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THE HINDU NEWSPAPER

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

13 MAY 2025

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13_05_2025 DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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

1. **India always chose Buddha over Yuddha, says Kharge**

   भारत ने हमेशा युद्ध के बजाय बुद्ध को चुना, खड़गे ने कहा

2. **East Asians began evolving to drink milk before rearing cattle**

   पूर्वी एशियाई लोगों में दूध पीने की क्षमता पशुपालन शुरू करने से पहले ही विकसित होने लगी थी

3. **With a new Pope, an understanding of Catholicism in India**

   एक नए पोप के साथ, भारत में कैथोलिक धर्म की समझ

India always chose Buddha over *yuddha*, says Kharge

The Congress leader was speaking after paying respects to the Buddha on Buddha Purnima near Kalaburagi; when nation is under threat, we must rise above caste and religion, he adds

GS Paper I: A&C

The Hindu Bureau
KALABURAGI

We are at the crossroads today, torn between choosing war and embracing Buddha's ideology of peace, said Mallikarjun Kharge, Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha. "When a nation's security is under threat, we must rise above caste and religion to stand united by setting aside all differences," he added.

The Congress leader was addressing a gathering after offering floral tributes to the statue of Buddha during the 2,569th Vaishakh Buddha Purnima on the outskirts of Kalaburagi in Karnataka on Monday.

Paying homage: Mallikarjun Kharge and wife Radhabai Kharge felicitate monks at Buddha Vihar, on Monday. ARUN KULKARNI

He emphasised that Constitution, democracy, and religion can survive only if the nation survives.

Mr. Kharge appealed to the people not to lose their self-confidence in this 'war-like' situation.

Recalling the recent terror attack in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Kharge said Pakistan that had lost wars to India in the past, was again provoking a conflict. India is a peace-loving country, and it always preferred Buddha (peace) over *yuddha* (war and conflict).

Soldiers hailed

"Any war brings only harm and disrupts people's lives. However, at times war becomes unavoidable because of the sheer nature of circumstances and we must accept it," he added.

The veteran leader praised the sacrifices of the soldiers guarding the borders and said that the country stands with every decision taken by the armed forces.

He said the Buddha's ideologies and teachings have gained relevance and influence globally, while it was not spreading as widely in India.

India always chose Buddha over Yuddha, says Kharge

भारत ने हमेशा युद्ध के बजाय बुद्ध को चुना, खड़गे ने कहा

• Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge stated that India is currently at a crossroads, torn between choosing war and embracing Buddha's ideology of peace.

• कांग्रेस नेता मल्लिकार्जुन खड़गे ने कहा कि भारत इस समय एक संकटपूर्ण मोड़ पर है, जहां उसे युद्ध और बुद्ध के शांति के विचार के बीच चुनना है।

• He said, "When a nation's **security** is under **threat**, we must **rise above caste and religion** to stay **united** by setting aside all differences."

• उन्होंने कहा, "जब राष्ट्र की **सुरक्षा** को **खतरा** हो, तो हमें **जाति और धर्म से ऊपर उठकर**, सभी मतभेदों को किनारे रखकर **एकजुट** होना चाहिए।"

• Kharge was speaking after offering **floral tributes** to the statue of Buddha on the **2,569th Vaishakh Buddha Purnima**, on the outskirts of **Kalaburagi** in **Karnataka**.

• खड़गे ने **कर्नाटक** के **कलबुर्गी** के बाहरी इलाके में स्थित बुद्ध की प्रतिमा पर **पुष्पांजलि अर्पित** करने के बाद, **2,569वें वैशाख बुद्ध पूर्णिमा** के अवसर पर यह बात कही।

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• He emphasised that the **Constitution**, **democracy**, and **religion** can survive only if the **nation survives**.

• उन्होंने जोर दिया कि **संविधान**, **लोकतंत्र**, और **धर्म** तभी तक जीवित रह सकते हैं जब **राष्ट्र जीवित** रहे।

• Kharge urged people not to lose their **self-confidence** in this **'war-like'** situation.

• खड़गे ने लोगों से आग्रह किया कि इस **'युद्ध जैसे'** हालात में अपना **आत्मविश्वास** न खोएं।

Reference to Pakistan and Terror Attack
पाकिस्तान और आतंकी हमले का उल्लेख

• Referring to the recent **terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir**, he said **Pakistan**, which has **lost wars** to India in the past, is again **provoking conflict**.

• हाल में **जम्मू-कश्मीर के पहलगाम में** हुए **आतंकी हमले** का उल्लेख करते हुए उन्होंने कहा कि **पाकिस्तान**, जो पहले भारत से **युद्ध हार चुका है**, एक बार फिर **संघर्ष को भड़का रहा है।**

• He stressed that **India** is a **peace-loving country** and has always preferred **Buddha (peace)** over **Yuddha (war/conflict)**.

• उन्होंने ज़ोर दिया कि **भारत** एक **शांतिप्रिय देश** है और उसने हमेशा **बुद्ध (शांति)** को **युद्ध (संघर्ष)** पर प्राथमिकता दी है।

Perspective on War and Soldiers
युद्ध और सैनिकों के प्रति दृष्टिकोण

• Kharge said, "**Any war** brings only **harm** and **disrupts** people's lives. However, at times, war becomes **unavoidable** due to the **circumstances**."

• खड़गे ने कहा, "**कोई भी युद्ध** केवल **हानि** लाता है और लोगों के जीवन को **बाधित** करता है। हालांकि, कई बार **परिस्थितियों** के कारण युद्ध **अपरिहार्य** हो जाता है।"

• He praised the **sacrifices of soldiers** guarding the **borders**, stating that the **country stands with every decision** taken by the **armed forces**.

• उन्होंने **सीमाओं की रक्षा कर रहे सैनिकों के बलिदानों** की प्रशंसा करते हुए कहा कि देश **सशस्त्र बलों द्वारा लिए गए हर निर्णय** के साथ खड़ा है।

Relevance of Buddha's Teachings
बुद्ध के उपदेशों की प्रासंगिकता

• Kharge noted that **Buddha's ideologies and teachings** have gained **global influence**, but are not **spreading as widely in India**.

• खड़गे ने बताया कि **बुद्ध के विचारों और शिक्षाओं** को **वैश्विक स्तर पर प्रभाव** मिला है, लेकिन वे **भारत में उतनी व्यापकता से नहीं फैल रहे** हैं।

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East Asians began evolving to drink milk before rearing cattle

The mutations that confer **lactase** persistence emerged independently in different populations; their emergence in North European and African populations appears to have coincided with domestication of cattle, buffaloes, goats, sheep, and other livestock, which began about **11,000 years ago**

D.P. Kasbekar

Female mammals produce milk to nourish their young. Much of the nourishment comes from lactose, the major sugar in milk. The lactose is broken down in the infant's small intestine into the more simpler sugars, glucose, and galactose, which are readily absorbed by the small intestine. The break-down, or digestion, of lactose is mediated by an enzyme called lactase.

After weaning, a baby rapidly loses the ability to produce lactase. When adults consume milk, cheese, ice cream or other dairy products, many of them experience unpleasant effects like bloating, flatulence, and diarrhoea. This is because the undigested lactose passes into the large intestine, where it is utilised by the bacteria residing there. This produces hydrogen, carbon dioxide, and methane, and the unabsorbed sugars increase water flow into the bowels to produce diarrhoea. These are the hallmarks of lactose intolerance.

Yet millions of people around the world regularly indulge in milkshakes, cheese pizzas, and ice cream sundaes even as adults. This is because they carry genetic mutations that allow them to continue producing lactase even as adults. This trait is called lactase persistence.

The coincidental emergence of lactase persistence mutations with livestock domestication was taken by many scientists to be a textbook example of convergent evolution. TADEU/UNSPLASH

A textbook example

The mutations that confer lactase persistence emerged independently in different populations. Their emergence in North European and African populations in particular appears to have coincided with the domestication of cattle, buffaloes, goats, sheep, and other livestock, which began about 11,000 years ago. The cultural shift from hunting/gathering to pastoralism gave continued access to meat, milk, and hides from herds of domesticated animals.

The coincidental emergence of lactase persistence mutations with livestock domestication was taken by many scientists at the time to be a "textbook example" of convergent evolution. That is, the independent evolution of similar traits in distantly related populations. Experts believed it was driven, in the words of a 2007 paper in *Nature Genetics*, by the "strong selective pressure resulting from shared cultural traits – animal domestication and adult milk consumption."

A wrinkle in the textbook

Scientists may need to reevaluate this neat summation in the light of new findings reported by a team of researchers from Fudan University in Shanghai, China; the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, in Leipzig, Germany; and the Université de Lyon in France. Their findings were published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

The researchers found a distinct evolutionary pathway for lactase persistence in East Asian populations, which includes the Chinese, the Japanese, and the Vietnamese. Unlike the gene-and-culture coevolution well-documented in African and European groups, the East Asian lactase persistence gene had come from the

Neanderthals, an archaic group of humans that went extinct about 30,000 years ago.

When the researchers conducted population genetic analyses of the part of the genome containing the lactase gene, they found evidence of pre-agricultural selection pressures beginning more than 30,000 years ago. That is, the East Asian genomes began evolving towards lactase persistence several millennia before these populations began to domesticate livestock.

This early evolution likely targeted advantages related to the immune system rather than lactose digestion directly. The researchers found the East Asian (Neanderthal-derived) lactase gene showed the same expression pattern as the mutant responsible for lactase persistence in Europeans. This suggested it also conferred lactate persistence.

Neanderthals in our genome

About 7 million years ago, the evolutionary line leading to the contemporary *Homo sapiens* diverged from the one leading to our closest living cousins, the chimpanzees and bonobos. About 800,000 years ago, our line split once more: one population broke away and migrated to Eurasia, adapting to cold climes and eventually becoming the Neanderthals. The other stayed put in Africa and, by about 200,000 years ago, evolved into modern humans.

Modern humans migrated out of Africa into Eurasia 120,000 to 80,000 years ago, and came into contact with their Neanderthal cousins there. DNA evidence from skeletal remains dating to after the contact showed the two occasionally interbred as well. As a result, today, about 1-4% of the genome of individuals with Eurasian ancestry – i.e. Europeans, East Asians, Indians, Native Americans, and

Studies found evidence of pre-agricultural selection pressures beginning 30,000 years ago. The East Asian genomes began evolving towards lactase persistence several millennia before these populations began to domesticate livestock

Oceanians – represents Neanderthal-derived DNA sequences. The lactase gene of East Asians was one such segment. On the other hand, those of African descent have close to 0% Neanderthal-derived sequences.

About 30,000 years ago the Neanderthals went extinct for reasons that are still not clear.

Bones to pick

Experts can distinguish Neanderthal skeletal remains from those of modern humans by the shape of the skull, inner ear bones, and pelvis width. Neanderthal bones have yielded DNA, which scientists have sequenced and compared with that of *H. sapiens*.

Two random humans share about 99.9% of their DNA sequence whereas humans and Neanderthals shared only about 99.7%. Thus, there are about 9.6 million points of difference between Neanderthal and human DNA sequences, in terms of the bases the DNA is made of. Based on these differences, if a DNA sequence is sufficiently long, one can tell whether it is from humans or Neanderthals.

The Allen Ancient DNA Resource (AADR) is a curated database of more than 10,000 genome sequences from the skeletal remains of ancient individuals who lived up to 20,000 years ago. The researchers who put this resource

together have also identified, on every genome, more than a million sites where the DNA has been known to exhibit a different ordering of bases than "normal."

About 67% of the ancient DNA sequences in AADR are from remains recovered in Europe and Russia, some 8% each are from East Asia and the Near East, about 7% are from the Americas, about 5% are from South and Central Asia, about 3% from Africa, and about 2% from Oceania.

A story upended

The researchers behind the new study searched AADR and found one modern human who lived around 14,000 years ago in the Amur area of China. This individual carried the Neanderthal-derived lactase gene. The gene occurred in roughly 10% of those humans who lived 8,000 to 3,000 years ago, and in about 20% of those who lived about 3,000 to 1,000 years ago. Its current frequency among East Asians is 28.9%.

Thus, the AADR data also supported the inference made from the population genetic analyses: that the lactase gene had already experienced selection and had reached a (relatively) high frequency among East Asians long before they began to domesticate animals.

Thus either the selection in East Asians, unlike that in Africans and North Europeans, was for reasons other than lactase persistence, or in all three geographies the selection was similarly not for lactase persistence.

Either way in the light of these findings the classic story of gene–culture coevolution has become more complicated and hence, as the researchers note, more interesting.

(D.P. Kasbekar is a retired scientist. kasbekardp@yahoo.co.in)

cattle

पूर्वी एशियाई लोगों में दूध पीने की क्षमता पशुपालन शुरू करने से पहले ही विकसित होने लगी थी

• **Female mammals produce milk to nourish their young.**

 • **मादा स्तनधारी अपने बच्चों को पोषण देने के लिए दूध का उत्पादन करती हैं।**

• The major sugar in milk is **lactose**, which is broken down in the infant's small intestine into **glucose** and **galactose**, which are easily absorbed.

 • दूध में मुख्य शकरा **लैक्टोज** होती है, जिसे शिशु की छोटी आंत में **ग्लूकोज़** और **गैलेक्टोज़** में तोड़ा जाता है, जो आसानी से अवशोषित हो जाते हैं।

• This break-down is carried out by an enzyme called **lactase**.

 • यह प्रक्रिया एक एंजाइम **लैक्टेस** के माध्यम से होती है।

• After **weaning**, infants lose the ability to produce lactase quickly.

 • **स्तनपान छुड़ाने** के बाद, शिशुओं की **लैक्टेस** बनाने की क्षमता तेजी से समाप्त हो जाती है।

• Adults who consume milk products often suffer from **bloating, flatulence, and diarrhoea** due to undigested lactose reaching the large intestine.

 • वयस्क जब दूध से बने उत्पादों का सेवन करते हैं तो **अपचित लैक्टोज** बड़ी आंत तक पहुंचता है, जिससे **फुलाव, गैस और दस्त** जैसे लक्षण उत्पन्न होते हैं।

• This occurs because the lactose is fermented by **bacteria** in the large intestine, producing **hydrogen, carbon dioxide, and methane**.

 • ऐसा इसलिए होता है क्योंकि लैक्टोज बड़ी आंत में मौजूद **बैक्टीरिया** द्वारा किण्वित किया जाता है, जिससे **हाइड्रोजन, कार्बन डाइऑक्साइड और मीथेन** उत्पन्न होते हैं।

• The unabsorbed sugars increase **water flow** into the bowels, leading to diarrhoea — the hallmark of **lactose intolerance**.

 • अपचित शर्कराएं आंतों में **पानी का प्रवाह** बढ़ाती हैं, जिससे **दस्त** होता है — जो **लैक्टोज असहिष्णुता** की पहचान है।

Lactase Persistence in Adults
वयस्कों में लैक्टेस बने रहने की क्षमता

• Many adults can consume milk products because of **genetic mutations** that allow continued lactase production — this is called **lactase persistence**.

• कई वयस्क दूध से बने उत्पादों का सेवन कर सकते हैं क्योंकि उनके पास **आनुवंशिक उत्परिवर्तन** होते हैं जो **लैक्टेस उत्पादन** को जारी रखते हैं — इसे **लैक्टेस बना रहना** कहते हैं।

A Textbook Example of Evolution
विकास का एक पाठ्यपुस्तकीय उदाहरण

- These **lactase persistence mutations** emerged **independently** in different populations.
  ये **लैक्टेस बने रहने वाले उत्परिवर्तन** विभिन्न जनसंख्याओं में **स्वतंत्र रूप से** उत्पन्न हुए।
- In **North European** and **African** populations, the mutations coincided with **domestication of cattle, buffaloes, goats, and sheep** about **11,000 years ago**.
  उत्तर यूरोपीय और **अफ्रीकी** जनसंख्याओं में, ये उत्परिवर्तन **लगभग 11,000 वर्ष पहले गाय, भैंस, बकरी और भेड़ के पालतू बनाए जाने** के समय के साथ मेल खाते हैं।
- The shift from **hunting-gathering** to **pastoralism** provided access to **meat, milk, and hides**.
  शिकार-संग्रह से **पशुपालन** की ओर संक्रमण ने **मांस, दूध और खाल** तक पहुंच प्रदान की।
- This coincidence was viewed as a case of **convergent evolution** — the **independent evolution** of similar traits in unrelated groups.
  इस संयोग को **सामवर्ती विकास (convergent evolution)** का एक उदाहरण माना गया — यानी असंबंधित समूहों में समान गुणों का **स्वतंत्र विकास**।
- A 2007 paper in *Nature Genetics* described it as driven by **strong selective pressure** due to **shared cultural traits** like animal domestication and adult milk consumption.
  नेचर जेनेटिक्स में 2007 के एक शोधपत्र में इसे **पशुपालन** और **वयस्कों द्वारा दूध के सेवन** जैसी **सांस्कृतिक समानताओं** के कारण उत्पन्न **मजबूत चयन दबाव** का परिणाम बताया गया।

A Wrinkle in the Textbook Narrative
पाठ्यपुस्तक की कहानी में एक मोड़

- New research from **Fudan University (Shanghai), Max Planck Institute (Germany)**, and **Université de Lyon (France)** challenges the traditional view.
  फ़ूडन यूनिवर्सिटी (शंघाई), मैक्स प्लैंक संस्थान (जर्मनी) और **ल्योन विश्वविद्यालय (फ्रांस)** के नए शोध ने पारंपरिक दृष्टिकोण को चुनौती दी है।
- Findings were published in the **Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences**.
  निष्कर्ष **नेशनल एकेडमी ऑफ साइंसेज की कार्यवाही** में प्रकाशित हुए।
- In **East Asian populations** (including **Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese**), **lactase persistence** evolved through a different pathway.
  पूर्वी एशियाई जनसंख्याओं (जैसे **चीनी, जापानी, वियतनामी**) में **लैक्टेस बना रहना** एक अलग रास्ते से विकसित हुआ।

- Unlike the gene-culture coevolution in Africa and Europe, the East Asian **lactase gene** was derived from **Neanderthals**, who went extinct about **30,000 years ago**.
  अफ्रीका और यूरोप में देखे गए **जीन-संस्कृति सहविकास** के विपरीत, पूर्वी एशिया में **लैक्टेस जीन नीएंडरथल** से आया, जो लगभग **30,000 वर्ष पहले** विलुप्त हो गए थे।

- **Genetic analysis** revealed **pre-agricultural selection pressures** on the **lactase gene**, starting **over 30,000 years ago**.
  आनुवंशिक विश्लेषण से पता चला कि **लैक्टेस जीन** पर **30,000 वर्ष पहले** से ही **कृषि पूर्व चयन दबाव** थे।

- This suggests that **East Asian evolution** toward lactase persistence began **well before** domestication of livestock.
  इसका अर्थ है कि **पूर्वी एशियाई लोगों** में लैक्टेस बना रहने की प्रक्रिया **पशुपालन शुरू होने से बहुत पहले** ही शुरू हो गई थी।

Possible Immune Benefits
संभवतः रोग प्रतिरोधक लाभ

- This early evolution may have been selected for **immune-related advantages**, not just lactose digestion.
  यह प्रारंभिक विकास संभवतः केवल **लैक्टोज पाचन** के लिए नहीं, बल्कि **प्रतिरक्षा से संबंधित लाभों** के कारण हुआ हो।

- The **Neanderthal-derived lactase gene** in East Asians showed similar **expression patterns** to the one responsible for lactase persistence in Europeans.
  पूर्वी एशियाई लोगों में **नीएंडरथल से प्राप्त लैक्टेस जीन** ने **यूरोपीय लोगों** में लैक्टेस बने रहने वाले जीन के समान **अभिव्यक्ति पैटर्न** दिखाए।

- This similarity indicates that the East Asian gene also **conferred lactase persistence**, although it originated much earlier.
  यह समानता दर्शाती है कि पूर्वी एशियाई जीन ने भी **लैक्टेस बना रहने** की क्षमता दी, हालांकि इसकी उत्पत्ति बहुत पहले हुई थी।

Neanderthals in our Genome
हमारे जीनोम में निएंडरथल

- Around **7 million years ago**, the evolutionary line that led to **modern Homo sapiens** split from the one that led to **chimpanzees and bonobos**.
- लगभग **70 लाख वर्ष पहले**, वह विकासीय रेखा जो **आधुनिक होमो सेपियन्स** की ओर जाती है, वह **चिंपैंजी और बोनोबो** की ओर जाने वाली रेखा से अलग हो गई।

- Around **800,000 years ago**, this human line split again — one group migrated to **Eurasia**, adapted to cold climates, and became **Neanderthals**.

• लगभग **8 लाख वर्ष पहले**, यह मानव रेखा फिर से विभाजित हुई — एक समूह **यूरेशिया** चला गया, ठंडी जलवायु में अनुकूलित हुआ और **निएंडरथल** बन गया।

• The group that remained in **Africa** evolved into **modern humans** by around **200,000 years ago**.
• जो समूह **अफ्रीका** में रहा, वह लगभग **2 लाख वर्ष पहले आधुनिक मानवों** में विकसित हो गया।

• Between **120,000 to 80,000 years ago**, modern humans migrated out of Africa and came into contact with Neanderthals in **Eurasia**.
• **1.2 लाख से 80 हजार वर्ष पहले**, आधुनिक मानव **अफ्रीका** से बाहर गए और **यूरेशिया** में निएंडरथल से संपर्क में आए।

• **DNA evidence** from skeletons shows that **interbreeding** occurred between the two.
• कंकालों से प्राप्त **डीएनए प्रमाण** दर्शाते हैं कि दोनों के बीच **सहवास (interbreeding)** हुआ था।

• As a result, **1-4%** of the genome of people with **Eurasian ancestry** (Europeans, East Asians, Indians, Native Americans, Oceanians) is **Neanderthal-derived**.
• परिणामस्वरूप, **यूरेशियाई वंश** (यूरोपीय, पूर्वी एशियाई, भारतीय, नेटिव अमेरिकन, ओशियान) वाले लोगों के जीनोम का **1-4%** हिस्सा **निएंडरथल से प्राप्त** होता है।

• The **lactase gene** in **East Asians** is one such Neanderthal-derived segment.
• **पूर्वी एशियाई लोगों** में **लैक्टेस जीन** ऐसा ही एक **निएंडरथल से प्राप्त खंड** है।

• People of **African descent** have close to **0%** Neanderthal-derived sequences.
• **अफ्रीकी मूल** के लोगों में **निएंडरथल से प्राप्त अनुक्रम** लगभग **0%** होता है।

• Neanderthals went **extinct** around **30,000 years ago** for reasons still unclear.
• निएंडरथल लगभग **30,000 वर्ष पहले लुप्त** हो गए, और इसके कारण अभी तक स्पष्ट नहीं हैं।

Bones to Pick
कंकालों से संकेत

• Experts can identify Neanderthal skeletons based on **skull shape**, **inner ear bones**, and **pelvis width**.
• विशेषज्ञ **खोपड़ी के आकार**, **भीतरी कान की हड्डियों**, और **श्रोणि की चौड़ाई** के आधार पर निएंडरथल के कंकालों की पहचान कर सकते हैं।

• DNA extracted from Neanderthal bones has been sequenced and compared with **Homo sapiens**.
• निएंडरथल की हड्डियों से प्राप्त **डीएनए** का अनुक्रमण कर उसे **होमो सेपियन्स** से तुलना की गई है।

• Two random humans share about **99.9%** of their DNA sequence, but **Neanderthals and humans** shared only about **99.7%.**

• दो यादृच्छिक मानवों के **डीएनए अनुक्रम** में लगभग **99.9% समानता** होती है, जबकि **मानव और निएंडरथल** में केवल **99.7%** समानता होती है।

• This results in approximately **9.6 million differences** in the DNA sequence between the two.

• इससे दोनों के **डीएनए अनुक्रम** में लगभग **96 लाख अंतर** पाए जाते हैं।

• If a DNA sequence is long enough, it can be determined whether it is from a **human** or a **Neanderthal**.

• यदि **डीएनए अनुक्रम** पर्याप्त लंबा हो, तो यह पता लगाया जा सकता है कि यह **मानव** का है या **निएंडरथल** का।

The Allen Ancient DNA Resource (AADR)
एलन प्राचीन डीएनए संसाधन (AADR)

• The **AADR** is a curated database of more than **10,000 genome sequences** from ancient skeletal remains up to **20,000 years old**.

• **AADR** एक संकलित डेटाबेस है जिसमें **20,000 वर्ष पुराने** प्राचीन कंकालों से प्राप्त **10,000 से अधिक जीनोम अनुक्रम** शामिल हैं।

• Researchers have identified over **1 million sites** on each genome with **variant base orderings**.

• शोधकर्ताओं ने प्रत्येक जीनोम पर **10 लाख से अधिक स्थानों** की पहचान की है जहां **बेस का क्रम भिन्न** होता है।

• Around **67%** of these DNA sequences are from **Europe and Russia**, **8%** from **East Asia** and **Near East**, **7%** from the **Americas**, **5%** from **South and Central Asia**, **3%** from **Africa**, and **2%** from **Oceania**.

• इन डीएनए अनुक्रमों में से लगभग **67% यूरोप और रूस**, **8% पूर्वी एशिया और निकट पूर्व**, **7% अमेरिका**, **5% दक्षिण और मध्य एशिया**, **3% अफ्रीका**, और **2% ओशियानिया** से प्राप्त हुए हैं।

A Story Upended
एक उलटी कहानी

• In the **AADR**, researchers found a **14,000-year-old modern human** from **Amur, China** who carried the **Neanderthal-derived lactase gene**.

• **AADR** में, शोधकर्ताओं ने **अमूर, चीन** से **14,000 वर्ष पुराने एक आधुनिक मानव** की पहचान की, जिसमें **निएंडरथल से प्राप्त लैक्टेस जीन** पाया गया।

• This gene was present in about **10%** of humans living **8,000 to 3,000 years ago**, and in **20%** of those living **3,000 to 1,000 years ago**.

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• यह जीन **8,000 से 3,000 वर्ष पहले** रहने वाले लगभग **10%** मानवों में और **3,000 से 1,000 वर्ष पहले** रहने वाले **20%** मानवों में मौजूद था।

• Today, the gene's frequency among **East Asians** is **28.9%**.
 • आज, **पूर्वी एशियाई लोगों** में इस जीन की **आवृत्ति 28.9%** है।

• This supports the theory that **lactase gene selection** happened **before animal domestication** in East Asia.
 • यह इस सिद्धांत का समर्थन करता है कि **पूर्वी एशिया** में **पशु पालन से पहले ही लैक्टेस जीन का चयन** हुआ था।

• Therefore, in **East Asians**, the **selection pressure** might not have been for **lactase persistence**, or the same might be true for **Africans and North Europeans**.
 • इसलिए **पूर्वी एशियाई लोगों** में **लैक्टेस सहनशीलता** के बजाय किसी अन्य कारण से **चयन दबाव** हो सकता है, या फिर **अफ्रीकी और उत्तरी यूरोपीय** लोगों के लिए भी यही सच हो सकता है।

• In light of these findings, the classic story of **gene–culture coevolution** has become more **complex** and **interesting**.
 • इन निष्कर्षों के प्रकाश में, **जीन–संस्कृति सह-विकास** की पारंपरिक कहानी अब अधिक **जटिल** और **रोमांचक** बन गई है।

With a new Pope, an understanding of Catholicism in India

A look at the religious behaviours of Catholics, who form the largest share among all Christian denominations globally and in India

GS Paper I: A&C

DATA POINT

Mohd Arshid

Upon the passing of Pope Francis, Chicago-born Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost was elected to succeed him as Pope Leo XIV.

The conclave to elect the new pontiff began on May 7. The election of the Pope takes place through an electoral college composed of Cardinals from around the world. This time, the electoral college included 135 Cardinals from 70 countries, with four Cardinals from India, the country's highest-ever tally.

Among all Christian denominations, Catholics comprise the largest population, forming 15.9% of the global population and a large share of the Indian Christian population as well. The Vatican is a spiritual symbol for this denomination. In this context, this is an analysis of the Catholic denomination, its religious behaviour, and its demographic share among Indian Christians.

According to data from the PEW Research Center, about 37% of Christians in India are Catholic, 17.9% are Baptist, 9.5% are Presbyterian, and 24.3% belong to other denominations. About 10% of Christians do not affiliate with any denomination (Chart 1).

Chart 2 shows the distribution of Catholics among Christian social groups. It shows that nearly 75% of general category Christians, 16.8% of Scheduled Caste Christians, 23.7% of Christian tribal people, 55.5% of Other Backward Classes Christians, and 23.5% of Christians from the Most Backward Classes are Catholic.

Though the majority of Indian Catholics belong to upper castes, for the first time, a Dalit, Anthony Poola, the Archbishop of Hyderabad, was among the four Indian cardinals who voted for the new Pope. He was appointed as a cardinal in 2022 by Pope Francis.

Map 3 shows the State-wise share of Catholics within the total Christian population of each State. A State marked as zero indicates that it has Christians, but no Catholics. A majority of the Christian population in Nagaland and Mizoram is Catholic. In Meghalaya, it is 90.8% and in Goa, it is 58.7%.

To measure aggregate religiosity in India, I developed an Aggregate Religiosity Index that captures the religiosity of all major religious groups in India from 1989 to 2023, based on 15 indicators. The findings reveal that all religious groups in India exhibit high levels of religiosity. **Tables 4 and 5** provide a breakdown of the most recent religiosity levels (in % terms) among Christian denominations across selected indicators.

More than 90% of Catholic respondents consider religion important, believe in God and participate in religious festivals (**Table 4**). Public expressions of faith, such as wearing a religious pendant (74.6%) and attending services (59.9%), are also common. However, only a small proportion (11.2%) actively follows religious leaders. This suggests that while personal religiosity remains high, institutional influence may be limited.

Table 5 presents the social, democratic, and economic behaviour of Indian Christians. The first column corresponds to Catholics.

Within Christianity, Catholics exhibit a comparatively softer attitude towards religion than Presbyterians and Christians who do not affiliate with any denomination. Even Baptists and Christians from other denominations are stricter than Catholics when it comes to opposing inter-religious marriages. Catholics tend to have higher literacy levels compared to members of all other Christian denominations except Presbyterians.

Mohd Arshid is a research scholar studying the political economy of religion in India at the Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, JNU, New Delhi

Indian Catholics: a profile

Data for the charts were sourced from the PEW Research Center and the 2011 Census of India

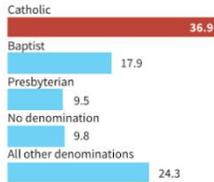**Chart 1:** Denomination-wise share of Christians in India (in %)

Denomination	%
Catholic	36.9
Baptist	17.9
Presbyterian	9.5
No denomination	9.8
All other denominations	24.3

Chart 2: Distribution of Catholics among Christian social groups (in %)

Social group	%
General category	73.9
SCs	16.8
STs	23.7
OBCs	55.5
MBCs	23.5

Map 3: Share of Catholics within the Christian population in each State
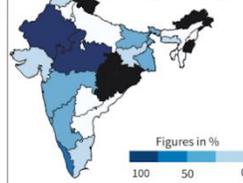
Figures in %
100   50   0

Table 4: The table presents the religious behaviour of Christian denominations in India. Figures in %

Religious Indicator	Catholic	Baptist	Presbyterian	All other denominations	Not affiliated with any denomination
Importance of religion in life	90.4	92.3	86.5	90.7	92.9
Religious attendance	59.9	63.5	86.5	62.6	45.5
Believe in afterlife	66.6	77.9	91.7	68.7	57.6
Celebration of religious festivals	97.1	100.0	95.8	95.9	88.8
Believe in God	98.7	99.4	99.0	97.2	96.9
Follow religious leaders	11.2	11.6	4.2	21.5	15.2
Made pilgrimages	52.7	23.8	7.3	49.2	38.4
Fasting	65.8	54.1	42.7	67.5	59.5
Believe in the Day of Judgement	62.6	48.1	79.2	52.4	42.4
Frequency of the recitation of religious books	80.2	88.4	83.3	79.7	66.7
Wear a religious pendant	74.6	20.4	29.2	54.1	62.6

Table 5: The table shows the social, democratic, and economic behaviour of Indian Christians. Figures in %

Indicator	Catholic	Baptist	Presbyterian	Others	No affiliation
Women should have the same rights as men	95.2	97.8	82.3	92.7	93.9
Abortion should be legal	42.2	18.8	11.5	53.7	39.3
Commitment towards democracy	58.6	17.7	80.2	53.7	90.9
Technology use in balancing family gender ratio	47.3	63.0	59.4	44.7	45.5
Against inter-caste marriages (for men)	53.5	54.7	81.3	60.6	78.8
Against inter-religious marriages (for women)	53.2	72.4	93.8	63.8	78.8
Against inter-caste marriages (for women)	67.4	51.9	86.5	58.0	88.9
Against inter-religious Marriages (for women)	50.8	71.3	81.3	62.2	81.0
Inheritance: men and women should have equal rights	72.5	66.9	49.0	57.3	61.6
Earning money: Primary responsibility of men and women	57.0	67.4	63.5	65.4	63.0
Illiteracy	11.8	14.9	9.4	19.1	30.0
Men and women are equally capable of leadership	61.8	67.4	16.7	57.3	67.7

To measure aggregate religiosity in India, the author developed an Aggregate Religiosity Index based on 15 indicators

With a new Pope, an understanding of Catholicism in India
एक नए पोप के साथ, भारत में कैथोलिक धर्म की समझ

• Upon the passing of **Pope Francis**, Chicago-born **Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost** was elected to succeed him as **Pope Leo XIV**.

• **पोप फ्रांसिस** के निधन के बाद, **शिकागो में जन्मे कार्डिनल रॉबर्ट फ्रांसिस प्रेवोस्ट** को **पोप लियो चौदहवें** के रूप में चुना गया।

• The **conclave** to elect the new Pope began on **May 7**.

• नए पोप को चुनने के लिए **कॉनक्लेव** की शुरुआत **7 मई** को हुई।

• The election took place through an **electoral college** composed of **Cardinals** from around the world.

• यह चुनाव दुनिया भर के **कार्डिनलों** से बने एक **निर्वाचन मंडल** के माध्यम से हुआ।

• This time, the electoral college included **135 Cardinals** from **70 countries**, including **4 Cardinals from India**, the **highest-ever tally** for the country.

• इस बार, **निर्वाचन मंडल** में **70 देशों** के **135 कार्डिनल** शामिल थे, जिनमें से **भारत के 4 कार्डिनल** थे — जो अब तक की **सबसे अधिक संख्या** है।

Global and Indian Catholic Population
वैश्विक और भारतीय कैथोलिक जनसंख्या

- Among all **Christian denominations**, **Catholics form the largest group**, comprising **15.9% of the global population**.
  सभी ईसाई संप्रदायों में, **कैथोलिक सबसे बड़ा समूह** हैं, जो **वैश्विक जनसंख्या का 15.9%** हिस्सा बनाते हैं।
- **Catholics also constitute a large share** of the **Indian Christian population**.
  भारत के ईसाई समुदाय में भी कैथोलिकों की बड़ी संख्या है।
- The **Vatican** serves as the **spiritual symbol** for this denomination.
  वेटिकन इस संप्रदाय के लिए **आध्यात्मिक प्रतीक** के रूप में कार्य करता है।

Denominational Share among Indian Christians
भारतीय ईसाइयों के बीच संप्रदायों का हिस्सा

• According to **PEW Research Center** data:

- **37% of Christians** in India are **Catholics**
- **17.9% are Baptist**
- **9.5% are Presbyterian**
- **24.3% belong to other denominations**
- **10% of Christians** are **not affiliated** with any denomination
  • **PEW रिसर्च सेंटर** के आंकड़ों के अनुसार:
- भारत में **ईसाइयों का 37% हिस्सा कैथोलिक** है
- **17.9% बैपटिस्ट** हैं

- **9.5% प्रेस्बिटेरियन** हैं
- **24.3% अन्य संप्रदायों** से संबंधित हैं

- **10% ईसाई किसी भी संप्रदाय से संबद्ध नहीं हैं**

Social Composition of Indian Catholics
भारतीय कैथोलिकों की सामाजिक संरचना

• Distribution among Christian social groups (Chart 2):

- **75% of General category Christians** are Catholic

- **16.8% of Scheduled Caste Christians**

- **23.7% of Christian tribals**

- **55.5% of OBC Christians**

- **23.5% of Most Backward Class Christians**
  • ईसाई सामाजिक समूहों में कैथोलिकों का वितरण (चार्ट 2):

- **सामान्य वर्ग के 75% ईसाई** कैथोलिक हैं

- **अनुसूचित जाति के 16.8% ईसाई**

- **जनजातीय ईसाइयों के 23.7%**

- **ओबीसी ईसाइयों के 55.5%**

- **अत्यंत पिछड़े वर्ग के 23.5% ईसाई** कैथोलिक हैं

Dalit Representation in Catholic Leadership
कैथोलिक नेतृत्व में दलित प्रतिनिधित्व

• Although **most Indian Catholics belong to upper castes**, for the **first time**, a **Dalit**, **Anthony Poola**, Archbishop of **Hyderabad**, participated in the conclave to elect the new Pope.

• हालांकि **अधिकांश भारतीय कैथोलिक ऊंची जातियों से हैं**, **पहली बार**, **हैदराबाद के आर्चबिशप एंथनी पूला**, जो **दलित** हैं, नए पोप के चुनाव में शामिल हुए।

• He was appointed a **Cardinal in 2022** by **Pope Francis**.
• उन्हें **2022 में पोप फ्रांसिस** द्वारा **कार्डिनल** नियुक्त किया गया था।

State-wise Catholic Population in India
भारत में राज्यवार कैथोलिक जनसंख्या

• **Map 3** shows **State-wise share** of Catholics within total Christian population.
• **मैप 3** में **राज्यवार ईसाई आबादी में कैथोलिकों का प्रतिशत** दर्शाया गया है।

• States marked as **zero** indicate they have Christians, but **no Catholics**.
• जिन राज्यों को **शून्य** दिखाया गया है, वहाँ **ईसाई तो हैं**, लेकिन **कोई कैथोलिक नहीं** हैं।

• **Catholics form the majority** of Christians in **Nagaland** and **Mizoram**.
• **नगालैंड** और **मिज़ोरम** में **कैथोलिकों की संख्या ईसाइयों में सबसे अधिक** है।

• In **Meghalaya**, **90.8%** of Christians are Catholics; in **Goa**, it is **58.7%**.
• **मेघालय** में **90.8%** और **गोवा** में **58.7% ईसाई कैथोलिक** हैं।

Aggregate Religiosity of Catholics in India
भारत में कैथोलिकों की समग्र धार्मिकता

• An **Aggregate Religiosity Index** was developed to measure religiosity among religious groups in India from **1989 to 2023**, using **15 indicators**.
• **1989 से 2023** तक भारत में धार्मिक समूहों की धार्मिकता मापने के लिए **15 संकेतकों** पर आधारित **समग्र धार्मिकता सूचकांक** विकसित किया गया।

• The findings show that **all religious groups** in India display **high levels of religiosity**.
• निष्कर्षों से पता चलता है कि भारत के **सभी धार्मिक समूहों में उच्च स्तर की धार्मिकता** देखी जाती है।

Religious Behaviour of Catholics
कैथोलिकों का धार्मिक व्यवहार

• As per **Table 4**, more than **90%** of Catholic respondents:

- Consider **religion important**

- **Believe in God**

- **Participate in religious festivals**
  - तालिका 4 के अनुसार, **90% से अधिक कैथोलिक उत्तरदाता**:

- **धर्म को महत्वपूर्ण मानते हैं**

- **ईश्वर में विश्वास रखते हैं**

- **धार्मिक त्योहारों में भाग लेते हैं**

• **Public expressions of faith** are common:

- **74.6% wear religious pendants**

- **59.9% attend religious services**
  - सार्वजनिक रूप से आस्था व्यक्त करने के रूप:

- **74.6% धार्मिक लॉकेट पहनते हैं**

- **59.9% धार्मिक सेवाओं में भाग लेते हैं**

• Only **11.2% actively follow religious leaders**, suggesting **strong personal religiosity** but **limited institutional influence**.
 • केवल **11.2% ही धार्मिक नेताओं का सक्रिय रूप से अनुसरण करते हैं**, जिससे यह संकेत मिलता है कि **व्यक्तिगत धार्मिकता तो मजबूत है**, लेकिन **संस्थागत प्रभाव सीमित है**।

Social, Democratic and Economic Behaviour
 सामाजिक, लोकतांत्रिक और आर्थिक व्यवहार

• **Table 5** shows that among Christians:

- **Catholics show softer religious attitudes** than Presbyterians and unaffiliated Christians.

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- **Baptists and other denominations** are stricter in **opposing inter-religious marriages**.
  - **तालिका 5** के अनुसार ईसाइयों में:

- कैथोलिकों का धार्मिक दृष्टिकोण प्रेस्बिटेरियन और गैर-संप्रदायों से नरम है।

- बैपटिस्ट और अन्य संप्रदाय अंतर-धार्मिक विवाहों के विरोध में अधिक कठोर हैं।

- **Catholics** have **higher literacy rates** than most other denominations, except **Presbyterians**.
- कैथोलिकों की साक्षरता दर अन्य अधिकांश संप्रदायों से अधिक है, सिवाय **प्रेस्बिटेरियन** के।

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

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13_05_2025 DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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

1. **When Nizam-era Hyderabad ensured pilgrimage parity**
   निज़ाम कालीन हैदराबाद में तीर्थयात्रा की समानता सुनिश्चित की गई
2. **The Educational Landscape, Its Disconcerting Shift**
   शैक्षिक परिदृश्य, इसकी चिंताजनक बदलाव
3. **A Belated Admission: On the Undercount of India's COVID-19 Pandemic Deaths**

एक विलंबित स्वीकारोक्ति: भारत में COVID-19 महामारी से हुई मौतों की कम गणना पर

4. On Differences in Clientelism, Patronage, and Freebies
क्लायंटेलिज़्म, संरक्षकवाद और मुफ्तखोरी में अंतर पर

When Nizam-era Hyderabad ensured pilgrimage parity

GS Paper II: Secularism

Syed Mohammed
HYDERABAD

In 1934, the then princely State of Hyderabad had granted six months of paid leave to employees of the Nizam government to undertake pilgrimages to Islamic holy sites such as Mecca and Medina (in present-day Saudi Arabia), Mashhad (Iran), and other significant places like Najaf, Karbala, and Baghdad (Iraq), besides Jerusalem.

However, the policy came under review when Ram Swaroop Tandon, a Hindu employee in the Nizam administration, submitted a petition seeking similar leave for a pilgrim-

Secular move: The archives showed that Gangotri and Yamunotri were also considered as pilgrimage sites by the Nizam govt. PTI

age. His request triggered internal deliberations about existing rules and the need for equitable treatment of employees from different faiths, considering the religious diversity of Hyderabad State.

A file preserved at the Telangana State Archives and Research Institute (TSARI) details how the pe-

tition was handled. It was first examined by the Law Department and later referred to the Finance Department. The latter noted that, according to the Service Rules, Muslim employees were explicitly permitted to avail leave for pilgrimages to Mecca for Haj, Medina for the Prophet's Mosque, and Shia holy sites such as Najaf, Karbala, and Baghdad, apart from Jerusalem.

"Given that Jerusalem was mentioned, it was noted that Christians and Jews in the Nizam's employ could also make use of this concession. When Tandon's request came, the government decided to grant

leave to Hindus on similar lines," Zareena Parveen of TSARI, who studied the file, said. The file shows that Gangotri and Yamunotri were also considered as pilgrimage sites.

At that time, the Prime Minister was Maharaja Kishen Pershad, a Punjabi Khatri, she said. A council, which also included Pershad, convened and resolved to bring about the legislation which would allow Hindu employees to make yatras. In July 1934, a firman was issued amending the Service Rules, officially granting Hindu employees six months of leave with advance salary to undertake religious yatras.

When Nizam-era Hyderabad ensured pilgrimage parity
निज़ाम कालीन हैदराबाद में तीर्थयात्रा की समानता सुनिश्चित की गई

• In 1934, the then princely State of Hyderabad granted six months of paid leave to employees of the Nizam government to undertake pilgrimages to Islamic holy sites such as Mecca and Medina (now in Saudi Arabia), Mashhad (Iran), and other significant places like Najaf, Karbala, Baghdad (Iraq), and Jerusalem.

• **1934 में, तत्कालीन हैदराबाद रियासत ने निज़ाम सरकार के कर्मचारियों को इस्लामी पवित्र स्थलों जैसे मक्का और मदीना (अब सऊदी अरब में), मशहद (ईरान), और अन्य प्रमुख स्थानों जैसे नजफ, कर्बला, बगदाद (इराक) तथा यरुशलम की तीर्थयात्रा के लिए छह महीने का सवेतन अवकाश दिया।**

• The policy was reconsidered when **Ram Swaroop Tandon**, a **Hindu employee**, submitted a petition seeking **similar leave for a pilgrimage**.
• यह नीति तब पुनः विचाराधीन आई जब **राम स्वरूप टंडन**, एक **हिंदू कर्मचारी**, ने **ऐसी ही तीर्थयात्रा की छुट्टी** के लिए एक याचिका दायर की।

• Tandon's request triggered internal discussions on the **existing rules** and the need for **equitable treatment** of employees from **different faiths**, considering the **religious diversity** of **Hyderabad State**.
• टंडन की मांग ने **मौजूदा नियमों** और **हैदराबाद राज्य** की **धार्मिक विविधता** को देखते हुए विभिन्न **धर्मों के कर्मचारियों** के **समान व्यवहार** की आवश्यकता पर आंतरिक चर्चाएं शुरू कर दीं।

• A **file preserved** at the **Telangana State Archives and Research Institute (TSARI)** shows how the petition was processed.
• यह याचिका कैसे निपटाई गई, इसका विवरण **तेलंगाना राज्य अभिलेखागार और अनुसंधान संस्थान (TSARI)** में संरक्षित एक **फाइल** में मिलता है।

• The petition was first examined by the **Law Department** and later referred to the **Finance Department**.
• इस याचिका की पहले **कानून विभाग** ने जांच की और फिर इसे **वित्त विभाग** को भेजा गया।

• The Finance Department noted that, as per **Service Rules**, **Muslim employees** were explicitly allowed to take leave for pilgrimages to **Mecca (Haj)**, **Medina (Prophet's Mosque)**, and **Shia holy sites** like **Najaf**, **Karbala**, **Baghdad**, and **Jerusalem**.
• वित्त विभाग ने बताया कि **सेवा नियमों** के अनुसार, **मुस्लिम कर्मचारियों** को विशेष रूप से **मक्का (हज)**, **मदीना (पैगंबर की मस्जिद)**, और **शिया पवित्र स्थलों** जैसे **नजफ**, **कर्बला**, **बगदाद** और **यरुशलम** की तीर्थयात्रा के लिए छुट्टी लेने की अनुमति थी।

• Since **Jerusalem** was included, it was inferred that **Christians and Jews** working under the **Nizam** could also use this **concession**.
• चूंकि **यरुशलम** शामिल था, इसलिए यह माना गया कि **ईसाई और यहूदी कर्मचारी** भी इस **छूट** का लाभ उठा सकते थे।

• When Tandon's request was received, the **government decided** to grant **similar leave** to **Hindus** as well.

 • टंडन की याचिका मिलने पर **सरकार** ने **हिंदू कर्मचारियों** को भी **ऐसी ही छुट्टी** देने का निर्णय लिया।

• According to **Zareena Parveen** of **TSARI**, who studied the file, **Gangotri** and **Yamunotri** were also included as pilgrimage sites.

 • **TSARI** की **जरीना परवीन** के अनुसार, जिन्होंने इस फाइल का अध्ययन किया, **गंगोत्री** और **यमुनोत्री** को भी तीर्थस्थलों में शामिल किया गया।

• At that time, the **Prime Minister** of Hyderabad was **Maharaja Kishen Pershad**, a **Punjabi Khatri**.

 • उस समय हैदराबाद के **प्रधानमंत्री महाराजा किशन पर्शाद** थे, जो एक **पंजाबी खत्री** थे।

• A **council**, including **Kishen Pershad**, convened to pass a **legislation** to allow **Hindu employees** to undertake pilgrimages.

 • एक **परिषद**, जिसमें **किशन पर्शाद** भी शामिल थे, ने एक **कानून** बनाने का निर्णय लिया जिससे **हिंदू कर्मचारी** तीर्थयात्रा पर जा सकें।

• In **July 1934**, a **firman** was issued, **amending the Service Rules**, and officially allowing **Hindu employees six months of leave with advance salary** for religious yatras.

 • **जुलाई 1934** में एक **फरमान** जारी किया गया, जिसमें **सेवा नियमों में संशोधन** कर के **हिंदू कर्मचारियों को छह महीने की अग्रिम वेतन सहित छुट्टी** धार्मिक यात्राओं के लिए देने की आधिकारिक अनुमति दी गई।

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The *educational landscape*, its disconcerting shift

Education has historically been regarded as the cornerstone of societal advancement – a realm where critical thinking, free inquiry, and the pursuit of knowledge could flourish. At its best, higher education had always cultivated intellectual independence, nurtured dissent, and inspired progress across disciplines and societies. The boundaries of human understanding were continually pushed through unfettered dialogue and academic exploration.

Yet, in recent decades, the educational landscape, especially within universities, has undergone a profound and disconcerting shift. Institutions once celebrated for fostering independent thought now appear increasingly constrained by bureaucratic controls, external mandates, and ideological gatekeeping. Rather than serving as laboratories of innovation and resistance, the Canadian thinker, H.A. Giroux, sees universities becoming engines of conformity, prioritising managerial efficiency and market alignment over academic freedom and intellectual integrity. Indoctrination, intimidation and intolerance become the central ingredients of education.

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From independence to centralisation
A particularly disquieting development in this decline is the unyielding centralisation of academic curricula. In the past, universities enjoyed considerable autonomy to craft syllabi tailored to their students' needs, faculty expertise, and the shifting contours of intellectual inquiry. Today, however, this independence is steadily eroding. Centralised agencies – be they governmental bodies such as the University Grants Commission (UGC) or frameworks such as the National Education Policy (NEP) – increasingly dictate the structure and content of academic programmes. These prescriptions are often influenced not by academic merit or pedagogical philosophy, but by economic agendas or partisan leanings.

The UGC, originally intended to coordinate academic standards, has mutated into an instrument of control. It dictates appointments, interferes in administration, and shapes curricula, often with scant regard for academic judgement, thereby becoming the long arm of a state increasingly intolerant of independent or critical thinking. Let us be clear: this is not about standards – it is about submission. Under the guise of regulation, the UGC has eroded the autonomy of Indian universities to the point of extinction. The promise of self-governance has been replaced with bureaucratic tutelage. An institution that is stripped of autonomy in faculty selection, research direction, and protection of dissent ceases to be a university in any meaningful sense.

The consequences of this centralisation are

Institutions once celebrated for fostering independent thought, now face bureaucratic controls, external mandates and ideological gatekeeping

far-reaching. It undercuts not only academic autonomy but also produces compliant drones, regiments intellectual discourse, and marginalises alternative perspectives. When syllabi are standardised across regions and institutions, the intellectual ecosystem becomes monolithic – devoid of diversity, nuance, or radical innovation. This intellectual flattening not only stifles creativity but also discourages the interrogation of dominant narratives and received assumptions.

Pressures on the academic climate
Historically, campuses have played a vital role in catalysing social change – whether in anti-colonial movements, civil rights struggles, or pro-democracy uprisings. By exerting control over what is taught and how it is taught, policymakers and administrators ensure that universities remain compliant rather than confrontational. Suppressing critical perspectives ensures that higher education does not produce citizens who question authority or imagine alternatives to the status quo. Take, for instance, a research scholar who gives a reference to Noam Chomsky's views on the decline of democracy or talks about nationalism and human rights. There is every chance that the student and his supervisor will be reprimanded by the state, a preposterous intervention indeed.

Take, for instance, the resurgence of reactionary politics that has led to increasing interference in academic affairs. Scholars whose work critiques systemic injustice, discriminatory politics, corporate exploitation, or nationalist rhetoric often find themselves marginalised, defunded, or even expelled or deported. Entire disciplines, especially in the social sciences and humanities, are being defunded or dismissed as politically awkward.

Such pressures have had an unsettling effect on academic life. Teachers, wary of professional reprisals, begin to engage in self-censorship. Controversial research topics are sidestepped not out of disinterest, but out of fear. Students, too, internalise this climate of caution, refraining from engaging critically with contentious issues, apprehensive about academic penalties, peer backlash, or threats to their future careers. The outcome is a smothering intellectual climate where fear of dissent trumps inquiry, and conformity is mistaken for collective wisdom, resulting in the decline of public intellectuals.

This erosion of academic freedom is compounded by the increasing corporatisation of higher education. Universities are no longer viewed as public institutions dedicated to knowledge and social advancement. Instead, they are treated as businesses, expected to generate profit, attract investment, and enhance their brand image. The logic of the market now governs the priorities of educational institutions,

reshaping both what is taught and why it is taught. The corporate corruption of higher education and the wrecking of the university is indeed apparent.

Consequently, disciplines that promise immediate financial returns – such as technology, business, and engineering – receive substantial funding and institutional support. Meanwhile, fields that emphasise critical thought, ethical reflection and historical understanding – such as philosophy, literature, and the arts – are sidelined as unproductive or irrelevant. The value of education is thus reduced to its marketability, and knowledge becomes a commodity to be consumed rather than a pursuit to be cherished.

It is often seen that faculty members are not immune to these pressures. Academic faculty are increasingly subject to performative pressures, evaluated through metrics such as publication counts and student satisfaction ratings. The proliferation of global university rankings exacerbates this issue, prioritising conformity to western norms and standardised metrics over indigenous intellectual traditions and context-specific inquiry. This regime incentivises strategic branding and replication of external models, rather than genuine academic innovation.

Academic governance as a concern
This shift has also altered the structure and the ethos of academic governance. University leadership, it is now proposed, can comprise administrators drawn from corporate backgrounds rather than only academic. These individuals will, understandably, bring with them a managerial mindset that privileges efficiency, quantifiable outputs, and brand visibility over scholarly rigour and pedagogical richness. Furthermore, the appointment of Vice Chancellors from non-academic fields compromises the collegial culture of universities, disconnecting decision-making from teaching and research realities.

Visibly, the prevailing trend of appointing academics lacking intellectual engagement with literature and social issues raises concerns about ideological biases influencing leadership selections. To address this, universities should prioritise appointments grounded in the intellectual ethos of liberal arts and sciences, ensuring that selection procedures are rigorous and objective.

The crisis of education has, therefore, at its core, a crisis of imagination. The university must at all costs be preserved as a sanctuary of intellectual freedom, where merit is not the casualty. Failure to do so imperils not only education but also the very idea of democracy. By reclaiming the university's essence, we restore the transformative potential of knowledge, rather than reducing it to mere transaction.

The Educational Landscape, Its Disconcerting Shift
शैक्षिक परिदृश्य, इसकी चिंताजनक बदलाव

• **Education has traditionally been seen as the foundation of societal progress, fostering critical thinking, free inquiry, and knowledge pursuit.**

• शिक्षा को पारंपरिक रूप से सामाजिक प्रगति की नींव के रूप में देखा गया है, जो नैतिक सोच, स्वतंत्र अन्वेषण, और ज्ञान की खोज को बढ़ावा देती है।

• At its peak, **higher education** promoted **intellectual independence**, encouraged **dissent**, and contributed to **progress across societies**.
• अपने उत्कर्ष पर, **उच्च शिक्षा** ने **बौद्धिक स्वतंत्रता** को प्रोत्साहित किया, **असहमति** को बढ़ावा दिया और **समाजों में प्रगति** में योगदान दिया।

• **Human understanding** expanded through **open dialogue** and **academic exploration**.
• **मानव समझ** को **मुक्त संवाद** और **शैक्षणिक खोज** के माध्यम से बढ़ाया गया।

From Academic Freedom to Bureaucratic Control
शैक्षणिक स्वतंत्रता से नौकरशाही नियंत्रण तक

• In recent decades, universities have experienced a **disturbing transformation**.
• पिछले कुछ दशकों में, विश्वविद्यालयों ने एक **चिंताजनक परिवर्तन** का अनुभव किया है।

• Institutions once praised for **nurturing independent thought** now face **bureaucratic restrictions**, **external mandates**, and **ideological control**.
• जो संस्थान पहले **स्वतंत्र सोच** को बढ़ावा देने के लिए प्रशंसित थे, वे अब **नौकरशाही प्रतिबंधों**, **बाहरी आदेशों**, और **वैचारिक नियंत्रण** का सामना कर रहे हैं।

• Instead of being **centres of innovation and resistance**, they are becoming **engines of conformity**, says **Canadian thinker H.A. Giroux**.
• **कनाडाई विचारक एच.ए. गिरौक्स** कहते हैं कि वे **नवाचार और प्रतिरोध के केंद्र** होने के बजाय अब **अनुरूपता के इंजन** बनते जा रहे हैं।

• **Managerial efficiency** and **market needs** are being prioritised over **academic freedom** and **intellectual values**.
• **प्रबंधकीय दक्षता** और **बाजार की आवश्यकताओं** को **शैक्षणिक स्वतंत्रता** और **बौद्धिक मूल्यों** से ऊपर रखा जा रहा है।

• The central tools of modern education now seem to be **indoctrination**, **intimidation**, and **intolerance**.
• आधुनिक शिक्षा के मुख्य उपकरण अब **प्रचार**, **धमकी**, और **असहिष्णुता** प्रतीत होते हैं।

From Independence to Centralisation
स्वतंत्रता से केंद्रीकरण की ओर

• A major concern is the **unrelenting centralisation** of academic curricula.

• एक मुख्य चिंता है **शैक्षणिक पाठ्यक्रमों का निरंतर केंद्रीकरण**।

• Earlier, universities had the **freedom to design syllabi** based on **student needs**, **faculty expertise**, and **academic trends**.

• पहले, विश्वविद्यालयों को **छात्रों की आवश्यकताओं**, **प्रोफेसरों की विशेषज्ञता**, और **शैक्षणिक प्रवृत्तियों** के आधार पर **पाठ्यक्रम बनाने की स्वतंत्रता** थी।

• Today, this **freedom is shrinking** as **central agencies** like the **University Grants Commission (UGC)** and frameworks like the **National Education Policy (NEP)** control academic content.

• आज, यह **स्वतंत्रता सिमटती जा रही है**, क्योंकि **विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग (UGC)** और **राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति (NEP)** जैसे **केंद्रीय निकाय** शैक्षणिक सामग्री को नियंत्रित कर रहे हैं।

• These decisions are often guided more by **political agendas** and **economic objectives** than by **academic merit**.

• ये निर्णय अक्सर **शैक्षणिक गुणवत्ता** की तुलना में अधिक **राजनीतिक एजेंडे** और **आर्थिक उद्देश्यों** द्वारा संचालित होते हैं।

The Changing Role of the UGC
UGC की बदलती भूमिका

• The **UGC**, which was created to **coordinate academic standards**, now functions as a **controlling authority**.

• **UGC**, जिसे **शैक्षणिक मानकों के समन्वय** के लिए बनाया गया था, अब एक **नियंत्रणकारी संस्था** के रूप में कार्य करती है।

• It **interferes in appointments**, **administration**, and **curriculum design**, often ignoring **academic expertise**.

• यह **नियुक्तियों**, **प्रशासन**, और **पाठ्यक्रम निर्माण** में हस्तक्षेप करती है और अक्सर **शैक्षणिक विशेषज्ञता** की अनदेखी करती है।

• The UGC has become the **extended arm of a state** that is increasingly **intolerant of dissent and critical thought**.

• UGC अब एक ऐसे राज्य की **विस्तारित शाखा** बन गई है जो **असहमति और आलोचनात्मक सोच** के प्रति तेजी से **असहिष्णु** होता जा रहा है।

• This is not about ensuring **quality standards** — it is about demanding **submission**.

• यह **गुणवत्ता मानकों** को सुनिश्चित करने के बारे में नहीं है — यह **आज्ञाकारिता** की मांग के बारे में है।

• Under the cover of **regulation**, the UGC has **stripped Indian universities of autonomy**.

 • **नियमन** की आड़ में, UGC ने **भारतीय विश्वविद्यालयों की स्वायत्तता छीन ली है।**

• The dream of **self-governance** has been replaced with **bureaucratic oversight**.

 • **आत्म-शासन** का सपना अब **नौकरशाही निगरानी** से बदल गया है।

• A university that lacks **freedom in faculty selection**, **research direction**, and **protection of dissent** can no longer be considered a **true university**.

 • एक ऐसा विश्वविद्यालय जो **शिक्षक चयन**, **अनुसंधान दिशा**, और **असहमति की सुरक्षा** में **स्वतंत्रता** से वंचित हो, उसे **वास्तविक विश्वविद्यालय** नहीं कहा जा सकता।

Consequences of Centralisation
केंद्रीकरण के प्रभाव

• The **centralisation** of academic policy undercuts **academic autonomy**, produces **compliant drones**, **regiments intellectual discourse**, and **marginalises alternative perspectives**.

 • **शैक्षणिक नीतियों** का **केंद्रीकरण** न केवल **शैक्षणिक स्वायत्तता** को कमजोर करता है, बल्कि **अनुशासित सोच**, **आज्ञाकारी छात्र** पैदा करता है और **वैकल्पिक दृष्टिकोणों** को हाशिये पर डालता है।

• When **syllabi are standardised** across institutions, the **intellectual ecosystem** becomes **monolithic**, lacking **diversity**, **nuance**, and **radical innovation**.

 • जब संस्थानों में **पाठ्यक्रमों का एकीकरण** किया जाता है, तो **बौद्धिक परिवेश एकरूप** हो जाता है, जिससे उसमें **विविधता**, **सूक्ष्मता** और **क्रांतिकारी नवाचार** की कमी हो जाती है।

• This leads to **stifling creativity** and discourages **questioning of dominant narratives** or **received assumptions**.

 • इससे **रचनात्मकता का दम घुटता है** और **प्रचलित विचारों** या **स्वीकृत धारणाओं** पर **प्रश्न उठाने की प्रवृत्ति** कम हो जाती है।

Pressures on the Academic Climate
शैक्षणिक माहौल पर दबाव

• Historically, campuses have catalysed **social change**—in **anti-colonial**, **civil rights**, and **pro-democracy** movements.

 • ऐतिहासिक रूप से, विश्वविद्यालय परिसरों ने **सामाजिक परिवर्तन** के लिए उत्प्रेरक की भूमिका निभाई है—जैसे **औपनिवेशिक-विरोधी**, **नागरिक अधिकारों**, और **लोकतंत्र समर्थक आंदोलनों** में।

• By controlling **what and how subjects are taught**, **policymakers and administrators** ensure that universities remain **compliant**, not **confrontational**.

• **क्या और कैसे पढ़ाया जाए** इस पर नियंत्रण रखकर, **नीतिनिर्माता और प्रशासक** यह सुनिश्चित करते हैं कि विश्वविद्यालय **विरोधात्मक नहीं**, बल्कि **आज्ञाकारी** बनें।

• **Suppressing critical perspectives** prevents higher education from producing **citizens who question authority** or **imagine alternatives**.
• **आलोचनात्मक दृष्टिकोणों का दमन** यह सुनिश्चित करता है कि उच्च शिक्षा से ऐसे नागरिक न निकलें जो **सत्ता पर सवाल उठाएं** या **विकल्पों की कल्पना** करें।

• A scholar referencing **Noam Chomsky** on **democracy's decline**, **nationalism**, or **human rights** may face **state reprimand**, a **preposterous intervention**.
• यदि कोई शोधार्थी **नोम चॉम्स्की** के **लोकतंत्र के पतन**, **राष्ट्रवाद** या **मानवाधिकारों** पर विचार प्रस्तुत करता है, तो **राज्य की फटकार** का सामना करना पड़ सकता है, जो एक **अस्वीकार्य हस्तक्षेप** है।

• The rise of **reactionary politics** has led to **increasing interference** in academic affairs.
• **प्रतिक्रियावादी राजनीति** के पुनरुत्थान ने शैक्षणिक मामलों में **बढ़ती दखलअंदाजी** को जन्म दिया है।

• Scholars critiquing **systemic injustice**, **discrimination**, **corporate exploitation**, or **nationalism** face **marginalisation**, **defunding**, or even **deportation**.
• जो विद्वान **संस्थागत अन्याय**, **भेदभाव**, **कॉर्पोरेट शोषण** या **राष्ट्रवाद** की आलोचना करते हैं, वे **हाशिये पर डाल दिए जाते हैं**, **वित्तीय सहायता से वंचित** किए जाते हैं या **देश निकाला** झेलते हैं।

• Entire **social science and humanities** disciplines are being **defunded** or seen as **politically awkward**.
• पूरे **सामाजिक विज्ञान और मानविकी** क्षेत्रों को **वित्तीय सहायता से वंचित** किया जा रहा है या उन्हें **राजनीतिक रूप से असहज** माना जा रहा है।

Impact on Teachers and Students
शिक्षकों और छात्रों पर प्रभाव

• **Teachers**, fearing **professional reprisals**, begin to practice **self-censorship**.
• **शिक्षक**, **पेशेवर दंड** के डर से **स्व-नियंत्रण** अपनाने लगते हैं।

• **Controversial topics** are avoided not due to lack of interest, but due to **fear**.
• **विवादास्पद विषयों** से दूरी इसलिए नहीं होती कि वे रुचिकर नहीं हैं, बल्कि इसलिए कि उनमें **डर** शामिल होता है।

• **Students** also internalise this **cautious climate**, avoiding **critical engagement**, fearing **academic penalties**, **peer backlash**, or **career threats**.
• **छात्र** भी इस **सावधान माहौल** को आत्मसात कर लेते हैं और **आलोचनात्मक विचारों** से बचते हैं, उन्हें **शैक्षणिक दंड**, **सहपाठियों की प्रतिक्रिया**, या **भविष्य के करियर के खतरों** का डर होता है।

• This results in an **intellectual climate** where **fear of dissent** dominates over **inquiry**, and **conformity** is mistaken for **collective wisdom**.
 • इसका परिणाम यह होता है कि **असहमति का डर जिज्ञासा** पर हावी हो जाता है, और **एकरूपता** को **सामूहिक विवेक** समझ लिया जाता है।

• Ultimately, this leads to the **decline of public intellectuals**.
 • अंततः, इससे **सार्वजनिक बुद्धिजीवियों** का **पतन** होता है।

Corporatisation of Higher Education
 उच्च शिक्षा का निजीकरण

• **Universities** are no longer seen as **public institutions** for **knowledge** and **social advancement**, but as **businesses** seeking **profit** and **brand value**.
 • **विश्वविद्यालयों** को अब **ज्ञान** और **सामाजिक प्रगति** के **सार्वजनिक संस्थान** नहीं बल्कि **लाभ** और **ब्रांड प्रतिष्ठा** कमाने वाले **व्यवसाय** के रूप में देखा जा रहा है।

• The **market logic** now decides **what is taught** and **why it is taught**.
 • अब **क्या पढ़ाया जाए** और **क्यों पढ़ाया जाए** यह **बाज़ार की सोच** तय करती है।

• **Technology**, **business**, and **engineering** receive **more funding**; while **philosophy**, **literature**, and **arts** are considered **unproductive**.
 • **प्रौद्योगिकी**, **व्यवसाय**, और **इंजीनियरिंग** को **अधिक वित्तीय सहायता** मिलती है, जबकि **दर्शन**, **साहित्य**, और **कला** को **अप्रासंगिक** माना जाता है।

• Education's value is reduced to its **marketability**; **knowledge** becomes a **commodity**.
 • शिक्षा का मूल्य अब केवल उसकी **बाज़ार में बिक्री योग्यता** पर निर्भर हो गया है; **ज्ञान** एक **उपभोक्ता वस्तु** बन गया है।

Performative Pressure on Faculty
 शिक्षकों पर दिखावटी दबाव

• Faculty are judged on **publication counts** and **student satisfaction ratings**.
 • शिक्षकों को **प्रकाशनों की संख्या** और **छात्र संतुष्टि रेटिंग्स** के आधार पर आंका जाता है।

• **Global university rankings** worsen the issue by favouring **Western metrics** over **local contexts**.
 • **वैश्विक विश्वविद्यालय रैंकिंग्स** इस समस्या को बढ़ा देती हैं क्योंकि वे **पश्चिमी मानकों** को **स्थानीय संदर्भों** पर प्राथमिकता देती हैं।

• This incentivises **branding** and **model replication** over **academic innovation**.
• इससे **ब्रांडिंग** और **मॉडल की नकल** को बढ़ावा मिलता है, न कि **शैक्षणिक नवाचार** को।

Academic Governance as a Concern
शैक्षणिक प्रशासन एक चिंता का विषय

• Universities now propose **corporate professionals** as **leaders**, who prioritise **efficiency**, **quantifiable output**, and **visibility**.
• अब विश्वविद्यालयों में **कॉर्पोरेट क्षेत्र** से **प्रशासकों** को **नेतृत्व** सौंपने का प्रस्ताव है, जो **कुशलता, मात्रात्मक उपलब्धियाँ**, और **दृश्यता** को प्राथमिकता देते हैं।

• Appointing **Vice Chancellors** from **non-academic fields** disconnects governance from **teaching and research**.
• **गैर-शैक्षणिक क्षेत्रों** से **कुलपति** नियुक्त करने से, प्रशासन और **शिक्षण तथा शोध** के बीच **दूरी** बढ़ती है।

• Increasingly, appointments lack **engagement with literature and social issues**, raising concerns about **ideological bias**.
• अब नियुक्तियों में **साहित्य और सामाजिक मुद्दों से जुड़ाव** नहीं होता, जिससे **वैचारिक पक्षपात** की आशंका बढ़ जाती है।

• Appointments must be based on the **liberal arts and sciences ethos** with **rigorous, objective selection**.
• नियुक्तियाँ **लिबरल आर्ट्स और विज्ञान की भावना** पर आधारित हों और चयन प्रक्रिया **कठोर और निष्पक्ष** होनी चाहिए।

Conclusion: The Crisis of Imagination
निष्कर्ष: कल्पना का संकट

• At its core, the **education crisis** is a **crisis of imagination**.
• **शिक्षा का संकट** वास्तव में **कल्पना के संकट** का प्रतीक है।

• The **university** must be preserved as a **sanctuary of intellectual freedom**.
• **विश्वविद्यालय** को **बौद्धिक स्वतंत्रता के आश्रय** के रूप में संरक्षित किया जाना चाहिए।

• If **merit** is lost, not only education, but **democracy itself** is in peril.
• अगर **मेधा** समाप्त हो जाती है, तो केवल शिक्षा ही नहीं, **लोकतंत्र** भी खतरे में पड़ जाएगा।

• By reclaiming its **essence**, we restore the **transformative power** of knowledge.
• इसके **मूल स्वरूप** को पुनः प्राप्त करके हम **ज्ञान की परिवर्तनकारी शक्ति** को पुनर्स्थापित कर सकते हैं।

A belated admission

Civil registration data from 2021 point to significant excess deaths

It has been four years since the delta variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus hit India. The country bore the brunt of the pandemic's devastating impact, with harrowing scenes of overwhelmed health-care systems, oxygen-supply shortages and even bodies floating in the Ganga in Uttar Pradesh. Reports based on data sourced from the Civil Registration System through RTIs and other means, by *The Hindu* in particular, besides independent surveys, showed that the toll was clearly staggering and in millions, much more than the official tally. The government's response was defensive and dismissive; the attempt was to consistently undermine the findings. After maintaining that the reported number of COVID-19 deaths during this period was accurate, the government, through the Registrar General of India, released a report last week that showed that there were 21.5 lakh excess deaths in 2021 as against 3.32 lakh reported COVID-19 deaths. During a pandemic, the bulk of these excess deaths must have been related to the effects of the disease. Besides, lockdown restrictions had resulted in lower fatalities due to causes such as road accidents. The high number of excess deaths was estimated by *The Hindu*'s calculations to be nearly 6.5 times more than the reported deaths. The fact that this multiple was even higher for Gujarat (44.2), Madhya Pradesh (19.5), Uttar Pradesh (19.5) and Telangana (18.2) suggests that COVID-19 deaths were under-reported significantly in 2021. These were largely due to the fact that deaths due to comorbidities were perhaps not considered as COVID-19 deaths or because those numbers were suppressed in order to paint a rosier picture of the government's response to the pandemic.

The nearly four-year delay in releasing this report, alongside the Sample Registration System Report for 2021, reveals the Union government's reluctance to comprehensively assess the pandemic's true impact and its casual approach to publishing critical demographic data. This reluctance in publishing timely information coincides with the fact that India's civil registration system that tracks births and deaths has become more robust over time with most States reporting the bulk of the deaths that occur, either in institutions such as hospitals or at homes. In some States, this reporting happens with a lag when compared to others, but it is encouraging that registration levels are getting better. But medical certification of the causes of the deaths still remains low when compared to other developing countries such as Brazil. A robust maintenance of registration and certification records is important for public health tools. The delay in release of vital data defeats the purpose of the improvements made in civil registration. Data delayed is also data denied.

A Belated Admission: On the Undercount of India's COVID-19 Pandemic Deaths
एक विलंबित स्वीकारोक्ति: भारत में COVID-19 महामारी से हुई मौतों की कम गणना पर

Civil registration data from 2021 points to significant excess deaths
2021 के नागरिक पंजीकरण डेटा से बड़े पैमाने पर अतिरिक्त मौतों की पुष्टि होती है

• It has been **four years** since the **delta variant** of the **SARS-CoV-2** virus hit India.
• भारत में **SARS-CoV-2** वायरस के **डेल्टा वेरिएंट** के फैलने के **चार साल** हो चुके हैं।

• The country experienced the pandemic's **devastating impact**—with overwhelmed health-care systems, **oxygen shortages**, and even **bodies floating in the Ganga** in **Uttar Pradesh**.
• देश ने महामारी के **विनाशकारी प्रभाव** को झेला—जहां स्वास्थ्य सेवाएं **चरमरा गईं**, **ऑक्सीजन की कमी** हुई, और **उत्तर प्रदेश** में **गंगा नदी में तैरती लाशें** देखी गईं।

• Reports from **The Hindu** and other independent surveys based on **Civil Registration System** data (via RTIs and other sources) revealed that the **death toll** was in the **millions**, **much more** than the official count.
• **RTI** और अन्य स्रोतों के माध्यम से प्राप्त **नागरिक पंजीकरण प्रणाली** के आंकड़ों पर आधारित **The Hindu** और स्वतंत्र सर्वेक्षणों ने दिखाया कि **मृत्यु संख्या लाखों** में थी, जो आधिकारिक आंकड़ों से **कहीं अधिक** थी।

• The government's response was **defensive** and **dismissive**, continuously trying to **undermine** the findings.
• सरकार की प्रतिक्रिया **रक्षात्मक** और **उपेक्षापूर्ण** रही, और उसने लगातार इन निष्कर्षों को **कमतर** दिखाने की कोशिश की।

• After long denial, the **Registrar General of India** recently released a report showing **21.5 lakh excess deaths** in **2021**, compared to **3.32 lakh reported COVID-19 deaths**.

• लंबे समय तक इनकार के बाद, हाल ही में **भारत के रजिस्ट्रार जनरल** ने एक रिपोर्ट जारी की जिसमें बताया गया कि **2021** में **21.5 लाख अतिरिक्त मौतें** हुईं, जबकि **कोविड-19 से 3.32 लाख मौतों** की सूचना दी गई थी।

• During a pandemic, **most excess deaths** are likely related to the disease itself.
• महामारी के दौरान, **अधिकांश अतिरिक्त मौतें** संभवतः उसी बीमारी से संबंधित होती हैं।

• Due to lockdowns, deaths from causes like **road accidents** were fewer, which means actual pandemic-related deaths were even higher.
• लॉकडाउन के कारण जैसे **सड़क दुर्घटनाओं** से होने वाली मौतें कम थीं, जिससे यह संकेत मिलता है कि महामारी से जुड़ी मौतें और भी **अधिक** थीं।

• **The Hindu's** estimate showed these excess deaths were about **6.5 times** higher than reported deaths.
• **The Hindu** के अनुमान के अनुसार ये अतिरिक्त मौतें रिपोर्ट की गई मौतों से लगभग **6.5 गुना** अधिक थीं।

• In states like **Gujarat (44.2 times)**, **Madhya Pradesh (19.5)**, **Uttar Pradesh (19.5)**, and **Telangana (18.2)**, under-reporting was significantly higher.
• **गुजरात (44.2 गुना)**, **मध्य प्रदेश (19.5)**, **उत्तर प्रदेश (19.5)** और **तेलंगाना (18.2)** जैसे राज्यों में यह **कम गणना** और भी ज्यादा थी।

• This suggests many deaths were due to **comorbidities** not classified as COVID-19 or were **suppressed** to **show better government performance**.
• इससे संकेत मिलता है कि कई मौतें **सह-रोगों (comorbidities)** के कारण हुईं जिन्हें कोविड-19 से **संलग्न नहीं किया गया**, या आंकड़े **छिपाए गए** ताकि सरकार की प्रतिक्रिया **बेहतर** दिखाई दे।

Delays in Data Release and its Implications
आंकड़ों के प्रकाशन में देरी और इसके प्रभाव

• The **four-year delay** in releasing this report and the **Sample Registration System Report (2021)** shows the Union government's **reluctance** to fully assess the **true impact** of the pandemic.
• इस रिपोर्ट और **सैंपल रजिस्ट्रेशन सिस्टम रिपोर्ट (2021)** के प्रकाशन में **चार साल** की देरी से यह स्पष्ट होता है कि केंद्र सरकार महामारी के **वास्तविक प्रभाव** का मूल्यांकन करने में **अनिच्छुक** रही।

• This delay reflects a **casual approach** towards publishing **critical demographic data**.
• यह देरी **महत्वपूर्ण जनसांख्यिकीय डेटा** के प्रकाशन को लेकर सरकार की **लापरवाही** को दर्शाती है।

• Meanwhile, India's **Civil Registration System** has become **more robust**, with most states reporting **majority of deaths**, whether in hospitals or at home.

• इस बीच, भारत की **नागरिक पंजीकरण प्रणाली** पहले से **मजबूत** हो गई है, और अब अधिकांश राज्य अस्पतालों या घरों में हुई **अधिकांश मौतों** की सूचना दे रहे हैं।

• However, the **medical certification** of **causes of death** still remains **low** compared to countries like **Brazil**.

• हालांकि, **मृत्यु के कारणों का चिकित्सा प्रमाणीकरण** अभी भी **ब्राज़ील** जैसे देशों की तुलना में **कम** है।

• Maintaining **accurate records** of registration and certification is vital for **public health planning**.

• पंजीकरण और प्रमाणीकरण के **सटीक रिकॉर्ड** बनाए रखना **सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य योजना** के लिए अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण है।

• Delayed release of such vital data **defeats** the improvements made in the system.

• ऐसे **महत्वपूर्ण डेटा** का देर से प्रकाशन इस प्रणाली में हुए **सुधारों को निष्फल** बना देता है।

• **Data delayed is also data denied**—timely access to information is critical in a public health crisis.

• **जानकारी में देरी का मतलब जानकारी से वंचित होना भी है**—सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य संकट में समय पर जानकारी मिलना **अत्यंत आवश्यक** होता है।

On differences in clientelism, patronage and freebies

In most political commentaries, there is a tendency to conflate these different phenomena, since there are some overlaps between these practices. However, such conflation leads to overlooking harmful relationships

Sarthak Bagchi

In recent times, a lot of scholarship has emerged espousing a call to end the politics of patronage and clientelism, advocating a move away from the politics of distribution of 'freebies' and calling an end to the use of populist schemes. The opposition to populist schemes has been mostly advanced as an academic argument by both economists and political scientists as such redistributive practices are seen as negatively affecting the political culture of a polity, enfeebling the democratic credentials of voters and making them dependent on the distribution of such largesse.

However, we often see that in such commentaries there is a tendency to conflate many different phenomena, since there are some overlaps between these practices. This article will highlight some subtle yet important differences between clientelism, patronage and 'freebie' distribution.

On clientelism

Clientelism or clientelistic politics is defined typically as a kind of reciprocal exchange in which politicians offer or promise to offer certain tangible material benefits to voters based on the offer or promise of their electoral support. This reciprocal relationship, between those who can deliver the resources and those who can give support in return for these resources has been the focal point of many studies in political science, anthropology and sociology. The delivery or selective distribution of resources in clientelism is contingent on the continuance or expectation of electoral support in terms of voting and/ or campaign participation. This reciprocity factor means that while politicians are offering gifts, money or other distributive largesse to their supporters, they too in return, must be able to monitor the voting action of their supporters and ensure that the supporter who is receiving this benefit is also returning the 'favour' by voting in support of the politician. Politicians ensure this reciprocity by monitoring the compliance of their supporters. Such monitoring is often done by dense networks of local level leaders, political brokers or *karyakartas* (party workers). An important distinction between a clientelistic exchange and any other type of distributive politics is the threat of retribution on non-compliance of reciprocity.

Clientelistic relationships or patron-client ties are typically asymmetrical in nature, in which politicians as patrons and voters as clients are linked through bonds of hierarchy, caste-identity or resources, or both. As the Indian polity has undergone democratic upsurges that have levelled some hierarchies of caste and made democratic politics more representative, the asymmetry of resources has only increased, as the wealth of India's politicians has increased manifold as compared to their voters. So, it is quite possible that a wealthy politician will be in a position to punish a poor voter for not voting for him/her.

However, we don't usually see such situations. This is in part due to the robustness of India's secret ballot system which enables voters to believe that their voting action cannot be monitored efficiently by politicians. Voters therefore do not feel compelled or forced to vote for the politician from whom they receive a gift or money, and instead tend to take gifts across parties (even demand in some cases, as our fieldwork shows). Another factor affecting the ability of politicians to monitor the compliance of their supporters is a decline and lack of dense networks of party activists, that are typically found in political machine models populating the favellas of Rio De Janeiro or the slums of Buenos Aires.

In India, a high voting population and large constituency size restricts a politician's ability to implement effective monitoring strategies to check the voting actions of their voters. These limitations are only multiplied with an increasing democratic culture imbibed by voters through repeated participation in elections, which has been captured as a deepening of democracy in the Indian context. To put it simply, clientelism in the Indian context, operates in an atypical manner, in which neither are voters suppressed clients who are compromising their autonomy of voting choice nor are patrons or politicians able to punish their voters for their non-compliance, even if there exists a hierarchy of resources between the two.

Patronage networks and freebies

Another manner in which this hierarchy of unequal resources is manifested is through patronage networks, which allow politicians to disburse resources of a permanent nature, such as jobs, loans or subsidies, to cultivate electoral loyalty among their supporters. While clientelistic exchanges takes place in the immediate proximity of elections and usually involves the exchange of tangible material benefits like money, liquor, food, gifts, clothes, phones etc., patronage ties are more long-standing relationships, in which the interaction between the distributing politician and the receiving voter is more recurring and reiterative. Patronage ties are usually not one-time exchanges between politicians and voters.

Freebies can be classified as universally distributed goods, which are not selectively distributed based on individual targeting (whether a person has voted for me or not, or will vote for me or not). The distributive criteria for freebies is more inclusive than in clientelism. Freebies are typically distributed to an entire population group or a class of voters like women, or female children above the age of 15 or men under the age of 30. The idea is to expand the scope of distribution on a large scale, by defining the contours of that scale very clearly, in order to justify the distribution. Theoretically, freebies do not carry any reciprocity condition or retribution, though there is always a hope of garnering electoral support. But, such hope can be embedded in each and every action taken by a politician and not just in shaping schemes of universal distribution. Moreover, the distribution of freebies does not necessarily need to be monitored by political agents to check reciprocal compliance by recipients. In fact, by the introduction of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and increased usage of banking channels for such distribution, the role of party brokers and *karyakartas* in mediating such welfare schemes is waning. Goods distributed through such universal distribution schemes or what political scientist James Manor has called, post-clientelistic schemes, can also bring important transformations at the household level as well as the societal level.

Some 'freebies' like free bus rides for women in Delhi and Karnataka or free bicycles for female school going children in Bihar and West Bengal can have positive effects on women's participation in the work force and education by increasing school enrolment numbers as research has shown. DBT cash transfers to women's bank accounts could also have positive effects on household spending patterns, although longitudinal data for such schemes is yet to come.

In such a scenario in which universal distributive schemes are not mediated or monitored (or at least less monitored) through political workers, and do not bring along any retributive clauses based on reciprocity in terms of electoral support, a criticism of freebies as undemocratic or violating the voters' right to vote freely or promoting the suppression of voters is not a fair criticism.

More scrutiny on clientelistic networks

Politicians taking part in India's highly competitive electoral market are distributing a lot of resources besides what are called 'freebies'. Much of the spending in India's exorbitant election campaigns are done via politician's private resources which are often mobilised to pay for hiring campaign teams, loudspeakers, stages, vehicles and transportations for mega rallies, publicity and social media advertisements, political consultants and on distributing tangible material benefits like gifts, money or liquor – in short on actual clientelistic distribution, that is largely informal in nature and therefore undocumented.

Formal distribution in the form of freebies are much open for audits and therefore also open for restructuring and subsequent reforms at a later stage. However, conflating these practices often leads to overlooking informal clientelistic transfers which need more researched focus to capture their long-term impact on democracy and economy. Focusing the criticism on universal distributive schemes which are more inclusive in their distributive criteria and have shown positive affects in the long-term, instead of looking at actual clientelistic practices that are exclusionary in nature and undermine the quality of democracy, is therefore akin to missing the woods for the trees.

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Collective good: A large number of women wait to travel on BMTC buses, one year after the launch of free bus travel, in Bengaluru on June 5, 2024. MURALI KUMAR K

क्लायंटेलिज़म, संरक्षकवाद और मुफ्तखोरी में अंतर पर

• In many **political commentaries**, there is a tendency to **conflate clientelism, patronage, and freebies**, due to their **overlapping features**.

• कई **राजनीतिक टिप्पणियों** में **क्लायंटेलिज़म, संरक्षकवाद और मुफ्त योजनाओं** को एक जैसा मान लेने की प्रवृत्ति होती है क्योंकि इनमें कुछ **समानताएँ** होती हैं।

• However, such **conflation leads to overlooking** the **harmful relationships** embedded in these practices.

• लेकिन ऐसा **घालमेल इन प्रक्रियाओं में निहित हानिकारक संबंधों** को **नज़रअंदाज़ कर देता है।**

Criticism of Populist Schemes
जनप्रिय योजनाओं की आलोचना

• Recently, **scholars** have called for ending **clientelism and patronage politics**, and criticized the **distribution of freebies** and **populist schemes**.

• हाल ही में, **विद्वानों** ने **क्लायंटेलिज़म और संरक्षक राजनीति** को समाप्त करने की बात की है और **मुफ्त वितरण** और **लोकलुभावन योजनाओं** की आलोचना की है।

• Such practices are seen as **weakening democratic values**, creating **dependency**, and **damaging political culture**.

• इन प्रथाओं को **लोकतांत्रिक मूल्यों को कमजोर करने, निर्भरता पैदा करने** और **राजनीतिक संस्कृति को नुकसान पहुँचाने** के रूप में देखा जाता है।

Need for Distinction
अंतर की आवश्यकता

• This article aims to show the **subtle yet important differences** between **clientelism, patronage, and freebies**.

• यह लेख **क्लायंटेलिज़म, संरक्षकवाद और मुफ्त वितरण** के बीच के **सूक्ष्म लेकिन महत्वपूर्ण अंतर** को उजागर करता है।

On Clientelism
क्लायंटेलिज़म पर

• **Clientelism** is a **reciprocal exchange**, where **politicians offer material benefits** in return for **electoral support**.

• **क्लायंटेलिज़म** एक **पारस्परिक विनिमय** है, जिसमें **राजनीतिज्ञ भौतिक लाभ** के बदले **चुनावी समर्थन** प्रदान करते हैं।

• This involves a **mutual relationship**: politicians provide resources, and voters support them through **voting or campaign work**.

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• यह एक **आपसी संबंध** है: राजनीतिज्ञ संसाधन देते हैं, और मतदाता **वोटिंग या प्रचार** के माध्यम से उनका समर्थन करते हैं।

• A key feature is that **politicians monitor** if the voters actually support them in return.
 • एक मुख्य विशेषता यह है कि **राजनीतिज्ञ निगरानी रखते हैं** कि क्या मतदाता वास्तव में उनके समर्थन में वोट दे रहे हैं।

• Monitoring is done by **local leaders, brokers, or party workers (karyakartas)**.
 • निगरानी **स्थानीय नेताओं, दलालों या पार्टी कार्यकर्ताओं (कार्यकर्ताओं)** द्वारा की जाती है।

• A **clientelistic exchange** differs from other types of distributive politics due to the **threat of punishment** for non-compliance.
 • एक **क्लायंटेलिज़म आधारित लेन-देन** अन्य वितरण आधारित राजनीति से अलग होता है क्योंकि इसमें **पालन न करने पर दंड का खतरा** होता है।

Asymmetrical Patron-Client Relationships
 ## असमान संरक्षक-ग्राहक संबंध

 • **Clientelistic relationships** are typically **asymmetrical**, with **politicians as patrons** and **voters as clients**.
 • **क्लायंटेलिज़म संबंध** आमतौर पर **असमान** होते हैं, जिसमें **राजनीतिज्ञ संरक्षक** और **मतदाता ग्राहक** होते हैं।

• These are often based on **hierarchy, caste identity, or resources**.
 • ये संबंध अक्सर **श्रृंखला, जातिगत पहचान या संसाधनों** पर आधारित होते हैं।

• With **democratic upsurges** in India, **caste hierarchies have reduced**, but the **resource gap** between voters and politicians has widened.
 • भारत में **लोकतांत्रिक उभार** के साथ **जातीय असमानताएँ घटी हैं**, लेकिन **राजनीतिज्ञों और मतदाताओं के बीच संसाधन अंतर** बढ़ा है।

• **Wealthy politicians** now have more **power to punish** poor voters.
 • **धनी राजनीतिज्ञों** के पास अब **गरीब मतदाताओं को दंडित करने की अधिक शक्ति** है।

Limitations of Clientelism in India
 ## भारत में क्लायंटेलिज़म की सीमाएँ

• Despite the hierarchy, voters are **not easily forced** to vote for a particular candidate.
 • भले ही असमानता हो, लेकिन मतदाताओं को किसी विशेष उम्मीदवार को **वोट देने के लिए मजबूर करना आसान नहीं** है।

• **Secret ballot system** in India ensures that **voting action remains private**, reducing fear of punishment.

• भारत की **गुप्त मतदान प्रणाली** यह सुनिश्चित करती है कि **वोटिंग गोपनीय बनी रहे**, जिससे **दंड का डर कम** होता है।

• Voters **accept gifts** from multiple parties and sometimes **demand gifts**, as found in **fieldwork**.

• मतदाता **कई पार्टियों से उपहार स्वीकार करते हैं** और कभी-कभी **उपहार की मांग भी करते हैं**, जैसा कि **मैदान अनुसंधान** में पाया गया।

• Decline in **dense networks of party activists** reduces the ability to monitor compliance, unlike political machines in **Rio or Buenos Aires**.

• **पार्टी कार्यकर्ताओं के घने नेटवर्क** में गिरावट से निगरानी क्षमता कम हो गई है, जो **रियो या ब्यूनस आयर्स** जैसे राजनीतिक तंत्रों से अलग है।

• **Large constituencies** and **high voting populations** in India make it hard to track voting behavior.

• भारत में **बड़ी निर्वाचन क्षेत्रों** और **उच्च मतदान जनसंख्या** के कारण वोटिंग व्यवहार पर नजर रखना मुश्किल हो जाता है।

• As **voter participation increases**, **democracy deepens**, making **clientelism less effective**.

• जैसे-जैसे **मतदाता भागीदारी बढ़ती है**, **लोकतंत्र मजबूत होता है**, जिससे **क्लायंटेलिज़्म कम प्रभावी** होता है।

• In India, **clientelism functions atypically** — voters are **not coerced**, and politicians **cannot punish them**, even with **resource inequality**.

• भारत में, **क्लायंटेलिज़्म असामान्य तरीके से काम करता है** — मतदाताओं को **मजबूर नहीं किया जाता**, और राजनीतिज्ञ **उन्हें दंडित नहीं कर सकते**, भले ही **संसाधनों में असमानता** हो।

Patronage Networks and Freebies
सरपरस्ती नेटवर्क और फ्रीबीज

• **Patronage networks** are a way through which the **hierarchy of unequal resources** is maintained, where politicians distribute **permanent resources** like **jobs, loans, or subsidies** to build **electoral loyalty**.

• **सरपरस्ती नेटवर्क** असमान संसाधनों की **हीरार्की** को बनाए रखने का एक तरीका है, जहाँ राजनेता **नौकरियाँ, ऋण या सब्सिडी** जैसे स्थायी संसाधनों को बाँटकर **मतदाता निष्ठा** को मजबूत करते हैं।

• **Clientelistic exchanges** occur closer to elections and involve the **direct exchange** of **tangible benefits** like **money, liquor, food, clothes, phones**, etc.

• **क्लाएंटेलिस्टिक लेनदेन** चुनावों के पास होते हैं और इनमें **पैसे, शराब, भोजन, कपड़े, फ़ोन** जैसे **ठोस लाभों का सीधा आदान-प्रदान** शामिल होता है।

• **Patronage ties** are **long-standing relationships** involving **recurring interactions** between the politician and the voter.
• **सरपरस्ती संबंध** लंबे समय तक चलने वाले होते हैं जिनमें राजनेता और मतदाता के बीच **बार-बार होने वाले संवाद** शामिल होते हैं।

• These are not **one-time exchanges** like clientelism.
• ये **एक बार के लेन-देन** नहीं होते जैसे कि क्लाएंटेलिज़म।

Freebies and Universal Distribution
फ्रीबीज और सार्वभौमिक वितरण

• **Freebies** are **universally distributed goods**, not targeted based on whether someone voted for a politician or not.
• **फ्रीबीज** वे **सामान होते हैं जो सार्वभौमिक रूप से वितरित किए जाते हैं**, यह नहीं देखा जाता कि किसी व्यक्ति ने वोट दिया या नहीं।

• The **distribution criteria** for freebies is **more inclusive** than that of clientelism.
• फ्रीबीज का **वितरण मापदंड** क्लाएंटेलिज़म से **अधिक समावेशी** होता है।

• They are typically given to **entire groups or classes** like **women**, **girls above 15**, or **men below 30**.
• इन्हें सामान्यतः **समूहो या वर्गों** जैसे कि **महिलाओं**, **15 वर्ष से ऊपर की लड़कियों**, या **30 वर्ष से कम आयु के पुरुषों** को दिया जाता है।

• The goal is to define the **scale of distribution** clearly to justify the action.
• उद्देश्य है कि **वितरण के पैमाने** को स्पष्ट रूप से परिभाषित किया जाए ताकि इसे न्यायोचित ठहराया जा सके।

• Theoretically, **freebies** do not carry a condition of **reciprocity or punishment**, although there is always a hope of **electoral support**.
• सैद्धांतिक रूप से, **फ्रीबीज** में **परस्परता या प्रतिशोध** की कोई शर्त नहीं होती, हालाँकि **चुनावी समर्थन** की उम्मीद बनी रहती है।

• But such **hope** exists in almost every political action, not just in **universal distribution**.
• लेकिन ऐसी **उम्मीद** लगभग हर राजनीतिक क्रिया में होती है, न कि केवल **सार्वभौमिक वितरण** में।

• Freebies do not need to be **monitored by political agents** to ensure **reciprocity**.
• फ्रीबीज के लिए **राजनीतिक एजेंटों द्वारा निगरानी** की आवश्यकता नहीं होती ताकि **परस्परता** सुनिश्चित हो।

• With **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** and greater use of **banking systems**, the role of **party brokers and workers** is declining.

• डायरेक्ट बेनिफिट ट्रांसफर (DBT) और **बैंकिंग प्रणाली** के बढ़ते उपयोग के साथ **दलालों और कार्यकर्ताओं** की भूमिका घट रही है।

• These **post-clientelistic schemes**, as called by **James Manor**, can bring **transformative changes** at **household and societal levels**.

• इन्हें **जेम्स मैनर** द्वारा **पोस्ट-क्लाएंटेलिस्टिक योजनाएं** कहा गया है, जो **घर और समाज** दोनों स्तरों पर **बदलाव ला सकती हैं**।

Positive Effects of Freebies

फ्रीबीज के सकारात्मक प्रभाव

• Examples like **free bus rides for women** in **Delhi and Karnataka**, and **free bicycles** for **female students** in **Bihar and West Bengal**, have increased **women's workforce participation** and **school enrolments**.

• दिल्ली और कर्नाटक में महिलाओं के लिए **फ्री बस सेवा**, और **बिहार और पश्चिम बंगाल** में छात्राओं को **निःशुल्क साइकिल** जैसी योजनाओं ने **महिलाओं की कार्यक्षमता और स्कूल नामांकन** को बढ़ाया है।

• **DBT cash transfers** to **women's bank accounts** may impact **household spending patterns**, although **long-term data** is still awaited.

• **महिलाओं के बैंक खातों में DBT कैश ट्रांसफर** से **घरेलू खर्च के पैटर्न** में बदलाव आ सकता है, हालाँकि **दीर्घकालिक आंकड़ों** का अभी इंतज़ार है।

• Since these **schemes are not monitored** by party workers and have **no retributive conditions**, criticizing them as **undemocratic** is **unfair**.

• क्योंकि ये योजनाएं **राजनीतिक कार्यकर्ताओं द्वारा नियंत्रित नहीं होती** और इनमें **प्रतिशोध की शर्तें** नहीं होतीं, इसलिए इन्हें **गैर-लोकतांत्रिक** कहना **अनुचित** है।

More Scrutiny on Clientelistic Networks

क्लाएंटेलिस्टिक नेटवर्क पर अधिक निगरानी की आवश्यकता

• Indian politicians spend vast sums in a **highly competitive electoral market** beyond freebies.

• भारतीय राजनेता **अत्यंत प्रतिस्पर्धी चुनावी बाज़ार** में फ्रीबीज से भी आगे **बड़ी धनराशि खर्च** करते हैं।

• Much of this spending is on **campaign teams, loudspeakers, rallies, advertisements, consultants**, and **material benefits** like **gifts, money, liquor**.

• इसका अधिकांश खर्च **प्रचार टीमों, लाउडस्पीकरों, रैलियों, विज्ञापनों, सलाहकारों**, और **उपहारों, पैसे, शराब** जैसे **ठोस लाभों** पर होता है।

• These are **informal**, **undocumented**, and reflect **clientelistic distribution**.
• ये लेन-देन **अनौपचारिक**, **दस्तावेज रहित** होते हैं और **क्लाएंटेलिस्टिक वितरण** को दर्शाते हैं।

• In contrast, **formal freebies** are **auditable** and open to **restructuring and reform**.
• इसके विपरीत, **औपचारिक फ्रीबीज** की **जाँच की जा सकती है** और इन्हें **पुनर्गठन और सुधार** के लिए खुला रखा जाता है।

• Mixing both can lead to **overlooking informal networks** which **undermine democracy** and need more research.
• दोनों को मिलाने से **अनौपचारिक नेटवर्कों की अनदेखी** होती है जो **लोकतंत्र को कमजोर करते हैं** और जिन पर **अधिक शोध** की आवश्यकता है।

• Focusing criticism only on **universal schemes** that are **inclusive** and have shown **positive long-term effects**, instead of targeting **exclusive clientelistic practices**, is like **missing the woods for the trees**.
• केवल **समावेशी सार्वभौमिक योजनाओं** की आलोचना करना, जिन्होंने **दीर्घकालिक सकारात्मक प्रभाव** दिखाए हैं, जबकि **बहिष्कृत क्लाएंटेलिस्टिक प्रथाओं** को अनदेखा करना, ऐसा है जैसे **पेड़ों को देखकर जंगल को भूल जाना।**

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

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13_05_2025 DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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

1. **India Won't Bend to Pakistan's Nuclear Blackmail, Says Modi**

   भारत पाकिस्तान की परमाणु धमकी के आगे नहीं झुकेगा, मोदी ने कहा

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2. All Indian Military Bases Will Remain Ready for Combat

सभी भारतीय सैन्य ठिकाने युद्ध के लिए तैयार रहेंगे

3. Markets mark massive gains as border tensions and U.S.-China trade war ease

सीमा तनाव और अमेरिका-चीन व्यापार युद्ध में कमी से बाजारों में भारी तेजी

4. Woman killed in tiger attack in Chandrapur; fifth death in 3 days

चंद्रपुर में बाघ के हमले में महिला की मौत; 3 दिनों में पांचवीं मौत

5. India Engaged with China on Germanium Export Restrictions

भारत ने जर्मेनियम निर्यात प्रतिबंधों पर चीन से संपर्क किया

6. Government's Silence on Cyberbullying of Foreign Secretary Questioned by Left Parties

विदेश सचिव पर साइबर हमले पर सरकार की चुप्पी पर वामपंथी दलों ने उठाए सवाल

7. Paddy, Pulses Acreage Has Increased This Kharif Season: Centre

धान, दालों की बुवाई इस खरीफ सीजन में बढ़ी: केंद्र

8. Single-use Food Packaging: 84% of Himalayan Plastic Waste

सिंगल-यूज़ फूड पैकेजिंग: हिमालयी प्लास्टिक कचरे का 84%

9. Toxic Trolling: On India-Pakistan Conflict, Troll Army

ज़हरीली ट्रोलिंग: भारत-पाकिस्तान संघर्ष और ट्रोल आर्मी पर

10. India's Rising E-Waste, the Need to Recast Its Management

भारत में बढ़ता ई-कचरा और इसके प्रबंधन को पुनः ढालने की आवश्यकता

11. **When Water Standards Don't Hold Water**
जब जल मानक अपनी गुणवत्ता नहीं रखते

12. **Decarbonisation in the Shipping Industry**
शिपिंग उद्योग में डिकार्बोनाइजेशन

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India won't bend to Pakistan's nuclear blackmail, says Modi

Operation Sindoor not over, cessation of hostilities only a pause, says PM in his address to the nation; Pakistan's actions in the next few days will be evaluated for any further action, he adds; he sidesteps Trump's claims on U.S. intervention
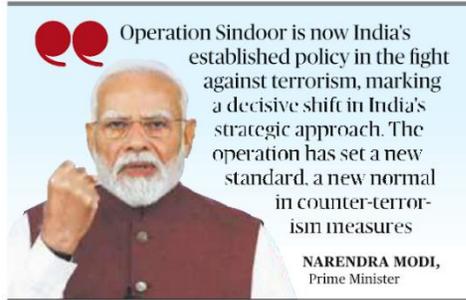
GS paper III: IS

Nistula Hebbar
NEW DELHI

Operation Sindoor is still on, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday in his first address to the nation after the operation got under way on May 7. He added that India "will not tolerate any nuclear blackmail" while acting against terror and its sponsor, Pakistan.

India has established a "new normal" in dealing with terror incidents - of responding to them in a language that the terrorists understood, he said.

'Zero tolerance'
Referencing the surgical strikes of 2016 and the Balakot air strikes of 2019 in his address, he said that zero tolerance of terrorism

> Operation Sindoor is now India's established policy in the fight against terrorism, marking a decisive shift in India's strategic approach. The operation has set a new standard, a new normal in counter-terrorism measures
>
> **NARENDRA MODI,**
> Prime Minister

was the guarantee for a better world.

The Prime Minister said the cessation of hostilities at the moment between India and Pakistan should be seen only as a pause and that Pakistan's actions in the next few days will be evaluated for any further action.

Mr. Modi clarified that talks with Pakistan would only take place on the issues of terrorism, and on the issue of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

"Talks and terror cannot go together, terror and trade cannot go together, and water and blood [referring to the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty] cannot go together," he said during the televised address. He sidestepped

Trump claims to have stopped a 'nuclear conflict'

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON
U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday claimed that his administration stopped a "nuclear conflict" between India and Pakistan. "I think it could have been a bad nuclear war", Mr. Trump said. » PAGE 5

U.S. President Donald Trump's statement that his administration had helped halt the conflict.

Referring to the presence of Pakistani Army officials at the funeral of terrorists killed in Operation Sindoor, Mr. Modi said it had unmasked the fact that the Pakistani state was a sponsor of terror.

In future, India will not

distinguish between terrorists and their sponsors, be it the Pakistani state.

He said that Bahawalpur and Muridke (two of the terror camps hit by Indian forces) were "universities of terrorism", with links to every big terror attack in the last few years, including the 9/11 attacks and that on the London tube system.

He lauded the role of three armed services, the Army, the Air Force and the Navy as well as the Border Security Force (BSF) in hitting targets in Pakistan within the first three days and also defending the country when Pakistan retaliated. "They are still on full alert," added the Prime Minister.

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India Won't Bend to Pakistan's Nuclear Blackmail, Says Modi
भारत पाकिस्तान की परमाणु धमकी के आगे नहीं झुकेगा, मोदी ने कहा

• **Operation Sindoor is still ongoing, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in his first address to the nation after the operation began on May 7.**

• प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने कहा कि ऑपरेशन सिंदूर अभी जारी है, यह बयान उन्होंने 7 मई को शुरू हुए ऑपरेशन के बाद देश को अपने पहले संबोधन में दिया।

• India **will not tolerate any nuclear blackmail** while acting against **terror** and its **sponsor**, Pakistan.

• भारत **आतंकवाद** और इसके **प्रायोजक पाकिस्तान** के खिलाफ कार्रवाई करते समय किसी भी प्रकार की **परमाणु धमकी** को **बर्दाश्त नहीं करेगा।**

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• India has established a **"new normal"** in responding to terror incidents — one that is **understood by terrorists**.
• भारत ने **आतंकी घटनाओं** का जवाब देने में एक **"नई सामान्य स्थिति"** स्थापित की है — जो **आतंकवादियों की समझ** में आती है।

Zero Tolerance of Terrorism
आतंकवाद के प्रति शून्य सहनशीलता

• Referring to the **2016 surgical strikes** and **2019 Balakot air strikes**, Modi said **zero tolerance** of terrorism is the **guarantee of a better world**.
• मोदी ने **2016 की सर्जिकल स्ट्राइक** और **2019 की बालाकोट एयर स्ट्राइक** का हवाला देते हुए कहा कि **आतंकवाद के प्रति शून्य सहनशीलता** एक **बेहतर दुनिया की गारंटी** है।

• The current **cessation of hostilities** between India and Pakistan should be seen only as a **pause**, not a conclusion.
• भारत और पाकिस्तान के बीच मौजूदा **शत्रुता की समाप्ति** को केवल एक **विराम** के रूप में देखा जाना चाहिए, **अंत के रूप में नहीं।**

• **Pakistan's actions** in the coming days will be **evaluated** to determine any **further response**.
• आने वाले दिनों में **पाकिस्तान की गतिविधियों** का **मूल्यांकन** किया जाएगा ताकि **आगे की कार्रवाई** तय की जा सके।

Talks Conditional on Terrorism and PoK
बातचीत केवल आतंकवाद और पाक अधिकृत कश्मीर पर

• Modi clarified that **talks with Pakistan** will only be on **terrorism** and **Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK)**.
• मोदी ने स्पष्ट किया कि **पाकिस्तान से बातचीत** केवल **आतंकवाद** और **पाक अधिकृत कश्मीर (PoK)** के मुद्दे पर ही होगी।

• **"Talks and terror cannot go together**, **terror and trade cannot go together**, and **water and blood cannot flow together**," he stated.
• उन्होंने कहा, "**बातचीत और आतंक** साथ-साथ नहीं चल सकते, **आतंक और व्यापार** साथ नहीं चल सकते और **पानी और खून** साथ नहीं बह सकते।"

• Modi **sidestepped** U.S. President **Donald Trump's** claim that **U.S. intervention** helped halt the conflict.
• मोदी ने अमेरिका के राष्ट्रपति **डोनाल्ड ट्रंप** के इस दावे को **नज़रअंदाज़** किया कि **अमेरिका की मध्यस्थता** से संघर्ष रुका।

Pakistan's Role in Sponsoring Terror
आतंकवाद को प्रायोजित करने में पाकिस्तान की भूमिका

• Modi referred to the **presence of Pakistani Army officials** at funerals of terrorists killed in Operation Sindoor as evidence of **state sponsorship of terror**.

• मोदी ने **ऑपरेशन सिंदूर** में मारे गए आतंकवादियों के **जनाज़े में पाकिस्तानी सेना के अधिकारियों की मौजूदगी** को **राज्य प्रायोजित आतंकवाद** का प्रमाण बताया।

• In future, India **will not distinguish** between **terrorists** and their **sponsors**, even if the sponsor is the **Pakistani state**.

• भविष्य में भारत **आतंकवादियों** और उनके **प्रायोजकों** के बीच कोई **भेद नहीं करेगा**, चाहे प्रायोजक **पाकिस्तानी राज्य** ही क्यों न हो।

Targeting Terror Camps
आतंकी ठिकानों को निशाना बनाना

• Modi said **Bahawalpur** and **Muridke**, the terror camps struck by Indian forces, are **"universities of terrorism"**.

• मोदी ने कहा कि भारतीय बलों द्वारा निशाना बनाए गए **बहावलपुर** और **मुरीदके आतंकवाद के विश्वविद्यालय** हैं।

• These camps were linked to **major terror attacks**, including **9/11** in the U.S. and the **London Tube bombings**.

• इन ठिकानों का संबंध **9/11 अमेरिका** और **लंदन ट्यूब विस्फोट** जैसे **बड़े आतंकी हमलों** से रहा है।

Praise for Armed Forces
सशस्त्र बलों की सराहना

• Modi praised the **Army, Air Force, Navy**, and the **Border Security Force (BSF)** for hitting targets in Pakistan within the **first three days** and for defending the country during Pakistani retaliation.

• मोदी ने **पहले तीन दिनों** में पाकिस्तान में लक्ष्य भेदने और पाकिस्तान की जवाबी कार्रवाई के दौरान देश की रक्षा करने के लिए **थल सेना, वायु सेना, नौसेना** और **सीमा सुरक्षा बल (BSF)** की सराहना की।

• He added that all these forces are still on **full alert**.

• उन्होंने यह भी जोड़ा कि ये सभी बल अभी भी **पूर्ण सतर्कता** में हैं।

All Indian military bases will remain ready for combat

GS Paper III: IS
Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

India and Pakistan on Monday agreed to "consider immediate measures to ensure troop reduction" from the borders and forward areas, the Army said, adding that their commitment to not fire a single shot or initiate any aggressive and inimical action will continue.

The agreement came during talks between the Directors-General of Military Operations (DGMOs) of India and Pakistan on Monday.

The agreement effectively takes forward the understanding reached between the DGMOs on Saturday to stop all firing and military activity. While the understanding was breached by Pakistan within a few hours, guns have now fallen silent and the skies remained devoid of drones on Sunday night, the Army confirmed.

Earlier in the day, Air Marshal A.K. Bharti, Director-General of Air Operations (DGAO), said that in spite of some minor damages, "all our military bases and systems continue to remain fully operational, and ready to undertake any further missions, should the need so arise." The DGAO also highlighted the role of air defence weapons, including the older and battle-proven ones, in minimising damage to both civilian and military infrastructure.

"I would like to highlight again that in every single domain that Operation Sindoor has been prosecuted, there has been total synergy between the three Services," noted Lieutenant General Rajiv Ghai, Director-General of Military Operations.

The Directors-General

Air Marshal A.K. Bharti

Drone downed in Punjab: official

JAMMU/CHANDIGARH

A "surveillance drone" was downed in Jalandhar of Punjab on Monday night, Deputy Commissioner Himanshu Aggarwal said. Meanwhile, suspected drones were being engaged at Samba in J&K, the Army said. PTI

(Operations) Army, Navy, and Air Force, underscored how the country's air defence grid functioned seamlessly to shoot down the waves and waves of incoming drones, loitering munitions, and missiles launched by Pakistan between May 7 and 10.

The DG, Naval Operations, Vice Admiral A. N. Pramod said their powerful Carrier Battle Group (CBG) with formidable offensive capability was able to operate "with impunity and maintained an uncontested presence" in the area of operations. "Effectively it compelled the Pakistani air elements to remain bottled up close to the Makaran coast, denying any opportunity to be a threat in maritime space."

Air Marshal Bharti delved into how the Indian armed forces managed to minimise the damage to both civilian and military infrastructure in the country.

All Indian Military Bases Will Remain Ready for Combat

सभी भारतीय सैन्य ठिकाने युद्ध के लिए तैयार रहेंगे

• **India and Pakistan on Monday agreed to consider immediate measures to ensure troop reduction from the borders and forward areas, the Army said.**

• सेना ने बताया कि सोमवार को भारत और पाकिस्तान ने सीमाओं और अग्रिम क्षेत्रों से सेना में कमी सुनिश्चित करने के लिए तत्काल उपायों पर विचार करने पर सहमति जताई।

• Their commitment to **not fire a single shot** or initiate any **aggressive or inimical action** will continue.

• दोनों देशों की यह **प्रतिबद्धता कि वे एक भी गोली नहीं चलाएंगे** या कोई **आक्रामक या शत्रुतापूर्ण कार्रवाई** शुरू नहीं करेंगे, **जारी रहेगी।**

DGMO-Level Agreement
सेना संचालन महानिदेशकों (DGMO) के स्तर पर समझौता

• The agreement came during **talks between the Directors-General of Military Operations (DGMOs)** of India and Pakistan on **Monday**.

• यह समझौता **सोमवार** को भारत और पाकिस्तान के **सेना संचालन महानिदेशकों (DGMOs)** के बीच बातचीत के दौरान हुआ।

• The agreement takes forward the **understanding reached on Saturday** to **stop all firing and military activity**.

• यह समझौता **शनिवार को हुई सहमति** को आगे बढ़ाता है, जिसमें **सभी गोलीबारी और सैन्य गतिविधियों को रोकने** पर सहमति बनी थी।

• Although the understanding was **breached by Pakistan within a few hours**, guns have now **fallen silent** and the skies remained **devoid of drones** on **Sunday night**, the Army confirmed.

• सेना ने पुष्टि की कि यद्यपि पाकिस्तान ने इस समझौते का **कुछ घंटों में उल्लंघन** किया, लेकिन अब **तोपें शांत** हैं और **रविवार रात** को आकाश में **ड्रोन नहीं** देखे गए।

Operational Readiness of Indian Forces
भारतीय सेनाओं की संचालनात्मक तत्परता

• **Air Marshal A.K. Bharti**, Director-General of Air Operations (DGAO), stated that despite **some minor damages**, "**all our military bases and systems remain fully operational** and ready for any further missions."

• वायु अभियान के महानिदेशक **एयर मार्शल ए.के. भारती** ने कहा कि **कुछ मामूली क्षति** के बावजूद, "**हमारे सभी सैन्य ठिकाने और प्रणालियाँ पूरी तरह से संचालन में हैं** और किसी भी आगामी मिशन के लिए तैयार हैं।"

• The DGAO highlighted the **role of air defence weapons**, including older but **battle-proven systems**, in **minimising damage** to both **civilian and military infrastructure**.

• DGAO ने बताया कि **वायु रक्षा हथियारों**, विशेषकर **पुराने लेकिन युद्ध में सिद्ध** प्रणालियों की भूमिका से **नागरिक और सैन्य संरचनाओं** को होने वाला **नुकसान कम हुआ**।

Joint Synergy Among Three Services
तीनों सेनाओं के बीच समन्वय

• **Lieutenant General Rajiv Ghai**, Director-General of Military Operations, stated that "in every domain of **Operation Sindoor**, there was **total synergy** between the **Army, Navy, and Air Force**."

• सैन्य संचालन महानिदेशक **लेफ्टिनेंट जनरल राजीव घई** ने कहा कि **ऑपरेशन सिंदूर** के हर क्षेत्र में **सेना, नौसेना और वायुसेना** के बीच **पूर्ण समन्वय** था।

Defensive Success During Pakistan's Attacks
पाकिस्तान के हमलों के दौरान रक्षात्मक सफलता

• The Directors-General (Operations) of the **Army, Navy, and Air Force** underlined how the **air defence grid** functioned **seamlessly** to shoot down **drones, loitering munitions, and missiles** launched by Pakistan between **May 7 and 10**.

• **सेना, नौसेना और वायुसेना** के संचालन महानिदेशकों ने बताया कि **7 से 10 मई** के बीच पाकिस्तान द्वारा भेजे गए **ड्रोन, घूमते हथियार और मिसाइलों** को मार गिराने में **वायु रक्षा तंत्र** ने **बिना रुकावट कार्य** किया।

Navy's Dominance in Maritime Domain
समुद्री क्षेत्र में नौसेना की प्रधानता

• **Vice Admiral A.N. Pramod**, DG, Naval Operations, said that India's **Carrier Battle Group (CBG)** with its **formidable offensive capability** maintained an **uncontested presence** in the area of operations.

• नौसेना संचालन महानिदेशक **वाइस एडमिरल ए. एन. प्रमोद** ने बताया कि भारत का **कैरियर बैटल ग्रुप (CBG)** अपनी **शक्तिशाली आक्रामक क्षमता** के साथ **संचालन क्षेत्र में निर्बाध उपस्थिति** बनाए रखने में सफल रहा।

• It forced **Pakistani air elements** to stay **close to the Makran coast**, denying them any opportunity to pose a **threat in maritime space**.

• इसने **पाकिस्तानी वायु घटकों** को **मकरान तट** के पास **रुके रहने** को मजबूर कर दिया, जिससे वे **समुद्री क्षेत्र में खतरा** नहीं बन सके।

Damage Control by Armed Forces
सशस्त्र बलों द्वारा क्षति नियंत्रण

• **Air Marshal Bharti** explained how the Indian armed forces succeeded in **minimising damage** to **both civilian and military infrastructure** during Pakistan's offensive.

• **एयर मार्शल भारती** ने बताया कि पाकिस्तान के हमले के दौरान भारतीय सशस्त्र बलों ने **नागरिक और सैन्य ढांचों** को होने वाली **क्षति को न्यूनतम** करने में कैसे सफलता प्राप्त की।

Markets mark massive gains as border tensions and U.S.-China trade war ease

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty registered their biggest single-day gains in absolute terms on Monday, skyrocketing nearly 4%, as border tensions between India and Pakistan eased and the U.S. and China agreed to lower tariffs.

The 30-share BSE Sensex soared by 2,975.43 points, or 3.74%, to settle at a more than seven-month high of 82,429.90. During the day, it rallied 3,041.5 points, or 3.82%, to a high of 82,495.97.

The 50-issue Nifty of NSE skyrocketed 916.70 points, or 3.82%, to close at 24,924.70. In intra-day trade, the barometer zoomed 936.8 points, or 3.90%, to 24,944.80.

Monday was the best day for Indian bourses since April 9, 2020, when

Sharp rebound
Sensex recorded its biggest single-day gains in absolute terms on Monday, skyrocketing nearly 4%

Nifty 50 increased almost 4%. The day was also the ninth best day in the past decade. Eight of Nifty's top 10 highest daily returns since April 2014 were in 2020 and 2021, which was the beginning of the bull run during COVID-19, from which the market started correcting in the second half of 2024. Without including these eight instances, Monday was the second-best day for Nifty 50.

"Nifty jumped 900+ points, partly due to the India-Pakistan ceasefire, but mainly on the news that the U.S. and China have eased tariffs and talks progressed well. A 90-day window for a trade deal has lifted sentiment, with investors hoping the worst of the trade war is behind us," said Amar Ambani, executive director, YES Securities.

The markets reacted positively after the U.S. decided to slash tariffs on Chinese imports to 30% and China's announcement to cut reciprocal tariffs on U.S. imports to 10%. Nifty IT index increased the most, changing 6.7% and Nifty Pharma index improved the least, going up by 0.15%.

All sectors gave positive returns to investors. Markets were the least volatile since April 15, 2025, as the Nifty VIX index was down 15% to 18.4 points on Monday. The current trend shows positive sentiments in the markets. "On the higher side, 25,200-25,300/83,000-83,300 would be the key resistance areas, while below 24,590/81,150 traders may prefer to exit their long positions," said Shrikant Chouhan, Head - Equity Research at Kotak Securities.

Markets mark massive gains as border tensions and U.S.-China trade war ease

सीमा तनाव और अमेरिका-चीन व्यापार युद्ध में कमी से बाजारों में भारी तेजी

• **Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty registered their biggest single-day gains in absolute terms on Monday, soaring by nearly 4%.**

• बेंचमार्क सूचकांक सेंसेक्स और निफ्टी ने सोमवार को लगभग 4% की तेजी के साथ अब तक की सबसे बड़ी एकदिनी बढ़त दर्ज की।

• This rally came as **border tensions between India and Pakistan** eased and the **U.S. and China** agreed to lower **tariffs**.

• यह तेजी तब आई जब **भारत और पाकिस्तान के बीच सीमा तनाव** में कमी आई और **अमेरिका और चीन** ने **टैरिफ घटाने** पर सहमति जताई।

Sensex and Nifty Gains
सेंसेक्स और निफ्टी में उछाल

• The **30-share BSE Sensex** rose by **2,975.43 points (3.74%)** to settle at a **seven-month high** of **82,429.90**.

• **30 शेयरों वाला बीएसई सेंसेक्स 2,975.43 अंक (3.74%)** बढ़कर **82,429.90** के **सात महीने के उच्च स्तर** पर बंद हुआ।

• During the day, it hit a high of **82,495.97**, rising **3,041.5 points (3.82%)**.

• दिन के दौरान, यह **3,041.5 अंक (3.82%)** बढ़कर **82,495.97** के उच्चतम स्तर तक पहुंचा।

• The **50-issue NSE Nifty** surged by **916.70 points (3.82%)** to close at **24,924.70**.

• **50 अंकों वाला एनएसई निफ्टी 916.70 अंक (3.82%)** की तेजी के साथ **24,924.70** पर बंद हुआ।

• In intra-day trade, Nifty hit a high of **24,944.80**, gaining **936.8 points (3.90%)**.

• इंट्रा-डे ट्रेड में निफ्टी **936.8 अंक (3.90%)** बढ़कर **24,944.80** के उच्चतम स्तर पर पहुंचा।

Historical Comparison
ऐतिहासिक तुलना

• **Monday** was the **best day** for Indian stock markets since **April 9, 2020**, when Nifty 50 had also surged nearly **4%**.

• **सोमवार** भारतीय शेयर बाजारों के लिए **9 अप्रैल 2020** के बाद का **सबसे अच्छा दिन** था, जब निफ्टी 50 ने भी लगभग **4%** की बढ़त दर्ज की थी।

• It was the **ninth best day** in the **last decade**.

• यह पिछले **दशक** में **नौवां सबसे अच्छा दिन** था।

• **Eight** of Nifty's top **10 highest daily returns** since **April 2014** occurred in **2020 and 2021**, during the **COVID-19 bull run**.

• **अप्रैल 2014** से अब तक के निफ्टी के **10 सर्वाधिक दैनिक लाभों** में से **आठ 2020 और 2021 में COVID-19 बुल रन** के दौरान हुए।

• Excluding these, **Monday** was the **second-best day** for **Nifty 50**.
• इनको छोड़कर, **सोमवार निफ्टी 50** के लिए **दूसरा सबसे अच्छा दिन** था।

Market Drivers
बाजार को बढ़ावा देने वाले कारण

• "Nifty jumped **900+ points** partly due to the **India-Pakistan ceasefire**, but mainly because of progress in **U.S.-China trade talks**," said **Amar Ambani**, Executive Director, **YES Securities**.
• "निफ्टी में **900+ अंकों** की छलांग **भारत-पाकिस्तान संघर्षविराम** के कारण भी थी, लेकिन मुख्य रूप से **अमेरिका-चीन व्यापार वार्ता में प्रगति** के कारण," **यस सिक्योरिटीज** के कार्यकारी निदेशक **अमर अंबानी** ने कहा।

• A **90-day window** for a trade deal lifted **investor sentiment**, suggesting the worst of the trade war may be over.
• व्यापार समझौते के लिए **90 दिनों की समयसीमा** ने **निवेशकों की भावना** को मजबूत किया, जिससे लगा कि **व्यापार युद्ध का सबसे बुरा दौर** शायद समाप्त हो गया है।

Tariff Cuts and Sector Performance
टैरिफ कटौती और क्षेत्रों का प्रदर्शन

• The **U.S.** decided to **cut tariffs** on **Chinese imports** to **30%**, and **China** reduced its reciprocal tariffs on **U.S. goods** to **10%**.
• **अमेरिका** ने **चीनी आयातों** पर **टैरिफ को 30%** तक घटाने का फैसला किया, और **चीन** ने **अमेरिकी वस्तुओं** पर **10%** की **प्रतिशोधात्मक टैरिफ** में कटौती की।

• **Nifty IT index** gained the most, rising **6.7%**.
• **निफ्टी आईटी इंडेक्स** में सबसे अधिक तेजी आई, जो **6.7%** बढ़ा।

• **Nifty Pharma index** rose the least, going up by only **0.15%**.
• **निफ्टी फार्मा इंडेक्स** में सबसे कम वृद्धि हुई, जो सिर्फ **0.15%** बढ़ा।

• All sectors gave **positive returns** to investors.
• सभी क्षेत्रों ने निवेशकों को **सकारात्मक रिटर्न** दिया।

Market Volatility and Outlook
बाजार में उतार-चढ़ाव और दृष्टिकोण

• **Markets** were the **least volatile** since **April 15, 2025**, as **Nifty VIX index** fell **15%** to **18.4 points**.

• **बाजार** में **15 अप्रैल 2025** के बाद से सबसे कम **उतार-चढ़ाव** रहा, क्योंकि **निफ्टी वीआईएक्स इंडेक्स 15%** गिरकर **18.4 अंक** पर आ गया।

• Current trends reflect **positive sentiments** in the market.

• वर्तमान रुझान **बाजार में सकारात्मक भावनाओं** को दर्शाते हैं।

• "On the higher side, **25,200–25,300** for Nifty and **83,000–83,300** for Sensex are key **resistance levels**," said **Shrikant Chouhan**, Head of Equity Research, **Kotak Securities**.

• **कोटक सिक्योरिटीज** के इक्विटी अनुसंधान प्रमुख **श्रीकांत चौहान** ने कहा, "ऊपरी स्तरों पर, निफ्टी के लिए **25,200–25,300** और सेंसेक्स के लिए **83,000–83,300 प्रमुख प्रतिरोध स्तर** हैं।"

• "Below **24,590 for Nifty** and **81,150 for Sensex**, traders may prefer to **exit long positions**."

• "अगर निफ्टी **24,590** और सेंसेक्स **81,150** से नीचे जाता है, तो ट्रेडर अपनी **लॉन्ग पोजिशन से बाहर निकलना** पसंद कर सकते हैं।"

Woman killed in tiger attack in Chandrapur; fifth death in 3 days

GS Paper III: Environment

Press Trust of India
CHANDRAPUR

A 30-year-old woman was mauled to death by a tiger in eastern Maharashtra's Chandrapur district on Monday morning, the fifth woman to die in an attack by a big cat in three days, a forest officer said.

Bhuvaneshwari Bhendre (30), a resident of Bhadurni village, was attacked by a tiger around 7 a.m. in the morning while she was collecting tendu leaves in the forest along with some other members of her family, said the official.

The incident took place in Mul range under buffer zone of the Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve.

The body was retrieved and sent to hospital for autopsy, the he said, adding the family will be paid initial compensation and the final compensation will be given after necessary formalities are completed.

The district has witnessed five deaths in tiger attacks in the last three days. Three women were killed by a tiger in Sindewahi forest area while they were collecting tendu leaves on May 10.

The following day a 65-year-old woman was killed by a tiger while collecting tendu leaves in Chichpalli range. Tendu leaves are used for 'bidi' manufacturing and a major source of income in the region.

Woman killed in tiger attack in Chandrapur; fifth death in 3 days

चंद्रपुर में बाघ के हमले में महिला की मौत; 3 दिनों में पांचवीं मौत

• A 30-year-old woman was mauled to death by a tiger in Chandrapur district of eastern Maharashtra on Monday morning.

• सोमवार सुबह, पूर्वी महाराष्ट्र के चंद्रपुर जिले में एक 30 वर्षीय महिला की बाघ के हमले में मौत हो गई।

• This was the **fifth woman** to die in a tiger attack in the last **three days**, according to a forest officer.

• एक **वन अधिकारी** के अनुसार, पिछले **तीन दिनों** में **बाघ के हमले** में मरने वाली यह **पांचवीं महिला** थी।

• The victim, **Bhuvaneshwari Bhendre (30)**, was a resident of **Bhadurni village**.

• मृतका **भुवनेश्वरी भेंद्रे (30)**, **भदुर्नी गांव** की निवासी थी।

• She was attacked by the tiger around **7 a.m.** while **collecting tendu leaves** in the forest with her family members.

• वह सुबह **लगभग 7 बजे** अपने **परिवार के सदस्यों के साथ तेंदू पत्ते** इकट्ठा कर रही थी, तभी **बाघ** ने हमला कर दिया।

• The incident took place in the **Mul range**, which lies under the **buffer zone of Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve**.

• यह घटना **मुल रेंज** में हुई, जो **ताडोबा अंधारी टाइगर रिजर्व** के **बफ़र ज़ोन** के अंतर्गत आता है।

• The body was recovered and sent for **autopsy**.
• शव को बरामद कर **पोस्टमार्टम** के लिए भेजा गया।

• The **family** will be given an **initial compensation**, and the **final compensation** will be provided after completion of **necessary formalities**.
• **परिवार** को **प्रारंभिक मुआवज़ा** दिया जाएगा, और आवश्यक **औपचारिकताएं** पूरी होने के बाद **अंतिम मुआवज़ा** दिया जाएगा।

• The district has witnessed **five tiger attack deaths** in the last **three days**.
• इस जिले में पिछले **तीन दिनों** में **बाघ के हमलों** में **पांच मौतें** हो चुकी हैं।

• On **May 10**, **three women** were killed by a **tiger** while collecting **tendu leaves** in the **Sindewahi forest area**.
• **10 मई** को **सिंदेवाही वन क्षेत्र** में **तेंदू पत्ते** इकट्ठा करते समय **तीन महिलाओं** की **बाघ के हमले** में मौत हो गई थी।

• The following day, a **65-year-old woman** was killed by a **tiger** while collecting **tendu leaves** in the **Chichpalli range**.
• अगले दिन, **चिचपल्ली रेंज** में **तेंदू पत्ते** इकट्ठा करते समय एक **65 वर्षीय महिला** की **बाघ के हमले** में मौत हो गई थी।

• **Tendu leaves** are used for **bidi manufacturing** and are a **major source of income** in the region.
• **तेंदू पत्तों** का उपयोग **बीड़ी बनाने** में किया जाता है और यह क्षेत्र में **आय का एक प्रमुख स्रोत** है।

India engaged with China on germanium export restrictions, says embassy

The Indian embassy in Beijing listed germanium as the only element mentioned in grievances from Indian industry players regarding China's export restrictions of rare earth elements

GS Paper III: Industries

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

India is engaging with the Chinese government to navigate export restrictions on germanium, a critical mineral that is used for manufacturing semiconductors, fibre optic cables, and solar panels. The export restrictions for the element – over half of its annual output comes from China – may have caused some friction in electronics manufacturing and other industries that require the element.

In response to a Right to Information application from *The Hindu*, the Indian Embassy in Beijing listed germanium as the only element mentioned in grievances from Indian industry players regarding China's export restrictions of rare earth elements (REEs). Germanium is not listed as an REE, a category that includes 17 heavy metals that China has a practical monopoly in refining.

The exports of germanium and gallium to the United States were largely banned last November. REUTERS

Germanium and gallium's exports to the United States were largely banned last November, and a year before, were placed under "export licensing" for other countries.

Fully reliant on imports
India makes no germanium, and is completely reliant on imports for the element. According to a financial daily's report in 2024, India is relying on imports of germanium through suppliers in the United Arab Emirates, a process that has inflated costs for Indian importers.

The embassy in Beijing declined to disclose specific representations and meetings with Chinese officials on the issue. "The matter has been taken up with Ministries/Departments concerned on the Chinese side through formal communications as well as during meetings," the embassy said in its response to *The Hindu*.

Germanium oxide is used in the "core of the preform" for fibre optic cables, an industry expert said. "Preforms are solid cylinders of glass which are used to draw optical fibres in specialised furnaces."

While relations with China have cooled down in recent months, the country is reportedly thwarting certain projects with export curbs and even travel restrictions. For instance, Apple, Inc.'s contract manufacturer for iPhones, Foxconn, was reportedly prevented from allowing personnel to travel from China to India, and more recently, moving heavy machinery needed to make the phones. "I guess these are matters which pertain to Foxconn and several other Indian private entities so they would be looking into it," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in response to a query on these curbs in January.

India Engaged with China on Germanium Export Restrictions
भारत ने जर्मेनियम निर्यात प्रतिबंधों पर चीन से संपर्क किया

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• India is engaging with the **Chinese government** to address **export restrictions on germanium**, a **critical mineral** used in **semiconductors, fibre optic cables**, and **solar panels**.

• भारत **अर्धचालकों, फाइबर ऑप्टिक केबलों** और **सौर पैनलों** में उपयोग होने वाले एक **महत्वपूर्ण खनिज जर्मेनियम** पर **निर्यात प्रतिबंधों** को लेकर **चीनी सरकार** से संपर्क कर रहा है।

• Over **half** of the **world's annual germanium output** comes from **China**, and the **restrictions** may have affected **electronics manufacturing** and other industries.

• **दुनिया के वार्षिक जर्मेनियम उत्पादन** का **आधा हिस्सा चीन** से आता है, और ये **प्रतिबंध इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स निर्माण** और अन्य उद्योगों को प्रभावित कर सकते हैं।

• In response to a **Right to Information** application, the **Indian Embassy in Beijing** stated that **germanium** was the **only element** mentioned in complaints from **Indian industry players**.

• एक **सूचना का अधिकार (RTI)** आवेदन के जवाब में, **बीजिंग में भारतीय दूतावास** ने बताया कि **भारतीय उद्योग जगत** की शिकायतों में केवल **जर्मेनियम** का ही उल्लेख किया गया था।

• Although **germanium** is not classified as a **Rare Earth Element (REE)**, it has been impacted by similar export policies.

• हालांकि **जर्मेनियम** को **दुर्लभ पृथ्वी तत्व (REE)** के रूप में वर्गीकृत नहीं किया गया है, फिर भी यह समान **निर्यात नीतियों** से प्रभावित हुआ है।

• **Germanium** and **gallium** exports to the **United States** were largely **banned** in **November 2023**, and earlier placed under **"export licensing"** for other countries.

• **जर्मेनियम** और **गैलियम** का **संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका** को निर्यात **नवंबर 2023** में बड़े पैमाने पर **प्रतिबंधित** किया गया था, और पहले इन्हें अन्य देशों के लिए **"निर्यात लाइसेंसिंग"** के तहत रखा गया था।

India's Dependence on Imports
भारत की आयात पर निर्भरता

• India **does not produce** any germanium and is **fully reliant** on **imports**.

• भारत में **जर्मेनियम का उत्पादन नहीं होता** है और यह पूरी तरह **आयात** पर **निर्भर** है।

• According to a **2024 financial report**, India is importing germanium through **suppliers in the United Arab Emirates**, which has led to **higher costs** for Indian buyers.

• **2024 की एक वित्तीय रिपोर्ट** के अनुसार, भारत **संयुक्त अरब अमीरात (UAE)** के **आपूर्तिकर्ताओं** से **जर्मेनियम** आयात कर रहा है, जिससे **भारतीय आयातकों की लागत बढ़ गई** है।

• The **Indian Embassy in Beijing** did not reveal details of its **communications or meetings** with **Chinese officials**, but said the issue was taken up through **formal channels**.
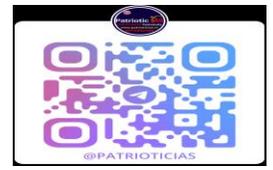
• बीजिंग में **भारतीय दूतावास** ने **चीनी अधिकारियों** के साथ की गई **बैठकों या संवाद** का विवरण नहीं दिया, लेकिन बताया कि यह मामला **औपचारिक माध्यमों** से उठाया गया है।

Importance of Germanium in Industry
उद्योग में जर्मेनियम का महत्व

• An **industry expert** said that **germanium oxide** is used in the **core of the preform** for **fibre optic cables**.
• एक **उद्योग विशेषज्ञ** ने बताया कि **फाइबर ऑप्टिक केबलों** के **प्रीफॉर्म के कोर** में **जर्मेनियम ऑक्साइड** का उपयोग होता है।

• **Preforms** are **solid cylinders of glass** used to draw optical fibres in **specialised furnaces**.
• **प्रीफॉर्म कांच के ठोस सिलेंडर** होते हैं जिन्हें **विशेष भट्टियों** में **ऑप्टिकल फाइबर** खींचने के लिए उपयोग किया जाता है।

Impact of Tensions with China
चीन के साथ तनाव का प्रभाव

• Although relations with **China** have cooled in recent months, the country is reportedly **blocking some projects** through **export curbs** and even **travel restrictions**.
• हाल के महीनों में **चीन** के साथ संबंध **शांत** हुए हैं, लेकिन देश कथित रूप से **निर्यात प्रतिबंधों** और यहां तक कि **यात्रा प्रतिबंधों** के जरिए **कुछ परियोजनाओं को रोक** रहा है।

• For example, **Foxconn**, which manufactures **Apple iPhones**, reportedly faced obstacles in moving **personnel and heavy machinery** from **China to India**.
• उदाहरण के लिए, **ऐप्पल आईफोन** का निर्माण करने वाली **फॉक्सकॉन** को कथित रूप से **चीन से भारत** तक **कर्मचारियों और भारी मशीनरी** के आवागमन में **अड़चनें** झेलनी पड़ीं।

• In **January**, the **External Affairs Ministry** responded that these matters are for **Foxconn** and **private Indian entities** to look into.
• **जनवरी** में **विदेश मंत्रालय** ने जवाब दिया कि ये मामले **फॉक्सकॉन** और अन्य **भारतीय निजी कंपनियों** के देखने के हैं।

Rare Earth Elements (REEs):

Aspect	Explanation
Definition	A group of **17 metallic elements** in the periodic table (15 lanthanides + scandium + yttrium).

Aspect	Explanation
Examples	Neodymium (Nd), Lanthanum (La), Cerium (Ce), Dysprosium (Dy), Yttrium (Y), etc.
Uses	High-tech applications like magnets, lasers, smartphones, electric vehicles, wind turbines, defense, etc.
Nature	Not actually rare in Earth's crust, but are **rarely found in concentrated, economically viable deposits**.
Geopolitical Importance	China controls more than **60–80%** of global REE production and processing.
Mineral Group	A **subgroup** of the broader category of critical minerals.

✅ Critical Minerals:

Aspect	Explanation
Definition	Minerals that are **economically important** for a country (especially for clean energy, defense, electronics, etc.) and **have supply risk**.
Examples	Lithium, Cobalt, Nickel, Graphite, Chromium, Titanium, Tungsten, and also **Rare Earth Elements**.
Uses	Battery storage (EVs), solar panels, semiconductors, aerospace, defense, etc.
Nature	Not defined by a fixed set of elements — it **varies by country and time** based on economic & strategic needs.
Geopolitical Importance	Countries are diversifying supply chains to reduce dependency on a few suppliers (e.g., China).
Includes REEs?	✅ **Yes**, REEs are a part of critical minerals in most official lists (e.g., US, EU, India).

Summary of the Difference:

Feature	Rare Earth Elements (REEs)	Critical Minerals
Definition	Specific 17 metallic elements	Economically vital & supply-risk minerals
Count	Fixed – 17 elements	Variable – depends on national priorities
Scope	Subset of critical minerals	Broader category (includes REEs)
Example	Neodymium, Dysprosium	Lithium, Cobalt, REEs, etc.
Usage	Mostly high-tech & green tech	Defense, energy, electronics, EVs, etc.

Why is government silent on cyberbullying of Foreign Secretary, ask Left parties

GS Paper III: IS

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Left parties questioned the BJP-led government's silence on the cyberbullying of Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, who faced trolling on social media in the wake of India and Pakistan reaching an understanding on May 10 to halt all military actions.

In a post on X, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) shared an image of a report on Mr. Misri and his daughter being trolled online. "Why is the government silent? Shame on the trolls," the CPI(M) said.

The party's Rajya Sabha floor leader, John Brittas, wrote to Home Minister Amit Shah seeking urgent intervention. Mr. Brittas

John Brittas

said the Foreign Secretary was only articulating the considered stance of the Indian government.

Mr. Misri locked his X profile after the cyberattack.

"The fact that the nation's seniormost diplomat is driven to digitally withdraw into a shell to escape abuse for mere adherence to governmental policy is

both unprecedented and troubling. It sends an ominous signal about rapidly shrinking space for civil servants to function without fear or intimidation," Mr. Brittas added.

CPI general secretary D. Raja said it is the politics of hate that has led to this situation. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi should speak out openly and address the problem. Mr. Misri is not a layman. He is a top-ranking bureaucrat; if he is not safe, then who is? This is a result of jingoism that the government has been fanning," he said.

In a post on X, CPI (Marxist-Leninist) general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya asked: "Why should the Foreign Secretary be trolled for a decision taken by the PM?"

Government's Silence on Cyberbullying of Foreign Secretary Questioned by Left Parties

विदेश सचिव पर साइबर हमले पर सरकार की चुप्पी पर वामपंथी दलों ने उठाए सवाल

• **The Left parties questioned the BJP-led government's silence on the cyberbullying of Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, who faced trolling on social media after India and Pakistan reached an understanding on May 10 to halt all military actions.**

• वामपंथी दलों ने विदेश सचिव विक्रम मिस्री पर साइबर हमले को लेकर भाजपा-नीत सरकार की चुप्पी पर सवाल उठाए, जिन्हें सोशल मीडिया पर ट्रोल किया गया जब भारत और पाकिस्तान ने 10 मई को सभी सैन्य कार्रवाई रोकने पर सहमति बनाई।

• In a post on X, the **Communist Party of India (Marxist)** shared an image of a report about Mr. Misri and his daughter being trolled online. "**Why is the government silent? Shame on the trolls,**" the CPI(M) said.

• X पर एक पोस्ट में, **भारतीय कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी (मार्क्सवादी)** ने मिस्री और उनकी बेटी को **ऑनलाइन ट्रोल** किए जाने की एक रिपोर्ट साझा की। CPI(M) ने कहा, "**सरकार चुप क्यों है? ट्रोल करने वालों पर शर्म आनी चाहिए।**"

• The party's **Rajya Sabha floor leader**, **John Brittas**, wrote to **Home Minister Amit Shah** seeking **urgent intervention**.

• पार्टी के **राज्यसभा में नेता**, **जॉन ब्रिटास** ने **गृह मंत्री अमित शाह** को पत्र लिखकर **त्वरित हस्तक्षेप** की मांग की।

• Mr. Brittas stated that the **Foreign Secretary** was merely articulating the **considered stance of the Indian government**.

• श्री ब्रिटास ने कहा कि **विदेश सचिव** केवल **सरकारी नीति** को ही अभिव्यक्त कर रहे थे।

• Following the attack, Mr. **Misri locked his X profile** to protect himself from further abuse.

• हमले के बाद, श्री **मिस्री ने अपना X प्रोफाइल लॉक कर दिया** ताकि आगे की गालियों से बच सकें।

• Mr. Brittas said, "It is **unprecedented and troubling** that the nation's **senior-most diplomat** is forced to **digitally withdraw** to escape abuse for **merely following government policy**."

• श्री ब्रिटास ने कहा, "यह **अभूतपूर्व और चिंताजनक है** कि देश का **शीर्षतम राजनयिक** केवल **सरकारी नीति का पालन** करने पर **डिजिटल रूप से पीछे हटने** को मजबूर हो जाता है।"

• He added that this sends an **ominous signal** about the **shrinking space** for **civil servants** to work **without fear or intimidation**.

• उन्होंने कहा कि यह **नौकरशाहों** के लिए **बिना भय और दबाव** के काम करने की **सिकुड़ती जगह** को लेकर एक **खतरनाक संकेत** भेजता है।

• **CPI general secretary D. Raja** said this situation is the result of the **politics of hate**.

• **CPI के महासचिव डी. राजा** ने कहा कि यह स्थिति **घृणा की राजनीति** का परिणाम है।

• He urged **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** to speak out and address the issue, stating, "Mr. Misri is a **top-ranking bureaucrat**. If he is not safe, then **who is**?"

• उन्होंने **प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी** से आग्रह किया कि वे इस मुद्दे पर **खुलकर बोलें** और समाधान करें। उन्होंने कहा, "मिस्री एक **शीर्षस्थ नौकरशाह** हैं। अगर वे सुरक्षित नहीं हैं, तो **फिर कौन है?**"

• Mr. Raja added, "This is the **result of jingoism** that the government has been **fanning**."

• श्री राजा ने कहा, "यह उस **राष्ट्रवाद की अतिशयोक्ति** का **परिणाम** है जिसे सरकार **भड़का रही** है।"

• In a post on X, **CPI (Marxist-Leninist)** general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya asked: "**Why should the Foreign Secretary be trolled for a decision taken by the PM?**"

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• X पर एक पोस्ट में, **CPI (मार्क्सवादी-लेनिनवादी)** के महासचिव दीपंकर भट्टाचार्य ने पूछा: "**प्रधानमंत्री द्वारा लिए गए फैसले पर विदेश सचिव को क्यों ट्रोल किया जाना चाहिए?**"

Paddy, pulses acreage has increased this kharif season: Centre

Shivraj Chouhan reviews sowing of crops; Ministry says stock of rice and wheat is higher than buffer standard and there is no impact of heatwave

GS Paper III: Agriculture

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The cultivation of paddy, pulses, coarse grains, and oilseeds has expanded this kharif season, the Agriculture Ministry said here on Monday, after a meeting chaired by Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

As on May 2, paddy sowing has increased by 3.44 lakh hectares, compared with last year. The sowing of pulses increased by 2.20 lakh hectares.

In 2023-24, paddy acreage was 28.57 lakh hectares and in this season, it is 32.02 lakh hectares. "Sowing of pulses has increased to 20.67 lakh hectares in 2024-25 as compared to 18.47 lakh hectares in 2023-24," the Ministry said, adding that cultivation of popular pulses varieties such as *moong* and *urad* has also increased by 1.70 lakh hectares and 0.50 lakh hectares, respectively.

Senior officials informed Mr. Chouhan in the meeting that there has been an uptick in the sowing of onion and potato in 2024-25 as compared with 2023-24. "There has been

The Agriculture Ministry said paddy sowing has increased by 3.44 lakh hectares compared with last year. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

an increase of 2.82 lakh hectares in onion sowing, which is an increase from 9.76 lakh hectares in 2023-24 to 12.58 lakh hectares in 2024-25. The sowing area of potato has also increased by 0.47 lakh hectares," the Ministry said in a statement. The sowing of tomato and onion is also going on smoothly in the current season, it said.

Better water storage
The meeting also reviewed the weather conditions and the availability of water in reservoirs. "The total water storage situation is better than last year. The storage available in 161 reservoirs is 117% of the storage of the same period last

year and 114% of the average storage of the last 10 years," the Ministry said.

On foodgrains, the Ministry said the actual stock of rice and wheat is more than the buffer standard. The actual stock of rice is 389.05 lakh tonnes against the buffer standard of 135.8 lakh tonnes. The actual stock of wheat is 177.08 lakh tonnes against the buffer standard of 74.6 lakh tonnes, it said. The harvest of wheat in almost all major wheat growing States is over and there was no impact of heatwave or high temperature.

The meeting also decided to launch a campaign to promote scientific agriculture.

Paddy, Pulses Acreage Has Increased This Kharif Season: Centre

धान, दालों की बुवाई इस खरीफ सीजन में बढ़ी: केंद्र

• The cultivation of paddy, pulses, coarse grains, and oilseeds has expanded during the current Kharif season, according to the Agriculture Ministry after a review meeting chaired by Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

• कृषि मंत्रालय के अनुसार, केंद्रीय मंत्री शिवराज सिंह चौहान की अध्यक्षता में हुई समीक्षा बैठक के बाद इस वर्तमान खरीफ सीजन में धान, दालों, मोटे अनाज और तिलहन की खेती में वृद्धि हुई है।

• As on **May 2**, **paddy sowing** has increased by **3.44 lakh hectares** compared to last year.

• **2 मई** तक **धान की बुवाई** में **3.44 लाख हेक्टेयर** की वृद्धि दर्ज की गई है, जो पिछले वर्ष की तुलना में अधिक है।

• In **2023-24**, paddy acreage was **28.57 lakh hectares**, and in this season it has risen to **32.02 lakh hectares**.

• **2023-24** में धान का क्षेत्रफल **28.57 लाख हेक्टेयर** था, जो इस सीजन में बढ़कर **32.02 लाख हेक्टेयर** हो गया है।

• **Pulses sowing** has also increased to **20.67 lakh hectares** in 2024-25, up from **18.47 lakh hectares** in **2023-24**.

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• 2024-25 में **दालों की बुवाई** बढ़कर **20.67 लाख हेक्टेयर** हो गई है, जबकि **2023-24** में यह **18.47 लाख हेक्टेयर** थी।

• The cultivation of major pulse varieties like **moong** and **urad** has increased by **1.70 lakh hectares** and **0.50 lakh hectares**, respectively.

• प्रमुख दालों जैसे **मूंग** और **उड़द** की खेती में क्रमशः **1.70 लाख हेक्टेयर** और **0.50 लाख हेक्टेयर** की वृद्धि हुई है।

Increase in Sowing of Vegetables
सब्जियों की बुवाई में वृद्धि

• Officials informed that there has been a rise in the sowing of **onion** and **potato** in **2024-25** compared to **2023-24**.

• अधिकारियों ने जानकारी दी कि **2024-25** में **2023-24** की तुलना में **प्याज** और **आलू** की बुवाई में वृद्धि हुई है।

• **Onion sowing** has increased by **2.82 lakh hectares**, from **9.76 lakh hectares** in 2023-24 to **12.58 lakh hectares** in **2024-25**.

• **प्याज की बुवाई** में **2.82 लाख हेक्टेयर** की वृद्धि हुई है, जो 2023-24 में **9.76 लाख हेक्टेयर** से बढ़कर 2024-25 में **12.58 लाख हेक्टेयर** हो गई है।

• The sowing area of **potato** has increased by **0.47 lakh hectares**.

• **आलू** की बुवाई का क्षेत्र **0.47 लाख हेक्टेयर** बढ़ा है।

• The sowing of **tomato** and **onion** is progressing smoothly in the current season.

• वर्तमान सीजन में **टमाटर** और **प्याज** की बुवाई सुचारु रूप से चल रही है।

Better Water Storage Situation
पानी का भंडारण बेहतर स्थिति में

• The meeting reviewed **weather conditions** and **reservoir water availability**.

• बैठक में **मौसम की स्थिति** और **जलाशयों में जल उपलब्धता** की समीक्षा की गई।

• The total water storage in **161 reservoirs** is **117%** of last year's level and **114%** of the average storage of the last **10 years**.

• **161 जलाशयों** में कुल जल भंडारण पिछले वर्ष की तुलना में **117%** और पिछले **10 वर्षों** के औसत भंडारण का **114%** है।

Sufficient Foodgrain Stock
अन्न भंडार पर्याप्त मात्रा में उपलब्ध

• The **actual stock** of **rice and wheat** is higher than the **buffer standard**, as per the Ministry.

• मंत्रालय के अनुसार, **चावल और गेहूं** का **वास्तविक भंडार बफर मानक** से अधिक है।

• **Rice stock** is **389.05 lakh tonnes**, while the buffer standard is **135.8 lakh tonnes**.

• चावल का भंडार **389.05 लाख टन** है, जबकि बफर मानक **135.8 लाख टन** है।

• **Wheat stock** stands at **177.08 lakh tonnes** against the buffer standard of **74.6 lakh tonnes**.

• गेहूं का भंडार **177.08 लाख टन** है, जबकि बफर मानक **74.6 लाख टन** है।

• The **harvest of wheat** in almost all **major wheat-growing States** is over, and there was **no impact** of **heatwave** or **high temperature**.

• लगभग सभी **प्रमुख गेहूं उत्पादक राज्यों** में **गेहूं की कटाई** पूरी हो चुकी है और **लू** या **उच्च तापमान** का **कोई प्रभाव** नहीं पड़ा।

Promotion of Scientific Agriculture
वैज्ञानिक कृषि को बढ़ावा

• The meeting also decided to launch a **campaign** to promote **scientific agriculture**.

• बैठक में **वैज्ञानिक कृषि** को बढ़ावा देने के लिए एक **अभियान** शुरू करने का निर्णय लिया गया।

The exercise yielded 1,21,739 pieces of trash, of which 1,06,857 were plastic, mostly single-use.
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Single-use food packaging 84% of Himalayan plastic waste

GS Paper III: Environment
Rahul Karmakar

Single-use food and beverage packaging forms more than 84% of the plastic waste in the eco-sensitive Himalayan region, an anti-waste collective of NGOs has found.

According to the Zero Waste Himalaya Alliance, about 70% of the plastics collected from across the Himalayan belt from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh are non-recyclable and have no market value.

The gravity of the environmental reality came to light at the Zero Waste Himalaya Network Meet held in Himachal Pradesh's Bir in April, where the constituents of the alliance lamented the failure of the current policies in addressing the unique challenges of mountain ecosystems.

The alliance was initiated by Zero Waste Himalaya, an organisation based in Sikkim's Gangtok, and the Integrated Mountain Initiative based in Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

The two organisations have been spearheading The Himalayan Cleanup (THC), one of the biggest movements against plastic pollution in the Indian Himalayan region, since 2018. The Bir convergence of anti-plastic groups was held a month before their annual plastic waste collection from May 26-30.

A statement issued by the alliance on May 8 said, "Over the past six years, the data has indicated that the Himalayan waste crisis is fundamentally a production and systems issue rather than a post-consumer waste management flaw."

A report released by THC said the 2018 waste collection exercise was conducted at more than 250 sites by volunteers of 200 organisations. In 2024, more than 15,000 members of 350 organisations collected plastic waste from 450 locations.

71% of the plastic waste was non-recyclable, mainly, multilayered plastics and tetrapak. These are not collected by waste pickers and are found littering mountains, choking waterways and filling up landfills

Among the nine Himalayan States targeted in 2025, Sikkim generated the most trash items. A total of 53,814 (44% of the total) pieces of litter were audited across 86 sites. This was followed by West Bengal's Darjeeling with 36,180 items audited across 37 sites.

The volunteers in Ladakh picked up and audited 11,958 pieces of trash across 18 sites. Nagaland and Uttarakhand followed Ladakh to take the fourth and fifth spots.

The exercise across the nine States yielded 1,21,739 pieces of trash, of which 1,06,857 were plastic, mostly single-use, divided into six categories: food packaging, household products, personal care products, smoking material, packing material, and others.

The report said 84.2% of the plastic waste was found to be food and beverage packaging. These packages have been audited to gather data on the top corporate polluters in the Himalayan belt.

"Within food packaging, 71% of the plastic waste was non-recyclable. THC2022 and THC2023 showed 72% and 77.4% of all plastic collected was non-recyclable, mainly, multilayered plastics and tetrapak... These problematic plastics are not collected by any waste pickers and scrap dealers and are found littering mountain landscapes, choking waterways and filling up landfill sites," it said.

"Thus, there is a need to look at solutions beyond the recycling lens," it added.

The THC2024 was conducted across villages, schools, tourist spots, and protected areas. Water bodies and rivers were the most littered in the tourist spots.

Single-use Food Packaging: 84% of Himalayan Plastic Waste

सिंगल-यूज़ फ़ूड पैकेजिंग: हिमालयी प्लास्टिक कचरे का 84%

• **Single-use food and beverage packaging accounts for more than 84% of the plastic waste in the eco-sensitive Himalayan region, as reported by an anti-waste collective of NGOs.**

• पर्यावरण-संवेदनशील **हिमालयी क्षेत्र** में **सिंगल-यूज़ फ़ूड और बेवरेज पैकेजिंग प्लास्टिककचरे** का **अधिक** है, यह जानकारी एनजीओ के एक **एंटी-वेस्ट कलेक्टिव** द्वारा दी गई।

• According to the **Zero Waste Himalaya Alliance**, about **70%** of the plastics collected from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh are **non-recyclable** and have **no market value**.

• **जीरो वेस्ट हिमालय एलायंस** के अनुसार, **लद्दाख से अरुणाचल प्रदेश** तक एकत्र किए गए प्लास्टिक का लगभग **70% रीसाइक्लिंग योग्य नहीं** है और

उसका **कोई बाजार मूल्य नहीं** है।

• The environmental seriousness was highlighted during the **Zero Waste Himalaya Network Meet** held in **Bir, Himachal Pradesh** in **April**.

• यह पर्यावरणीय गंभीरता **अप्रैल** में **हिमाचल प्रदेश के बीर** में आयोजित **जीरो वेस्ट हिमालय नेटवर्क मीट** में सामने आई।

• The alliance criticized the **failure of current policies** to address the **unique challenges** of **mountain ecosystems**.

• एलायंस ने **पहाड़ी पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र की विशिष्ट चुनौतियों** को संबोधित करने में **वर्तमान नीतियों की विफलता** की आलोचना की।

The Organisations Behind the Movement
इस आंदोलन के पीछे की संस्थाएँ

• The alliance was initiated by **Zero Waste Himalaya** (Gangtok, Sikkim) and **Integrated Mountain Initiative** (Dehradun, Uttarakhand).

• यह एलायंस **जीरो वेस्ट हिमालय (गंगटोक, सिक्किम)** और **इंटीग्रेटेड माउंटेन इनिशिएटिव (देहरादून, उत्तराखंड)** द्वारा शुरू की गई थी।

• These organisations have led **The Himalayan Cleanup (THC)** since **2018**, one of the **biggest movements** against **plastic pollution** in the **Indian Himalayan region**.

• ये संस्थाएँ **2018** से **द हिमालयन क्लीनअप (THC)** का नेतृत्व कर रही हैं, जो **भारतीय हिमालयी क्षेत्र** में **प्लास्टिक प्रदूषण** के खिलाफ **सबसे बड़े आंदोलनों** में से एक है।

• The **Bir convergence** was held a month before the annual cleanup drive scheduled for **May 26-30, 2025**.

• **बीर सम्मेलन** वार्षिक सफाई अभियान **(26-30 मई, 2025)** से एक महीने पहले आयोजित किया गया।

The Core Issue: Production and Systems
मुख्य समस्या: उत्पादन और प्रणाली

• The alliance stated on **May 8** that the **Himalayan waste crisis** is fundamentally a **production and systems issue**, not just a **post-consumer waste problem**.

• **8 मई** को एलायंस ने कहा कि **हिमालयी कचरा संकट** मूलतः **उत्पादन और प्रणाली की समस्या** है, केवल **उपभोक्ता के बाद के कचरे** का मुद्दा नहीं।

Waste Collection and Data from THC
THC द्वारा कचरा एकत्रण और आंकड़े

• In **2018**, waste was collected from over **250 sites** by volunteers from **200 organisations**.

• **2018** में, **200 संगठनों** के स्वयंसेवकों द्वारा **250 से अधिक स्थानों** से कचरा एकत्र किया गया था।

• In **2024**, over **15,000 members** from **350 organisations** collected plastic from **450 locations**.
• **2024** में, **350 संगठनों** के **15,000 से अधिक सदस्यों** ने **450 स्थानों** से प्लास्टिक कचरा एकत्र किया।

• In **2025**, the most trash was generated in **Sikkim** – **53,814 items** (about **44%**) across **86 sites**.
• **2025** में सबसे अधिक कचरा **सिक्किम** में उत्पन्न हुआ – **86 स्थलों** पर कुल **53,814 आइटम** (लगभग **44%**)।

• Next was **Darjeeling (West Bengal)** with **36,180 items** across **37 sites**.
• इसके बाद **दार्जिलिंग (पश्चिम बंगाल)** में **37 स्थानों** पर **36,180 आइटम** एकत्र किए गए।

• In **Ladakh**, volunteers picked up **11,958 items** from **18 sites**.
• **लद्दाख** में, स्वयंसेवकों ने **18 स्थानों** से **11,958 आइटम** उठाए।

• **Nagaland** and **Uttarakhand** followed in fourth and fifth positions respectively.
• **नागालैंड** और **उत्तराखंड** क्रमशः चौथे और पाँचवें स्थान पर रहे।

Type and Nature of Plastic Waste
प्लास्टिक कचरे का प्रकार और स्वरूप

• From across the nine States, a total of **1,21,739 pieces** of trash were collected. Out of these, **1,06,857** were **plastic**, mostly **single-use**.
• नौ राज्यों में कुल **1,21,739 आइटम** कचरे के रूप में एकत्र हुए। इनमें से **1,06,857 आइटम** प्लास्टिक थे, जिनमें अधिकतर **सिंगल-यूज़** थे।

• Plastic waste was categorized into **six types**: **food packaging**, **household products**, **personal care products**, **smoking material**, **packing material**, and **others**.
• प्लास्टिक कचरे को **छह श्रेणियों** में विभाजित किया गया: **फूड पैकेजिंग**, **घरेलू उत्पाद**, **पर्सनल केयर उत्पाद**, **धूमपान सामग्री**, **पैकेजिंग सामग्री**, और **अन्य**।

• **84.2%** of the plastic waste was **food and beverage packaging**.
• **84.2%** प्लास्टिक कचरा **फूड और बेवरेज पैकेजिंग** था।

• These packages were audited to identify **top corporate polluters** in the **Himalayan belt**.
• इन पैकेजों का ऑडिट **हिमालयी क्षेत्र** में **शीर्ष कॉर्पोरेट प्रदूषकों** की पहचान के लिए किया गया।

Recyclability Issues
रीसाइक्लिंग की समस्याएँ

• Within food packaging, **71%** of the plastic was **non-recyclable**.
• फूड पैकेजिंग में **71%** प्लास्टिक **रीसाइक्लिंग योग्य नहीं** था।

• THC reports from **2022** and **2023** showed **72%** and **77.4%** of all plastic collected was **non-recyclable**, mostly **multilayered plastics and tetrapak**.

• THC की **2022** और **2023** की रिपोर्टों में **72%** और **77.4%** प्लास्टिक **रीसाइक्लिंग योग्य नहीं** था, जिसमें मुख्यतः **मल्टीलेयर्ड प्लास्टिक और टेट्रापैक** शामिल थे।

• These problematic plastics are **not collected** by **waste pickers** or **scrap dealers**, and are found **littering landscapes**, **choking waterways**, and **filling up landfills**.
• ये समस्याजनक प्लास्टिक **कचरा बीनने वालों या कबाड़ीवालों** द्वारा एकत्र नहीं किए जाते, और **पर्यावरण में बिखरे**, **जलधाराओं को अवरुद्ध करते**, तथा **लैंडफिल भरते** पाए जाते हैं।

• Hence, solutions must go **beyond recycling**.
• इसलिए, समाधान **रीसाइक्लिंग से परे** देखने की आवश्यकता है।

Cleanup Locations and Littering Trends
सफाई के स्थान और कचरे के रुझान

• THC2024 was conducted across **villages**, **schools**, **tourist spots**, and **protected areas**.
• THC2024 को **गाँवों**, **स्कूलों**, **पर्यटन स्थलों**, और **संरक्षित क्षेत्रों** में आयोजित किया गया।

• **Water bodies and rivers** were the **most littered** tourist sites.
• **जल स्रोत और नदियाँ सबसे अधिक गंदे** पर्यटन स्थल पाए गए।

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Toxic trolling
Online threats of violence cannot be allowed in the name of free speech

A full-scale war between India and Pakistan may have been averted, but the troll army has come out in force to disturb the peace. After India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri announced on May 10 that an understanding had been reached between the two sides to halt all military actions, his personal account on X (formerly Twitter), was flooded with abusive comments which did not spare his daughter. Mr. Misri locked the account, and several diplomats and politicians have condemned the toxic culture in no uncertain terms, pointing out that several red lines had been crossed. Mr. Misri was only doing his job and conveying a decision taken by the political leadership. The Foreign Secretary had been addressing the media since Operation Sindoor began on May 7, in response to the deadly terrorist attack in Pahalgam on April 22, in which 26 people died. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B), which had rightly slammed Pakistan for unleashing "a full-blown disinformation offensive" on social media about the ground reality regarding Operation Sindoor, remained quiet about the vicious trolling of Mr. Misri and the doxing of his daughter. Unfortunately, with the phenomenal rise of social media in India but little Internet literacy, there is a pattern of platforms being regularly used for hate speech, abusive comments, and deliberate distortion of facts.

The public sphere may have become more participatory, but that does not necessarily ensure civil behaviour. Surveys have shown that women, minorities and marginalised communities are particularly targeted by trolls. The extreme reactions often include rape and death threats. With surveillance now the byword for all tech companies, surely it should not take long to locate and end the online run of trolls. A stringent anti-troll law must be put in place to stop the acute mental and physical harassment trolls can cause. The draft Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules, 2025, set to be rolled out this year, prescribe penalties for misuse of personal information. Now, there are only a limited number of provisions under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Information Technology Act to address cyberbullying. The courts have been more proactive by directing quick removal of offending content and also mandating the disclosure of basic subscriber information linked to such accounts. In the Shaviya Sharma case (2024), the Delhi High Court had noted that "there can be no doubt that acts of doxing if permitted to go on unchecked could result in violation of right to privacy". In a democracy, all voices should be heard but disinformation and misinformation must be stopped with the help of guidelines and the law.

Toxic Trolling: On India-Pakistan Conflict, Troll Army
ज़हरीली ट्रोलिंग: भारत-पाकिस्तान संघर्ष और ट्रोल आर्मी पर

• A full-scale war between India and Pakistan may have been avoided, but troll armies have emerged online to disturb the peace.
• भारत और पाकिस्तान के बीच पूर्ण युद्ध टल गया हो सकता है, लेकिन ट्रोल आर्मी ने शांति भंग करने के लिए ऑनलाइन हमला बोल दिया है।

• After Foreign Secretary **Vikram Misri** announced on **May 10** that both nations had agreed to halt all military actions, his personal account on **X (formerly Twitter)** was flooded with **abusive comments**.
• विदेश सचिव **विक्रम मिस्री** द्वारा **10 मई** को यह घोषणा किए जाने के बाद कि दोनों देशों ने सभी सैन्य कार्रवाइयों को रोकने पर सहमति जताई है, उनके **X (पूर्व में ट्विटर)** अकाउंट पर **अपमानजनक टिप्पणियों** की बाढ़ आ गई।

• These abuses did not even spare his **daughter**, prompting Mr. Misri to **lock his account**.
• ये **गालियाँ** उनकी **बेटी** को भी नहीं छोड़ीं, जिससे **मिस्री ने अपना अकाउंट लॉक कर दिया।**

• Several **diplomats and politicians** strongly condemned this **toxic culture**, stating that many **red lines** had been crossed.
• कई **राजनयिकों और राजनेताओं** ने इस **ज़हरीली संस्कृति** की कड़ी निंदा की और कहा कि कई **लाल रेखाएँ** पार की जा चुकी हैं।

• Mr. Misri was merely doing his job by conveying a **political decision**.
• मिस्री केवल एक **राजनीतिक निर्णय** को सार्वजनिक कर रहे थे, जो उनका **कर्तव्य** था।

• He had been briefing the media since **Operation Sindoor** started on **May 7**, in response to the **April 22 terrorist attack in Pahalgam** that killed **26 people**.

• वह **7 मई** से मीडिया को **ऑपरेशन सिंदूर** के बारे में जानकारी दे रहे थे, जो कि **22 अप्रैल को पहलगाम में हुए आतंकी हमले** (जिसमें **26 लोग मारे गए**) के जवाब में शुरू हुआ था।

• The Ministry of **Information and Broadcasting (I&B)** condemned **Pakistan's disinformation offensive**, but remained **silent** on the **vicious trolling and doxing** of Mr. Misri and his daughter.
• **सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्रालय (I&B)** ने **पाकिस्तान के दुष्प्रचार अभियान** की निंदा की, लेकिन **मिस्री और उनकी बेटी के खिलाफ हुई ट्रोलिंग और डॉक्सिंग** पर **चुप** रहा।

• The rise of **social media** in India without adequate **internet literacy** has led to a pattern of **hate speech**, **abuse**, and **distortion of facts** online.
• भारत में **सोशल मीडिया** के तेज़ी से बढ़ने और **इंटरनेट साक्षरता** की कमी के कारण, **हेट स्पीच**, **गाली-गलौज**, और **तथ्यों के विकृत प्रस्तुतिकरण** की प्रवृत्ति बन गई है।

Trolling and Public Sphere
ट्रोलिंग और सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र

• While the **public sphere** has become more **participatory**, it has not led to more **civil behaviour**.
• **सार्वजनिक मंच** अधिक **भागीदारीपूर्ण** तो हुआ है, लेकिन इससे **सभ्य व्यवहार** नहीं बढ़ा है।

• Surveys show that **women**, **minorities**, and **marginalised communities** are especially targeted by **trolls**.
• सर्वेक्षणों में पाया गया है कि **महिलाएं**, **अल्पसंख्यक**, और **वंचित समुदाय** विशेष रूप से **ट्रोल्स** के निशाने पर रहते हैं।

• The attacks often include **rape threats** and **death threats**, causing **severe trauma**.
• हमलों में अक्सर **बलात्कार की धमकियाँ** और **हत्या की धमकियाँ** शामिल होती हैं, जिससे **गंभीर मानसिक आघात** होता है।

• With the current era of **surveillance by tech companies**, identifying **online trolls** should not be difficult.
• आज के समय में जब **टेक कंपनियों द्वारा निगरानी** की जा रही है, तो **ऑनलाइन ट्रोल्स** की पहचान करना मुश्किल नहीं होना चाहिए।

• There is a need for a **strict anti-troll law** to curb the **mental and physical harassment** caused by such activities.
• ऐसी गतिविधियों से होने वाले **मानसिक और शारीरिक उत्पीड़न** को रोकने के लिए एक **कठोर एंटी-ट्रोल कानून** की आवश्यकता है।

Legal and Institutional Responses
कानूनी और संस्थागत प्रतिक्रियाएँ

• The **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules, 2025** aim to penalise **misuse of personal information**.

• डिजिटल पर्सनल डेटा प्रोटेक्शन (DPDP) नियम, 2025 का उद्देश्य **व्यक्तिगत जानकारी के दुरुपयोग** पर **दंड** देना है।

• Currently, only a few provisions under the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita** and the **Information Technology Act** deal with **cyberbullying**.

• वर्तमान में, केवल कुछ ही प्रावधान **भारतीय न्याय संहिता** और **सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी अधिनियम** के तहत **साइबरबुलिंग** से संबंधित हैं।

• Courts have become more **proactive**, ordering **swift removal** of offending content and mandating **disclosure of subscriber details**.

• न्यायालय अब अधिक **सक्रिय** हो गए हैं और **आपत्तिजनक सामग्री को त्वरित हटाने** तथा संबंधित **खातों की जानकारी** साझा करने का आदेश दे रहे हैं।

• In the **Shaviya Sharma case (2024)**, the **Delhi High Court** stated that **unchecked doxing** can **violate the right to privacy**.

• **शविया शर्मा मामले (2024)** में, **दिल्ली उच्च न्यायालय** ने कहा कि **डॉक्सिंग** को यदि रोका न जाए, तो यह **गोपनीयता के अधिकार** का उल्लंघन कर सकता है।

• In a **democracy**, all voices must be heard, but **disinformation** and **misinformation** should be curbed through proper **laws and guidelines**.

• एक **लोकतंत्र** में सभी आवाज़ों को सुना जाना चाहिए, लेकिन **भ्रामक जानकारी** और **झूठी सूचनाओं** को उचित **कानूनों और दिशानिर्देशों** के माध्यम से रोका जाना चाहिए।

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India's rising e-waste, the need to recast its management

India's journey toward Viksit Bharat is being powered by a rapid digital transformation, with an increasing reliance on electronic devices. From smartphones and laptops to advanced industrial and medical equipment, technology has become the backbone of economic growth, connectivity and innovation. However, this growing dependence on electronic devices has a by-product – electronic waste (e-waste) – which must be managed effectively to ensure sustainable progress. Ranking among the world's top e-waste generators (China, the United States, Japan, and Germany) India confronts a formidable challenge of managing e-waste. India's e-waste volumes soared by 151.03% in six years, from 7,08,445 metric tonnes in 2017-18 to 17,78,400 metric tonnes in 2023-24, with an annual increase of 1,69,283 metric tonnes.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) mandates producers, importers and brand owners to manage waste from their products' end-of-life. It holds them accountable for environmental impacts throughout the product lifecycle, promotes sustainable design, integrates environmental costs into pricing, and supports efficient waste management, reducing the burden on municipalities.

Impact of improper e-waste management

The consequences of improper e-waste management extend beyond environmental degradation. India loses more than $10 billion annually due to water pollution from the disposal of cyanide and sulphuric acid solutions, air pollution caused by lead fumes, open coal burning, and plastic incineration, and soil pollution. Beyond the environmental impact, improper e-waste recycling causes a social loss of over $20 billion annually, as most of the hazardous processing is conducted by informal, illegal recyclers (women and children comprise the majority workforce). Tragically, their average lifespan is less than 27 years due to prolonged exposure to toxic substances. Additionally, India forfeits over ₹80,000 crore annually in lost critical metal value due to rudimentary

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A focus on floor price will help transform e-waste recycling and its management in India

extraction methods in informal recycling. In addition, at least $20 billion in annual tax revenue is lost as informal recycling is largely cash-based and unaccounted for.

Importance of stable pricing

The E-waste (Management) Rules, 2022 introduced a floor price for EPR certificates, a game-changer for India's e-waste management. This provision ensures fair returns for registered recyclers, curbing informal, hazardous recycling (practices that dominate 95% of the sector). Without a strong floor price, India may miss the chance to lead in sustainable waste management. Stable pricing incentivises formal recyclers to adopt safe, advanced technologies, unlocking e-waste's valuable materials such as gold and copper. It prevents chaos seen in sectors such as plastic waste and drives investment in infrastructure, turning e-waste into a resource and supporting a circular economy.

This economic pivot carries profound environmental benefits. Fair compensation motivates recyclers to prioritise material recovery over disposal, shrinking landfill burdens and halting the seepage of toxins such as lead and mercury into soil and waterways. It recasts e-waste as an asset rather than as a liability, redefining India's waste narrative toward sustainability. Globally, EPR fees paid by original equipment manufacturers are significantly higher than the floor EPR prices fixed by the Government of India, in alignment with global best practices. The minor impact of floor EPR prices on product costs is outweighed by the significant environmental and social benefits of formal recycling and sustainable practices.

An effective floor price levels the playing field by offsetting the informal sector's cost advantage. It makes formal recycling viable, reduces waste leakage, and ensures more responsible processing. This not only corrects market imbalances but also drives compliance, helping producers meet EPR targets through certified recyclers. When recyclers are adequately paid, they can expand operations, deliver verifiable

outcomes, and reduce producers' incentives to bypass obligations. In a country where only 10% of e-waste reaches formal recycling, this stability is a game-changer. Without it, certificate prices could collapse, starving recyclers of funds and exposing producers to unpredictable costs, destabilising EPR markets. A predictable pricing framework fosters trust, ensuring the system doesn't erode into a free-for-all.

Critics argue that a floor price hikes producer costs, potentially raising consumer prices. This concern, while valid, misses the broader calculus. The cost of inaction – environmental ruin, health crises and lost resources – dwarfs the modest burden of fair pricing. Producers can offset expenses by innovating durable, recyclable designs, which is a core EPR goal. The plastic industry's misstep with low prices, which spawned sham recyclers and eroded trust, underscores the peril of under-pricing. Far from stifling progress, a floor price could surge innovation, rewarding efficiency and technological breakthroughs. India's e-waste crisis demands audacious solutions, aligning with economic and ecological imperatives.

Need for a recycling vision

The stakes of EPR floor pricing transcend financial concerns. Inadequate pricing imperils more than profits. It endangers rivers with pollution, soils and agriculture produce with harmful ingredients, damages communities with toxic exposure, and squanders valuable potential. By valuing recycling efforts, India can formalise its e-waste sector, spur advanced infrastructure, and champion resource efficiency, ensuring responsible practices.

As India vies for sustainability leadership, this floor price is the bedrock of its recycling vision – a bold move to transform e-waste into opportunity, setting a global standard. The numbers demand action: a 73% e-waste surge in five years is a clarion call. With an adequate floor price, economic vitality and environmental care can coexist, securing the future with sustainability.

India's Rising E-Waste, the Need to Recast Its Management
भारत में बढ़ता ई-कचरा और इसके प्रबंधन को पुनः ढालने की आवश्यकता

• **Digital Transformation and E-Waste Growth**

• **डिजिटल परिवर्तन और ई-कचरे की वृद्धि**

• India's journey toward **Viksit Bharat** is powered by a rapid **digital transformation** with increasing use of **electronic devices**.

• **विकसित भारत** की दिशा में भारत की यात्रा तेज़ **डिजिटल परिवर्तन** और **इलेक्ट्रॉनिक उपकरणों** के बढ़ते उपयोग से संचालित हो रही है।

• Devices like **smartphones, laptops**, and **industrial and medical equipment** have become essential to **economic growth, connectivity, and innovation**.

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• **स्मार्टफोन, लैपटॉप** और **औद्योगिक व चिकित्सा उपकरणों** जैसे उपकरण **आर्थिक वृद्धि, कनेक्टिविटी और नवाचार** के लिए आवश्यक बन गए हैं।

• This growing reliance has led to a surge in **electronic waste (e-waste)**, which must be managed for **sustainable development**.

• इस बढ़ती निर्भरता के कारण **इलेक्ट्रॉनिक कचरे (ई-कचरे)** में वृद्धि हुई है, जिसे **सतत विकास** के लिए सही ढंग से प्रबंधित करना आवश्यक है।

• India is among the world's **top e-waste generators** along with **China, the United States, Japan, and Germany**.

• भारत दुनिया के **शीर्ष ई-कचरा उत्पादकों** में शामिल है, जिसमें **चीन, अमेरिका, जापान और जर्मनी** जैसे देश भी शामिल हैं।

• **E-waste volume** in India increased by **151.03%** in six years – from **7,08,445 metric tonnes (2017–18)** to **17,78,400 metric tonnes (2023–24)**, with an annual rise of **1,69,283 metric tonnes**.

• भारत में **ई-कचरे की मात्रा** छह वर्षों में **151.03%** बढ़ी – **7,08,445 मीट्रिक टन (2017–18)** से **17,78,400 मीट्रिक टन (2023–24)** तक, जिसमें हर साल **1,69,283 मीट्रिक टन** की वृद्धि हुई।

• Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

• विस्तारित उत्पादक ज़िम्मेदारी (EPR)

• **EPR** mandates **producers, importers, and brand owners** to manage waste generated at the **end-of-life** of their products.

• **EPR** के तहत **उत्पादकों, आयातकों और ब्रांड मालिकों** को अपने उत्पादों के **आखिरी चरण** में उत्पन्न कचरे का प्रबंधन करना अनिवार्य है।

• It holds them **accountable** for environmental impacts during the product's lifecycle.

• यह उन्हें उत्पाद के पूरे जीवनचक्र में **पर्यावरणीय प्रभावों** के लिए **उत्तरदायी** बनाता है।

• EPR promotes **sustainable product design**, integrates **environmental costs** into pricing, and supports **efficient waste management**.

• EPR **सतत उत्पाद डिज़ाइन** को बढ़ावा देता है, मूल्य निर्धारण में **पर्यावरणीय लागतों** को शामिल करता है और **प्रभावी कचरा प्रबंधन** को सहयोग देता है।

• This reduces the burden on **municipalities**.

• इससे **नगरपालिकाओं** पर बोझ कम होता है।

• Impact of Improper E-Waste Management

• अनुचित ई-कचरा प्रबंधन का प्रभाव

• Improper e-waste management causes more than **$10 billion** in annual **environmental**

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damage due to:

• अनुचित ई-कचरा प्रबंधन के कारण हर साल **$10 अरब** से अधिक की **पर्यावरणीय क्षति** होती है, जैसे:

- Water pollution from **cyanide and sulphuric acid solutions**

- **सायनाइड और सल्फ्यूरिक एसिड** के घोलों से जल प्रदूषण

- Air pollution from **lead fumes** and **plastic incineration**

- **सीसे की धुएं** और **प्लास्टिक जलाने** से वायु प्रदूषण

- Soil degradation from toxic chemicals

- विषैले रसायनों से भूमि की हानि

• Beyond environmental loss, the **social cost** of poor recycling exceeds **$20 billion annually**.

• पर्यावरणीय क्षति के अतिरिक्त, गलत पुनर्चक्रण से होने वाली **सामाजिक हानि** हर साल **$20 अरब** से अधिक होती है।

• Most e-waste is processed by the **informal sector**, involving **women and children**, leading to severe **health risks**.

• अधिकांश ई-कचरा **अनौपचारिक क्षेत्र** द्वारा पुनर्चक्रित किया जाता है, जिसमें **महिलाएं और बच्चे** शामिल होते हैं, जिससे गंभीर **स्वास्थ्य जोखिम** उत्पन्न होते हैं।

• Their average lifespan is **less than 27 years** due to continuous exposure to **toxic substances**.

• इन लोगों की औसत आयु **27 वर्षों से कम** होती है क्योंकि ये लगातार **विषैले पदार्थों** के संपर्क में रहते हैं।

• India loses over **₹80,000 crore** annually due to loss of **critical metals** from **primitive extraction** in informal recycling.

• भारत को हर साल **₹80,000 करोड़** से अधिक का नुकसान होता है क्योंकि **महत्वपूर्ण धातुएं** अनौपचारिक पुनर्चक्रण में **कच्चे तरीकों** से निकाली जाती हैं।

• Additionally, at least **$20 billion** in **tax revenue** is lost every year since informal recycling is mostly **cash-based and unaccounted**.

• साथ ही, हर साल कम से कम **$20 अरब** की **कर राजस्व हानि** होती है क्योंकि अनौपचारिक पुनर्चक्रण मुख्यतः **नकद आधारित और अपंजीकृत** होता है।

Importance of Stable Pricing
स्थिर मूल्य निर्धारण का महत्व

• The **E-waste (Management) Rules, 2022** introduced a **floor price** for **EPR certificates**, which is a **game-changer** for India's e-waste management system.
 • **ई-वेस्ट (प्रबंधन) नियम, 2022** ने ईपीआर प्रमाणपत्रों के लिए **न्यूनतम मूल्य** की शुरुआत की, जो भारत के ई-वेस्ट प्रबंधन के लिए एक **परिवर्तनकारी कदम** है।

• This provision ensures **fair returns** for **registered recyclers**, helping curb **informal and hazardous recycling**, which currently dominates **95%** of the sector.
 • यह प्रावधान **पंजीकृत पुनर्चक्रकों** को **उचित लाभ** सुनिश्चित करता है और **असंगठित और खतरनाक पुनर्चक्रण** को नियंत्रित करने में मदद करता है, जो वर्तमान में इस क्षेत्र के **95%** हिस्से पर हावी है।

• Without a strong **floor price**, India could lose the opportunity to lead in **sustainable waste management**.
 • एक मजबूत **न्यूनतम मूल्य** के बिना, भारत **सतत अपशिष्ट प्रबंधन** में अग्रणी बनने का अवसर खो सकता है।

• Stable pricing encourages formal recyclers to adopt **safe and advanced technologies**, unlocking **valuable materials** like **gold** and **copper** from e-waste.
 • स्थिर मूल्य निर्धारण औपचारिक पुनर्चक्रकों को **सुरक्षित और उन्नत तकनीकों** को अपनाने के लिए प्रोत्साहित करता है, जिससे ई-वेस्ट से **सोना** और **तांबा** जैसे **मूल्यवान तत्वों** की प्राप्ति संभव होती है।

• It helps avoid the chaos seen in sectors like **plastic waste**, drives investment in infrastructure, and supports a **circular economy**.
 • यह **प्लास्टिक अपशिष्ट** जैसे क्षेत्रों में देखे गए अव्यवस्था से बचाता है, अवसंरचना में निवेश को बढ़ाता है और **परिपथीय अर्थव्यवस्था** को प्रोत्साहित करता है।

• The policy shift brings **significant environmental benefits**, as recyclers are fairly paid and thus focus on **material recovery** rather than disposal.
 • यह नीतिगत बदलाव **महत्वपूर्ण पर्यावरणीय लाभ** लाता है क्योंकि पुनर्चक्रकों को **उचित भुगतान** मिलने से वे निपटान की जगह **सामग्री पुनर्प्राप्ति** पर ध्यान केंद्रित करते हैं।

• This reduces **landfill burden** and prevents toxins like **lead** and **mercury** from contaminating **soil and water**.
 • इससे **लैंडफिल का बोझ** कम होता है और **सीसा** तथा **पारा** जैसे **विषाक्त पदार्थों** के **मिट्टी और जल** में मिलने से रोका जा सकता है।

• It transforms e-waste from a **liability** to an **asset**, redefining India's waste management narrative.
• यह ई-वेस्ट को एक **बोझ** से एक **संपत्ति** में बदल देता है और भारत की अपशिष्ट प्रबंधन की सोच को नया रूप देता है।

• Globally, **EPR fees** paid by **original equipment manufacturers (OEMs)** are **much higher** than the **floor prices** fixed in India, aligning with **global best practices**.
• वैश्विक स्तर पर, **मूल उपकरण निर्माताओं (OEMs)** द्वारा दी जाने वाली **ईपीआर शुल्क** भारत में तय **न्यूनतम मूल्यों** से **काफी अधिक** है, जो **वैश्विक सर्वोत्तम प्रथाओं** के अनुरूप है।

• The **minor impact** of floor prices on product costs is outweighed by the **large-scale environmental and social benefits**.
• उत्पाद लागत पर **न्यूनतम प्रभाव** की तुलना में **पर्यावरणीय और सामाजिक लाभ** कहीं अधिक महत्वपूर्ण हैं।

• A strong floor price offsets the **cost advantage** of the **informal sector**, making formal recycling **economically viable**.
• एक मजबूत न्यूनतम मूल्य **असंगठित क्षेत्र** के **लागत लाभ** को संतुलित करता है और औपचारिक पुनर्चक्रण को **आर्थिक रूप से व्यवहार्य** बनाता है।

• It helps in reducing **waste leakage** and ensures more **responsible processing**.
• यह **अपशिष्ट रिसाव** को कम करता है और अधिक **जवाबदेह प्रक्रिया** सुनिश्चित करता है।

• A fair price improves **compliance**, encouraging producers to meet **EPR targets** through certified recyclers.
• उचित मूल्य **अनुपालन** को बेहतर बनाता है और उत्पादकों को **प्रमाणित पुनर्चक्रकों** के माध्यम से **ईपीआर लक्ष्य** प्राप्त करने के लिए प्रेरित करता है।

• When recyclers are paid adequately, they can **expand operations**, offer **verifiable results**, and discourage producers from **bypassing responsibilities**.
• जब पुनर्चक्रकों को **पर्याप्त भुगतान** मिलता है, तो वे **संचालन का विस्तार**, **सत्यापन योग्य परिणाम** प्रदान कर सकते हैं और उत्पादकों को **जिम्मेदारी से बचने** से रोक सकते हैं।

• In a country where only **10%** of e-waste reaches formal recycling, such stability is **crucial**.
• एक ऐसा देश जहाँ केवल **10%** ई-वेस्ट ही औपचारिक पुनर्चक्रण तक पहुँचता है, वहाँ ऐसी **स्थिरता अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण** है।

• Without it, **certificate prices** may crash, depriving recyclers of funds and making costs unpredictable for producers.
• इसके बिना, **प्रमाणपत्रों की कीमतें** गिर सकती हैं, जिससे पुनर्चक्रकों को धन की कमी हो सकती है और उत्पादकों के लिए लागत **अनिश्चित** हो सकती है।

• A **predictable pricing framework** builds **trust** and prevents the system from becoming **chaotic**.

 • एक **पूर्वानुमान योग्य मूल्य ढांचा विश्वास** को बढ़ाता है और प्रणाली को **अव्यवस्थित** होने से रोकता है।

• Critics argue that floor prices could raise **producer costs** and lead to **higher consumer prices**.

 • आलोचक तर्क देते हैं कि न्यूनतम मूल्य से **उत्पादकों की लागत** बढ़ सकती है और इससे **उपभोक्ताओं की कीमतें** भी बढ़ सकती हैं।

• While valid, this concern ignores the **greater costs of inaction** — including **environmental damage**, **health crises**, and **resource loss**.

 • यह चिंता उचित होने के बावजूद **निष्क्रियता की बड़ी लागतों** — जैसे कि **पर्यावरणीय नुकसान**, **स्वास्थ्य संकट**, और **संसाधनों की बर्बादी** — को नज़रअंदाज़ करती है।

• Producers can offset costs by **innovating durable and recyclable products**, which is a key goal of **EPR**.

 • उत्पादक **टिकाऊ और पुनर्नवीनीकरण योग्य उत्पादों** में नवाचार करके लागत को संतुलित कर सकते हैं, जो **ईपीआर का मुख्य उद्देश्य** है।

• The failure in **plastic waste sector** due to low prices, emergence of **sham recyclers**, and **loss of public trust** highlights the **risk of under-pricing**.

 • **प्लास्टिक अपशिष्ट क्षेत्र** में कम कीमतों के कारण **नकली पुनर्चक्रकों** का उदय और **जन विश्वास की हानि** ने **कम मूल्य निर्धारण के खतरे** को उजागर किया है।

• A proper floor price can actually fuel **innovation**, reward **efficiency**, and promote **technological advancement**.

 • एक उपयुक्त न्यूनतम मूल्य **नवाचार**, **प्रभावशीलता** को बढ़ावा दे सकता है और **तकनीकी प्रगति** को प्रेरित कर सकता है।

• India's e-waste crisis needs **bold solutions** that align with both **economic growth** and **ecological responsibility**.

 • भारत की ई-वेस्ट समस्या के लिए ऐसे **साहसी समाधान** चाहिए जो **आर्थिक विकास** और **पर्यावरणीय उत्तरदायित्व** दोनों के अनुरूप हों।

Need for a Recycling Vision
पुनर्चक्रण दृष्टिकोण की आवश्यकता

• The impact of **floor pricing** goes beyond economics — it's about preventing **pollution in rivers**, protecting **soil and crops**, and saving **communities** from **toxic exposure**.

• **न्यूनतम मूल्य निर्धारण** का प्रभाव केवल आर्थिक नहीं है — यह **नदियों में प्रदूषण रोकने, मिट्टी और फसलों की सुरक्षा**, और **समुदायों को विषैले प्रभाव** से बचाने का विषय है।

• By valuing **recycling efforts**, India can **formalise the e-waste sector**, build **advanced infrastructure**, and lead in **resource efficiency**.

• **पुनर्चक्रण प्रयासों** को महत्व देकर भारत **ई-वेस्ट क्षेत्र का औपचारिकीकरण**, **उन्नत अवसंरचना** का निर्माण और **संसाधन दक्षता** में नेतृत्व कर सकता है।

• The **floor price** is the **foundation** of India's **recycling vision**, turning e-waste into **opportunity** and setting a **global benchmark**.

• **न्यूनतम मूल्य** भारत के **पुनर्चक्रण दृष्टिकोण की नींव** है, जो ई-वेस्ट को **अवसर** में बदलता है और **वैश्विक मानक** स्थापित करता है।

• A **73% surge in e-waste in five years** is a **wake-up call** for urgent action.

• **पांच वर्षों में ई-वेस्ट में 73% की वृद्धि** एक **चेतावनी** है जो तत्काल कार्रवाई की मांग करती है।

• With a proper floor price, **economic vitality** and **environmental sustainability** can go hand-in-hand, securing India's future.

• एक उपयुक्त न्यूनतम मूल्य के साथ, **आर्थिक प्रगति** और **पर्यावरणीय स्थिरता** एक साथ आगे बढ़ सकती हैं, जिससे भारत का भविष्य सुरक्षित रहेगा।

When water standards don't hold water

How much water should a person receive each day? In India, this question is not answered by science or necessity, but by an arbitrary metric – the per capita water supply standard, prescribed in litres per capita per day (lpcd). While the human right to water guarantees access to safe and clean water, and obligates governments to provide basic services, in practice this right is shaped by the per capita standard. This benchmark not only dictates how much water citizens are entitled to demand for their daily needs, but also drives planning and investments in urban water infrastructure, from dams to household taps. Yet, despite its widespread use by municipal authorities across India, it lacks empirical grounding, objective rationale, and validity, making it a policy instrument built more on convenience than evidence.

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Defining per capita standard

The per capita standard, combined with population figures, is used to compute the domestic water demand of a city. It serves as a reference point to assess the adequacy, 'water shortages', and 'over consumption'. The per capita standard is also used to assess future investments required for developing and maintaining water supply services. In addition, water demand computed using this standard determines how much water is to be diverted from rural to urban areas – and the scale of its negative consequences. Mumbai, for instance, justifies the development of upcoming dams using the per capita standard of 240 lpcd for domestic use alone, excluding losses.

The per capita standards are prescribed by multiple agencies, including the Bureau of Indian Standards and the Central Public Health and Environmental Engineering Organization (CPHEEO), a technical wing of the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA). Additionally, cities such as

Despite its widespread use by municipal authorities across India, the per capita water supply standard lacks empirical grounding, objective rationale, and validity

Mumbai and Delhi follow their own standards. Evidence suggests that these standards are not based on extensive consumer surveys or empirical data on water consumption. Studies show that the per capita water demand varies based on socio-economic status, climate, geography, and culture. Yet, a single value is often prescribed for the entire country despite its vast geographical expanse and climatic variations.

For example, CPHEEO prescribes 150 lpcd for megacities and 135 lpcd for all other cities with existing or planned sewerage systems without providing any rationale to substantiate these numbers. Similarly, the standard of 55 lpcd prescribed under the Jal Jeevan Mission for all rural drinking water supply schemes lacks any empirical rationale. The same standard was set under the National Rural Drinking Water Programme (2013) for designing rural piped water supply. However, it only aimed to provide individual tap connections to at least 30% of households – far from universal coverage. Later, the Swachh Bharat Mission pushed for universal access to individual household toilets, significantly increasing per capita water consumption. Yet, while promising a functional tap connection for every household under JJM, the earlier standard of 55 lpcd was retained.

While designing urban water supply schemes, cities often follow the per capita standards prescribed by the project financing agency. The per capita standard influences the overall cost of the scheme. Since water supply schemes are capital-intensive, the majority of cities depend on central government assistance (through AMRUT and the Smart Cities Mission) for their construction. As CPHEEO provides a technical sanction to these schemes only if the design adheres to prescribed standards, engineers and consultants follow CPHEEO standards unquestioningly to ensure a smooth approval process, regardless of the actual water requirements. CPHEEO standards have therefore become the de facto norm in urban water supply.

Cities conveniently apply multiple per capita standards simultaneously, regardless of actual water requirements. For instance, in 2012, while preparing the detailed project report for the Gargai Dam, Mumbai adopted a standard of 150 lpcd – deviating from the 240 lpcd used for other projects – just to meet CPHEEO requirements and secure Central government funding.

No monitoring

The prescribed standards are not monitored during service delivery to ensure water supply according to the design standards at the doorstep of all citizens. To ensure water delivery as per the standard, the consumer connections need to be metered, and the installation of bulk water meters in the distribution network is a prerequisite to measure water flows. However, very few cities have connections with functional meters. In many cities, supply zones are not isolated, and bulk water meters are not installed. Therefore, it is not feasible to trace how much water is flowing where in the city.

Although the service level benchmarks used by MoHUA to assess the performance of municipal water supply include per capita supply as a parameter, it is measured at the city level and, therefore, fails to indicate whether water is delivered to citizens according to the standard. As a result, the per capita standard of water supply, a useful metric for planners (to allocate financial resources) and engineers (to design infrastructure), remains a fictitious number for citizens when it comes to actual service delivery. Systematic efforts are needed to establish evidence-based per capita standards and ensure equitable water delivery so that every citizen receives their rightful share.

When Water Standards Don't Hold Water

जब जल मानक अपनी गुणवत्ता नहीं रखते

• Arbitrary Water Supply Standard in India

• भारत में जल आपूर्ति मानक मनमाना है

• In India, the **per capita water supply standard** (in **litres per capita per day - lpcd**) is not based on science or need but is an **arbitrary metric**.

• भारत में **प्रति व्यक्ति जल आपूर्ति मानक** (प्रति व्यक्ति प्रतिदिन लीटर - lpcd) विज्ञान या आवश्यकता पर आधारित नहीं है, बल्कि एक **मनमाना मापदंड** है।

• The **human right to water** ensures access to **safe and clean water**, and mandates the government to provide services, but this right is shaped by the per capita standard.

• **जल का मानवाधिकार सुरक्षित और स्वच्छ जल** तक पहुंच सुनिश्चित करता है और सरकार को सेवा प्रदान करने के लिए बाध्य करता है, लेकिन यह अधिकार **प्रति व्यक्ति मानक** द्वारा आकार लेता है।

• This standard dictates how much water citizens are **entitled** to and guides **urban planning and infrastructure investment**.

• यह मानक तय करता है कि नागरिकों को कितना जल **मिलना चाहिए** और यह **शहरी योजना और बुनियादी ढांचे में निवेश** को निर्देशित करता है।

• However, the standard lacks **empirical evidence**, **objective rationale**, and **scientific validity**.

• हालांकि, इस मानक में **प्रायोगिक साक्ष्य**, **तर्कसंगत आधार** और **वैज्ञानिक वैधता** का अभाव है।

• Role of the Per Capita Standard in Urban Planning

• शहरी योजना में प्रति व्यक्ति मानक की भूमिका

• The standard, combined with **population data**, is used to estimate a city's **domestic water demand**.

• यह मानक, **जनसंख्या आंकड़ों** के साथ मिलकर, किसी शहर की **घरेलू जल मांग** का आकलन करने के लिए उपयोग होता है।

• It influences decisions on **water shortages**, **overconsumption**, and **infrastructure investments**.

• यह **जल की कमी**, **अत्यधिक खपत** और **बुनियादी ढांचे में निवेश** से संबंधित निर्णयों को प्रभावित करता है।

• It also impacts **water diversion** from **rural to urban areas**, causing **negative effects**.

• यह **ग्रामीण से शहरी क्षेत्रों** में **जल स्थानांतरण** को भी प्रभावित करता है, जिससे **नकारात्मक प्रभाव** उत्पन्न होते हैं।

• For example, Mumbai uses **240 lpcd** to justify building new dams — excluding **water losses**.
• उदाहरण के लिए, मुंबई **240 lpcd** का उपयोग **नई बांध परियोजनाओं** को उचित ठहराने के लिए करता है — जिसमें **जल हानि** शामिल नहीं होती।

• Lack of Uniformity and Scientific Basis
• एकरूपता और वैज्ञानिक आधार का अभाव

• Multiple agencies like **Bureau of Indian Standards** and **CPHEEO** prescribe standards, but these lack **empirical surveys**.
• **भारतीय मानक ब्यूरो** और **CPHEEO** जैसी कई एजेंसियाँ मानक तय करती हैं, लेकिन इनका **प्रायोगिक सर्वेक्षण** के साथ कोई आधार नहीं होता।

• **CPHEEO** suggests **150 lpcd** for megacities and **135 lpcd** for others, but provides **no rationale**.
• **CPHEEO** मेगासिटी के लिए **150 lpcd** और अन्य शहरों के लिए **135 lpcd** का सुझाव देता है, लेकिन इसके पीछे **कोई तर्क** नहीं देता।

• The **Jal Jeevan Mission** prescribes **55 lpcd** for rural areas, without data justification.
• **जल जीवन मिशन** ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों के लिए **55 lpcd** तय करता है, लेकिन इसके पीछे **कोई डेटा आधारित तर्क** नहीं होता।

• Earlier under **NRDWP (2013)**, this standard was used for 30% **household tap coverage** only.
• पहले **राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण पेयजल कार्यक्रम (2013)** के तहत यह मानक केवल **30% घरों में नल कनेक्शन** देने के लिए तय किया गया था।

• Later, **Swachh Bharat Mission** expanded household water needs, but the **55 lpcd** figure remained unchanged.
• बाद में, **स्वच्छ भारत मिशन** ने घरों की जल आवश्यकताओं को बढ़ा दिया, लेकिन **55 lpcd** मानक को **बदलाव नहीं किया गया**।

• Influence of Financing Agencies
• वित्त पोषक एजेंसियों का प्रभाव

• Cities often adopt the per capita standard prescribed by the **financing agency**.
• शहर अक्सर **वित्त पोषक एजेंसियों** द्वारा निर्धारित प्रति व्यक्ति मानक को अपनाते हैं।

• Since CPHEEO gives **technical sanctions** only if norms are followed, cities adopt them without question.

• क्योंकि **CPHEEO** केवल तभी **तकनीकी मंजूरी** देता है जब मानक पालन हो, इसलिए शहर इन्हें **बिना सवाल उठाए** अपनाते हैं।

• As a result, CPHEEO standards become the **default norm** for most urban water supply projects.
• परिणामस्वरूप, **CPHEEO मानक** अधिकांश शहरी जल आपूर्ति परियोजनाओं के लिए **मूल मानक** बन जाते हैं।

• In Mumbai, the **Gargai Dam** project used **150 lpcd** instead of **240 lpcd** to comply with CPHEEO and get funding.
• मुंबई में **गर्गाई बांध परियोजना** ने **CPHEEO मानदंडों** का पालन करने और **वित्त प्राप्त करने** के लिए **150 lpcd** का उपयोग किया, जबकि अन्य परियोजनाओं में **240 lpcd** था।

• Absence of Monitoring and Ground-Level Reality
• निगरानी की कमी और जमीनी वास्तविकता

• There is **no monitoring** to ensure that water is supplied according to the prescribed standards at the **consumer level**.
• **उपभोक्ता स्तर** पर निर्धारित मानकों के अनुसार जल आपूर्ति सुनिश्चित करने के लिए **कोई निगरानी** नहीं होती।

• Functional **water meters** at consumer connections and **bulk meters** in the network are rarely present.
• उपभोक्ता कनेक्शन पर **कार्यशील जल मीटर** और नेटवर्क में **बड़ी मात्रा में जल मापी यंत्र** शायद ही लगे होते हैं।

• Many cities lack **zonal isolation** and proper **distribution measurement**, making it impossible to track water flow.
• कई शहरों में **क्षेत्रीय पृथक्करण** और **जल वितरण की माप** नहीं होती, जिससे जल प्रवाह का पता लगाना असंभव हो जाता है।

• **MoHUA's benchmarks** include per capita supply, but they are measured at **city-level**, not **household-level**.
• **आवास और शहरी मामलों के मंत्रालय** के मानक **प्रति व्यक्ति आपूर्ति** को शामिल करते हैं, लेकिन यह **शहर स्तर** पर मापी जाती है, **घरों में नहीं**।

• Thus, the **per capita standard** becomes a **planning tool**, not a **service guarantee**.
• इस प्रकार, **प्रति व्यक्ति मानक** एक **योजना उपकरण** बन जाता है, **सेवा की गारंटी** नहीं।

• Need for Evidence-Based Standards and Equitable Supply
• प्रमाण-आधारित मानकों और न्यायसंगत आपूर्ति की आवश्यकता

• **Systematic efforts** are needed to define **evidence-based per capita standards**.

 • **प्रमाण-आधारित प्रति व्यक्ति मानकों** को तय करने के लिए **व्यवस्थित प्रयासों** की आवश्यकता है।

• Policies must ensure **equitable delivery** so that **every citizen** gets their **rightful share** of water.

 • नीतियों को यह सुनिश्चित करना चाहिए कि **हर नागरिक** को जल की **न्यायसंगत आपूर्ति** और उनका **वाजिब हिस्सा** मिले।

How is shipping industry tackling emissions?

What was decided at the 83rd session of the International Maritime Organization's Marine Environment Protection Committee? Was the U.S. a participant in the discussions? How have oil-exporting nations and traditional maritime powerhouses responded to the decision? How has India positioned itself?

GS Paper III: Environment

EXPLAINER

Amitabh Kumar

The story so far:

After a decade of deliberations towards decarbonising the maritime industry, at its 83rd session, the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC-83) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) was faced with the challenge of coming to a consensus on a proposed emissions levy on global shipping. The session's objective was to adopt a Market-Based Measure (MBM) that balanced environmental effectiveness with economic fairness.

What were the proposals?

Five distinct proposals were tabled in the meeting. The first was by the International Chamber of Shipping which advocated for a fixed levy per every tonne of CO₂ emitted. Secondly, China proposed a market-driven approach where ships could trade compliance units and invest in alternative fuels. The European Union suggested a fixed Greenhouse Gas (GHG) levy, managed by an IMO-administered fund while India propositioned a 'bridging mechanism', which would target only under-compliant ships to bear the financial burden, while rewarding those using Zero or Near-Zero (ZNZ) fuels. Finally, Singapore also joined the fray by proposing an enhanced version of India's model, involving a GHG Fuel Standard (GFS) and a tiered system rewarding surplus emission units and requiring the purchase of remedial units for underperformance.

Even before the debate on MBMs could fully unfold in the IMO, geopolitical tensions took centre-stage. The U.S. Trump administration, which had already withdrawn from the Paris Agreement and stripped the agency that responds to disasters from their climate work related responsibilities, did not participate in the IMO deliberations. It warned of "reciprocal measures" if the EU-backed uniform carbon levy were passed.

What was decided?

The MPEC-83 of IMO voted 63 to 16 in favour of accepting Singapore's hybrid model based on India's proposal as the IMO's Net Zero Framework, making international shipping the first global industry to adopt a mandatory emissions levy framework. Having piloted a compromise formula amidst extremely divergent views, both India and Singapore have claimed credit for the successful outcome.

However, the decision of the MEPC-83 is not final yet. Despite the vote, the path to implementation is far from straightforward. The MEPC-83's decision, having approved the Net Zero Framework, now needs to amend Annex VI of the MARPOL convention, which governs air pollution from ships. The amendment will undergo a six-month circulation period among all contracting parties to MARPOL. For final adoption, it requires a two-thirds majority of votes from members present and voting; this means that if all 101 parties participate, at least 67 must support the measure. Even if adopted, the amendment could still be blocked, should one-third of the parties – provided they account for at least 50% of global shipping tonnage – formally object in writing.

Currently, with 63 votes in favour, 16 against, and 22 abstentions, the outcome remains uncertain. The process ahead is critical and could reshape the dynamics of global shipping regulation for decades to come.

What other interests were at play?

The wide range of positions expressed during the MEPC-83 underscores the enduring dominance of national interests in global climate diplomacy. Oil-exporting countries, led by Saudi Arabia, opposed any significant transition to green fuels, prioritising the protection of their fossil fuel markets. In contrast, small island nations and least developed countries advocated for steep carbon levies, seeking to redirect revenues into broader green development initiatives.

Moreover, China, along with other large shipping nations, pushed for minimal levies to preserve competitiveness while focusing on investments in cleaner fuels. Norway and other Scandinavian countries have been seeking recognition for their early and costly efforts in decarbonising shipping, proposing that these efforts be rewarded through surplus credit systems. Brazil has been advocating for a rapid shift to methanol as a primary marine fuel, while several nations, citing a lack of viable green technologies, hoped for delayed implementation.

Even after voting, scepticism still lingered among shipowners in traditional maritime powerhouses like Greece, who question the necessity and feasibility of a green levy altogether. The range of these responses illustrates the immense challenge the IMO faces in crafting a universally acceptable emissions framework.

Why does green shipping matter?

Shipping may seem invisible to most consumers, but it plays an outsized role in global emissions. The sector emits approximately one billion metric tonnes of GHG each year, representing about 2.8% of total global emissions. If ranked as a country, international shipping would be the sixth-largest emitter in the world, between Germany and Japan. Projections indicate that, without corrective action, emissions from shipping could rise by as much as 50 to 250% by 2050. Even though the sector contributes less than road transport emissions, they face heavier regulatory pressure because of their international nature.

Therefore, to align with the 13th UN Sustainable Development Goal as well as the Paris Agreement, the IMO began implementing emissions-reduction measures in 2011, followed by the Initial GHG Strategy in 2018 and the updated IMO GHG Strategy in 2023. It has also included a technical measure such as the Energy Efficiency Design Index in Annex VI of the MARPOL convention; an operational measure, the Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan, for reduction of GHG emissions from ships; and introduced mandatory recording and reporting of fuel oil consumption.

Consistent with the 'Paris agreement temperature goals' it has also adopted 'levels of ambition' and 'guiding principles'. Between 2018 and 2023, it has agreed to fix a target for reducing carbon intensity (CO2 emissions per transport work) by at least 40% by 2030 compared to 2008 levels, and by 70% by 2040, ultimately achieving net-zero by 2050. This is notably more concrete than the International Civil Aviation Organization, which has only pledged a "long-term aspirational goal" of net-zero emissions by 2050 without setting interim targets.

Is it an equitable distribution?

There has been a gradual erosion of the guiding principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities' (CBDR-RC) incorporated in the 2018 initial GHG strategy. The CBDR-RC is a core principle enshrined in climate agreements like UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement. It acknowledges that all nations must address climate change but recognise historical responsibility and unequal capacities. Developed nations, with their longer industrial histories, are expected to bear greater burdens. However, recent IMO proceedings reflect an effort by wealthier nations to shift responsibility onto developing economies, despite stark differences in income and consumption.

How does India benefit?

While the carbon levy and GHG targets set by the IMO may pose short-term challenges for certain sectors of the Indian economy, India is likely to emerge as a long-term beneficiary of the new MBM framework. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the impact of the MBM on India's maritime logistics costs will be modest in the near term – ranging from 4.98 to 7.29% on imports and 5.92 to 8.09% on exports by 2030. By 2050, these figures are projected to rise to about 33 to 35%. However, the actual impact on trade volumes is expected to be minimal.

India currently operates nearly 236 ships over 5,000 gross tonnage, with only 135 involved in international voyages. Since MBMs apply only to international shipping, India's coastal fleet remains unaffected. At present, India spends roughly $400 million per year on fuel for its international fleet. The MBM is projected to increase this by approximately $108 million by 2030 – a manageable rise given the scale of India's maritime economy.

Perhaps the most exciting implication of the MBM framework is the potential for India to become a global hub for clean energy exports. As the world's third-largest importer of fossil fuels, India is now investing heavily in green hydrogen through its National Hydrogen Mission. Industrial giants such as Reliance, Adani, and JSW are planning to scale up production, while three Indian ports are preparing to offer green hydrogen bunkering services.

Under the mission's guidelines, Indian green hydrogen must meet a well-to-wake greenhouse gas fuel intensity of no more than 2 kg CO₂e per kilogram of hydrogen, translating to about 16.7 grams of CO₂ equivalent per megajoule. This standard positions Indian hydrogen well within the IMO's reward thresholds, which are capped at 19.0 g CO₂e/MJ until 2034 and 14.0 g CO₂e/MJ thereafter. This alignment creates a significant opportunity for India to export green fuels globally and capitalise on international incentives.

Global shipping now stands at a transformative moment. Despite persistent disagreements and uncertain implementation pathways, the adoption of a MBM by the IMO represents a milestone in the journey toward decarbonisation. If successful, this framework could make shipping the first truly global sector to operate under binding climate goals, setting a powerful precedent for others to follow.

Amitabh Kumar, a retired IRS officer, is former Director General of Shipping, Government of India. Views expressed are personal.

Heavily polluting: A container ship approaches the port of Santos in Brazil, on April 1. AP

THE GIST

▼ At its 83rd session, the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC-83) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) was faced with the challenge of coming to a consensus on a proposed emissions levy on global shipping.

▼ Shipping may seem invisible to most consumers, but it plays an outsized role in global emissions. The sector emits approximately one billion metric tonnes of GHG each year, representing about 2.8% of total global emissions.

▼ While the carbon levy and GHG targets set by the IMO may pose short-term challenges for certain sectors of the Indian economy, India is likely to emerge as a long-term beneficiary of the new MBM framework.

Decarbonisation in the Shipping Industry
शिपिंग उद्योग में डिकार्बोनाइजेशन

- **The shipping industry is moving toward decarbonisation after a decade of discussions, focusing on reducing emissions through global regulations.**
  शिपिंग उद्योग एक दशक की चर्चाओं के बाद डिकार्बोनाइजेशन की ओर बढ़ रहा है, जिसका उद्देश्य उत्सर्जन को वैश्विक नियमों के माध्यम से कम करना है।

- **83rd Session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC-83)**
  समुद्री पर्यावरण संरक्षण समिति का 83वां सत्र (MEPC-83)

- The **83rd session** of the **IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC-83)** aimed to adopt a **Market-Based Measure (MBM)** that balances **environmental effectiveness** with **economic fairness**.
  IMO की समुद्री पर्यावरण संरक्षण समिति (MEPC-83) का 83वां सत्र ऐसा **मार्केट-बेस्ड उपाय (MBM)** अपनाने के लिए आयोजित हुआ जो **पर्यावरणीय प्रभावशीलता** और **आर्थिक निष्पक्षता** के बीच संतुलन बनाए।

Proposals at the MEPC-83
MEPC-83 में प्रस्तुत प्रस्ताव

- The **International Chamber of Shipping** proposed a **fixed levy** per **tonne of CO$_2$ emitted**.
  इंटरनेशनल चैंबर ऑफ शिपिंग ने प्रति टन CO$_2$ उत्सर्जन पर **निश्चित शुल्क** लगाने का प्रस्ताव दिया।

- **China** proposed a **market-driven** model where ships could **trade compliance units** and invest in **alternative fuels**.
  चीन ने एक **बाजार-आधारित** मॉडल का प्रस्ताव दिया जिसमें जहाज **अनुपालन इकाइयों का व्यापार** कर सकते हैं और **वैकल्पिक ईंधनों** में निवेश कर सकते हैं।

- The **European Union** backed a **fixed GHG levy**, managed through an **IMO-administered fund**.
  यूरोपीय संघ ने एक **निश्चित GHG शुल्क** का समर्थन किया, जो एक **IMO-प्रशासित कोष** के माध्यम से संचालित होता।

- **India** proposed a **bridging mechanism**, targeting only **under-compliant ships** while rewarding those using **Zero or Near-Zero (ZNZ) fuels**.
  भारत ने एक **ब्रिजिंग मैकेनिज्म** का प्रस्ताव रखा, जो केवल **अधूरी अनुपालन वाली जहाजों** को वित्तीय बोझ से जोड़ता है और **Zero या Near-Zero (ZNZ) ईंधन** का उपयोग करने वालों को प्रोत्साहित करता है।

- **Singapore** proposed an **enhanced version of India's model**, introducing a **GHG Fuel Standard (GFS)** and a **tiered system** with **surplus credit and remedial units**.

  सिंगापुर ने भारत के मॉडल का एक **उन्नत संस्करण** प्रस्तावित किया, जिसमें **GHG फ्यूल स्टैंडर्ड (GFS)** और **स्तरीय प्रणाली** शामिल है, जिसमें **अतिरिक्त क्रेडिट** और **सुधारात्मक इकाइयों** का प्रावधान है।

U.S. Participation
अमेरिका की भागीदारी

- The **U.S.**, under the **Trump administration**, **did not participate** in IMO deliberations and warned of **"reciprocal measures"** if the EU's **uniform carbon levy** passed.

  ट्रंप प्रशासन के तहत **संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका** ने IMO की चर्चाओं में **भाग नहीं लिया** और यदि **ईयू का समान कार्बन शुल्क** पास होता है तो **"प्रत्युत्तरात्मक कदमों"** की चेतावनी दी।

- MEPC-83 **voted 63 to 16** in favour of **Singapore's hybrid model**, based on **India's proposal**, making shipping the **first global industry** with a **mandatory emissions levy**.

  MEPC-83 ने **63 बनाम 16** मतों से **सिंगापुर के मिश्रित मॉडल** को स्वीकार किया, जो **भारत के प्रस्ताव** पर आधारित था, जिससे शिपिंग **पहला वैश्विक उद्योग** बन गया जिसने **अनिवार्य उत्सर्जन शुल्क** को अपनाया।

- Both **India and Singapore** have claimed credit for the **Net Zero Framework** compromise.

  भारत और सिंगापुर दोनों ने इस **Net Zero Framework** समझौते का श्रेय लिया है।

- To implement the decision, **Annex VI of the MARPOL convention** must be amended and **circulated for 6 months** among members.

  निर्णय को लागू करने के लिए **MARPOL कन्वेंशन के अनुच्छेद VI** में संशोधन किया जाना होगा और इसे **6 महीने के लिए सदस्य देशों में प्रसारित** किया जाएगा।

- For final adoption, **two-thirds majority** is required. Out of **101 members**, at least **67 must support** it.

  अंतिम स्वीकृति के लिए **दो-तिहाई बहुमत** आवश्यक है। **101 सदस्यों** में से कम से कम **67 सदस्यों का समर्थन** जरूरी है।

- The amendment can still be **blocked** if **one-third** of parties representing **50% of global shipping tonnage** object.

  यदि **एक-तिहाई सदस्य**, जो वैश्विक शिपिंग टन भार के **50%** का प्रतिनिधित्व करते हैं, **आपत्ति जताते हैं**, तो संशोधन को **रोक भी सकते हैं**।

- With **63 in favour**, **16 against**, and **22 abstentions**, the outcome remains **uncertain**.

  63 समर्थन, **16 विरोध** और **22 अनुपस्थितियों** के साथ, निर्णय अब भी **अनिश्चित** बना हुआ है।

Responses from Other Countries
अन्य देशों की प्रतिक्रियाएँ

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- **Oil-exporting nations**, led by **Saudi Arabia**, opposed major **green fuel transitions**, aiming to **protect fossil fuel markets**.

  तेल निर्यातक देश, विशेषकर **सऊदी अरब**, ने **हरित ईंधनों में बदलाव** का विरोध किया ताकि **फॉसिल ईंधन बाजारों** की **रक्षा** की जा सके।

- **Small island nations** and **least developed countries** demanded **high carbon levies** and redistribution of funds into **green development**.

  छोटे द्वीपीय देश और **कम विकसित राष्ट्र** **उच्च कार्बन शुल्क** और **हरित विकास में फंड के पुनः वितरण** की मांग कर रहे थे।

- **China** and other large shipping nations wanted **minimal levies** and investment in **cleaner fuels** to maintain **competitiveness**.

  चीन और अन्य बड़े शिपिंग राष्ट्रों ने **न्यूनतम शुल्क** और **स्वच्छ ईंधनों में** निवेश का समर्थन किया ताकि **प्रतिस्पर्धात्मकता** बनी रहे।

- **Norway** and **Scandinavian countries** sought **rewards** for their early efforts in decarbonisation via **surplus credit systems**.

  नॉर्वे और **स्कैंडेनेवियाई देश** अपने **प्रारंभिक डिकार्बोनाइजेशन प्रयासों** के लिए **अतिरिक्त क्रेडिट सिस्टम** के माध्यम से **इनाम** चाहते थे।

- **Brazil** promoted **methanol** as the main **marine fuel**.

  ब्राज़ील ने **मेथनॉल** को मुख्य **समुद्री ईंधन** के रूप में अपनाने की बात कही।

- **Traditional maritime powers** like **Greece** remained **skeptical** about the feasibility of a **green levy**.

  ग्रीस जैसे **पारंपरिक समुद्री शक्तियाँ** **हरित शुल्क** की **व्यवहारिकता** पर **संदेह** जता रही थीं।

Importance of Green Shipping
हरित शिपिंग का महत्व

• The **shipping sector emits ~1 billion metric tonnes** of GHG annually, about **2.8% of global emissions**.

 • **शिपिंग क्षेत्र हर साल लगभग 1 बिलियन मीट्रिक टन GHG उत्सर्जन** करता है, जो **वैश्विक उत्सर्जन का लगभग 2.8%** है।

• If treated as a country, it would be the **6th largest emitter**, between **Germany and Japan**.

 • यदि इसे एक देश माना जाए, तो यह **छठा सबसे बड़ा उत्सर्जक** होगा, **जर्मनी और जापान** के बीच।

• Emissions from shipping could rise by **50% to 250% by 2050** without intervention.

 • यदि उपाय न किए गए, तो 2050 तक **शिपिंग से उत्सर्जन 50% से 250%** तक बढ़ सकता है।

• Despite lower emissions than **road transport**, international shipping faces **stricter regulations** due to its **global nature**.

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• **सड़क परिवहन** की तुलना में उत्सर्जन कम होने के बावजूद, **अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रकृति** के कारण **शिपिंग पर सख्त नियम** लागू होते हैं।

IMO's Steps Towards Decarbonisation
IMO द्वारा डिकार्बोनाइजेशन की दिशा में उठाए गए कदम

• The IMO began reducing emissions in **2011**, introduced an **Initial GHG Strategy in 2018**, and updated it in **2023**.
• IMO ने **2011** में उत्सर्जन कम करने के कदम शुरू किए, **2018** में **प्रारंभिक GHG रणनीति** लाई और इसे **2023** में अपडेट किया।

• Technical measures include the **Energy Efficiency Design Index** (EEDI) in **Annex VI** of MARPOL.
• तकनीकी उपायों में **MARPOL के अनुच्छेद VI में ऊर्जा दक्षता डिज़ाइन सूचकांक (EEDI)** शामिल है।

• Operational measures include the **Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan** (SEEMP) and **mandatory fuel oil reporting**.
• संचालन उपायों में **जहाज ऊर्जा दक्षता प्रबंधन योजना (SEEMP)** और **ईंधन तेल की अनिवार्य रिपोर्टिंग** शामिल है।

• IMO set goals to reduce **carbon intensity by 40% by 2030** and **70% by 2040**, aiming for **net-zero by 2050**.
• IMO ने **2030 तक कार्बन तीव्रता में 40%** और **2040 तक 70%** की कटौती का लक्ष्य रखा है, और **2050 तक नेट-शून्य** उत्सर्जन प्राप्त करने का लक्ष्य तय किया है।

• These targets are more **concrete** than the **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)**, which has only a **"long-term aspirational goal"**.
• ये लक्ष्य **अंतरराष्ट्रीय नागरिक उड्डयन संगठन (ICAO)** की तुलना में अधिक **ठोस** हैं, जिसने केवल **"दीर्घकालिक आकांक्षी लक्ष्य"** तय किया है।

Is it an equitable distribution?
क्या यह एक न्यायसंगत वितरण है?

• There has been a gradual erosion of the guiding principle of **'common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities' (CBDR-RC)** incorporated in the **2018 initial GHG strategy**.
• **2018** की प्रारंभिक GHG रणनीति में शामिल **'साझा लेकिन भिन्न ज़िम्मेदारियों और संबंधित क्षमताओं' (CBDR-RC)** के मार्गदर्शक सिद्धांत का धीरे-धीरे क्षरण हुआ है।

• **CBDR-RC** is a core principle enshrined in climate agreements like the **UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol, and Paris Agreement**.

• **CBDR-RC** जलवायु समझौतों जैसे कि **UNFCCC, क्योटो प्रोटोकॉल और पेरिस समझौता** में निहित एक प्रमुख सिद्धांत है।

• It acknowledges that all nations must address climate change but recognises **historical responsibility** and **unequal capacities**.

• यह मानता है कि सभी देशों को जलवायु परिवर्तन का समाधान करना चाहिए, लेकिन यह **ऐतिहासिक जिम्मेदारी** और **असमान क्षमताओं** को भी स्वीकार करता है।

• Developed nations, with their **longer industrial histories**, are expected to bear **greater burdens**.

• विकसित देशों से, जिनका **औद्योगिक इतिहास लंबा** रहा है, अपेक्षा की जाती है कि वे **अधिक भार** वहन करें।

• However, recent **IMO proceedings** reflect an effort by **wealthier nations** to shift responsibility onto **developing economies**, despite stark **differences in income and consumption**.

• हालांकि, हाल की **IMO कार्यवाही** यह दर्शाती है कि **समृद्ध देश विकासशील अर्थव्यवस्थाओं** पर जिम्मेदारी डालने का प्रयास कर रहे हैं, जबकि **आय और खपत में भारी अंतर** है।
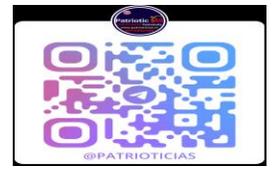
How does India benefit?
भारत को कैसे लाभ होता है?

• While the **carbon levy** and **GHG targets** set by the IMO may pose **short-term challenges** for some sectors of the Indian economy, India likely to emerge as a **long-term beneficiary** of the new **Market-Based Measure (MBM)** framework.

• IMO द्वारा निर्धारित **कार्बन लेवी** और **GHG लक्ष्य** भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था के कुछ क्षेत्रों के लिए **अल्पकालिक चुनौतियाँ** पैदा कर सकते हैं, लेकिन भारत **दीर्घकालिक लाभार्थी** बन सकता है **नए MBM ढांचे** का।

• According to the **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**, the impact of MBM on India's **maritime logistics costs** will be modest in the near term — ranging from **4.98% to 7.29% on imports** and **5.92% to 8.09% on exports by 2030**.

• **संयुक्त राष्ट्र व्यापार और विकास सम्मेलन** के अनुसार, भारत की **समुद्री लॉजिस्टिक्स लागत** पर MBM का प्रभाव निकट भविष्य में सीमित रहेगा — **2030 तक आयात पर 4.98% से 7.29%** और **निर्यात पर 5.92% से 8.09%** के बीच।

• By **2050**, these figures are projected to rise to about **33% to 35%**, but the actual impact on **trade volumes** is expected to be **minimal**.

• **2050 तक**, ये आंकड़े लगभग **33% से 35%** तक बढ़ सकते हैं, लेकिन **व्यापार की मात्रा** पर वास्तविक प्रभाव **न्यूनतम** रहने की संभावना है।

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• India currently operates nearly **236 ships** over **5,000 gross tonnage**, with only **135** involved in **international voyages**.

• भारत वर्तमान में **5,000 ग्रॉस टन** से अधिक के लगभग **236 जहाजों** का संचालन करता है, जिनमें से केवल **135 अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रा** में संलग्न हैं।

• Since MBMs apply only to **international shipping**, India's **coastal fleet** remains **unaffected**.

• चूंकि MBM केवल **अंतरराष्ट्रीय शिपिंग** पर लागू होता है, इसलिए भारत का **तटीय बेड़ा प्रभावित नहीं** होता।

• Currently, India spends roughly **$400 million per year** on fuel for its **international fleet**.

• वर्तमान में भारत अपने **अंतरराष्ट्रीय बेड़े** के लिए ईंधन पर लगभग **$400 मिलियन प्रति वर्ष** खर्च करता है।

• The MBM is projected to increase this by approximately **$108 million by 2030** — a **manageable rise** given the scale of India's **maritime economy**.

• MBM के कारण यह खर्च **2030 तक लगभग $108 मिलियन** तक बढ़ सकता है — भारत की **समुद्री अर्थव्यवस्था** के आकार को देखते हुए यह एक **सहनीय वृद्धि** है।

India's clean energy opportunity
भारत का स्वच्छ ऊर्जा अवसर

• The most exciting implication of the MBM framework is the **potential for India to become a global hub for clean energy exports**.

• MBM ढांचे का सबसे रोमांचक पहलू यह है कि भारत के पास **स्वच्छ ऊर्जा निर्यात के लिए एक वैश्विक केंद्र बनने की संभावना** है।

• As the world's **third-largest importer of fossil fuels**, India is now investing heavily in **green hydrogen** through its **National Hydrogen Mission**.

• दुनिया का **तीसरा सबसे बड़ा जीवाश्म ईंधन आयातक** होने के नाते, भारत अब अपनी **राष्ट्रीय हाइड्रोजन मिशन** के माध्यम से **हरित हाइड्रोजन** में भारी निवेश कर रहा है।

• Industrial giants like **Reliance, Adani, and JSW** are planning to **scale up production**, while **three Indian ports** are preparing to offer **green hydrogen bunkering services**.

• **रिलायंस, अदानी और JSW** जैसे औद्योगिक समूह **उत्पादन बढ़ाने** की योजना बना रहे हैं, जबकि **तीन भारतीय बंदरगाह हरित हाइड्रोजन बंकरिंग सेवाएं** देने की तैयारी कर रहे हैं।

• Under the mission's guidelines, Indian green hydrogen must meet a **well-to-wake GHG fuel intensity** of **no more than 2 kg CO_2e per kilogram of hydrogen**, translating to about **16.7 grams of CO_2e per megajoule**.

• मिशन के दिशा-निर्देशों के अनुसार, भारतीय हरित हाइड्रोजन को **2 किलोग्राम CO_2e प्रति किलोग्राम हाइड्रोजन** से अधिक की **well-to-wake GHG तीव्रता** नहीं होनी चाहिए, जो लगभग **16.7 ग्राम CO_2e प्रति मेगाजूल** के बराबर है।

• This standard positions Indian hydrogen well within the **IMO's reward thresholds**, which are **capped at 19.0 g CO_2e/MJ until 2034** and **14.0 g CO_2e/MJ thereafter**.

• यह मानक भारतीय हाइड्रोजन को **IMO के पुरस्कार मानकों** के भीतर रखता है, जो **2034 तक 19.0 ग्राम CO_2e/MJ** और उसके बाद **14.0 ग्राम CO_2e/MJ** तक सीमित हैं।

• This alignment creates a significant opportunity for India to **export green fuels globally** and capitalise on **international incentives**.

• यह मेल भारत के लिए **हरित ईंधनों का वैश्विक निर्यात** करने और **अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रोत्साहनों** का लाभ उठाने का एक महत्वपूर्ण अवसर पैदा करता है।

Global Shipping at a Crossroads
वैश्विक शिपिंग एक परिवर्तनकारी मोड़ पर

• Global shipping now stands at a **transformative moment**.

• वैश्विक शिपिंग अब एक **परिवर्तनकारी क्षण** पर खड़ी है।

• Despite persistent **disagreements** and **uncertain implementation pathways**, the adoption of a **Market-Based Measure (MBM)** by the **IMO** represents a **milestone** in the journey toward **decarbonisation**.

• लगातार **विरोधों** और **अस्पष्ट कार्यान्वयन मार्गों** के बावजूद, IMO द्वारा **मार्केट-बेस्ड मेज़र (MBM)** को अपनाना **डीकार्बोनाइजेशन** की दिशा में एक **मील का पत्थर** है।

• If successful, this framework could make **shipping the first truly global sector** to operate under **binding climate goals**, setting a **powerful precedent** for others to follow.

• यदि यह सफल होता है, तो यह ढांचा **शिपिंग को पहला वास्तविक वैश्विक क्षेत्र** बना सकता है जो **अनिवार्य जलवायु लक्ष्यों** के तहत संचालित होता है, और दूसरों के लिए एक **प्रभावशाली उदाहरण** स्थापित करता है।