So far, the playbook that is being experimented with seems to be inspired by the successful rescue work in the Silkyara Tunnel collapse in Uttarkashi, Uttarakhand, in November 2023, where a portion of the four-kilometre-long tunnel that was being constructed collapsed, stranding 41 workers. It took a 16-day operation that started out with a variety of approaches, including drilling horizontally, and later on vertically, from both ends of the tunnel to reach the stranded workers. In the end, key breakthroughs were achieved by a team of 'rat hole' miners from Assam, who use manual excavation methods that are considered hazardous and deemed illegal.

The key difference between the Silkyara episode and the one in Srisailem is the presence of water. There were 70 workers in the tunnel when a deluge of water and muck suddenly began to gush inside. Barring the eight, the rest escaped, with 13 of them sustaining injuries. However, in the subsequent days, it is the torrential flow that has proved to be a barrier to rescue operations. The history of tunnel-linked disasters globally shows that while rare, they can often be catastrophic. A large proportion of these accidents, studies show, are due to a rupture in aquifers (underground water channels). It is to determine such risks that extensive studies are commissioned to understand the sub-surface geology of a site. A report by the Uttarakhand disaster management authority on the Silkyara episode says that there was insufficient analysis of the rock formations at Silkyara but also that a complete picture of structural deformities cannot be known before tunnelling. While the rescue of the trapped personnel at the Srisailem tunnel is paramount, there has to be a proper investigation by the authorities on the reasons for the collapse and action taken, if evidence emerges of tardy pre-tunnelling analysis.

Water blight: Scientific risk assessment prior to undertaking tunnel work is a must

जल संकट: सुरंग निर्माण से पहले वैज्ञानिक जोखिम

आकलन अनिवार्य

Srisailem Tunnel Collapse: A Developing Disaster

श्रीसैलम सुरंग ध्वस्त: एक उभरती हुई आपदा

• Barely a week after the recovery of nine coal miners' remains in Assam, another tunnel collapse in Nagarkurnool, Telangana, on February 22 has left eight workers trapped.

असम में नौ कोयला खनिकों के अवशेष मिलने के एक सप्ताह बाद, 22 फरवरी को तेलंगाना के नागरकुरनूल में एक और सुरंग ध्वस्त हो गई, जिसमें आठ मजदूर फंसे हुए हैं।

• The Srisailem Left Bank Canal tunnel, still under construction, collapsed due to water seepage, causing an eight-metre-long section to crumble.

निर्माणाधीन श्रीसैलम लेफ्ट बैंक नहर सुरंग पानी के रिसाव के कारण ध्वस्त हो गई, जिससे आठ मीटर लंबा हिस्सा गिर गया।

• Despite nine specialized rescue teams working round-the-clock, there has been no significant progress in locating the trapped workers.

नौ विशेष बचाव दल लगातार काम कर रहे हैं, लेकिन अब तक कोई महत्वपूर्ण प्रगति नहीं हुई है।

Comparison with Silkyara Tunnel Collapse

सिलक्यारा सुरंग हादसे की तुलना

• Silkyara Tunnel collapse in Uttarakhand (November 2023) trapped 41 workers; rescue took 16 days with horizontal and vertical drilling.

उत्तराखंड के सिलक्यारा सुरंग हादसे (नवंबर 2023) में 41 मजदूर फंस गए थे; बचाव कार्य 16 दिनों में पूरा हुआ, जिसमें क्षैतिज और ऊर्ध्वाधर ड्रिलिंग शामिल थी।

• Rat-hole miners from Assam played a key role in the final breakthrough, using manual excavation methods, considered hazardous and illegal.

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असम के रैट-होल खनिकों ने महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई, जिन्होंने खतरनाक और अवैध माने जाने वाले हाथ से खोदाई के तरीकों का उपयोग किया।

- **Difference:** The Silkyara incident lacked water, whereas Srisailam's flooding has severely hampered rescue efforts.

अंतर: सिलक्यारा घटना में पानी की समस्या नहीं थी, जबकि श्रीसैलम में पानी का प्रवाह बचाव कार्य में बड़ी बाधा बना हुआ है।

Water-Related Risks in Tunnel Construction

सुरंग निर्माण में जल-संबंधी जोखिम

- **70 workers** were inside the Srisailam tunnel when water and mud suddenly rushed in; 13 workers were injured, while 8 remain trapped.
श्रीसैलम सुरंग में 70 मजदूर थे जब अचानक पानी और कीचड़ अंदर घुस आया; 13 मजदूर घायल हुए, जबकि 8 अभी भी फंसे हुए हैं।
- **Global tunnel disasters** are often linked to ruptures in underground aquifers (water channels).
वैश्विक स्तर पर सुरंग आपदाएं अक्सर भूमिगत जलधाराओं (एक्विफर्स) के टूटने के कारण होती हैं।
- **Extensive geological studies** are crucial before tunneling to assess sub-surface water risks.
सुरंग निर्माण से पहले विस्तृत भूवैज्ञानिक अध्ययन जरूरी होते हैं, ताकि भूमिगत जल जोखिमों का आकलन किया जा सके।

Need for Scientific Risk Assessment

वैज्ञानिक जोखिम आकलन की आवश्यकता

- **Uttarakhand Disaster Management Authority's report** on Silkyara found insufficient rock analysis, showing that structural deformities cannot always be predicted before tunneling.
उत्तराखंड आपदा प्रबंधन प्राधिकरण की रिपोर्ट में सिलक्यारा सुरंग में अपर्याप्त चट्टान विश्लेषण का उल्लेख किया गया, जिससे पता चलता है कि सुरंग निर्माण से पहले संरचनात्मक विकृतियों का पूर्वानुमान हमेशा संभव नहीं होता।
- While rescuing trapped workers in Srisailam remains the top priority, an official investigation must determine the cause of collapse.
श्रीसैलम में फंसे मजदूरों को बचाना प्राथमिकता है, लेकिन हादसे के कारणों की जांच भी आवश्यक है।
- If negligence is found in pre-tunneling assessments, appropriate action must be taken against responsible authorities.



यदि सुरंग निर्माण से पहले के आकलन में लापरवाही पाई जाती है, तो जिम्मेदार अधिकारियों के खिलाफ उचित कार्रवाई की जानी चाहिए।

The bigger tragedy is the Railways and its systemic inertia

GS Paper III: Disaster Management

In the cacophony of religious fervour for a holy dip at the Kumbh, amidst bustling railway stations, jostling crowds, and ceaseless proclamations by Indian Railways about the number of train services and the passengers ferried to Prayagraj, lies an inconvenient truth: the approach to passenger safety and convenience is at best tragically outdated, and at worst, a harbinger of disaster.

It is a bitter pill to swallow, but swallow it we must, for the recent tragedy – the stampede at New Delhi railway station on February 15 – has once again exposed the chinks in armour of the Indian Railways. It has laid bare systemic failures born not of resource constraints but of an indifference to basic needs.

The half-truths

The first question is unavoidable. Was the stampede at New Delhi avoidable? The answer: Yes, it was. Amidst all the noise and shifting of blame, there are certain half-truths that demand scrutiny, for the halves that remain hidden also conceal the seeds of tragedy. **In any crowd control scenario, a stampede is averted by ensuring smooth, largely unidirectional movement, eliminating bottlenecks, and implementing robust barricading with adequate staffing of security personnel.** All these fundamental principles were glaringly ignored.

Railway representatives have repeatedly asserted that no platform changes were made. Yet, the last-minute announcement of a special unreserved train to Prayagraj on platform 12, when there was already a massive crowd of unreserved passengers on platform 14 for the Prayagraj Express, was tantamount to a change, triggering a surge of chaotic, conflicting movements.

It is also learnt – although not verified yet – that the control room, equipped with CCTV coverage, failed to stop the escalators, notorious for becoming bottlenecks in such situations. Moreover, the number of Railway Protection Force personnel on the one hand and the security arrangements and barricading on the other were inadequate.

The claim that such a massive crowd,



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Tragedies such as the stampede in Delhi will continue to be written off as unfortunate inevitabilities rather than preventable failures

particularly unreserved passengers, was unforeseen, defies logic. The Ministry of Railways was proud to announce that over 15 lakh passengers travelled in nearly 350 trains to Prayagraj in February. A simple calculation shows this translates to nearly 300 unreserved passengers in a coach, packed like sardines. New Delhi is a focal point for travellers from North India, and the magnitude of the crowd could have been anticipated based on recent significant 'bathing days' at the Kumbh. The Indian Railway's assertion that it was caught off-guard by a sudden surge in ticket sales towards the evening is a weak line of defence.

The blame has been subtly shifted onto travellers – that they congregated in huge numbers, that they bought large numbers of tickets, and that they did not heed announcements. Yet, none of this was unprecedented.

Festival times always draw huge crowds, and special trains are run routinely to ferry passengers, primarily to the eastern parts of the country. Unreserved tickets are typically sold in large numbers on such occasions, and there are established protocols to handle this. All that the Delhi division of the Indian Railways had to do was to replicate the tried-and-tested *Chhath* arrangements that have been implemented for decades.

Conflicting statements

Certain crowd control measures introduced after the tragedy – such as additional security personnel, the creation of holding areas, better CCTV monitoring, and stopping the sale of platform tickets – are hardly rocket science. Were it not for the grief of the victims' families, it would be tempting to call this tragedy a comeuppance for the Railways amidst its grandiose proclamations. On one hand, it reveals the Railways' hollow attempt to sell a commodity it does not possess: ensuring dignified travel for devotees. On the other, it exposes the Railways' failure to implement basic crowd control measures well within its capability.

For almost a day, the Railways kept changing its narrative – from denial to dilution to

obfuscation and staggering insensitivity. There were conflicting statements by various spokespersons, culminating in the grotesque spectacle of distributing *ex gratia* payments to the families bereaved even before confirming the death toll. As if that were not bad enough, statements from responsible government quarters suggested having a probe into alleged conspiratorial "fake news" triggering the stampede. This blame game, marked by cynicism, echoes the Railways' habit of prematurely attributing every mishap or near-accident to sabotage – despite not a single case having been proven.

History is replete with warnings, yet the regime in the Railways, which includes those earlier too, seems to behave like the student who refuses to learn. There have been similar tragedies before, which include the stampede at Elphinstone Road railway station in Mumbai in September 2017 and at Allahabad station during the Kumbh Mela in February 2013. But the past, as they say, is prologue, but only if one is willing to learn from it.

Another flaw

Disturbingly, the first step towards accountability is already a misstep. The "high-level" inquiry is to be conducted by senior railway executives, overseeing the very departments that may be culpable. In stark contrast, even a single fatality in a train accident warrants an investigation by the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), an entity independent of the Ministry of Railways. Although technically not categorised as a train accident, an independent inquiry – whether by the CRS or another external agency – would have demonstrated the Railways's commitment to transparency. Yet, as it stands, the Railways is both the accused and the judge.

The heart of the issue runs even deeper. Is there an ingrained malaise within the Railways, the supposed lifeline of the nation, that the more things should change, the more they stubbornly remain the same? Until the Railways confronts its own systemic inertia, tragedies such as these will continue to be written off as unfortunate inevitabilities rather than preventable failures.

The bigger tragedy is the Railways and its systemic inertia

बड़ी त्रासदी रेलवे और उसकी प्रणालीगत जड़ता है

Railway's Negligence in Crowd Management

भीड़ प्रबंधन में रेलवे की लापरवाही

- The February 15 stampede at New Delhi railway station highlights the systemic failures of Indian Railways in ensuring passenger safety and convenience.

15 फरवरी को नई दिल्ली रेलवे स्टेशन पर मची भगदड़ ने भारतीय रेलवे की प्रणालीगत विफलताओं को उजागर किया, जो यात्रियों की सुरक्षा और सुविधा सुनिश्चित करने में असफल रहा।



- The incident occurred amid the Kumbh Mela rush, where crowded railway stations and mismanagement led to chaos.

यह घटना कुंभ मेले की भीड़ के बीच हुई, जहां अत्यधिक भीड़ और कुप्रबंधन ने अराजकता पैदा कर दी।

Avoidable Stampede: A Failure in Planning

टाली जा सकने वाली भगदड़: योजना की असफलता

- The stampede was entirely avoidable if basic crowd control measures had been followed.

यह भगदड़ पूरी तरह से टाली जा सकती थी, यदि मौलिक भीड़ नियंत्रण उपायों का पालन किया जाता।

- Key failures included:

- Lack of smooth, unidirectional movement.
- No proper barricading or security personnel deployment.
- Last-minute platform announcements causing confusion.

मुख्य विफलताएं:

- सुनियोजित और एकल-दिशा में यात्री आवागमन की व्यवस्था नहीं थी।
- सुरक्षा कर्मियों की कमी और बैरिकेडिंग का अभाव।
- अंतिम क्षणों में प्लेटफॉर्म परिवर्तन की घोषणाएं, जिससे भ्रम की स्थिति बनी।

Railway's Half-Truths and Mismanagement

रेलवे के अधूरे सत्य और कुप्रबंधन

- Railway authorities claimed no platform changes were made, yet an unreserved special train to Prayagraj was suddenly announced on platform 12, while another train for the same destination was already scheduled on platform 14.

रेलवे अधिकारियों ने प्लेटफॉर्म परिवर्तन से इनकार किया, लेकिन प्रयागराज के लिए एक अनारक्षित विशेष ट्रेन अचानक प्लेटफॉर्म 12 पर घोषित कर दी गई, जबकि प्लेटफॉर्म 14 पर पहले से ही एक ट्रेन थी।

- The control room, despite CCTV coverage, failed to stop escalators, which worsened the bottleneck situation.

सीसीटीवी कवरेज के बावजूद कंट्रोल रूम ने एस्केलेटर को रोकने में असफलता दिखाई, जिससे भीड़ और बढ़ गई।

- Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel were inadequate, and barricading arrangements were not properly implemented.

रेलवे सुरक्षा बल (RPF) के कर्मी अपर्याप्त थे, और बैरिकेडिंग की व्यवस्था सही से लागू नहीं की गई।

Predictable Passenger Surge Ignored



यात्रियों की भीड़ पूर्वानुमान योग्य थी, लेकिन नजरअंदाज की गई

- The **Ministry of Railways** proudly announced that over 15 lakh passengers traveled to Prayagraj in February via nearly 350 trains.
रेल मंत्रालय ने गर्व से घोषणा की कि फरवरी में लगभग 15 लाख यात्री 350 ट्रेनों से प्रयागराज पहुंचे।
- This meant an **average of 300 unreserved passengers per coach**, indicating extreme overcrowding, yet Railways failed to anticipate the situation.
इसका मतलब था कि प्रत्येक कोच में औसतन 300 अनारक्षित यात्री थे, जिससे भीषण भीड़भाड़ स्पष्ट थी, लेकिन रेलवे ने इसे नजरअंदाज किया।
- The claim that ticket sales surged unexpectedly in the evening is a weak defense, as large crowds for religious events are always predictable.
रेलवे का यह दावा कि शाम को टिकटों की अचानक अधिक बिक्री हुई, एक कमजोर तर्क है, क्योंकि धार्मिक आयोजनों के दौरान भारी भीड़ हमेशा पूर्वानुमान योग्य होती है।

Shifting Blame on Passengers

यात्रियों पर दोषारोपण

- Authorities subtly shifted the blame onto passengers, claiming:
 - They gathered in large numbers.
 - They purchased too many tickets.
 - They did not follow instructions properly.
अधिकारियों ने यात्रियों पर दोष मढ़ने की कोशिश की, यह कहते हुए कि:
 - वे बड़ी संख्या में एकत्र हुए।
 - उन्होंने अत्यधिक टिकट खरीदे।
 - उन्होंने निर्देशों का पालन नहीं किया।
- However, festivals always attract huge crowds, and special train arrangements are routine.
हालांकि, त्योहारों के दौरान हमेशा भारी भीड़ उमड़ती है, और विशेष ट्रेनों की व्यवस्था नियमित रूप से की जाती है।
- The Delhi division of Indian Railways should have implemented the crowd management protocols used for Chhath Puja, which have proven effective over the years.
दिल्ली डिवीजन को उन्हीं भीड़ प्रबंधन प्रोटोकॉल लागू करने चाहिए थे, जो वर्षों से छठ पूजा के दौरान सफलतापूर्वक इस्तेमाल किए जाते रहे हैं।

Conflicting Statements and Railway's Accountability Issues

विरोधाभासी बयान और रेलवे की जवाबदेही की समस्या



Delayed and Basic Crowd Control Measures

देर से उठाए गए बुनियादी भीड़ नियंत्रण उपाय

- After the stampede, Indian Railways introduced crowd control measures such as:
 - Additional security personnel deployment.
 - Creation of holding areas.
 - Better CCTV monitoring.
 - Stopping the sale of platform tickets.

भगदड़ के बाद भारतीय रेलवे ने निम्नलिखित भीड़ नियंत्रण उपाय लागू किए:

- अतिरिक्त सुरक्षा कर्मियों की तैनाती।
 - होल्डिंग क्षेत्रों की स्थापना।
 - बेहतर सीसीटीवी निगरानी।
 - प्लेटफॉर्म टिकटों की बिक्री रोकना।
- These measures are not advanced solutions; they should have been implemented earlier to prevent the tragedy.
ये उपाय कोई विशेष तकनीकी समाधान नहीं हैं; इन्हें पहले ही लागू किया जाना चाहिए था ताकि त्रासदी को रोका जा सके।

Railway's Misleading Narrative and Blame Shifting

रेलवे की भ्रामक कहानी और दोषारोपण

- The Railways kept changing its narrative from denial to misinformation, showing insensitivity towards victims.
रेलवे ने अपने बयान बार-बार बदले, पहले इनकार किया, फिर भ्रामक जानकारी दी, जिससे पीड़ितों के प्रति संवेदनहीनता दिखाई दी।
- Ex gratia payments were distributed to families before confirming the death toll, making it a hasty and insensitive act.
मृतकों की संख्या की पुष्टि किए बिना ही मुआवजा राशि वितरित कर दी गई, जो जल्दबाजी और असंवेदनशीलता को दर्शाता है।
- Some officials suggested that fake news triggered the stampede, shifting blame instead of acknowledging railway mismanagement.
कुछ अधिकारियों ने यह सुझाव दिया कि फर्जी खबरों ने भगदड़ को बढ़ावा दिया, जिससे रेलवे की कुप्रबंधन की जिम्मेदारी से बचने की कोशिश की गई।

Railway's Habit of Avoiding Responsibility

रेलवे की जवाबदेही से बचने की आदत



- The Railways often **prematurely attributes accidents to sabotage**, despite **no proven cases**.
रेलवे अक्सर दुर्घटनाओं को तोड़फोड़ का परिणाम बताता है, जबकि ऐसा कोई प्रमाणित मामला नहीं मिला है।
- **Past tragedies** like the 2017 Elphinstone Road stampede and 2013 Allahabad Kumbh Mela stampede were also due to **poor crowd management**, yet no **substantial reforms** were implemented.
2017 एल्फिंस्टन रोड भगदड़ और 2013 इलाहाबाद कुंभ मेले की भगदड़ भी खराब भीड़ प्रबंधन के कारण हुई थीं, फिर भी कोई ठोस सुधार नहीं किया गया।

Flawed Investigation and Lack of Independent Inquiry

त्रुटिपूर्ण जांच और स्वतंत्र जांच की कमी

- The **high-level inquiry is being conducted by railway executives themselves**, raising concerns about **bias and lack of transparency**.
रेलवे के वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों द्वारा ही उच्च स्तरीय जांच की जा रही है, जिससे पक्षपात और पारदर्शिता की कमी को लेकर चिंता बढ़ रही है।
- **In contrast, train accidents with even a single fatality require an independent probe by the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS)**.
इसके विपरीत, एक भी मौत वाले ट्रेन हादसों की जांच रेलवे सुरक्षा आयुक्त (CRS) द्वारा की जाती है।
- **An external investigation would have ensured accountability**, but instead, the Railways is acting as both the **accused and the judge**.
एक स्वतंत्र जांच से जवाबदेही सुनिश्चित होती, लेकिन इसके बजाय, रेलवे खुद ही आरोपी और न्यायाधीश दोनों की भूमिका निभा रहा है।

Conclusion: Systemic Failures and the Need for Reform

निष्कर्ष: प्रणालीगत विफलताएं और सुधार की आवश्यकता

- The Railways continues to repeat past mistakes, failing to learn from previous tragedies.
रेलवे पिछली गलतियों को दोहराता जा रहा है, और पुरानी दुर्घटनाओं से सीखने में असफल रहा है।
- Until it addresses its **deep-rooted systemic inertia**, such tragedies will **continue to be dismissed as unfortunate events rather than preventable failures**.
जब तक रेलवे अपनी प्रणालीगत जड़ता को दूर नहीं करता, तब तक ऐसी घटनाएं **रोकथाम योग्य विफलताओं के बजाय केवल दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण घटनाएं मानी जाती रहेंगी**।



Over 70% farmers still use cash to sell their produce

The share of farmers using electronic payments for agriculture-related transactions rose from 8% in 2019 to 18% in 2024

GS Paper III: Cashless Economy

DATA POINT

Nitika Francis
Vignesh Radhakrishnan

More than 70% of Indian farmers still rely on cash to sell their produce, show data from a survey published by the Reserve Bank of India. This share has increased only slightly since the pre-COVID-19 years, despite the pandemic boosting digital payments in other sectors of the economy.

Data also show that a significant number of farmers still rely on word-of-mouth from traders and fellow farmers to discover market prices for their produce, rather than using websites or apps. This share has remained the same when compared with the pre-pandemic years.

Chart 1 shows the share of farmers, traders, and retailers using various modes of payment for agricultural transactions in 2019, 2022, and 2024. In 2019, a year before the pandemic, 88% of farmers used cash for transactions. This share declined to 79% in 2022 during the second COVID-19 wave and further dropped to 72% in 2024 post-pandemic. Meanwhile, the share of farmers using electronic payments rose from 8% in 2019 to 14% in 2022 and 18% in 2024.

While the increase in electronic payments among farmers was gradual, it was much sharper among traders and retailers. The share of traders using electronic payments for agricultural transactions grew from 8% in 2019 to 28% in 2022 and 31% in 2024. Among retailers, this share grew from 3% in 2019 to 15% in 2022 and 22% in 2024.

Chart 2 shows the share of farmers using various sources of information about the market prices of produce in 2024. Close to 55% of the farmers said that they source their information from traders in 2024, a slight increase from about 47% in 2019. In 2024, about 47% of the farmers sourced

their information from fellow farmers, a slight decrease from close to 51% in 2019.

However, the share of farmers sourcing information on prices from apps and websites has seen little change. In 2019, fewer than 10% of farmers relied on these digital sources for information on market prices. By 2024, this share grew a little up to 10%.

Charts 1 and 2 put together clearly show that in terms of business transactions and information management, a large section of farmers have remained insulated from digital practices.

The survey also shows the impact of climate change on agriculture. Close to 64% of farmers said they had experienced crop damage during the 2023-24 rabi season, with unseasonal rainfall being the reason for it, according to a majority (37%) of them. Heatwaves, which are closely associated with climate change, were the reason for crop damage, according to about 30% of the farmers. **Chart 3** shows the surveyed farmers' reasoning for crop damage during the 2023-24 rabi season.

Given the significant impact of climate change on agriculture, weather forecasts are cited as the primary factor influencing farmers' crop-sowing decisions (**Chart 4**). Nearly 90% of farmers identified weather forecasts as the major factor, followed by irrigation availability at a distant second (less than 60%) and the expected price of produce at a distant third (less than 40%).

Chart 5 illustrates the farmers' share in the final retail price of select products in 2024. Since a significant portion of wheat is procured by the government, farmers receive 67% of its retail selling price. Farmers selling lentils (masoor) and chana (gram) also get over 60% of the retail price. In contrast, the share is lowest for perishable goods, with farmers receiving only about 40% of the retail price for potatoes, mangoes, and cauliflower.

Cash is still king

The data for the charts were sourced from a report released by the Reserve Bank of India titled, "Dynamics of Agriculture Supply Chain: Insights from Pan India Survey during Rabi Marketing Season" by Rajib Das, Rishabh Kumar, Monika Sethi, Love Kumar Shandilya and Alice Sebastian



Chart 1: The chart shows the share of farmers, traders, and retailers using various modes of payment in 2019, 2022, and 2024. Figures in %

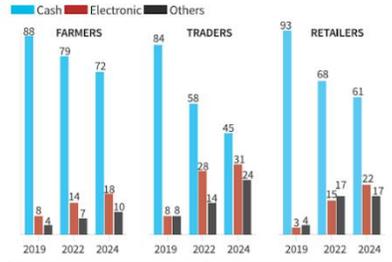


Chart 2: The share of farmers using various sources of information about market prices in 2024 (in %)



Chart 3: The surveyed farmers' reasoning for crop damage during the 2023-24 rabi season

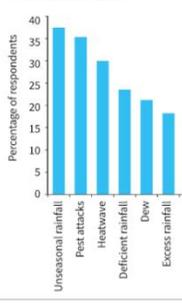


Chart 4: The surveyed farmers' reasoning for factors influencing their crop-sowing practices during the 2023-24 rabi season

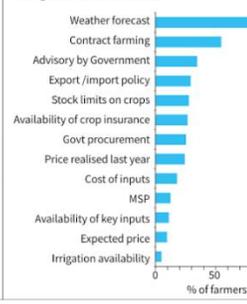
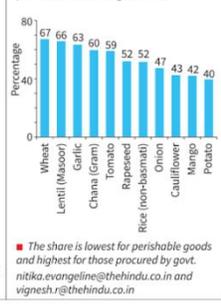


Chart 5: The chart shows the farmers' share in the final retail price of select products in 2024. Figures in %



Over 70% farmers still use cash to sell their produce

70% से अधिक किसान अभी भी नकद में अपना उत्पाद बेचते हैं

Slow Adoption of Digital Payments Among Farmers

किसानों के बीच डिजिटल भुगतान की धीमी स्वीकृति

More than 70% of Indian farmers still rely on cash for selling their produce, according to an RBI survey.



भारतीय किसानों में 70% से अधिक अभी भी नकद लेन-देन पर निर्भर हैं, यह भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक (RBI) के सर्वेक्षण से पता चला है।

- The share of farmers using electronic payments has risen from 8% in 2019 to 18% in 2024.
डिजिटल भुगतान का उपयोग करने वाले किसानों की संख्या 2019 में 8% से बढ़कर 2024 में 18% हो गई है।
- In comparison, traders and retailers have adopted digital payments at a faster rate:
 - Traders using digital payments: 8% in 2019 → 28% in 2022 → 31% in 2024.
 - Retailers using digital payments: 3% in 2019 → 15% in 2022 → 22% in 2024.इसके विपरीत, व्यापारियों और खुदरा विक्रेताओं ने डिजिटल भुगतान को तेजी से अपनाया:
 - व्यापारियों द्वारा डिजिटल भुगतान का उपयोग: 2019 में 8% → 2022 में 28% → 2024 में 31%।
 - खुदरा विक्रेताओं द्वारा डिजिटल भुगतान का उपयोग: 2019 में 3% → 2022 में 15% → 2024 में 22%।

Farmers Still Rely on Traditional Market Information Sources

किसान अभी भी पारंपरिक बाजार जानकारी स्रोतों पर निर्भर

- 55% of farmers get price information from traders in 2024, up from 47% in 2019.
2024 में 55% किसान व्यापारियों से कीमतों की जानकारी प्राप्त करते हैं, जो 2019 में 47% था।
- 47% of farmers rely on fellow farmers for market prices, a slight drop from 51% in 2019.
47% किसान अन्य किसानों से कीमतों की जानकारी लेते हैं, जो 2019 में 51% था।
- Farmers using apps/websites for price information have barely increased:
 - 2019: Less than 10%
 - 2024: Around 10%ऐप्स/वेबसाइट से जानकारी प्राप्त करने वाले किसानों की संख्या में मामूली वृद्धि:
 - 2019: 10% से कम
 - 2024: लगभग 10%

Impact of Climate Change on Agriculture

जलवायु परिवर्तन का कृषि पर प्रभाव

- 64% of farmers faced crop damage in the 2023-24 rabi season.
2023-24 रबी सीजन में 64% किसानों ने फसल नुकसान झेला।
- Top reasons for crop damage:
 - Unseasonal rainfall (37%)



- Heatwaves (30%)
फसल नुकसान के मुख्य कारण:
- असमय वर्षा (37%)
- गर्मी की लहरें (30%)
- Weather forecasts are the most important factor in farmers' sowing decisions (90%).
90% किसानों के लिए फसल बोने के फैसले में मौसम पूर्वानुमान सबसे महत्वपूर्ण कारक है।
- Other factors influencing sowing:
 - Irrigation availability (less than 60%)
 - Expected price of produce (less than 40%)
अन्य प्रमुख कारक:
 - सिंचाई की उपलब्धता (60% से कम)
 - उत्पाद की अपेक्षित कीमत (40% से कम)

Farmers' Share in Retail Prices

खुदरा कीमतों में किसानों की हिस्सेदारी

- Farmers get a higher share in government-procured crops:
 - Wheat: 67% of retail price
 - Lentils (Masoor) & Gram (Chana): Over 60%
सरकारी खरीद वाली फसलों में किसानों की अधिक हिस्सेदारी:
 - गेहूं: खुदरा मूल्य का 67%
 - मसूर और चना: 60% से अधिक
- For perishable goods, farmers receive a much lower share:
 - Potatoes, Mangoes, Cauliflower: Only ~40%
नाशवंत वस्तुओं के लिए किसानों को कम हिस्सेदारी मिलती है:
 - आलू, आम, फूलगोभी: केवल ~40%

Conclusion: Limited Digital Adoption and Climate Vulnerability

निष्कर्ष: सीमित डिजिटल अपनाने और जलवायु संवेदनशीलता

- Majority of farmers still depend on cash transactions and traditional market sources.
अधिकांश किसान अभी भी नकद लेन-देन और पारंपरिक बाजार स्रोतों पर निर्भर हैं।
- Slow adoption of digital payments limits financial inclusion and transparency.
डिजिटल भुगतान की धीमी प्रगति वित्तीय समावेशन और पारदर्शिता को बाधित करती है।
- Climate change remains a serious threat, affecting crop production and farmers' earnings.



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

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

CONTACT: 9971932488



जलवायु परिवर्तन एक गंभीर खतरा बना हुआ है, जो फसल उत्पादन और किसानों की आय को प्रभावित कर रहा है।

Government interventions needed to boost digital literacy, better market access, and climate resilience.

सरकार को डिजिटल साक्षरता, बेहतर बाजार पहुंच और जलवायु लचीलापन बढ़ाने के लिए हस्तक्षेप करने की आवश्यकता है।

TOPICS COVERED (GS Paper IV and Essay)

1.A Message to District Magistrates and the Police

जिला मजिस्ट्रेट और पुलिस के लिए एक संदेश

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A message to district magistrates and the police

Essay

Recently, two First Information Reports (FIRs) were registered under Section 223 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) in Indore for violating the District Magistrate's prohibitory orders issued under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS). These Sections correspond to Section 188 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), respectively. In a bid to make Indore free of beggars, the district administration had issued prohibitory orders on January 2, 2025. One FIR was registered against the person who gave alms to a beggar and the second was registered against a woman beggar's son who had taken responsibility for preventing her from begging but she was found begging anyway. Both FIRs were filed on the complaint of the Begging Eradication Squad officer.

Registering an FIR

However well-meaning the intentions of the district administration to make the city beggar-free may be, an FIR cannot be registered for the violation of orders issued under Section 163 of the BNSS. A District Magistrate may issue an order under this Section only in "urgent cases of nuisance or apprehended danger when there is sufficient ground for proceeding and immediate prevention or speedy remedy is desirable". The competent executive magistrate under such circumstances may direct any person to abstain from a certain act and may issue orders to "prevent obstruction, annoyance, or injury to any person lawfully employed, or danger to human life, health or safety, or a disturbance of the public tranquillity, or a riot, or an affray". Begging in public may cause annoyance or a disturbance to public tranquillity, but it cannot be considered an urgent case of nuisance or apprehended danger.

Even if such an order could be



R.K. Vij

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An FIR cannot be registered under Section 223 of the BNS for the violation of DM's orders under Section 163 of the BNSS

defended, an FIR cannot be registered for the violation. Section 215 of the BNSS (Section 195 of the CrPC) bars such action by the police. Section 215(1)(a) of BNSS says "no Court shall take cognisance (i) of any offence punishable under Sections 206 to 223 (both inclusive but excluding section 209) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023..., except on the complaint in writing of the public servant concerned or of some other public servant to whom he is administratively subordinate or of some other public servant who is authorised by the concerned public servant so to do". Therefore, despite the offence under Section 223 of the BNS being a cognisable one, the District Magistrate would have to approach the Court in writing to lodge a complaint. The police report is barred and therefore, no FIR can be registered.

The Supreme Court held in a case that "Section 195 of the CrPC is in fact a limitation on the unfettered powers of a (judicial) magistrate to take cognisance under Section 190" and he must determine "whether his power of taking cognisance has or has not been taken away by any provision of Section 195(i)". Charge-sheet on a cognisable offence is not a complaint, it is a police report.

In *C. Muniappan and others v. State of Tamil Nadu* (2010), the Supreme Court held that the provisions of Section 195 of the CrPC are mandatory and non-compliance of the same would vitiate the prosecution. In *State of U.P. v. Mata Bhikh and Others* (1994), the Supreme Court held that "the object of this section is to protect persons from being vexatiously prosecuted upon inadequate materials or insufficient grounds by person actuated by malice or ill-will or frivolity of disposition at the instance of private individuals for the offences specified therein". The Madras High Court in *Jeevanandham and Others v. State and Another* (2018) held that a police officer cannot register an

FIR for any of the offences falling under Section 172 to 188 of the IPC (Section 206 to 223 of the BNS). However, the Court observed that a police officer by virtue of powers conferred under Section 41 of CrPC (Section 35 of the BNSS) will have the authority to take action when a cognisable offence under Section 188 of the IPC is committed in his presence or where such action is required, to prevent such person from committing an offence under Section 188 of IPC.

Even the principles laid down in *Lalita Kumari v. Government of Uttar Pradesh and Others* (2014) will not apply to registration of FIR for offence under Section 223 of the BNS. In a more recent case, the High Court of Chhattisgarh quashed the FIR registered by the police as a medical graduate had failed to inform the Chief Medical Officer during the COVID-19 pandemic on her arrival in Rajnandgaon, as required by the District Magistrate's order dated May 2020. An FIR was registered under Section 188 IPC by the Rajnandgaon police on a complaint by the local Chief Municipal Officer. The High Court quashed the FIR and held that no FIR could be registered for offence under Section 188 of the IPC.

Close the cases

The apropos line of action for the Indore police will therefore be to close the cases and intimate the District Magistrate accordingly. In case the District Magistrate wishes to proceed further, he may approach the court in writing as required under Section 215 of the BNSS. Though the State government could either initiate state amendment in the BNSS to loosen the fetters of Section 215(1) BNSS or enact a local law making begging a cognisable offence, it would not be advisable to convert a petty civil offence into a criminal one. This might deter people from giving alms, but punishing the receiver of alms will make the situation worse. Beggars need to be rehabilitated, not prosecuted.

A Message to District Magistrates and the Police



जिला मजिस्ट्रेट और पुलिस के लिए एक संदेश

FIRs Filed in Indore for Violating Prohibitory Orders

इंदौर में निषेधाज्ञा के उल्लंघन पर दर्ज की गई FIR

- Two FIRs were registered in Indore under Section 223 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) for violating prohibitory orders issued under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).
इंदौर में भारतीय न्याय संहिता (BNS) की धारा 223 के तहत दो एफआईआर दर्ज की गईं, जो भारतीय नागरिक सुरक्षा संहिता (BNSS) की धारा 163 के तहत जारी निषेधाज्ञा के उल्लंघन से संबंधित थीं।
- First FIR: Against a person who gave alms to a beggar.
पहली एफआईआर: एक व्यक्ति के खिलाफ, जिसने एक भिखारी को भिक्षा दी।
- Second FIR: Against a beggar's son who was responsible for preventing his mother from begging.
दूसरी एफआईआर: एक भिखारी की बेटे के खिलाफ, जिसे अपनी मां को भीख मांगने से रोकने की जिम्मेदारी दी गई थी।
- Complaints were filed by the Begging Eradication Squad officer.
भिक्षावृत्ति उन्मूलन दल के अधिकारी द्वारा शिकायत दर्ज कराई गई।

Legal Issues in Filing the FIR

एफआईआर दर्ज करने में कानूनी समस्याएं

- A District Magistrate can issue orders under Section 163 BNSS only in cases of "urgent nuisance or apprehended danger".
जिला मजिस्ट्रेट BNSS की धारा 163 के तहत आदेश केवल "तत्काल उपद्रव या संभावित खतरे" के मामलों में जारी कर सकते हैं।
- Begging does not qualify as an urgent nuisance or immediate danger.
भिक्षावृत्ति को तत्काल उपद्रव या संभावित खतरे की श्रेणी में नहीं रखा जा सकता।
- Under Section 215 of BNSS (previously Section 195 of CrPC), a police officer cannot register an FIR for violating a Magistrate's order.
BNSS की धारा 215 (पहले CrPC की धारा 195) के तहत, मजिस्ट्रेट के आदेश के उल्लंघन पर पुलिस एफआईआर दर्ज नहीं कर सकती।
- Only the District Magistrate can file a complaint before the court.
केवल जिला मजिस्ट्रेट ही अदालत में शिकायत दर्ज करा सकते हैं।

Supreme Court and High Court Rulings on Similar Cases

सुप्रीम कोर्ट और हाई कोर्ट के फैसले

- C. Muniappan v. State of Tamil Nadu (2010): The Supreme Court ruled that non-compliance with Section 195 CrPC invalidates prosecution.



सी. मुनियप्पन बनाम तमिलनाडु राज्य (2010): सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने कहा कि CrPC की धारा 195 का पालन न करने से अभियोजन अमान्य हो जाता है।

- State of U.P. v. Mata Bhikh (1994): The court held that Section 195 CrPC protects individuals from malicious or frivolous prosecution.

उत्तर प्रदेश राज्य बनाम माता भीख (1994): अदालत ने माना कि CrPC की धारा 195 व्यक्तियों को दुर्भावनापूर्ण या निराधार मुकदमों से बचाने के लिए है।

- Jeevanandham v. State (2018): The Madras High Court ruled that police officers cannot register FIRs under Sections 172-188 IPC (now Sections 206-223 BNS).

जीवानंदम बनाम राज्य (2018): मद्रास हाई कोर्ट ने फैसला सुनाया कि पुलिस अधिकारी IPC की धारा 172-188 (अब BNS की धारा 206-223) के तहत एफआईआर दर्ज नहीं कर सकते।

- Chhattisgarh High Court (COVID-19 Case, 2020): The court quashed an FIR against a medical graduate for not informing the Chief Medical Officer about her arrival during the pandemic.

छत्तीसगढ़ हाई कोर्ट (COVID-19 मामला, 2020): अदालत ने एक मेडिकल ग्रेजुएट के खिलाफ

एफआईआर रद्द कर दी, जिसे महामारी के दौरान अपनी उपस्थिति की सूचना नहीं देने पर दर्ज किया गया था।

Proper Legal Procedure for Indore Case

इंदौर मामले के लिए सही कानूनी प्रक्रिया

- The Indore police should close the FIRs and inform the District Magistrate.

इंदौर पुलिस को एफआईआर बंद कर जिला मजिस्ट्रेट को सूचित करना चाहिए।

- If the District Magistrate wants to proceed, they must file a written complaint before the court.

यदि जिला मजिस्ट्रेट आगे कार्रवाई करना चाहते हैं, तो उन्हें अदालत में लिखित शिकायत दर्ज करनी होगी।

- State governments may amend laws to make begging a cognizable offense, but criminalizing it is not advisable.

राज्य सरकारें कानून में संशोधन कर भिक्षावृत्ति को संज्ञेय अपराध बना सकती हैं, लेकिन इसे अपराध बनाना उचित नहीं होगा।

Conclusion: Rehabilitation, Not Criminalization

निष्कर्ष: अपराधीकरण नहीं, पुनर्वास

- Punishing those who give alms may reduce begging, but punishing beggars will worsen their situation.

भिक्षा देने वालों को दंडित करने से भिक्षावृत्ति कम हो सकती है, लेकिन भिखारियों को सजा देने से उनकी स्थिति और खराब होगी।



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Begging should be addressed through social welfare and rehabilitation programs, not criminal prosecution.

भिक्षावृत्ति को सामाजिक कल्याण और पुनर्वास कार्यक्रमों के माध्यम से हल किया जाना चाहिए, न कि आपराधिक मुकदमों के जरिए।

TOPICS COVERED (PCS Special)

1. Bisht set to be elected Deputy Speaker today

बिष्ट आज उपाध्यक्ष चुने जाने के लिए तैयार

2. 6-time MLA Mohan Singh Bisht all set to be elected as Deputy Speaker today

6 बार के विधायक मोहन सिंह बिष्ट आज उपाध्यक्ष चुने जाने के लिए तैयार

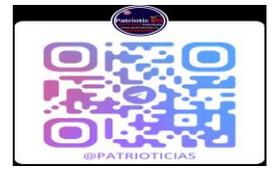
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Bisht set to be elected Deputy Speaker today

बिष्ट आज उपाध्यक्ष चुने जाने के लिए तैयार

Bisht set to be elected Deputy Speaker today

PCS

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

BJP's Mohan Singh Bisht, a six-time MLA, is set to be elected as Deputy Speaker of the Delhi Assembly on Thursday. The election, however, will be held in the absence of the Opposition as 21 AAP MLAs have been suspended until Friday for disrupting the House. Following the election, the House will continue to discuss the CAG report on the liquor policy.

BJP's Mohan Singh Bisht, a six-time MLA, is set to be elected as Deputy Speaker of the Delhi Assembly on Thursday.

भाजपा के मोहन सिंह बिष्ट, जो छह बार विधायक रह चुके हैं, को गुरुवार को दिल्ली विधानसभा के उपाध्यक्ष के रूप में चुने जाने की संभावना है।

- The election will be held in the absence of the Opposition, as 21 AAP MLAs have been suspended until Friday for disrupting the House.

यह चुनाव विपक्ष की गैरमौजूदगी में होगा, क्योंकि आप के 21 विधायक शुक्रवार तक निलंबित कर दिए गए हैं सदन में हंगामा करने के कारण।

- Following the election, the House will continue to discuss the CAG report on the liquor policy.

चुनाव के बाद, सदन शराब नीति पर सीएजी रिपोर्ट पर चर्चा जारी रखेगा।



6-time MLA Mohan Singh Bisht all set to be elected as Deputy Speaker today

6 बार के विधायक मोहन सिंह बिष्ट आज उपाध्यक्ष चुने जाने के लिए तैयार

6-time MLA Mohan Singh Bisht all set to be elected as Deputy Speaker today

Poll to take place in absence of 21 AAP legislators who've been suspended from House till Friday; discussion over CAG report on now-scrapped liquor policy also scheduled in the Assembly today

PCS
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Six-time MLA Mohan Singh Bisht, whom the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has nominated for the Deputy Speaker's post, is all set to be elected to the chair on Thursday.

The election will, however, be held in the absence of the Opposition. Speaker Vijender Gupta had, a day earlier, suspended 21 Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) legislators, including Leader of the Opposition Atishi, till Friday for disrupting the House. The lone AAP MLA to avoid the suspension, Amanatullah Khan, was not present in the Assembly on Tuesday.

Following the Deputy Speaker's election, the House will on Thursday continue to discuss the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report over the "₹2,002-crore loss to the exchequer due to the poor implementation" of the now-scrapped liquor policy.

During the course of the Assembly session, which has been extended till March 3, the Speaker is likely to table another CAG



Mohan Singh Bisht (right) with Speaker Vijender Gupta in the Assembly on Monday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

report, which pertains to the renovation of the 6, Flagstaff Road bungalow, where AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal stayed as Chief Minister from 2015 till he stepped down in October 2024.

The ruling party is expected to constitute various legislative panels over the next few days, including the Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

"After all the CAG reports are tabled, the PAC, comprising 14 MLAs of BJP and AAP, will examine the reports and submit its findings to the House, which will take appropriate ac-

tion," said a BJP leader.

In the run-up to the February 5 Assembly election, the BJP had promised to table 14 CAG reports, which it claimed unearthed the "scams" perpetrated in various sectors under the previous AAP government.

Political heavyweight

Mr. Bisht was elected this year from Mustafabad, which was marred by the 2020 north-east Delhi communal riots, in which 53 people died and over 700 were injured.

How important he is for the BJP in Delhi can be

gauged from the way he forced the party leadership to concede to his demands during the ticket distribution process.

On January 12, when the party issued its second candidates' list in which it replaced Mr. Bisht from Karawal Nagar seat, from where he had been elected five times, with Kapil Mishra, he threatened to contest as an independent.

Within hours, the party issued a third list for the Assembly election with just one name – that of Mr. Bisht, and fielded him from the adjoining Mustafabad constituency.

BJP's Mohan Singh Bisht, a six-time MLA, is set to be elected as Deputy Speaker of the Delhi Assembly on Thursday.

भाजपा के मोहन सिंह बिष्ट, जो छह बार विधायक रह चुके हैं, को गुरुवार को दिल्ली विधानसभा के उपाध्यक्ष के रूप में चुने जाने की संभावना है।

- The election will take place in the absence of 21 AAP legislators, who have been suspended until Friday for disrupting the House.

चुनाव में 21 आप विधायकों की अनुपस्थिति होगी, जिन्हें शुक्रवार तक निलंबित कर दिया गया है सदन में हंगामा करने के कारण।

- Speaker Vijender Gupta had suspended 21 AAP MLAs, including Leader of the Opposition Atishi, for disrupting the House.

स्पीकर विजेंद्र गुप्ता ने विपक्ष की नेता

आतिशी सहित 21 आप विधायकों को सदन में हंगामा करने के लिए निलंबित कर दिया था।

- AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan, the only one to avoid suspension, was

not present in the Assembly on Tuesday.

आप विधायक अमानतुल्लाह खान, जो निलंबन से बचने वाले एकमात्र विधायक थे, मंगलवार को विधानसभा में मौजूद नहीं थे।

Discussion on CAG report
सीएजी रिपोर्ट पर चर्चा



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- Following the **Deputy Speaker's election**, the House will discuss the **CAG report on the ₹2,002-crore loss due to the poor implementation of the now-scrapped liquor policy**.
उपाध्यक्ष के चुनाव के बाद, सदन ₹2,002 करोड़ के नुकसान और अब रद्द की गई शराब नीति के गलत कार्यान्वयन पर सीएजी रिपोर्ट पर चर्चा करेगा।
- The **Assembly session has been extended until March 3**, and the **Speaker is expected to table another CAG report regarding the renovation of 6, Flagstaff Road bungalow**, where **AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal lived as CM from 2015 to October 2024**.
विधानसभा सत्र को 3 मार्च तक बढ़ा दिया गया है, और स्पीकर एक अन्य सीएजी रिपोर्ट पेश करने की संभावना है, जो 6, फ्लैगस्टाफ रोड बंगले के नवीनीकरण से संबंधित है, जहां आप प्रमुख अरविंद केजरीवाल 2015 से अक्टूबर 2024 तक मुख्यमंत्री के रूप में रहे।

PAC and CAG reports **पीएसी और सीएजी रिपोर्ट्स**

- The **ruling party is expected to constitute various legislative panels**, including the **Public Accounts Committee (PAC)**, over the next few days.
सत्तारूढ़ पार्टी अगले कुछ दिनों में लोक लेखा समिति (पीएसी) सहित विभिन्न विधायी समितियों का गठन कर सकती है।
- **After all the CAG reports are tabled**, the **PAC, comprising 14 MLAs of BJP and AAP**, will **examine the reports and submit findings** to the House for **appropriate action**.
सभी सीएजी रिपोर्ट्स पेश होने के बाद, 14 भाजपा और आप विधायकों वाली पीएसी रिपोर्टों की जांच करेगी और निष्कर्षों को सदन के समक्ष प्रस्तुत करेगी, जिससे उचित कार्रवाई की जा सके।
- Before the **February 5 Assembly election**, **BJP promised to table 14 CAG reports**, claiming they exposed **scams under the previous AAP government**.
5 फरवरी को विधानसभा चुनाव से पहले, भाजपा ने 14 सीएजी रिपोर्ट पेश करने का वादा किया था, जिसमें उन्होंने पिछली आप सरकार के घोटालों को उजागर करने का दावा किया था।

Political heavyweight Mohan Singh Bisht

राजनीतिक दिग्गज मोहन सिंह बिष्ट

- **Mohan Singh Bisht** was elected this year from **Mustafabad**, which was affected by the **2020 north-east Delhi communal riots**, in which **53 people died and over 700 were injured**.
मोहन सिंह बिष्ट इस साल मुस्तफाबाद से चुने गए, जो 2020 के उत्तर-पूर्वी दिल्ली दंगों से प्रभावित था, जिसमें 53 लोगों की मौत हुई और 700 से अधिक लोग घायल हुए।
- His **influence in BJP Delhi politics** was evident when he **forced the party leadership to reconsider his ticket** during the candidate selection process.

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भाजपा की दिल्ली राजनीति में उनकी मजबूत पकड़ तब दिखी जब उन्होंने उम्मीदवार चयन प्रक्रिया के दौरान पार्टी नेतृत्व को अपना टिकट बदलने पर मजबूर कर दिया।

- On January 12, when the party replaced Bisht in Karawal Nagar with Kapil Mishra, he threatened to contest as an Independent.

12 जनवरी को जब पार्टी ने करावल नगर से बिष्ट की जगह कपिल मिश्रा को टिकट दिया, तो उन्होंने स्वतंत्र उम्मीदवार के रूप में चुनाव लड़ने की धमकी दी।

Within hours, the BJP issued a third list with only one name—Mohan Singh Bisht, fielding him from the Mustafabad constituency instead.

कुछ ही घंटों में, भाजपा ने अपनी तीसरी सूची जारी की, जिसमें केवल एक नाम—मोहन सिंह बिष्ट था, और उन्हें मुस्तफाबाद से उम्मीदवार घोषित किया गया।

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