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# PATRIOTIC IAS

## THE HINDU NEWSPAPER

### DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

#### 14 MAY 2025

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14\_05\_2025 DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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

1. Southwest Monsoon Advances into Andaman Sea  
दक्षिण-पश्चिम मानसून अंडमान सागर में आगे बढ़ा

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## 2. Congress Seeks Removal of M.P. Minister Over 'Insult' to Col. Sofiya

कांग्रेस ने कर्नल सोफिया का 'अपमान' करने पर मध्य प्रदेश के मंत्री को हटाने की मांग की

## 3. Southwest Monsoon Advances into Andaman Sea: IMD

दक्षिण-पश्चिम मानसून अंडमान सागर में प्रवेश कर गया है: IMD

## 4. Pollachi Sexual Assault Case

पोलाचि यौन उत्पीड़न मामला

## 5. Libya armed group leader is among victims in Tripoli clashes

लीबिया के सशस्त्र समूह के नेता त्रिपोली संघर्षों में मारे गए पीड़ितों में शामिल हैं



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## Southwest monsoon advances into Andaman Sea

GS Paper I: Geography

Jacob Koshy

NEW DELHI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) announced on Tuesday that the southwest monsoon has advanced into some parts of the south Bay of Bengal, the south Andaman Sea, Nicobar Islands, and parts of the north Andaman Sea.

Usually, the monsoon system takes about 10 days to reach mainland India from this region, although the agency has not yet revealed a date for the monsoon's onset over Kerala. The agency is expected to announce an official date later this month.

## Southwest Monsoon Advances into Andaman Sea दक्षिण-पश्चिम मानसून अंडमान सागर में आगे बढ़ा

• The India Meteorological Department (IMD) announced on Tuesday that the southwest monsoon has advanced into some parts of the south Bay of Bengal, the south Andaman Sea, the Nicobar Islands, and parts of the north Andaman Sea.

• भारत मौसम विज्ञान विभाग (IMD) ने मंगलवार को घोषणा की कि दक्षिण-पश्चिम मानसून ने दक्षिण बंगाल की खाड़ी, दक्षिण अंडमान सागर, निकोबार द्वीपसमूह और उत्तर अंडमान सागर के कुछ हिस्सों में प्रवेश कर लिया है।

• Usually, the monsoon system takes about 10 days to reach mainland India from this region.

• आमतौर पर, इस क्षेत्र से मुख्य भूमि भारत तक पहुंचने में मानसून प्रणाली को लगभग 10 दिन लगते हैं।

• However, the IMD has not yet revealed the date for the monsoon's onset over Kerala.

• हालांकि, आईएमडी ने अब तक केरल में मानसून की शुरुआत की तारीख की घोषणा नहीं की है।

• The agency is expected to announce an official date later this month.

• यह संभावना है कि एजेंसी इस महीने के अंत तक एक आधिकारिक तिथि की घोषणा करेगी।



# Cong. seeks removal of M.P. Minister over 'insult' to Col. Sofiya

GS Paper I: Society  
GS Paper I: Polity  
GS Paper IV: Ethics  
Essay

The Congress on Tuesday sought the removal of a Madhya Pradesh government Minister over his remarks on Indian Army Colonel Sofiya Qureshi, who held multiple press briefings during the recent India-Pakistan military conflict between May 7 and 10.

Kunwar Vijay Shah, who holds the Tribal Welfare and Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation portfolios in the BJP government, made the remarks on Monday at an event in Mhow.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge demanded that Mr. Shah be sacked immediately. "First they trolled the wife of the naval officer martyred in Pahalagam on social media, then harassed the daughter of [Foreign Secretary Vikram] Misri and now BJP Ministers are making such inde-



Colonel Sofiya Qureshi

cent comments about our braveheart Sofiya Qureshi. [PM Narendra] Modi should immediately dismiss such a Minister," Mr. Kharge said on X.

However, as the controversy spiralled, Mr. Shah issued clarifications on Tuesday saying that his remarks had been taken out of context and misunderstood. "Colonel Sofiya Qureshi has made the nation proud," he said.

Earlier in 2013, Mr. Shah had to resign from the then CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan's Cabinet after remarks on the latter's wife.

## Congress Seeks Removal of M.P. Minister Over 'Insult' to Col. Sofiya

कांग्रेस ने कर्नल सोफिया का 'अपमान' करने पर मध्य प्रदेश के मंत्री को हटाने की मांग की

• The Congress on Tuesday demanded the removal of a Madhya Pradesh government Minister over his remarks on Indian Army Colonel Sofiya Qureshi, who held multiple press briefings during the India-Pakistan military conflict between May 7 and 10.

• मंगलवार को कांग्रेस ने मध्य प्रदेश सरकार के एक मंत्री को हटाने की मांग की, क्योंकि उन्होंने भारतीय सेना की कर्नल सोफिया कुरैशी के बारे में टिप्पणी की थी। कर्नल ने 7 से 10 मई के बीच भारत-पाकिस्तान सैन्य संघर्ष के दौरान कई प्रेस ब्रीफिंग्स की थीं।

• Kunwar Vijay Shah, who holds the Tribal Welfare and Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation portfolios in the BJP government, made the remarks on Monday at an event in Mhow.

• बीजेपी सरकार में जनजातीय कल्याण और भोपाल गैस त्रासदी राहत और पुनर्वास विभागों को संभालने वाले कुँवर विजय शाह ने सोमवार को महु में एक कार्यक्रम के दौरान

यह टिप्पणी की थी।



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- Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge demanded that Mr. Shah be sacked immediately.
- कांग्रेस अध्यक्ष मल्लिकार्जुन खड़गे ने मांग की कि श्री शाह को तुरंत बर्खास्त किया जाए।
- Mr. Kharge said, "First they trolled the wife of the naval officer martyred in Pahalgam, then harassed the daughter of Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, and now BJP Ministers are making indecent comments about our braveheart Col. Sofiya Qureshi."
- श्री खड़गे ने कहा, "पहले इन्होंने पाहलगाम में शहीद हुए नौसेना अधिकारी की पत्नी को सोशल मीडिया पर ट्रोल किया, फिर विदेश सचिव विक्रम मिस्री की बेटी को परेशान किया और अब बीजेपी मंत्री हमारी वीर कर्नल सोफिया कुरैशी पर अशोभनीय टिप्पणी कर रहे हैं।"
- He added, "[PM Narendra Modi] should immediately dismiss such a Minister."
- उन्होंने आगे कहा, "[प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी] को ऐसे मंत्री को तुरंत बर्खास्त करना चाहिए।"
- As the controversy escalated, Mr. Shah issued a clarification on Tuesday, stating that his remarks had been taken out of context and misunderstood.
- जब यह विवाद बढ़ा, तो श्री शाह ने मंगलवार को स्पष्टीकरण जारी करते हुए कहा कि उनकी टिप्पणियों को संदर्भ से हटाकर और गलत तरीके से समझा गया है।
- He added, "Colonel Sofiya Qureshi has made the nation proud."
- उन्होंने कहा, "कर्नल सोफिया कुरैशी ने देश को गौरवान्वित किया है।"
- Earlier in 2013, Mr. Shah had to resign from Shivraj Singh Chouhan's Cabinet after his remarks on the CM's wife.
- इससे पहले 2013 में, श्री शाह को मुख्यमंत्री शिवराज सिंह चौहान की पत्नी पर टिप्पणी के बाद उनके मंत्रिमंडल से इस्तीफा देना पड़ा था।

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# Southwest monsoon has advanced into Andaman Sea: IMD

Heavy rainfall, accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning, expected over Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu this week

GS Paper I: Geography

**Jacob Koshy**  
NEW DELHI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) announced on Tuesday that the southwest monsoon has advanced into some parts of the south Bay of Bengal, the south Andaman Sea, Nicobar Islands, and parts of the north Andaman Sea.

Usually, the monsoon system, which splits into two branches, takes about 10 days to reach mainland India from this region, although the agency has not yet revealed a date for the monsoon's onset over Kerala.

The agency is expected to announce an official date later this month, and uses a custom forecast model for this purpose. The normal onset date of the monsoon over Kerala is June 1.

Meteorologists have stated that an early arrival in the Andaman Sea would not necessarily mean the monsoon would reach Kerala earlier.

Last month, the IMD said India is likely to receive "above normal"



Weather forecasts predict heavy rain in south peninsular India over the week. FILE PHOTO

monsoon rainfall, defined as 5% more than the historical average of 87 cm.

If this prediction holds true, it would be a second year of "above normal" rain. Last year, India received rainfall 8% above the historical average from June to September.

In 2024, the southwest monsoon set in over Kerala on May 30, two days before the normal date and a day before the forecast date of May 31. It was also unusual in that both branches of the monsoon simultaneously set in over northeast India and Kerala. The two branches eventually merge

over central India and sustain the southwest monsoon until the end of September.

"Rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning will likely continue over south peninsular India and adjoining central India for the next five days, with heavy rainfall also expected over Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu this week. Heavy to very heavy rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning is likely over northeast India during the next five days," the IMD said in a statement on Tuesday.

**Southwest Monsoon Advances into Andaman Sea: IMD**

**दक्षिण-पश्चिम मानसून अंडमान सागर में प्रवेश कर गया है: IMD**

• The India Meteorological Department (IMD) announced that the southwest monsoon has advanced into parts of the south Bay of Bengal, south Andaman Sea, Nicobar Islands, and parts of the north Andaman Sea.

• भारत मौसम विज्ञान विभाग (IMD) ने घोषणा की है कि दक्षिण-पश्चिम मानसून ने दक्षिण बंगाल की खाड़ी, दक्षिण अंडमान सागर, निकोबार द्वीप समूह, और उत्तर अंडमान सागर के कुछ हिस्सों में प्रवेश कर लिया है।

• Typically, the monsoon system, which splits into two branches, takes about 10 days to reach mainland India from this region.

• आमतौर पर, मानसून प्रणाली, जो दो



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शाखाओं में विभाजित होती है, को मुख्य भूमि भारत तक पहुँचने में इस क्षेत्र से लगभग 10 दिन लगते हैं।

- The IMD has **not yet declared the onset date** of the monsoon over **Kerala**.
- IMD ने अभी तक केरल में मानसून की शुरुआत की तारीख की घोषणा नहीं की है।
- An **official onset date** over Kerala is expected **later this month**, using a **custom forecast model**.
- आधिकारिक तिथि की घोषणा इस महीने के अंत में की जाएगी, और इसके लिए एक विशेष पूर्वानुमान मॉडल का उपयोग किया जाता है।
- **The normal onset date for monsoon over Kerala is June 1.**
- केरल में मानसून की सामान्य शुरुआत की तिथि 1 जून होती है।
- Meteorologists clarified that an **early arrival in the Andaman Sea does not guarantee an early onset in Kerala**.
- मौसम वैज्ञानिकों ने स्पष्ट किया कि अंडमान सागर में मानसून के जल्दी पहुंचने का मतलब यह नहीं है कि केरल में भी मानसून जल्दी आएगा।
- Last month, IMD predicted that **India is likely to receive 'above normal' rainfall**, meaning **5% more than the average of 87 cm**.
- पिछले महीने, IMD ने भविष्यवाणी की थी कि भारत को 'सामान्य से अधिक' वर्षा मिलने की संभावना है, जो कि 87 सेमी के औसत से 5% अधिक होगी।
- If the prediction holds, it would be the **second consecutive year of above-normal rainfall**.
- यदि यह भविष्यवाणी सही साबित होती है, तो यह लगातार दूसरा वर्ष होगा जब सामान्य से अधिक वर्षा होगी।
- In **2024**, the monsoon reached **Kerala on May 30**, which was **two days before the normal date and a day earlier than the forecast**.
- **2024 में**, मानसून 30 मई को केरल पहुंचा था, जो कि सामान्य तिथि से दो दिन पहले और पूर्वानुमान से एक दिन पहले था।
- It was unusual because **both branches of the monsoon set in simultaneously over northeast India and Kerala**.
- यह असामान्य था क्योंकि मानसून की दोनों शाखाएं एक साथ पूर्वोत्तर भारत और केरल में सक्रिय हुई थीं।
- These two branches later **merge over central India and sustain the monsoon till end of September**.
- ये दोनों शाखाएं बाद में मध्य भारत में मिलती हैं और सितंबर के अंत तक मानसून को बनाए रखती हैं।

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## Rainfall Forecast for Southern and Northeastern States

### दक्षिण और पूर्वोत्तर राज्यों के लिए वर्षा का पूर्वानुमान

- According to IMD, rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning is expected to continue over south peninsular India and adjoining central India for the next five days.
- IMD के अनुसार, गरज-चमक और बिजली के साथ बारिश दक्षिण प्रायद्वीपीय भारत और सटे हुए मध्य भारत में अगले पाँच दिनों तक जारी रहने की संभावना है।
- Heavy rainfall is expected over Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu this week.
- इस सप्ताह आंध्र प्रदेश, कर्नाटक, केरल और तमिलनाडु में भारी वर्षा की संभावना है।
- Heavy to very heavy rainfall with thunderstorms and lightning is likely over northeast India during the next five days.
- अगले पाँच दिनों में पूर्वोत्तर भारत में गंभीर से बहुत गंभीर वर्षा, गरज और बिजली के साथ होने की संभावना है।



GS paper I: Geography

A drone view shows the thunderous pororoca tidal bore wave on the Mearim River in the Amazon jungle, near the northern Brazilian city of Arari, on April 30. A tidal bore is created when an incoming tide is funnelled into a narrow river channel, forcing it to increase its height and speed. REUTERS



## Tidal Bore

### ज्वारीय लहर (Tidal Bore)

- A tidal bore is a natural phenomenon where the **leading edge of an incoming tide** forms a wave that **travels up a river or narrow bay**, moving **against the river's current**.
- ज्वारीय लहर एक प्राकृतिक घटना है जिसमें आने वाली ज्वार की अग्रिम लहर एक ऐसी लहर बनाती है जो किसी नदी या संकीर्ण खाड़ी में ऊपर की ओर चलती है, और नदी की धाराओं के विपरीत दिशा में बढ़ती है।
- This occurs in areas with a **significant tidal range**, typically more than **6 meters (20 feet)**, and where the incoming tide is **funneled into a shallow, narrowing river or bay via a broad estuary**.
- यह उन क्षेत्रों में होती है जहाँ ज्वार और भाटे का अंतर बहुत अधिक होता है, सामान्यतः 6 मीटर (20 फीट) से अधिक, और जहाँ आने वाला ज्वार एक चौड़े मुहाने से होकर किसी उथली और संकीर्ण होती नदी या खाड़ी में प्रवेश करता है।

### Mechanism of Formation

#### निर्माण की प्रक्रिया

- **Tidal Range:** A large difference between **high and low tide levels** is essential.
- ज्वारीय अंतर: उच्च और निम्न ज्वार स्तरों के बीच बड़ा अंतर आवश्यक होता है।
- **River Geometry:** A **shallow, narrowing river or bay** helps **amplify the incoming tide**.
- नदी की संरचना: कोई उथली और संकीर्ण होती नदी या खाड़ी आने वाली ज्वार को अधिक तीव्र बना देती है।
- **Incoming Tide:** As the **tide rises**, water is **pushed into the river's mouth**, creating a wave that **travels upstream**.
- आती हुई ज्वार: जब ज्वार बढ़ती है, तो पानी नदी के मुहाने में धकेला जाता है, जिससे एक लहर बनती है जो ऊपर की ओर बहती है।
- **Wave Formation:** The wave can be a **single breaking crest** or a **series of waves**, depending on the **river's characteristics**.
- लहर का निर्माण: यह लहर एक एकल टूटती हुई चोटी हो सकती है या कई लहरों की श्रृंखला, यह नदी की विशेषताओं पर निर्भर करता है।



# What has been decided in the Pollachi sexual assault case?

How were the accused identified by the Pollachi police and CBI? Why did the case gain political notoriety?

GS Paper I: Society

Wilson Thomas

## The story so far:

Six years ago, nine men from Pollachi, Coimbatore, were arrested for blackmailing, sexually assaulting, and videographing young girls and women between 2016 and 2018. The nine men, who have remained behind bars since their arrest, have been prosecuted for multiple offences, including criminal conspiracy, sexual harassment, rape, gang rape, and repeated rape of the same woman. On May 13, the Mahila Court in Coimbatore found all nine accused guilty and sentenced them to life imprisonment. The court also ordered the Tamil Nadu government to pay a compensation of ₹85 lakh to eight survivors of sexual assault.

## What is the case?

On February 24, 2019, a college girl lodged a complaint with the Pollachi East

police, alleging sexual abuse by four men in a moving car near Pollachi 12 days ago. The 19-year-old was the first survivor to speak up against the group of youngsters, who had allegedly been luring women and sexually assaulting them since 2016. The perpetrators filmed these sexual acts, which they used for further exploitation.

The police took up the investigation and examined the mobile phones and laptops of the accused. The gadgets contained numerous video clips of different women – from students to married women – who had been sexually assaulted at various locations by the accused. Most of these crimes had taken place at a house of one of the accused, K. Thirunavukkarasu, at Chinnappalayam near Pollachi, around 50 km from Coimbatore city. Sensing the gravity of the case, on March 12, 2019, the State government directed the Crime Branch-CID to launch an investigation. Eventually, amid outrage, the then

Edappadi K. Palaniswami government transferred the case to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), and the agency took over the probe on April 25, 2019.

## What did the agency find?

The central agency arraigned N. Sabarirajan also known as Rishwanth (32), K. Thirunavukkarasu (34), M. Sathish (33), T. Vasanthakumar (30), R. Mani, also known as Manivannan (32), P. Babu (33), T. Haronimus Paul (32), K. Arulanantham (39), and M. Arunkumar as the accused in the case. It found that Sabarirajan was the key perpetrator who lured the girls and women, including the complainant. The sexual assault of the first complainant, aged 19, took place on February 12, 2019, in a car on Dharapuram Road. They filmed the act and robbed her of a gold chain. The girl informed her family only after the accused demanded sexual favours from her by threatening to leak the video. Numerous videos of sexual

assault were found on the laptop of Sabarirajan and the mobile phone of Thirunavukkarasu. Using these, the police and the CBI identified the other accused and survivors. The case also stirred up a political controversy as Arulanantham had been the All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) Pollachi town students' wing secretary. He was expelled from the party after his arrest.

## Who were the survivors?

Investigations revealed the accused targeted young girls and women from middle class and lower socio-economic backgrounds. Though the accused are suspected to have sexually exploited numerous women, only eight of them testified. The investigation faced backlash when the then Coimbatore District Superintendent of Police R. Pandiarajan revealed the name of the complainant. It is believed some survivors chose to stay away from the investigation fearing their identities would be made public.

## How was the trial conducted?

A special court room facility was created at the Combined Court Complex in Coimbatore for the trial to protect the identities of the survivors. A chamber made of one-way glass prevented others from seeing the survivors during the trial. They were brought to court with extreme care, while the accused were produced through videoconferencing.

## THE GIST

▼ Six years ago, nine men from Pollachi, Coimbatore, were arrested for blackmailing, sexually assaulting, and videographing young girls and women between 2016 and 2018.

▼ On February 24, 2019, a college girl lodged a complaint with the Pollachi East police, alleging sexual abuse by four men in a moving car near Pollachi 12 days ago.

▼ Investigations revealed the accused targeted young girls and women from middle class and lower socio-economic backgrounds. Though the accused are suspected to have sexually exploited numerous women, only eight of them testified

## Pollachi Sexual Assault Case

### पोलाचि यौन उत्पीड़न मामला

• Six years ago, nine men from Pollachi, Coimbatore, were arrested for blackmailing, sexually assaulting, and videographing young girls and women between 2016 and 2018.

• छह साल पहले, कोयंबटूर के पोलाचि से नौ पुरुषों को 2016 से 2018 के बीच युवतियों और महिलाओं को ब्लैकमेल करने, यौन उत्पीड़न करने और वीडियो रिकॉर्ड करने के आरोप में गिरफ्तार किया गया था।

• The nine men, who have remained behind bars since their arrest, have been prosecuted for multiple offences, including criminal conspiracy, sexual harassment, rape, gang rape, and repeated rape of the same woman.

• ये नौ पुरुष, जो अपनी गिरफ्तारी के बाद से सलाखों के पीछे रहे हैं, उन्हें कई अपराधों के लिए अभियुक्त किया



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गया है, जिनमें आपराधिक साजिश, यौन उत्पीड़न, बलात्कार, सामूहिक बलात्कार और एक ही महिला से बार-बार बलात्कार शामिल हैं।

• On May 13, the Mahila Court in Coimbatore found all nine accused guilty and sentenced them to life imprisonment.

• 13 मई को, कोयंबटूर की महिला अदालत ने सभी नौ आरोपियों को दोषी ठहराया और उन्हें आजीवन कारावास की सजा सुनाई।

• The court also ordered the Tamil Nadu government to pay a compensation of ₹85 lakh to eight survivors of sexual assault.

• अदालत ने यह भी आदेश दिया कि तमिलनाडु सरकार आठ यौन उत्पीड़न से पीड़ित महिलाओं को ₹85 लाख की मुआवजा राशि दे।

## What is the case?

### मामला क्या है?

• On February 24, 2019, a college girl lodged a complaint with the Pollachi East police, alleging sexual abuse by four men in a moving car near Pollachi 12 days ago.

• 24 फरवरी 2019 को, एक कॉलेज की लड़की ने पोलाचि ईस्ट पुलिस में एक शिकायत दर्ज कराई, जिसमें उसने 12 दिन पहले पोलाचि के पास एक चलती कार में चार पुरुषों द्वारा यौन उत्पीड़न का आरोप लगाया।

• The 19-year-old was the first survivor to speak up against the group of youngsters, who had allegedly been luring women and sexually assaulting them since 2016.

• 19 वर्षीय लड़की उन युवकों के खिलाफ बोलने वाली पहली पीड़िता बनी, जिन्होंने 2016 से महिलाओं को बहलाकर उनका यौन उत्पीड़न किया था।

• The perpetrators filmed these sexual acts, which they used for further exploitation.

• अपराधियों ने इन यौन कृत्यों की फिल्म बनाई, जिसका वे आगे के शोषण के लिए उपयोग करते थे।

• The police took up the investigation and examined the mobile phones and laptops of the accused.

• पुलिस ने जांच शुरू की और आरोपियों के मोबाइल फोन और लैपटॉप की जांच की।

• The gadgets contained numerous video clips of different women — from students to married women — who had been sexually assaulted at various locations by the accused.

• इन उपकरणों में विभिन्न महिलाओं — छात्राओं से लेकर विवाहित महिलाओं तक — के कई वीडियो क्लिप थे, जिन्हें विभिन्न स्थानों पर आरोपियों द्वारा यौन उत्पीड़न किया गया था।

• Most of these crimes had taken place at a house of one of the accused, K. Thirunavukkarasu, at Chinnappalayam near Pollachi, around 50 km from Coimbatore city.



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• इन अपराधों में से अधिकांश अपराध एक आरोपी, के. थिरुनावुक्करसु के घर पर हुए थे, जो पोलाचि के पास चिन्नप्पललयम में स्थित है, जो कोयंबटूर शहर से लगभग 50 किमी दूर है।

• On March 12, 2019, the State government directed the Crime Branch-CID to launch an investigation.

• 12 मार्च 2019 को, राज्य सरकार ने अपराध शाखा-सीआईडी को जांच शुरू करने का निर्देश दिया।

• The case was later transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on April 25, 2019.

• बाद में, 25 अप्रैल 2019 को यह मामला केंद्रीय जांच ब्यूरो (CBI) को सौंप दिया गया।

## What did the agency find?

### एजेंसी ने क्या पाया?

• The central agency arraigned the accused including N. Sabarirajan (Rishwanth), K. Thirunavukkarasu, M. Sathish, and others.

• केंद्रीय एजेंसी ने आरोपियों, जिनमें एन. सबरीराजन (रिष्वंथ), के. थिरुनावुक्करसु, एम. सथिश और अन्य शामिल हैं, को आरोपित किया।

• The agency found that Sabarirajan was the key perpetrator who lured the girls and women, including the complainant.

• एजेंसी ने पाया कि सबरीराजन मुख्य अपराधी था, जिसने लड़कियों और महिलाओं को बहलाया, जिसमें शिकायतकर्ता भी शामिल थी।

• The first complainant, aged 19, was sexually assaulted on February 12, 2019, in a car on Dharapuram Road.

• पहली शिकायतकर्ता, जिनकी उम्र 19 साल थी, 12 फरवरी 2019 को धरापुरम रोड पर एक कार में यौन उत्पीड़न का शिकार हुई।

• The accused filmed the assault and robbed her of a gold chain.

• आरोपियों ने यौन उत्पीड़न की फिल्म बनाई और उससे एक सोने की चेन लूट ली।

• The girl informed her family only after the accused demanded sexual favours from her by threatening to leak the video.

• लड़की ने अपने परिवार को केवल तब सूचित किया, जब आरोपियों ने वीडियो लीक करने की धमकी देकर उससे यौन सुख की मांग की।

• Numerous videos of sexual assault were found on the laptops and mobile phones of the accused.

• आरोपियों के लैपटॉप और मोबाइल फोन में यौन उत्पीड़न के कई वीडियो पाए गए।

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- Using these, the police and the CBI identified the other accused and survivors.
- इन वीडियोज़ का उपयोग करके, पुलिस और CBI ने अन्य आरोपियों और पीड़ितों की पहचान की।
- The case also stirred up political controversy as one of the accused, Arulanantham, was an AIADMK student leader.
- इस मामले ने राजनीतिक विवाद को भी जन्म दिया क्योंकि एक आरोपी, अरुलानंदम, एआईएडीएमके के छात्र नेता थे।

## Who were the survivors?

### पीड़ित कौन थे?

- Investigations revealed the accused targeted young girls and women from middle class and lower socio-economic backgrounds.
- जांच से पता चला कि आरोपियों ने मध्यवर्गीय और निम्न socio-आर्थिक पृष्ठभूमि की युवतियों और महिलाओं को निशाना बनाया।
- Though the accused are suspected of sexually exploiting numerous women, only eight survivors testified.
- हालांकि आरोपियों पर कई महिलाओं का यौन शोषण करने का शक था, लेकिन केवल आठ पीड़ितों ने गवाही दी।
- Some survivors stayed away from the investigation fearing their identities would be made public.
- कुछ पीड़ितों ने अपनी पहचान सार्वजनिक होने के डर से जांच से दूर रहना चुना।

## How was the trial conducted?

### मुकदमा कैसे चलाया गया?

- A special court room facility was created at the Combined Court Complex in Coimbatore to protect the identities of the survivors.
- कोयंबटूर के संयुक्त न्यायालय परिसर में पीड़ितों की पहचान की सुरक्षा के लिए एक विशेष कोर्ट रूम सुविधा बनाई गई।
- A chamber made of one-way glass prevented others from seeing the survivors during the trial.
- एक-तरफा कांच से बनी कक्ष ने मुकदमे के दौरान दूसरों को पीड़ितों को देखने से रोका।
- The survivors were brought to court with extreme care, while the accused were produced through videoconferencing.
- पीड़ितों को अत्यधिक सतर्कता के साथ अदालत लाया गया, जबकि आरोपियों को वीडियो कॉन्फ्रेंसिंग के माध्यम से पेश किया गया।



## TRIPOLI

### Libya armed group leader is among victims in Tripoli clashes



GS Paper I: Mapping

AFP

Overnight clashes in Libya's capital killed at least six persons, with reports of an armed group leader being killed. Clashes between rival armed groups broke out in Tripoli from 9:00 pm. Reports said Abdelghani al-Kikli, leader of the Support and Stability Apparatus (SSA) which controls the district of Abu Salim, was killed. AFP

out in Tripoli from 9:00 pm.

- त्रिपोली में प्रतिद्वंद्वी सशस्त्र समूहों के बीच संघर्ष रात 9 बजे से शुरू हुआ।
- Reports said **Abdelghani al-Kikli**, leader of the **Support and Stability Apparatus (SSA)**, which controls the district of **Abu Salim**, was killed.
- रिपोर्ट्स के अनुसार, अब्देलघानी अल-किकली, सपोर्ट और स्टेबिलिटी एपरेटरस (SSA) के नेता, जो अबू सलिम जिले को नियंत्रित करते हैं, की हत्या हो गई।

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

#### 1. India asserts J&K stand after U.S. claims

भारत ने अमेरिकी दावों के बाद जम्मू-कश्मीर पर अपना रुख स्पष्ट किया

### Libya armed group leader is among victims in Tripoli clashes

लीबिया के सशस्त्र समूह के नेता त्रिपोली संघर्षों में मारे गए पीड़ितों में शामिल हैं

- Overnight clashes in Libya's capital **killed at least six persons**, with reports of an armed group leader being killed.
- लीबिया की राजधानी में रातोंरात संघर्षों में कम से कम छह लोग मारे गए, जिसमें एक सशस्त्र समूह के नेता की भी हत्या होने की सूचना है।

• Clashes between rival armed groups broke



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**2. PM calls for targeted intervention in TB elimination efforts**

टीबी उन्मूलन प्रयासों में लक्षित हस्तक्षेप की प्रधानमंत्री की अपील

**3. Issue of duplication of EPIC numbers resolved, says Election Commission**

ईपीआईसी नंबरों की दोहराव की समस्या सुलझ गई है, चुनाव आयोग ने कहा

**4. Prime message**

प्रधान संदेश

**5. Education Without Employment in India**

भारत में शिक्षा बिना रोजगार

**6. The Syrian people do not want another centralised regime in Syria'**

'सीरियाई लोग सीरिया में एक और केंद्रीकृत शासन नहीं चाहते हैं'

**7. U.S. Tariff Pause on Beijing Puts Pressure on 'China-Plus-One' Countries**

अमेरिका द्वारा बीजिंग पर टैरिफ विराम ने 'चाइना-प्लस-वन' देशों पर दबाव बढ़ाया

**8. India rolls over Treasury Bill worth \$50 million to help the Maldives**

भारत ने मालदीव की मदद के लिए 50 मिलियन डॉलर का ट्रेजरी बिल रोल ओवर किया



# India asserts J&K stand after U.S. claims

Kashmir a 'bilateral' issue to be addressed within the framework of India-Pakistan ties, says MEA

Trade did not figure in talks the leadership of India, U.S. held against the backdrop of Operation Sindoor

External Affairs Ministry denies Trump's claims of a possible escalation involving a nuclear scenario

GS Paper II: India-Pakistan

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**  
**Sahasini Haidar**  
NEW DELHI

of Operation Sindoor, which targeted nine terror locations inside Pakistan and PoK on May 7.

Responding to U.S. President Donald Trump's remarks on the Kashmir issue, India on Tuesday reiterated its "long-standing national position" that regards Jammu and Kashmir as a "bilateral" issue to be addressed within the framework of India-Pakistan ties.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the only subject India wished to raise was Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and that the matter of India-U.S. trade did not figure in the telephone conversations the leadership of India and the U.S. held against the backdrop

"We have a long-standing national position that any issues pertaining to the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir have to be addressed by India and Pakistan bilaterally. That stated policy has not changed," Mr. Jaiswal said, adding, "The outstanding matter is the vacating of illegally occupied Indian territory [PoK] by Pakistan."

Mr. Trump, who has been speaking on his behind-the-scenes role in bringing the hostilities between India and Pakistan to a pause, doubled down on the same in a speech in Saudi Arabia capital Riyadh on Tuesday.

Shortly before India an-

## Clearing the air | India rebuts Trump's statements against the backdrop of Operation Sindoor, the understanding between India and Pakistan

Trump/Rubio statements	MEA response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>U.S. brokered India-Pakistan ceasefire</li> <li>Averted nuclear conflict</li> <li>Threatened to stop trade</li> <li>Will mediate on Kashmir</li> <li>Hyphenated India and Pakistan</li> <li>India and Pakistan to talk at neutral venue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreement directly via DGMOs; it was requested by Pak. due to 'effective' IAF strikes</li> <li>Military action in conventional domain only</li> <li>No discussion on trade with U.S. during Operation Sindoor</li> <li>Talks will be bilateral, and topic will be PoK's return</li> <li>No hyphenation; international community stands with India on terrorism</li> <li>No such discussion planned</li> </ul>

nounced the "understanding" to pause firing and military action, Mr. Trump had said in a post on Truth Social on May 10 that the U.S. had mediated between India and Pakistan, leading to a "full and immediate ceasefire". The an-

nouncements from the Indian side were made by Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar thereafter. Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar announced the "ceasefire with immediate effect" the

same evening.

On Monday, Mr. Trump elaborated on his earlier statements while interacting with reporters at the White House. "I said [to the Indian and Pakistani leadership], let's stop it. If you stop it, we're doing

trade. If you don't stop it, we're not going to do any trade," Mr. Trump said. "I think it could have been a bad nuclear war. Millions of people could have been killed. So I'm very proud of that," he added.

### 'Historic ceasefire'

Mr. Trump, who reached Saudi Arabia on Tuesday, reiterated his offer to promote trade and said his administration brought about a "historic ceasefire" between India and Pakistan after Operation Sindoor. "Just days ago, my administration successfully brokered a historic ceasefire to stop the escalating violence between India and Pakistan, and I used trade to a large extent to do it. I said, fellows let us do some trade. Let us not trade nu-

clear missiles," Mr. Trump said in a speech at the Saudi-U.S. Investment Forum. He praised Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Vice-President J.D. Vance for the pause in military action between India and Pakistan. However, Mr. Jaiswal pushed back on the reference to trade. He said Operation Sindoor was "entirely in the conventional domain", denying Mr. Trump's claims of a possible escalation involving a nuclear scenario between India and Pakistan.

"As you know, India has a firm stance that it will not give in to nuclear blackmail or allow cross-border terrorism to be conducted involving it," Mr. Jaiswal said.

PM AT ADAMPUR AIRBASE  
» PAGE 5

## India asserts J&K stand after U.S. claims

### भारत ने अमेरिकी दावों के बाद जम्मू-कश्मीर पर अपना रुख स्पष्ट किया

Kashmir a 'bilateral' issue to be addressed within the framework of India-Pakistan ties, says MEA

विदेश मंत्रालय ने कहा कि कश्मीर एक 'द्विपक्षीय' मुद्दा है, जिसे भारत-पाकिस्तान के संबंधों के ढांचे के भीतर सुलझाया जाना चाहिए

• India reiterated its long-standing national position that Jammu and Kashmir is a bilateral issue to be addressed within the framework of India-Pakistan ties.

• भारत ने अपने लंबे समय से चले आ रहे राष्ट्रीय रुख को दोहराया कि जम्मू और कश्मीर एक द्विपक्षीय मुद्दा है जिसे भारत-पाकिस्तान संबंधों के ढांचे के भीतर सुलझाया जाना चाहिए।

• The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal emphasized that the only issue India wanted to raise was Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

• विदेश मंत्रालय के प्रवक्ता रंधीर जायसवाल ने जोर दिया कि भारत केवल पाक-अधिकृत कश्मीर (PoK) का मुद्दा उठाना चाहता है।

• He clarified that India-U.S. trade was not discussed during recent telephonic talks between Indian and U.S. leadership, which took place amid Operation Sindoor.



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• उन्होंने स्पष्ट किया कि भारत और अमेरिका के बीच व्यापार पर हालिया टेलीफोनिक बातचीत में कोई चर्चा नहीं हुई, जो ऑपरेशन सिंदूर की पृष्ठभूमि में हुई थी।

• Operation Sindoor targeted **nine terror locations** inside **Pakistan and PoK** on **May 7**.

• **7 मई** को ऑपरेशन सिंदूर के तहत पाकिस्तान और PoK के भीतर नौ आतंकी ठिकानों को निशाना बनाया गया था।

• Mr. Jaiswal stated, "Any issues pertaining to the **Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir** have to be addressed **bilaterally** by India and Pakistan."

• श्री जायसवाल ने कहा, "जम्मू और कश्मीर के भारतीय केंद्र शासित प्रदेश से संबंधित किसी भी मुद्दे को भारत और पाकिस्तान के बीच **द्विपक्षीय रूप** से सुलझाया जाना चाहिए।"

• He added, "The outstanding matter is the **vacating of illegally occupied Indian territory [PoK]** by Pakistan."

• उन्होंने आगे कहा, "मूल मुद्दा है कि पाकिस्तान **गैरकानूनी रूप से कब्जा किए गए भारतीय क्षेत्र (PoK)** को खाली करे।"

## Trump's Remarks and India's Response

### ट्रंप की टिप्पणियाँ और भारत की प्रतिक्रिया

• **Donald Trump** claimed to have played a **behind-the-scenes role** in stopping hostilities between India and Pakistan.

• **डोनाल्ड ट्रंप** ने भारत और पाकिस्तान के बीच शत्रुता रोकने में **पर्दे के पीछे भूमिका** निभाने का दावा किया।

• On **May 10**, Mr. Trump posted on **Truth Social** that the U.S. mediated a "**full and immediate ceasefire**" between India and Pakistan.

• **10 मई** को श्री ट्रंप ने **ट्रुथ सोशल** पर पोस्ट किया कि अमेरिका ने भारत और पाकिस्तान के बीच "**पूर्ण और तात्कालिक युद्धविराम**" कराया।

• On **Monday**, he elaborated at the **White House**, saying he told both sides: "**Stop it or no trade**," suggesting his influence in using **trade as leverage**.

• **सोमवार** को उन्होंने **व्हाइट हाउस** में विस्तार से कहा कि उन्होंने दोनों पक्षों से कहा: "**इसे रोको वरना व्यापार नहीं होगा**," यह बताते हुए कि उन्होंने **व्यापार को दबाव के रूप में इस्तेमाल** किया।

• Mr. Trump said it "**could have been a bad nuclear war**" and claimed that "**millions of people could have been killed**".

• श्री ट्रंप ने कहा कि यह "**खतरनाक परमाणु युद्ध**" बन सकता था और दावा किया कि "**लाखों लोग मारे जा सकते थे**"।



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- He expressed pride in stopping it, saying “I’m very proud of that.”
- उन्होंने इसे रोकने पर गर्व जताया और कहा, “मुझे इस पर बहुत गर्व है।”

## Saudi Arabia Speech and Trade-Nuclear Comments

### सऊदी अरब में भाषण और व्यापार-परमाणु टिप्पणियाँ

- During his speech at the **Saudi-U.S. Investment Forum**, Mr. Trump reiterated that his administration **brokered a historic ceasefire** using **trade diplomacy**.
- सऊदी-अमेरिकी निवेश मंच पर अपने भाषण में श्री ट्रंप ने दोहराया कि उनकी सरकार ने व्यापार कूटनीति के माध्यम से ऐतिहासिक युद्धविराम कराया।
- He said, “Let us do some **trade**. Let us not trade **nuclear missiles**.”
- उन्होंने कहा, “आओ कुछ व्यापार करें। परमाणु मिसाइलों का व्यापार नहीं करें।”
- He also praised **Secretary of State Marco Rubio** and **Vice-President J.D. Vance** for their roles in the ceasefire.
- उन्होंने विदेश मंत्री मार्को रुबियो और उप राष्ट्रपति जे. डी. वेंस की युद्धविराम में भूमिका की सराहना की।

## India Denies Nuclear War Angle and Trade Connection

### भारत ने परमाणु युद्ध की आशंका और व्यापार संबंध को खारिज किया

- Mr. Jaiswal **rejected** Mr. Trump's claims of a possible **nuclear escalation** and stated that **Operation Sindoor** was conducted **entirely in the conventional domain**.
- श्री जायसवाल ने श्री ट्रंप के परमाणु टकराव के दावे को खारिज किया और कहा कि ऑपरेशन सिंदूर पूरी तरह से पारंपरिक सैन्य कार्रवाई थी।
- He said, “India will not give in to **nuclear blackmail** or allow **cross-border terrorism** under that pretext.”
- उन्होंने कहा, “भारत परमाणु ब्लैकमेलिंग के आगे नहीं झुकेगा और इस बहाने सीमा पार आतंकवाद को अनुमति नहीं देगा।”

- **1971 War:** It resulted in partition of Pakistan and Bangladesh was created and it culminated with signing of **Shimla Agreement**.
- Under Shimla Agreement both countries agreed to renamed **ceasefire line as the Line of Control (LoC)**.
- Within the Shimla Agreement two countries agreed to **resolve any bilateral disputes/issues between the two bilaterally without involvement of any third party**. They agreed to work through the mechanism of bilateral working groups.
- Following the 1971 war Pakistan realized its limitation in winning conventional wars against India.

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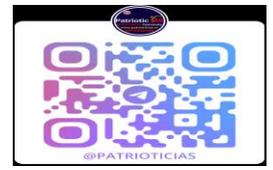
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- Therefore, it decided to change its strategy and has pursued: **Proxy warfare** by sponsoring cross border terrorism; and **pursued nuclear option** to gain strategic parity with India.

PATRIOTIC IAS



# PM calls for targeted intervention in TB elimination efforts

GS Paper II: Government Scheme

**Bindu Shajan Perappadan**  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday underscored the importance of targeted interventions and technology-led outreach in the fight against tuberculosis, while chairing a high-level review meeting on the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) at his official residence.

The Prime Minister emphasised the need to analyse TB patient data based on urban-rural distinctions and occupational categories. "This will help identify vulnerable groups requiring early testing and treatment, especially workers in construction, mining, textile and other high-risk sectors," Mr. Modi observed.

Highlighting the curability of TB with regular treatment, the Prime Minister said the public must be made more aware, with less fear and more support. He called upon *Nikshay Mitra* – volunteers who support TB patients, to leverage digital platforms and interactive technologies to engage with patients effectively.

He reiterated the role of public participation and cleanliness in the elimination strategy, and stressed the importance of ensuring that each patient re-



Between 2015 and 2023, there has been an 18% reduction in TB incidence in India.

ceives uninterrupted treatment.

During the meeting, the Prime Minister reviewed encouraging data from the World Health Organization's Global TB Report 2024, which notes an 18% reduction in TB incidence in India - from 237 to 195 per lakh population between 2015 and 2023 - double the global pace. TB mortality in India fell by 21%, and treatment coverage rose to 85%.

Officials also presented updates on key infrastructure enhancements under NTEP, including the expansion of the TB diagnostic network to 8,540 NAAT (Nucleic Acid Amplification Testing) laboratories and 87 culture and drug susceptibility testing labs. The current diagnostic infrastructure includes over 26,700 X-ray units.

## PM calls for targeted intervention in TB elimination efforts

### टीबी उन्मूलन प्रयासों में लक्षित हस्तक्षेप की प्रधानमंत्री की अपील

• Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday chaired a high-level review meeting on the **National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP)** at his official residence.

• प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने मंगलवार को अपने आधिकारिक निवास पर राष्ट्रीय टीबी उन्मूलन कार्यक्रम (NTEP) की उच्च स्तरीय समीक्षा बैठक की अध्यक्षता की।

• He stressed the **importance of targeted interventions and technology-led outreach** in the fight against **tuberculosis**.

• उन्होंने क्षय रोग (टीबी) के खिलाफ लड़ाई में लक्षित हस्तक्षेप और प्रौद्योगिकी-आधारित पहुँच के महत्व पर जोर दिया।

• The Prime Minister emphasised analysing **TB patient data based on urban-rural distinctions and occupational categories**.

• प्रधानमंत्री ने शहरी-ग्रामीण भेद और व्यावसायिक वर्गों के आधार पर टीबी रोगियों के डेटा का विश्लेषण करने की आवश्यकता पर बल दिया।

• He said this will help in identifying **vulnerable groups requiring early testing and treatment**, especially workers in **construction, mining, textile, and other high-risk sectors**.

• उन्होंने कहा कि इससे निर्माण, खनन, कपड़ा और अन्य उच्च जोखिम वाले क्षेत्रों में काम करने वाले संवेदनशील समूहों की जल्दी जांच और इलाज में मदद मिलेगी।



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- The Prime Minister highlighted that **TB is curable with regular treatment**, and the public should be made more **aware**, with **less fear and more support**.
- प्रधानमंत्री ने यह उजागर किया कि टीबी नियमित उपचार से ठीक किया जा सकता है, और जनता को जागरूक, कम भयभीत और अधिक सहायक बनाया जाना चाहिए।
- He urged **Nikshay Mitras** — volunteers who support TB patients — to use **digital platforms and interactive technologies** to engage with patients.
- उन्होंने टीबी रोगियों की सहायता करने वाले स्वयंसेवकों - निक्षय मित्रों से डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म और इंटरएक्टिव तकनीकों के उपयोग का आह्वान किया।
- He reiterated the importance of **public participation and cleanliness** in TB elimination, and stressed the need for **uninterrupted treatment** for every patient.
- उन्होंने जन भागीदारी और स्वच्छता की भूमिका को दोहराया और हर मरीज के लिए निरंतर उपचार सुनिश्चित करने की आवश्यकता पर बल दिया।

## Progress and Achievements in TB Elimination

### टीबी उन्मूलन में प्रगति और उपलब्धियाँ

- The Prime Minister reviewed **encouraging data** from the **World Health Organization's Global TB Report 2024**.
- प्रधानमंत्री ने विश्व स्वास्थ्य संगठन की वैश्विक टीबी रिपोर्ट 2024 से प्राप्त प्रोत्साहित करने वाले आंकड़ों की समीक्षा की।
- The report shows an **18% reduction in TB incidence in India** – from **237 to 195 per lakh population between 2015 and 2023**, which is **double the global pace**.
- रिपोर्ट के अनुसार भारत में टीबी के मामलों में 18% की कमी दर्ज की गई – 2015 से 2023 के बीच प्रति लाख जनसंख्या पर 237 से घटकर 195, जो कि वैश्विक औसत की तुलना में दोगुनी गति है।
- **TB mortality in India has fallen by 21%**, and **treatment coverage has risen to 85%**.
- भारत में टीबी मृत्यु दर में 21% की गिरावट आई है और उपचार कवरेज बढ़कर 85% हो गया है।

## Infrastructure Enhancements under NTEP

### NTEP के तहत बुनियादी ढांचे में सुधार

- Officials presented updates on infrastructure upgrades, including the expansion of **TB diagnostic network** to **8,540 NAAT (Nucleic Acid Amplification Testing) laboratories**.
- अधिकारियों ने बुनियादी ढांचे में सुधार की जानकारी दी, जिसमें टीबी निदान नेटवर्क का विस्तार 8,540 NAAT (न्यूक्लिक एसिड एम्प्लीफिकेशन टेस्टिंग) प्रयोगशालाओं तक शामिल है।

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- They also reported the presence of **87 culture and drug susceptibility testing labs** across the country.
- उन्होंने देश भर में **87 कल्चर और औषधि संवेदनशीलता परीक्षण प्रयोगशालाओं** की मौजूदगी की जानकारी दी।
- The current diagnostic infrastructure also includes over **26,700 X-ray units**.
- वर्तमान निदान अवसंरचना में **26,700 से अधिक एक्स-रे इकाइयाँ** भी शामिल हैं।

## Issue of duplication of **EPIC numbers** resolved, says Election Commission

GS Paper II: Elections

**Sreeparna Chakrabarty**  
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday said it had resolved the long-pending problem of duplication of voter ID card numbers and issued fresh **elector photo identity cards (EPIC)** to those who faced the issue.

The **10-digit EPIC number** is issued by the EC to each elector. The number is a **unique alphanumeric code** assigned to each registered elector to prevent impersonation.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had earlier alleged that multiple voters in the State had the same EPIC number. The Congress too had raised the issue.

EC sources said that in order to resolve the problem of duplication of numbers, the entire data-



On average, about one voter in four polling stations faced the duplication issue, sources said.

base of over 99 crore electors was searched by the **Chief Electoral Officers (CEO)** of all the **36 States and Union Territories** and **electoral registration officers** of all the **4,123 Assembly constituencies** in all the **10.5 lakh polling stations**. It was found that on average, about one voter in four polling stations faced the issue of EPIC number duplication, they added. There are nearly 1,000 electors per polling station.

“During the field-level verification, it was found that holders of such similar EPIC numbers were genuine electors in different Assembly constituencies and different polling stations. All such electors have since been issued new EPICs with new numbers,” a senior official of the EC told *The Hindu*.

Flagging the issue of EPIC number duplication in West Bengal on February 27, Ms. Banerjee alleged that the ruling BJP at the Centre, “with the blessings of Election Commission of India”, was including voters from other States in the West Bengal voters’ list.

Two days later, the EC said that irrespective of the EPIC number, a person can cast vote only once at their designated polling stations in their respective consti-

tuencies in their States or Union Territories. It had said that it would remove the duplication and ensure that each voter gets a unique EPIC number.

The Trinamool, however, rejected the EC clarification saying it was a “cover-up” and it was impossible for voters in two different constituencies to have the same EPIC number, citing the panel’s own handbook.

### ‘Will not impact results’

Every voter’s name is on the electoral roll of the polling station where she is an ordinary resident. Having similar EPIC numbers never enabled any such person to vote at any other polling station. Thus, the issue of duplication of EPIC numbers could not have impacted the results of any elections, it said.

## Issue of duplication of EPIC numbers resolved, says Election Commission

**ईपीआईसी नंबरों की दोहराव की समस्या सुलझ गई है, चुनाव आयोग ने कहा**

- The Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday said it had resolved the long-pending problem of duplication of voter ID card numbers and



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issued fresh Elector Photo Identity Cards (EPIC) to those who faced the issue.

• चुनाव आयोग (EC) ने मंगलवार को कहा कि उसने मतदाता पहचान पत्र नंबरों की दोहराव की लंबे समय से लंबित समस्या को सुलझा लिया है और जिन मतदाताओं को यह समस्या हुई थी, उन्हें नए ईपीआईसी कार्ड जारी कर दिए गए हैं।

• The **10-digit EPIC number is a unique alphanumeric code** assigned to each registered elector to prevent impersonation.

• **10-अंकों का ईपीआईसी नंबर** प्रत्येक पंजीकृत मतदाता को प्रतिरूपण रोकने के लिए एक अद्वितीय अल्फ़ान्यूमेरिक कोड के रूप में दिया जाता है।

• **West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee** had earlier alleged that **multiple voters** in the State had the **same EPIC number**.

• **पश्चिम बंगाल की मुख्यमंत्री ममता बनर्जी** ने पहले आरोप लगाया था कि राज्य में कई मतदाताओं के पास **समान ईपीआईसी नंबर** हैं।

• The **Congress** had also raised the issue.

• **कांग्रेस** ने भी इस मुद्दे को उठाया था।

• EC sources said that to resolve the problem, the entire **database of over 99 crore electors** was searched by **Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs)** of all **36 States and Union Territories**, and by **electoral registration officers** of all **4,123 Assembly constituencies and 10.5 lakh polling stations**.

• ईसी सूत्रों ने बताया कि समस्या को सुलझाने के लिए **99 करोड़ से अधिक मतदाताओं के पूरे डेटाबेस** को **36 राज्यों और केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों के मुख्य निर्वाचन अधिकारियों** और **4,123 विधानसभा क्षेत्रों तथा 10.5 लाख मतदान केंद्रों के निर्वाचन पंजीकरण अधिकारियों** द्वारा खंगाला गया।

• It was found that on average, about **one voter in every four polling stations** faced the issue of **EPIC number duplication**.

• यह पाया गया कि औसतन **हर चार मतदान केंद्रों में से एक मतदाता** को **ईपीआईसी नंबर की दोहराव** की समस्या का सामना करना पड़ा।

• There are nearly **1,000 electors per polling station**.

• प्रत्येक मतदान केंद्र पर लगभग **1,000 मतदाता** होते हैं।

• During the **field-level verification**, it was found that holders of similar EPIC numbers were **genuine electors** in **different Assembly constituencies and polling stations**.

• **मैदान स्तर पर सत्यापन** के दौरान पाया गया कि **समान ईपीआईसी नंबर रखने वाले मतदाता वास्तव में विभिन्न विधानसभा क्षेत्रों और मतदान केंद्रों में वैध मतदाता** थे।

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- All such electors have since been issued **new EPICs with new numbers**, a **senior EC official** said.
- चुनाव आयोग के एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी ने कहा कि ऐसे सभी मतदाताओं को नए नंबरों के साथ नए ईपीआईसी कार्ड जारी कर दिए गए हैं।
- On **February 27**, Ms. Banerjee had alleged that the ruling **BJP at the Centre**, "with the  **blessings of the Election Commission of India**", was including **voters from other States** in the **West Bengal voters' list**.
- 27 फरवरी को सुश्री बनर्जी ने आरोप लगाया कि केंद्र में सत्तारूढ़ भाजपा, "भारत निर्वाचन आयोग की सहमति से", अन्य राज्यों के मतदाताओं को पश्चिम बंगाल की मतदाता सूची में शामिल कर रही है।
- On **February 29**, the EC said that **irrespective of the EPIC number**, a person can vote **only once at their designated polling station** in their respective **State or Union Territory**.
- 29 फरवरी को ईसी ने कहा कि ईपीआईसी नंबर चाहे जो भी हो, कोई व्यक्ति केवल अपने निर्धारित मतदान केंद्र पर ही अपने संबंधित राज्य या केंद्र शासित प्रदेश में एक बार ही मतदान कर सकता है।
- The EC said it would **remove the duplication** and ensure each voter gets a **unique EPIC number**.
- ईसी ने कहा कि वह दोहराव को समाप्त करेगा और प्रत्येक मतदाता को अद्वितीय ईपीआईसी नंबर सुनिश्चित करेगा।
- The **Trinamool Congress** rejected the EC clarification, calling it a "**cover-up**" and said that it was **impossible for voters in two different constituencies** to have the **same EPIC number**, citing the EC's own handbook.
- तृणमूल कांग्रेस ने ईसी के स्पष्टीकरण को "ढकने का प्रयास" बताते हुए खारिज कर दिया और कहा कि दो अलग-अलग निर्वाचन क्षेत्रों के मतदाताओं के पास समान ईपीआईसी नंबर होना असंभव है, उन्होंने ईसी के खुद के मार्गदर्शिका पुस्तिका का हवाला दिया।

### **'Will not impact results'**

#### **'परिणामों पर कोई प्रभाव नहीं पड़ेगा'**

- Every voter's name is on the **electoral roll of the polling station** where they are an **ordinary resident**.
- हर मतदाता का नाम उस मतदान केंद्र की मतदाता सूची में होता है, जहां वह सामान्य रूप से निवास करता है।
- Having **similar EPIC numbers** never enabled any person to **vote at another polling station**.
- समान ईपीआईसी नंबर होने से किसी भी व्यक्ति को किसी अन्य मतदान केंद्र पर मतदान करने की अनुमति कभी नहीं मिली।

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• Thus, the issue of duplication of EPIC numbers could not have impacted the results of any elections.

• इसलिए, ईपीआईसी नंबरों की दोहराव की समस्या का किसी भी चुनाव के परिणामों पर कोई प्रभाव नहीं पड़ा।

GS Paper II: India-Pakistan

## Prime message

India must mobilise global opinion against Pakistan's nuclear threats

**P**rime Minister Narendra Modi's address to the nation on Monday night and his visit to the Adampur base of the Indian Air Force in Punjab on the frontlines with Pakistan on Tuesday were reassuring for the nation that has been in the midst of a volatile conflict. Mr. Modi reiterated India's revised strategy of responding to terrorism with clarity and resolve. For one, India is no longer willing to concede the fig leaf of an explanation often offered by Pakistan that terrorists were non-state actors acting independently of the state. Operation Sindoor is ongoing, but it is also a continuation of this new strategic approach which earlier manifested, less successfully, in the surgical strikes of 2016 and Balakot airstrikes of 2019. India is willing to engage with Pakistan diplomatically, but only on the central and relevant question of terrorism emanating from that country and the status of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Mr. Modi also made it clear that India would stay the course on the decision to suspend the Indus Waters Treaty. Though Mr. Modi did not directly join issue with U.S. President Donald Trump on his claim that his administration brokered the understanding between New Delhi and Islamabad, he was categorical in his assertion that India would be guided entirely by its national interest in deciding its future course of action. Further moves by India will depend on how Pakistan responds to the changed approach of India and the new realities.

Mr. Modi's visit to Adampur, 100 km from the border and also a site of India's Russian-made S-400 air defence system, disproved Pakistan's claim that the base was hit during the recent military face off. That said, there is a need to insulate strategy from populist sloganeering and prime-time TRP wars. India's stakes are high, and they must not be held hostage by the designs of Pakistan's terrorists, which are of course unacceptable. Quiet diplomacy and covert operations may not be suitable for TRP media wars but can be extremely useful in the pursuit of the country's strategic interests. While India should not be unsettled by Pakistan's nuclear sabre-rattling, it is also time India took the lead with other partner countries to start a new global conversation on the risks of nuclear weapons. The dangers of a nuclear conflict are far too serious to be ignored, and discussions within India and the world should be cognisant of that. While India's position against third-party interference in India-Pakistan relations is a historically established position, it must also build global opinion against Pakistan's strategy of terrorism and nuclear blackmail.

## Prime message

### प्रधान संदेश

• Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address to the nation on Monday night and his visit to the Adampur base of the Indian Air Force in Punjab on Tuesday were reassuring for the nation that has been in the midst of a volatile conflict.

प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी का सोमवार रात राष्ट्र को संबोधन और मंगलवार को पंजाब के अदमपुर वायुसैन्य अड्डे पर पाकिस्तान सीमा के पास उनकी यात्रा देश के लिए आश्वस्त करने वाली थी, जो एक उथल-पुथल भरे संघर्ष के बीच में था।

• Mr. Modi reiterated India's revised strategy of responding to terrorism with clarity and resolve.

श्री मोदी ने आतंकवाद का जवाब स्पष्टता और संकल्प के साथ देने के लिए भारत की संशोधित रणनीति को दोहराया।

• India is no longer willing to concede the fig leaf of an explanation often offered by Pakistan that terrorists were non-state actors acting independently of the state.

भारत अब पाकिस्तान द्वारा अक्सर दी जाने वाली उस व्याख्या को स्वीकार करने के लिए तैयार नहीं है, जिसमें कहा जाता था कि आतंकवादी गैर-राज्य अभिनेता हैं जो राज्य से स्वतंत्र रूप से काम कर रहे हैं।

• Operation Sindoor is ongoing, but it is also a continuation of this new strategic approach which earlier manifested, less successfully, in the surgical strikes of 2016 and Balakot airstrikes of 2019.

ऑपरेशन सिंदूर जारी है, लेकिन यह इस नई रणनीतिक दृष्टिकोण की निरंतरता भी है, जो पहले 2016 की सर्जिकल स्ट्राइक और 2019 के बालाकोट हवाई हमलों में कम सफलता के साथ प्रकट हुई थी।

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• India is willing to engage with Pakistan diplomatically, but only on the central and relevant question of terrorism emanating from that country and the status of **Pakistan-occupied Kashmir**.

भारत पाकिस्तान के साथ कूटनीतिक रूप से संवाद करने को तैयार है, लेकिन केवल उस देश से उत्पन्न आतंकवाद और पाकिस्तान के कब्जे वाले कश्मीर की स्थिति के केंद्रीय और प्रासंगिक प्रश्न पर ही।

• Mr. Modi also made it clear that India would stay the course on the decision to suspend the **Indus Waters Treaty**.

श्री मोदी ने यह भी स्पष्ट किया कि भारत **इंडस वॉटर ट्रीटी** को निलंबित करने के निर्णय पर अडिग रहेगा।

• Though Mr. Modi did not directly join issue with U.S. President **Donald Trump** on his claim that his administration brokered the understanding between New Delhi and Islamabad, he was categorical in his assertion that India would be guided entirely by its national interest in deciding its future course of action.

हालांकि श्री मोदी ने **अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रम्प** के उस दावे से सीधे विवाद नहीं किया कि उनकी सरकार ने न्यू दिल्ली और इस्लामाबाद के बीच समझौता कराया, उन्होंने यह स्पष्ट किया कि भारत अपने भविष्य के कार्य योजना को तय करते समय केवल अपनी राष्ट्रीय हितों से मार्गदर्शित होगा।

• Further moves by India will depend on how Pakistan responds to the changed approach of India and the new realities.

भारत की आगे की कार्रवाइयाँ इस बात पर निर्भर करेंगी कि पाकिस्तान भारत की बदलती रणनीति और नई वास्तविकताओं के प्रति कैसे प्रतिक्रिया देता है।

• **Mr. Modi's visit to Adampur, 100 km from the border and also a site of India's Russian-made S-400 air defence system**, disproved Pakistan's claim that the base was hit during the recent military face-off.

श्री मोदी की अदमपुर यात्रा, जो सीमा से 100 किमी दूर है और **भारत के रूसी निर्मित S-400 वायु रक्षा प्रणाली** का स्थल है, ने पाकिस्तान के उस दावे को झुठलाया कि हाल की सैन्य टकराव के दौरान इस अड्डे पर हमला हुआ था।

• That said, there is a need to insulate strategy from populist sloganeering and primetime TRP wars.

यह कहा गया है कि रणनीति को लोकलुभावन नारेबाजी और प्राइमटाइम **TRP** युद्धों से अलग करने की आवश्यकता है।

• India's stakes are high, and they must not be held hostage by the designs of Pakistan's terrorists, which are of course unacceptable.

भारत की दांव बहुत ऊँचे हैं, और इन्हें पाकिस्तान के आतंकवादियों की योजनाओं के सामने बंधक नहीं बनाना चाहिए, जो निस्संदेह अस्वीकार्य हैं।

• **Quiet diplomacy and covert operations may not be suitable for TRP media wars but can be extremely useful in the pursuit of the country's strategic interests.**

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चुप्प कूटनीति और गुप्त ऑपरेशन TRP मीडिया युद्धों के लिए उपयुक्त नहीं हो सकते हैं, लेकिन ये देश के रणनीतिक हितों की प्राप्ति में अत्यंत उपयोगी हो सकते हैं।

• While India should not be unsettled by Pakistan's nuclear sabre-rattling, it is also time India took the lead with other partner countries to start a new global conversation on the risks of nuclear weapons.

जबकि भारत को पाकिस्तान की परमाणु हथियारों की धमकी से अस्थिर नहीं होना चाहिए, यह समय है कि भारत अन्य साझेदार देशों के साथ मिलकर परमाणु हथियारों के खतरों पर एक नई वैश्विक चर्चा शुरू करे।

• The dangers of a nuclear conflict are far too serious to be ignored, and discussions within India and the world should be cognizant of that.

एक परमाणु संघर्ष के खतरें नज़रअंदाज करने के लिए बहुत गंभीर हैं, और भारत और दुनिया के भीतर चर्चाएँ इस बात से अवगत होनी चाहिए।

• While India's position against third-party interference in **India-Pakistan relations** is a historically established position, it must also build global opinion against Pakistan's strategy of terrorism and nuclear blackmail.

जबकि भारत का **भारत-पाकिस्तान संबंधों** में तीसरे पक्ष की हस्तक्षेप के खिलाफ रुख ऐतिहासिक रूप से स्थापित है, इसे पाकिस्तान की आतंकवाद और परमाणु ब्लैकमेलिंग की रणनीति के खिलाफ वैश्विक राय भी बनानी चाहिए।



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# In India, education without employment

SS Paper II: Education

In defending the educational policies of the present government, it has been claimed that education has been freed from the shackles of previous governments: **Atal Tinkering Labs, coding right from middle school, the recruitment of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe teachers, and the empowerment of Muslim girl students.** But primarily, it is stated that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 “will enable an educational renaissance”.

In all these utterances, the seminal point that is forgotten is that our educational system remains clueless about the shape-shifting marketplace – namely, the employability of our graduates as a workforce.

Education has many purposes. It enables, it enervates and elevates. As Vivekananda said, education empowers one to stand on one's own feet. After 75 years of foolishly gambling excellence for equity, India has squandered both. Young people are unable to find meaningful employment that is commensurate with any training that they may have received. The degrees they have are not worth the paper on which they are printed.

It is irrelevant that these problems were created or ignored by the Congress pot or the Bharatiya Janata Party kettle. The present lawfully elected government has the responsibility to cleanse these Augean stables. Never mind that the NEP 2000 is the fourth such document that was supposed to do this after the Radhakrishnan Commission (1948); the Kothari Commission (1966) and the Officers' Commission (1985).

A good education is one with an optimum of depth and breadth. Depth alone imparts the technical expertise for employability. Breadth provides flexibility in a rapidly changing Artificial Intelligence-driven ecosystem, where those in the job market need to constantly re-train themselves to avoid extinction.

## A high rate of educated unemployment

There is barely any evidence, four years on, that any of the NEP recommendations have been put into effect. In 2025, India's overall graduate employability rate is 42.6%, which is practically the same as the 44.3% of 2023. Similarly, knowledge-intensive employment in the year 2023 only stands at 11.72%. Multiple entries and exits, a hallmark of NEP, have only created low-quality and poorly paying e-commerce jobs.

The high rate of educated unemployment today shows that education in India is actually disempowering students. The NEP is a retreat to the Vannevar Bush model of the mid-20th century U.S. without its financial cushioning. The NEP is outdated and financially unviable in the India of 2025. With lip service paid to “new” ideas such as Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), mother



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The educational system is clueless about the employability of India's graduates as a workforce

tongue learning, changing history textbooks, flexible curricula and a complete absence of methodology to effect its recommendations, the NEP is a dead fish in the water. It depends on course choice alone to correct imbalances, notwithstanding that the course content itself may be unworkable. It is noteworthy that there was not a single member from industry or the business sectors in the committee that drafted the NEP.

A good university seamlessly integrates breadth with depth. It is claimed that there has been a remarkable improvement from the past in that 11 Indian universities are ranked in the top QS World University Rankings (WUR) 500, clearly echoing the selective narrative of Nunzio Quacquarelli, CEO of QS, who was generous in his praise of India, while releasing WUR 25. Mr. Quacquarelli quoted the 318% increase in the performance of Indian universities, as the highest growth among the G-20 nations, quietly avoiding mention of both India's low ranking (above 100) and low publication quality. To wit, India's Category Normalized Citation Impact (NCI) rank (an indicator of publications quality) during 2008-19 which was 17th among 19 countries in the G-20, inched up admirably to 16th position in 2024. Such ‘increases’ have been touted by the Ministry in its Press Information Bureau press release of February 13, 2025. It has also been claimed that this is the year when Indian universities showcased the highest performance improvement among all G-20 nations. It is unbelievable that in this digital era, the government has failed to recognise and understand the commercial implications of QS, THE and similar agencies and the reasons for their skewed and deceptive analyses.

## A missing transparency on projects

Mega research projects were carried out with great fanfare and amidst a media blitz in the past. These included the New Millennium project (CSIR-NMITL), the \$10 Akash tablet project, and the IMPRINT (IMPacting Research INnovation and Technology) project (MHRD).

These projects were in the limelight for years, but the public is not aware of the emergence of the intended products or processes from these projects, on which hundreds of crores of taxpayer money has been spent. It does not matter whether these projects were initiated or shut down by the Congress or the BJP. What we, as taxpayers, want to know is if these projects were value for money.

India's Global Innovation Index (GII) represents the innovation capabilities of India. Our ranks in 2014, 2015 and 2024 were 76, 81, and 39. Malaysia and Türkiye lead India in GII with ranks of 33 and 37, respectively. The GII reveals

the world's top S&T clusters in two innovation metrics: published patent applications and published scientific articles. India has four clusters with ranks of 56 (Bengaluru), 63 (Delhi), 82 (Chennai) and 84 (Mumbai). The Bengaluru cluster is often touted as an unparalleled rival to Silicon Valley, particularly with respect to the numbers of startups and Unicorns. However, its 56th rank needs to be compared to the sixth-ranked Silicon Valley cluster. In terms of cluster intensity of the top 100, Bengaluru at 94 followed by Chennai at 96, Delhi at 98, and Mumbai at 99 pale in comparison to San Jose-San Francisco (Silicon Valley) at 2 and Cambridge at 1. The number of Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) applications per capita and scientific publications per capita for the Silicon Valley cluster are 7885 and 9211, respectively. The corresponding numbers for the Bengaluru cluster are 313 and 1077. Samsung Electronics (South Korean) is the leading patentee in Bengaluru. No further comment is necessary.

## The subject of start-ups

There is no point talking about start-ups, when we do not know what they mean. Start-ups in China, the U.S. and Israel tackle semiconductor technology, how to refine rare earth elements with ecological sensitivity and how to make metformin cheaper. In contrast, our government lauds new apps that hawk food products. India cannot have start-ups without indigenous technology. It cannot have indigenous technology without indigenous science. It cannot have indigenous science without indigenous quality education, sans political agendas. Two-wheeler kiranas are not startups.

Contrary to the thinking of the Education Ministry, the University Grants Commission (UGC) remains an instrument of control. It always has been and there is no justification for this antediluvian organisation to have both regulatory and financial control over universities. Can the UGC present a single piece of hard data showing that changes in pedagogy and syllabus have had a positive effect? In other words, how relevant are these changes, if any, to industry, skilling, and employability? India would probably be better off if the UGC was shut down. Sitting UGC chairs, vice-chancellors, directors and ministers need not appear in national dailies peddling their policies and propaganda ad nauseam. Their job is to execute policy, not talk about it, and to ensure decent employability for the youth. It is our job, as independent academics, to write in the newspapers, if they do not do their job.

“When stupidity is considered patriotism, it is unsafe to be intelligent” – Isaac Asimov

*The views expressed are personal*

## Education Without Employment in India

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• In defence of the present government's educational policies, it is claimed that education has been freed from previous constraints—through **Atal Tinkering Labs, coding from middle school, recruitment of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe teachers, and empowerment of Muslim girl students.**

• वर्तमान सरकार की शैक्षिक नीतियों के बचाव में यह दावा किया जाता है कि शिक्षा को पहले की बाधाओं से मुक्त कर दिया गया है—जैसे कि अटल टिंकरिंग लैब्स, मिडिल स्कूल से कोडिंग, अनुसूचित जाति/अनुसूचित जनजाति शिक्षकों की भर्ती, और मुस्लिम छात्राओं को सशक्त बनाना।

• It is primarily stated that the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 will enable an educational renaissance.**

• मुख्य रूप से यह कहा जाता है कि राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति (NEP) 2020 एक शैक्षणिक पुनर्जागरण को संभव बनाएगी।

• However, the key issue ignored in all these statements is that India's **educational system** remains **clueless about the changing job market** and the **employability** of its graduates.

• लेकिन इन सभी बयानों में जिस मुख्य मुद्दे को नजरअंदाज किया गया है, वह यह है कि भारत की शिक्षा प्रणाली अभी भी बदलते रोजगार बाजार और स्नातकों की रोजगारयोग्यता को लेकर अस्पष्ट है।

## Purpose of Education and Current Reality

### शिक्षा का उद्देश्य और वर्तमान वास्तविकता

• Education has many purposes — it **enables, enervates, and elevates.** As **Swami Vivekananda** said, **education must empower one to stand on one's own feet.**

• शिक्षा के कई उद्देश्य होते हैं — यह सशक्त बनाती है, कमजोर करती है और उन्नति देती है। जैसा कि स्वामी विवेकानंद ने कहा था, शिक्षा का उद्देश्य व्यक्ति को स्वावलंबी बनाना होना चाहिए।

• **After 75 years of prioritising equity over excellence, India has lost both.**

• 75 वर्षों तक उत्कृष्टता की कीमत पर समानता को प्राथमिकता देने के बाद, भारत ने दोनों को खो दिया है।

• **Youth today are unable to find meaningful employment,** regardless of their educational qualifications.

• आज के युवा, अपनी शैक्षिक योग्यता के बावजूद, अर्थपूर्ण रोजगार प्राप्त करने में असमर्थ हैं।

• Their degrees are **not worth the paper** they are printed on.

• उनकी डिग्रियाँ उस कागज के लायक भी नहीं हैं, जिस पर वे छपी हैं।

## Responsibility of Present Government

### वर्तमान सरकार की ज़िम्मेदारी

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• It doesn't matter if these problems were created by **Congress** or **BJP**, the current **elected government** has the responsibility to **clean up the system**.

• यह मायने नहीं रखता कि ये समस्याएँ कांग्रेस ने बनाई थीं या भाजपा ने, वर्तमान निर्वाचित सरकार की जिम्मेदारी है कि वह इस व्यवस्था की सफाई करे।

• The **NEP 2020** is the **fourth such attempt**, following the **Radhakrishnan Commission (1948)**, **Kothari Commission (1966)**, and the **Officers' Commission (1985)**.

• **NEP 2020** इस दिशा में चौथा प्रयास है, इससे पहले राधाकृष्णन आयोग (1948), कोठारी आयोग (1966) और अधिकारियों का आयोग (1985) आ चुके हैं।

## What Good Education Should Be

### अच्छी शिक्षा कैसी होनी चाहिए

• Good education must provide both **depth and breadth**.

• अच्छी शिक्षा में गहराई और व्यापकता दोनों होनी चाहिए।

• **Depth** provides **technical expertise** necessary for employability.

• गहराई व्यक्ति को तकनीकी दक्षता प्रदान करती है जो रोजगार के लिए जरूरी है।

• **Breadth** gives **flexibility** in a rapidly evolving **AI-driven ecosystem**, where **constant retraining** is required.

• विस्तार एक तेजी से बदलते AI-आधारित वातावरण में लचीलापन प्रदान करता है, जहाँ लगातार पुनः प्रशिक्षण की आवश्यकता होती है।

## Educated but Unemployed

### शिक्षित लेकिन बेरोजगार

• Even after **four years**, there is **little evidence** that NEP 2020 recommendations have been implemented.

• चार साल बाद भी, बहुत कम साक्ष्य है कि NEP 2020 की सिफारिशों को लागू किया गया है।

• In **2025**, **graduate employability rate** is just **42.6%**, similar to **44.3% in 2023**.

• 2025 में स्नातक रोजगार दर केवल 42.6% है, जो 2023 के 44.3% के समान है।

• In **2023**, **knowledge-intensive employment** was just **11.72%**.

• 2023 में ज्ञान-आधारित रोजगार केवल 11.72% था।

• NEP's feature of **multiple entries and exits** has resulted in **low-quality, poorly paying e-commerce jobs**.

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• NEP की कई बार प्रवेश और निकास की विशेषता ने केवल कम गुणवत्ता और कम वेतन वाली ई-कॉमर्स नौकरियाँ उत्पन्न की हैं।

• The **high rate of educated unemployment** indicates that education is actually **disempowering** students.

• शिक्षित बेरोजगारी की उच्च दर यह दिखाती है कि शिक्षा वास्तव में छात्रों को असशक्त बना रही है।

## Flawed NEP Model and Lack of Planning

### गलत NEP मॉडल और योजना की कमी

• NEP 2020 resembles the outdated **Vannevar Bush model** of mid-20th century America, but without its **financial support**.

• NEP 2020 पुराने **Vannevar Bush मॉडल** (20वीं सदी के मध्य का अमेरिकी मॉडल) जैसा है, लेकिन उसके **वित्तीय समर्थन** के बिना।

• **NEP 2020 is financially unviable** in India's current situation.

• भारत की वर्तमान स्थिति में NEP 2020 **वित्तीय रूप से अव्यवहारिक** है।

• Terms like **Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)**, **mother tongue learning**, **changing textbooks**, and **flexible curricula** are mentioned without **any implementation methodology**.

• जैसे शब्द — **भारतीय ज्ञान प्रणाली (IKS)**, **मातृभाषा में शिक्षा**, **पाठ्यपुस्तकों में बदलाव**, और **लचीला पाठ्यक्रम** — तो हैं, लेकिन इनके **प्रभावी क्रियान्वयन की कोई विधि नहीं** है।

• NEP assumes **course choice** alone will solve issues, while ignoring the **quality and content** of those courses.

• NEP मानती है कि केवल **कोर्स की पसंद** से समस्याएं हल होंगी, जबकि वह इन **कोर्सों की गुणवत्ता और विषयवस्तु** को नजरअंदाज करती है।

• Notably, **no member from industry or business** was included in the **NEP drafting committee**.

• उल्लेखनीय है कि **NEP मसौदा समिति** में उद्योग या व्यापार क्षेत्र का कोई सदस्य नहीं था।

## Misleading Rankings and Narratives

### भ्रामक रैंकिंग और कथाएं

• It is claimed that **11 Indian universities** are now ranked in **top 500 QS World University Rankings (WUR)**.

• यह दावा किया गया है कि **11 भारतीय विश्वविद्यालय** अब **QS विश्व विश्वविद्यालय रैंकिंग (WUR)** की **शीर्ष 500 सूची** में हैं।

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- This echoes the narrative of QS CEO Nunzio Quacquarelli, who praised India for a **318% performance increase** among G-20 nations.
- यह QS के सीईओ नुनज़ियो क्वैक्वरेली की बातों को दोहराता है, जिन्होंने भारत को G-20 देशों में 318% प्रदर्शन वृद्धि के लिए सराहा।
- However, India's **low overall ranking (above 100)** and **low research quality** are ignored.
- लेकिन भारत की कुल रैंकिंग (100 से ऊपर) और कम शोध गुणवत्ता को नजरअंदाज किया गया है।
- India's **Category Normalized Citation Impact (CNCI)** was 17th among 19 G-20 nations (2008–19) and only improved to 16th in 2024.
- भारत की श्रेणी सामान्यीकृत संदर्भ प्रभाव (CNCI) 2008–19 में G-20 के 19 देशों में 17वें स्थान पर थी और 2024 में 16वें स्थान पर पहुंची।
- Such marginal increases were **celebrated** in the **Press Information Bureau release on February 13, 2025**.
- ऐसी मामूली बढ़ोतरी को 13 फरवरी 2025 की प्रेस सूचना ब्यूरो की विज्ञप्ति में उत्सवपूर्वक प्रस्तुत किया गया।
- The government fails to **recognize the commercial motives** and **manipulative nature** of rankings by agencies like QS and THE.
- सरकार यह समझने में विफल रही है कि QS और THE जैसी एजेंसियों की रैंकिंग के पीछे व्यावसायिक उद्देश्य और भ्रामक विश्लेषण होते हैं।

## A Missing Transparency on Projects

### परियोजनाओं पर पारदर्शिता की कमी

- Mega research projects were launched in the past with **great publicity and media coverage**, including the **New Millennium project (CSIR-NMITLI)**, the **\$10 Akash tablet project**, and the **IMPRINT (IMPActing Research INnovation and Technology) project (MHRD)**.
- पिछले वर्षों में भारी प्रचार और मीडिया कवरेज के साथ कई बड़े शोध परियोजनाएं शुरू की गईं, जिनमें न्यू मिलेनियम प्रोजेक्ट (CSIR-NMITLI), \$10 का आकाश टैबलेट प्रोजेक्ट, और IMPRINT (IMPActing Research INnovation and Technology) प्रोजेक्ट (MHRD) शामिल हैं।
- These projects remained in the **spotlight for years**, but the public has not been informed about the **actual outcomes or products** developed through them, despite **hundreds of crores of taxpayer money** being spent.
- ये परियोजनाएं वर्षों तक चर्चा में रहीं, लेकिन जनता को यह नहीं बताया गया कि इनमें से वास्तविक उत्पाद या प्रक्रियाएं क्या निकलीं, जबकि इन पर करदाताओं के सैकड़ों करोड़ रुपये खर्च हुए।
- It is **irrelevant** whether these projects were started or closed by the **Congress** or **BJP**; what matters is whether they were **worth the money**.



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• यह महत्वहीन है कि ये परियोजनाएं कांग्रेस ने शुरू की थीं या बीजेपी ने बंद कीं; महत्वपूर्ण यह है कि क्या ये योजनाएं **पैसे के लायक** थीं।

## India's Global Innovation Index (GII)

### भारत का वैश्विक नवाचार सूचकांक (GII)

- India ranked **76 in 2014, 81 in 2015, and 39 in 2024** in the **Global Innovation Index (GII)**.
- भारत ने वैश्विक नवाचार सूचकांक (GII) में **2014 में 76वां, 2015 में 81वां, और 2024 में 39वां** स्थान प्राप्त किया।
- **Malaysia and Türkiye** are ahead of India with ranks of **33 and 37**, respectively.
- **मलेशिया और तुर्किये** भारत से आगे हैं, जिनकी रैंकिंग **33 और 37** है।
- **GII highlights top S&T (Science & Technology) clusters** based on **patent applications and scientific publications**.
- **GII वैज्ञानिक और तकनीकी (S&T) क्लस्टर्स को पेटेंट आवेदनों और वैज्ञानिक लेखों के आधार पर रैंक करता है।**
- India has **four clusters** ranked at **56 (Bengaluru), 63 (Delhi), 82 (Chennai), and 84 (Mumbai)**.
- भारत में **चार क्लस्टर** हैं जिनकी रैंकिंग **56 (बेंगलुरु), 63 (दिल्ली), 82 (चेन्नई), और 84 (मुंबई)** है।
- Although **Bengaluru** is often compared to **Silicon Valley** in terms of **start-ups and Unicorns**, its **rank of 56** is far behind Silicon Valley's **rank 6**.
- **बेंगलुरु को अक्सर स्टार्टअप्स और यूनिकॉर्न्स के लिहाज़ से सिलिकॉन वैली से तुलना की जाती है, लेकिन इसकी रैंक 56 है, जो सिलिकॉन वैली की रैंक 6 से बहुत पीछे है।**
- In terms of **cluster intensity**, Bengaluru ranks **94**, Chennai **96**, Delhi **98**, and Mumbai **99**, compared to **San Jose-San Francisco (rank 2)** and **Cambridge (rank 1)**.
- **क्लस्टर की तीव्रता के मामले में, बेंगलुरु 94, चेन्नई 96, दिल्ली 98, और मुंबई 99 स्थान पर हैं, जबकि सैन जोस-सैन फ्रांसिस्को (रैंक 2) और कैम्ब्रिज (रैंक 1) हैं।**
- **Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) applications per capita and scientific publications per capita** in Silicon Valley are **7885 and 9211**, respectively.
- **सिलिकॉन वैली में प्रति व्यक्ति पेटेंट (PCT) आवेदन और वैज्ञानिक लेखों की संख्या क्रमशः 7885 और 9211 है।**
- In comparison, Bengaluru's numbers are only **313 (PCT applications)** and **1077 (scientific publications)**.
- तुलना में, **बेंगलुरु की संख्या केवल 313 (PCT आवेदन) और 1077 (वैज्ञानिक प्रकाशन) है।**



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- Samsung Electronics (South Korea) is the top patentee in Bengaluru.
- सैमसंग इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स (दक्षिण कोरिया) बेंगलुरु में शीर्ष पेटेंट धारक है।

## The Subject of Start-ups

### स्टार्टअप्स का विषय

- There is no point in talking about **start-ups** if we don't define what they actually mean.
- स्टार्टअप्स के बारे में बात करना व्यर्थ है अगर हम यह नहीं जानते कि इनका अर्थ क्या है।
- In China, the U.S., and Israel, start-ups work on **semiconductors**, **eco-friendly rare earth processing**, and **affordable medicine** like metformin.
- चीन, अमेरिका और इज़राइल में स्टार्टअप्स सेमीकंडक्टर्स, इको-फ्रेंडली रियर अर्थ प्रोसेसिंग, और सस्ती दवाएं जैसे कि मेटफॉर्मिन पर काम करते हैं।
- In contrast, Indian government celebrates **apps selling food products**, which is not genuine **technological innovation**.
- इसके विपरीत, भारतीय सरकार खाद्य उत्पाद बेचने वाले ऐप्स की प्रशंसा करती है, जो वास्तविक तकनीकी नवाचार नहीं है।
- **Indigenous technology** is not possible without **indigenous science**, which in turn is not possible without **quality education** free from **political influence**.
- स्वदेशी तकनीक बिना स्वदेशी विज्ञान के संभव नहीं है, और स्वदेशी विज्ञान बिना गुणवत्तापूर्ण और गैर-राजनीतिक शिक्षा के संभव नहीं है।
- **Two-wheeler kiranas** are not start-ups.
- दो-पहिया किराना स्टोर स्टार्टअप नहीं होते।

## The Role of UGC and Higher Education

### UGC और उच्च शिक्षा की भूमिका

- Contrary to the Ministry of Education's stance, the **University Grants Commission (UGC)** has always functioned as a **controlling authority**.
- शिक्षा मंत्रालय की सोच के विपरीत, विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग (UGC) हमेशा से एक नियंत्रणकारी संस्था रहा है।
- There is **no justification** for UGC to have both **regulatory** and **financial control** over universities.
- यह उचित नहीं है कि UGC के पास विश्वविद्यालयों पर **नियामक** और **वित्तीय नियंत्रण** दोनों हों।
- Can UGC provide any **concrete data** proving that **pedagogical and syllabus changes** have positively impacted **industry relevance**, **skill development**, or **employability**?

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• क्या UGC कोई ठोस आंकड़े दे सकता है जिससे साबित हो कि शिक्षण विधियों और पाठ्यक्रम में बदलाव से उद्योग, कौशल विकास या रोजगार पर सकारात्मक प्रभाव पड़ा है?

• India might be better off if **UGC is dissolved**.

• यदि **UGC** को भंग कर दिया जाए तो भारत **अधिक लाभ** में हो सकता है।

• Current UGC chairpersons, **vice-chancellors**, **directors**, and **ministers** should **focus on executing policies** and **ensuring youth employability** rather than appearing frequently in the media.

• वर्तमान UGC अध्यक्ष, कुलपति, निदेशक, और मंत्री बार-बार मीडिया में दिखने के बजाय नीतियों के क्रियान्वयन और युवाओं को रोजगार दिलाने पर ध्यान दें।

• It is the role of **independent academics** to write in newspapers if officials fail to perform their duties.

• यदि अधिकारी अपने कर्तव्यों का पालन नहीं करते हैं, तो स्वतंत्र शिक्षाविदों की भूमिका है कि वे अखबारों में लिखें।

## Quote on Intellectual Freedom

### बौद्धिक स्वतंत्रता पर उद्धरण

• "When stupidity is considered patriotism, it is unsafe to be intelligent." — Isaac Asimov

• "जब मूर्खता को देशभक्ति माना जाता है, तब बुद्धिमान होना असुरक्षित होता है।" — आइजैक असिमोव



# 'The Syrian people do not want another centralised regime in Syria'

Salih Muslim Muhammad, Syria's main Kurdish leader spoke about the role of Turkey in the Kurdish question, the resurgence of the Islamic State (ISIS) and the ongoing struggle against them, and the Syrian Kurds' ties with Israel

## INTERVIEW

### Salih Muslim Muhammad

ISS Paper II, West Asia  
Stanly Johny

Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), the jihadist group led by Abu Mohammed al-Jolani (also known as Ahmed al-Sharaa) that captured power in Syria in December, wants to establish a Salafi regime in Damascus, but the country's minorities are opposed to it, says Salih Muslim Muhammad, Syria's main Kurdish leader. In an interview with *The Hindu*, Mr. Muslim, co-chairman of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) – the main party of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria – said the HTS was trying to establish another centralised regime in Damascus with a different ideology. The Kurdish people support a decentralised, democratic Syria, he said. He also spoke about the role of Turkey in the Kurdish question, the resurgence of the Islamic State (ISIS) and the Syrian Kurds' ties with Israel. Edited excerpts.

**Syria has seen dramatic developments in recent months. It took just 12 days for the HTS to capture Damascus after they launched an offensive in Aleppo in late November. How do you look at the changes in Syria?**

Everybody followed what happened [in Syria]. Groups who are located in Idlib, most of them are jihadist groups, just went to the places occupied by Turkey and underwent training, helped by the Turkish side. And suddenly they woke up, went on to Aleppo, and then to the other cities, and they reached Damascus on December 8. Everybody should know that those groups are jihadists. We know them very well because we were fighting against them – Jabhat al-Nusra and then ISIS and the other groups. They have promised that they are going to change and make democratic changes in Syria. We are waiting to see what they are going to do. If they make [the promised] changes, we will be helping them. And then there was some other group – the Syrian National Army (SNA), which is under the control of Turkey. So HTS went to Damascus, and the other group [SNA] just marched towards Kurdish places. Since December, the fighting has been going on. We are still waiting for a proper ceasefire deal. On March 10, there was a kind of deal between our people and them – I mean, Mazloum Abdi (commander of the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces) and Jolani (Syria's interim President), containing about eight points to be executed within one year. We are still trying to implement the deal.

**The Kurdish people in Syria have enjoyed relative autonomy in recent years. Now that Assad is gone and HTS is in power in Damascus, do you think that this autonomy is under threat?**

We have about 20 parties [in north and east Syria], and our party [the Democratic Union Party, or PYD] is the main and the oldest party among them. Now we are trying to unify all those parties so that we can unify the demands of the Kurdish people and even the Arabs in our areas, to reach



Salih Muslim Muhammad, co-chairman of the Democratic Union Party. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

some solutions with the new government. There have been a lot of struggles. The latest were those massacres that happened in the coastal area in western Syria against the Alawites [the minority sect to which the deposed President Bashar al-Assad belonged to], because they don't like this regime. They don't want those Islamic groups to control the country. We are supporting them. Also, we have Druze in the south of Syria. Syria is a mosaic society. So you have to find a formula where all those people can live together – nobody wants to go back to pre-2011 situation when Syria had a centralised regime. They are now looking for a decentralised government – it could be federalism or self-administered areas. The Alawites, Druze, the Kurdish people, and other minorities, everybody is looking for freedom. Those who are controlling Damascus insist on forming a very strict, centralised regime as it was before, but with a different ideology – before there was a Baathist regime, and now they are trying to make it a Salafi regime. This is not acceptable for the Syrian people. We are trying to democratise Syria; we think a democratic and decentralised regime will help everybody.

**Kurdish fighters were on the frontline of the battle against ISIS. What is the status of ISIS today in Syria?**

There are ISIS-linked groups located in Idlib and areas occupied by Turkey. They have changed their names. Even this Jolani [Syria's interim President] was ISIS before. But after he went to Idlib, he changed his [organisation's] name to Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). The other groups also took different names, but they all practise the same ideology. By the name of ISIS, we still have some groups in our areas, in Deir ez-Zor, and especially in the western side of Euphrates, which is not under our control. It was under the control of the [Assad] regime and the Russians, but they could not eradicate them from those areas. Now, af-



The Kurdish-run camp, which holds relatives of IS fighters in the Hasakeh governorate, on April 18. AFP

ter the regime fell, those groups got a lot of weapons and are organising themselves again. We have a camp called Al-Hawl, which is mainly for the families of Daesh [ISIS] members. We also have about 10,000 ISIS members in our prisons. ISIS is trying to get the prisoners released and get into the camp. They have their plans. And we also have sleeping cells everywhere. So the struggle is continuing. Daesh is not finished. It's just been driven underground.

**Turkey has also seen interesting developments of late. For example, Abdullah Ocalan, the leader of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), has called for a ceasefire and for disarming his organisation. Does it have anything to do with the Democratic Union Party?**

We are not PKK. Ideologically, maybe, we are friends or brothers, but our party was established in Syria with the Syrian people, Kurdish people mainly. We have our plans and programmes. So we have nothing to do with Turkey. We always extended our hands for peace in Turkey because we are neighbours. But because of the Kurdish issue, Turkey has a kind of Kurdophobia. They don't accept the existence of Kurds anywhere. They look at the Kurds as a danger for Turkey and they fight the Kurdish people everywhere – in Iraq, Iran and Syria. We can solve our problem with the Syrian government, but Turkey has always been an obstacle. They accuse us of having a relationship with the PKK, which is not true at all. Even when we established our defence forces, we did it against ISIS, which was attacking us in our areas. We never attacked any Turkish interest. And now, when Mr. Ocalan announces his call for peace, we hope peace would prevail between the PKK and Turkey, because it will relieve us too. If they solve their Kurdish issue inside Turkey, then they cannot blame the others. We heard some voices

saying we should give up weapons too. If we do it, we will have to do it as part of our agreement with the Syrian regime, not with them.

**Are you getting any support from other countries?**

We have the international coalition in the area and they extended their hand to us. It's a kind of a partnership against Daesh [ISIS]. And it happened in 2015 when the international coalition couldn't find anybody fighting Daesh seriously other than us. So we said, OK, and this is still going on.

**This coalition is led by the United States, isn't it?**

Yes, led by the United States. And they are in the area. They don't dictate to us to do anything. We are partners only for fighting against ISIS and terrorism, nothing more than that. They didn't promise to protect us. And of course, as everybody knows, when Turkey attacked our areas, they [the coalition] did nothing. We were attacked by the regime forces and those Salafi jihadists. They didn't defend us. They are helping us as partners only for fighting against Daesh. And they continue to do so.

**Israel has repeatedly voiced its support for Syria's minorities, particularly after the fall of the Assad regime. What is your relationship with Israel? Is there any kind of cooperation between your Autonomous Administration and the state of Israel?**

There are Jewish people living in our areas. The Kurdish people don't have any enmity towards the Jewish people. This is historical. The Kurdish people are natural allies of the Jewish people. They are part of the Middle East [West Asia]. And we have to live together. This is our belief. But of course, there are no connections till now between the Kurdish people and the Israeli government. Recently, there were telephone conversations between our Foreign Affairs Committee and the Foreign Minister of Israel. If we do make any relations, it's ordinary because several Arab countries such as Egypt, Jordan and Gulf countries have already established diplomatic relations with Israel. So we don't know what will happen in the future.

**But how do you look at the war on Gaza?**

We think this is not the way to solve problems. They were just fighting, killing... it doesn't solve any problem. If they sit together for dialogue without any terrorism, they can resolve it. And we believe for the Palestinian and Jewish people, a democratic nation, which is what our project is, is convenient for them. But they have to believe in this democratic nation to live together – a democratic nation project for everybody.

**You're saying you support a single democratic nation for the Arabs and the Jews?**

Yes, a democratic nation project for everybody, for different ethnicities and even different beliefs, where they can live together. They have to accept each other.

**The Syrian people do not want another centralised regime in**



## Syria'

**‘सीरियाई लोग सीरिया में एक और केंद्रीकृत शासन नहीं चाहते हैं’**

• **Salih Muslim Muhammad, Syria's main Kurdish leader, spoke about the role of Turkey in the Kurdish question, the resurgence of Islamic State (ISIS), and the ongoing struggle against them.**

• सालिह मुस्लिम मुहम्मद, सीरिया के मुख्य कुर्द नेता, ने कुर्द प्रश्न में तुर्की की भूमिका, इस्लामिक स्टेट (ISIS) का पुनरुत्थान और उनके खिलाफ चल रही संघर्ष के बारे में बात की।

• He also spoke about the **Syrian Kurds' ties with Israel.**

• उन्होंने इज़राइल के साथ सीरियाई कुर्दों के संबंधों पर भी चर्चा की।

## Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)

### हयात तहरीर अल-शाम (HTS)

• **Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), the jihadist group led by Abu Mohammed al-Jolani (also known as Ahmed al-Sharaa), captured power in Syria in December and aims to establish a Salafi regime in Damascus, but Syria's minorities oppose this.**

• हयात तहरीर अल-शाम (HTS), जो अबू मोहम्मद अल-जोलानी (जो अहमद अल-शारा के नाम से भी जाने जाते हैं) द्वारा नेतृत्व किया गया जिहादी समूह है, ने दिसंबर में सीरिया में सत्ता पर कब्जा कर लिया और दमिश्क में एक सलाफी शासन स्थापित करने का लक्ष्य रखा है, लेकिन सीरिया के अल्पसंख्यक इसका विरोध करते हैं।

• **Salih Muslim Muhammad, the co-chairman of the Democratic Union Party (PYD), Syria's main Kurdish party, stated that HTS is trying to create another centralised regime with a different ideology in Damascus.**

• सालिह मुस्लिम मुहम्मद, डेमोक्रेटिक यूनियन पार्टी (PYD) के सह-अध्यक्ष, जो सीरिया की मुख्य कुर्द पार्टी है, ने कहा कि HTS दमिश्क में एक अलग विचारधारा के साथ एक और केंद्रीकृत शासन स्थापित करने की कोशिश कर रहा है।

• He emphasized that the **Kurdish people support a decentralised and democratic Syria.**

• उन्होंने यह भी जोर दिया कि कुर्द लोग एक केंद्रीकरण मुक्त और लोकतांत्रिक सीरिया का समर्थन करते हैं।

## The Changes in Syria

### सीरिया में परिवर्तन



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- The **HTS** captured **Damascus** just **12 days** after launching an offensive in **Aleppo** in late **November**.
- **HTS** ने नवंबर के अंत में अलेप्पो में हमलावर अभियान शुरू करने के सिर्फ **12 दिन** बाद **दमिश्क** पर कब्जा कर लिया।
- The groups located in **Idlib**, mostly **jihadists**, went to areas occupied by **Turkey** for training and then moved to **Aleppo** and other cities, eventually reaching **Damascus** by **December 8**.
- **इद्लिब** में स्थित समूह, जो ज्यादातर जिहादी थे, **तुर्की** द्वारा कब्जे वाले क्षेत्रों में प्रशिक्षण के लिए गए और फिर **अलेप्पो** और अन्य शहरों में गए, अंततः **8 दिसंबर** तक **दमिश्क** तक पहुँच गए।
- These jihadist groups, including **Jabhat al-Nusra** and **ISIS**, had promised to bring democratic changes in Syria, but the Kurdish people are still waiting to see their actions.
- ये जिहादी समूह, जिसमें **जभत अल-नुसरा** और **ISIS** शामिल हैं, ने सीरिया में लोकतांत्रिक बदलाव लाने का वादा किया था, लेकिन कुर्द लोग अब भी उनके कार्यों को देखने का इंतजार कर रहे हैं।
- The **Syrian National Army (SNA)**, under Turkish control, is marching towards Kurdish areas.
- **सीरियाई राष्ट्रीय सेना (SNA)**, जो तुर्की के नियंत्रण में है, कुर्द क्षेत्रों की ओर बढ़ रही है।
- Fighting continues since **December**, and a ceasefire deal was made on **March 10** between the **Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)** and **Jolani**.
- **दिसंबर** से संघर्ष जारी है, और **10 मार्च** को **कुर्द-नेतृत्व वाली सीरियाई डेमोक्रेटिक फोर्स (SDF)** और **जोलेनी** के बीच एक संघर्षविराम समझौता हुआ था।

## Autonomy of Syrian Kurds

### सीरियाई कुर्दों की स्वायत्तता

- The **Kurdish people** in Syria have enjoyed relative autonomy in recent years, but now with **Assad** gone and **HTS** in power in **Damascus**, this autonomy might be under threat.
- सीरिया में **कुर्द लोग** ने हाल के वर्षों में आंशिक स्वायत्तता का आनंद लिया है, लेकिन अब **असद** के चले जाने और **दमिश्क** में **HTS** के सत्ता में आने के साथ, यह स्वायत्तता खतरे में पड़ सकती है।
- There are **20 parties** in the north and east of Syria, and the **Democratic Union Party (PYD)** is the oldest and main party.
- सीरिया के उत्तर और पूर्व में **20 पार्टियाँ** हैं, और **डेमोक्रेटिक यूनियन पार्टी (PYD)** सबसे पुरानी और मुख्य पार्टी है।
- The Kurdish people are trying to unify all these parties to reach solutions for the new government.
- कुर्द लोग इन सभी पार्टियों को एकजुट करने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं ताकि नए सरकार के लिए समाधान तक पहुंचा जा सके।



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- Various struggles have occurred, including massacres against the **Alawites** in **western Syria**.
- विभिन्न संघर्ष हुए हैं, जिनमें **पश्चिमी सीरिया** में **अलवाइट्स** के खिलाफ हत्याकांड शामिल हैं।
- The **Alawites, Druze, Kurds**, and other minorities are looking for **freedom** and do not want to return to the pre-2011 **centralised regime**.
- **अलवाइट्स, द्रूज़, कुर्द** और अन्य अल्पसंख्यक **स्वतंत्रता** की तलाश में हैं और वे 2011 से पहले के **केंद्रीकृत शासन** में वापस नहीं लौटना चाहते हैं।
- They are seeking a **decentralised government**, which could be federalism or self-administered areas.
- वे **केंद्रीकरण मुक्त सरकार** की तलाश में हैं, जो संघीयवाद या स्व-प्रशासित क्षेत्रों के रूप में हो सकती है।

## Status of ISIS in Syria

### सीरिया में ISIS की स्थिति

- There are ISIS-linked groups in **Idlib** and areas occupied by **Turkey**.
- **इद्लिब** और **तुर्की** द्वारा कब्जे वाले क्षेत्रों में ISIS से जुड़े समूह हैं।
- The groups have changed names but continue to follow the same ideology.
- इन समूहों ने नाम बदल लिए हैं, लेकिन वे वही विचारधारा अपनाते हैं।
- **Jolani**, now Syria's interim president, was formerly part of **ISIS** and later renamed his group to **Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)**.
- **जोलेनी**, जो अब सीरिया के अंतरिम राष्ट्रपति हैं, पहले **ISIS** का हिस्सा थे और बाद में अपने समूह का नाम बदलकर **हयात तहरीर अल-शाम (HTS)** रख लिया।
- ISIS still has a presence in areas such as **Deir ez-Zor** and the western side of the **Euphrates**.
- ISIS की अब भी **देइर एज़-ज़ोर** और **यूप्रेट्स** के पश्चिमी हिस्से जैसे क्षेत्रों में मौजूदगी है।
- **ISIS** is organizing again after receiving weapons, and **Al-Hawl camp** houses families of ISIS members.
- **ISIS** फिर से हथियार मिलने के बाद खुद को संगठित कर रहा है, और **अल-हॉल शिविर** में ISIS सदस्यों के परिवार रहते हैं।
- There are about **10,000 ISIS members** in Kurdish-run prisons.
- **कुर्द-प्रशासित जेलों** में लगभग **10,000 ISIS सदस्य** हैं।
- ISIS continues to plan and has **sleeping cells** all over.
- ISIS अपनी योजनाओं को जारी रखे हुए है और उसके **स्लीपिंग सेल्स** हर जगह फैले हुए हैं।



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## Recent Developments in Turkey and Kurdish Relations

### तुर्की और कुर्द संबंधों में हाल के घटनाक्रम

- Abdullah Ocalan, the leader of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), has recently called for a ceasefire and for disarming his organisation.
- कुर्दिस्तान वर्कर्स पार्टी (PKK) के नेता अब्दुल्ला ओजलान ने हाल ही में संघर्ष विराम और अपने संगठन को निरस्त्र करने की अपील की है।

## Connection with the Democratic Union Party

### डेमोक्रेटिक यूनियन पार्टी से संबंध

- "We are **not** PKK. Ideologically, we may be friends or brothers, but our party was established in **Syria** with the **Syrian Kurdish people**."
- "हम **PKK नहीं** हैं। वैचारिक रूप से हम दोस्त या भाई हो सकते हैं, लेकिन हमारी पार्टी की स्थापना **सीरिया में सीरियाई कुर्द लोगों** के साथ हुई थी।"
- "We have **our own plans and programmes**. We have **nothing to do with Turkey**."
- "हमारे पास **अपने खुद के योजनाएँ और कार्यक्रम** हैं। हमारा **तुर्की से कोई लेना-देना नहीं** है।"
- "We have always extended our hands for **peace in Turkey**, but due to the **Kurdish issue**, Turkey suffers from **Kurdophobia**."
- "हमने हमेशा **तुर्की में शांति** के लिए हाथ बढ़ाया है, लेकिन **कुर्द मुद्दे** के कारण तुर्की में **कुर्दोफोबिया** है।"
- "Turkey sees Kurds as a **danger**, and fights them **everywhere** — in **Iraq, Iran, and Syria**."
- "तुर्की कुर्दों को एक **खतरे** के रूप में देखता है और उन्हें **हर जगह** — **इराक, ईरान और सीरिया** में — लड़ता है।"
- "We can solve our problems with the **Syrian government**, but **Turkey is an obstacle** and **falsely accuses** us of having ties with the PKK."
- "हम अपनी समस्याएँ **सीरियाई सरकार** के साथ हल कर सकते हैं, लेकिन **तुर्की एक बाधा** है और हमें **झूठा आरोप** लगाता है कि हमारा **PKK से संबंध** है।"
- "Our **defence forces** were established **against ISIS**, not against Turkey. We never attacked any **Turkish interest**."
- "हमारी **रक्षा बलों** की स्थापना **ISIS के खिलाफ** की गई थी, तुर्की के खिलाफ नहीं। हमने कभी किसी **तुर्की हित** पर हमला नहीं किया।"
- "We **hope for peace** between **PKK and Turkey**, as it would **also relieve us**."
- "हम **PKK और तुर्की के बीच शांति** की आशा करते हैं, क्योंकि इससे **हमें भी राहत** मिलेगी।"



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- "If we give up weapons, it will be part of our **agreement with the Syrian regime**, not Turkey."
- "अगर हम हथियार छोड़ते हैं, तो यह हमारे सीरियाई शासन के साथ समझौते का हिस्सा होगा, तुर्की के साथ नहीं।"

## Support from Other Countries

### अन्य देशों से समर्थन

- "We have the **international coalition** in our area which extended its hand to us."
- "हमारे क्षेत्र में अंतरराष्ट्रीय गठबंधन है जिसने हमें सहयोग दिया।"
- "This partnership began in **2015**, when no one else was **fighting Daesh (ISIS)** seriously except us."
- "यह साझेदारी **2015** में शुरू हुई, जब हमारे अलावा कोई भी **दाएश (ISIS)** से गंभीरता से नहीं लड़ रहा था।"

## Role of the United States

### संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका की भूमिका

- "Yes, the coalition is **led by the United States** and they are still present in the area."
- "हां, यह गठबंधन **संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका द्वारा नेतृत्व** किया गया है और वे अभी भी क्षेत्र में मौजूद हैं।"
- "They do not **dictate terms** to us. We are **partners only in fighting ISIS and terrorism**, nothing more."
- "वे हमें **शर्तें नहीं थोपते**। हम केवल **ISIS और आतंकवाद से लड़ने के साझेदार** हैं, इससे अधिक कुछ नहीं।"
- "They never **promised to protect us**. When **Turkey attacked**, they did **nothing**."
- "उन्होंने कभी हमें **सुरक्षा देने का वादा नहीं किया**। जब **तुर्की ने हमला किया**, तो उन्होंने **कुछ नहीं किया**।"
- "Even when we were attacked by **regime forces and Salafi jihadists**, the coalition did **not defend us**."
- "यहाँ तक कि जब **शासन बलों और सलफ़ी जिहादियों ने हम पर हमला किया**, तो गठबंधन ने **हमारा बचाव नहीं किया**।"
- "They only help us as **partners against Daesh**, and that **still continues**."
- "वे केवल **दाएश के खिलाफ साझेदार** के रूप में हमारी मदद करते हैं, और यह **अब भी जारी है**।"

## Relationship with Israel

### इज़राइल के साथ संबंध

- "There are **Jewish people** living in our areas. **Kurds have no enmity** with Jews."
- "हमारे क्षेत्रों में **यहूदी लोग** रहते हैं। **कुर्दों की यहूदियों से कोई दुश्मनी नहीं है**।"



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- "Historically, **Kurds and Jews** are **natural allies** in the Middle East."
- "ऐतिहासिक रूप से, कुर्द और यहूदी मध्य पूर्व में प्राकृतिक सहयोगी हैं।"
- "Currently, there are **no official connections** with Israel, though recently there were **telephone conversations** between our **Foreign Affairs Committee** and **Israel's Foreign Minister**."
- "फिलहाल, इज़राइल के साथ कोई आधिकारिक संबंध नहीं है, हालांकि हाल ही में हमारे विदेश मामलों की समिति और इज़राइल के विदेश मंत्री के बीच फोन पर बातचीत हुई थी।"
- "If we establish relations, it is **normal**, since countries like **Egypt, Jordan, and Gulf countries** already have **diplomatic ties** with Israel."
- "अगर हम संबंध बनाते हैं, तो यह सामान्य होगा, क्योंकि मिस्र, जॉर्डन और खाड़ी देश पहले से ही इज़राइल से राजनयिक संबंध रखते हैं।"

## Position on the War in Gaza

### गाज़ा में युद्ध पर स्थिति

- "We do **not support violence**. Fighting and killing **do not solve problems**."
- "हम हिंसा का समर्थन नहीं करते। लड़ाई और हत्या समस्याओं का समाधान नहीं करती।"
- "We believe in **dialogue without terrorism** to resolve issues."
- "हम मानते हैं कि आतंकवाद के बिना संवाद से समस्याओं का समाधान संभव है।"
- "For **Palestinians and Jews**, we support the idea of a **democratic nation** — our proposed model — where all ethnicities can live together."
- "फिलिस्तीनियों और यहूदियों के लिए हम एक लोकतांत्रिक राष्ट्र की अवधारणा का समर्थन करते हैं — जो हमारा प्रस्तावित मॉडल है — जहाँ सभी जातियाँ साथ रह सकें।"

## Support for a Single Democratic Nation

### एकल लोकतांत्रिक राष्ट्र का समर्थन

- "Yes, we support a **democratic nation project for everyone**, for different **ethnicities and beliefs**, where people **live together peacefully**."
- "हाँ, हम सभी के लिए एक लोकतांत्रिक राष्ट्र परियोजना का समर्थन करते हैं, जहाँ विभिन्न जातियाँ और आस्थाएँ एक साथ शांति से रह सकें।"
- "They must **accept each other** to make this project successful."
- "इस परियोजना को सफल बनाने के लिए उन्हें एक-दूसरे को स्वीकार करना होगा।"

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# U.S. tariff pause on Beijing puts pressure on 'China-plus-one' countries

Vietnam, Mexico saw supply chain shifts to avoid earlier U.S. tariffs on China; new U.S. duties of 145% on Chinese goods threatened greater exodus; now, other nations seeking better U.S. deals to keep advantage over China; tariffs on China are still higher than competing industrial hubs

GS Paper II: Super Power

## NEWS ANALYSIS

Reuters

BEIJING/MEXICO CITY/HANOI

A new U.S.-China agreement to pause sky-high tariffs on each other is pressuring manufacturing hubs such as Vietnam and Mexico to make their own, better deals with the U.S. to continue benefiting from a "China-plus-one" strategy by global producers.

In the new world order dictated by President Donald Trump's shifting announcements of tariffs, countries measure their success not by the terms of their trade deals with the U.S. but by how they compare to other countries.

For the last five weeks, many nations facing significant duties under Trump's now-paused "reciprocal" global tariff regime announced on April 2 took solace from having better rates than China, which saw U.S. tariffs on Chinese imports ratchet up from 20% to an embargo-like 145% from March to May.

Vietnam, for example, was better off than China with a 46% rate, while Thailand was at 36% and Malaysia at 24%.

Given their comparative advantage, manufacturing hubs anticipated further moves by multinational corporations to set up shop in their countries and



**Tariff rethink:** Manufacturing countries are now negotiating their own tariff deals with the U.S. REUTERS

decrease their dependency on China, potentially adding to a years-long trend known as "China-plus-one".

Now, everything is up in the air again following a breakthrough in U.S.-China trade talks, that resulted in a 90-day reprieve from the astoundingly high tariffs on China, leaving a base 30% import tax rate for made-in-China products.

Tariffs on China still remain higher than competing industrial hubs paying 10% under Mr. Trump's 90-day pause on the reciprocal duties, but some experts said the deal could halt some of the momentum pushing multinationals to further shift supply chains outside of China.

"The rules of the game



They [U.S. companies] will maintain their current situation... but the bulk of their business will remain in China.

**WU XINBO**  
Executive Dean  
Institute of International Studies,  
Fudan University

are still uncertain," said Diego Marroquin Bitar, an expert on North American trade who also works as a consultant. "I think companies are just going to delay their investments as much as they can."

Starting in his first term, Mr. Trump sought to leverage tariffs on China to force companies to relocate ma-

nufacturing to the U.S.

The "reshoring" to the U.S. largely did not materialise, but over the past decade companies such as Apple did start looking for alternatives to China, with a focus on countries that offered relatively low labour costs and smaller tariffs.

Southeast Asian nations were among the biggest beneficiaries, along with Mexico, but if the U.S.-China tariff pause is extended, those countries could see their comparative advantage dissipate.

Vietnam, Thailand and Malaysia are currently negotiating their own tariff deals with the United States. Mexico, which avoided reciprocal tariffs, is also seeking to reduce

separate import duties on specific products such as automobiles.

### Sweeter deals

The U.S.-China trade thaw means companies that had considered speeding up efforts to offshore production from China may now tap the brakes, said Wu Xinbo, director of the Center for American Studies at Shanghai's Fudan University.

"They will maintain their current situation, keep China as their main operations hub and make appropriate partial arrangements in neighbouring countries, but the bulk of their business will remain in China," he said.

Sun Chenghao, a fellow at Tsinghua University's Center for International Security and Strategy, said the uncertainty of Trump's policymaking was "very painful for companies" trying to decide whether or how much to decouple from China.

"The current cooldown in tensions does not mean that U.S. firms dare to boldly engage in business activities in China," he said. "Everyone is still waiting for the possibility that tariffs might be imposed again."

For countries like Vietnam, which had also attracted Chinese manufacturers since Mr. Trump imposed tariffs in his first administration, the unex-

pected U.S. rapprochement with Beijing ratchets up pressure to reach their own sweeter deals.

"If Vietnam manages to strike a better deal than China - which is more than likely after today - it will present itself as an attractive alternative to China in regional investment strategies," said Leif Schneider, head of international law firm Luther in Vietnam.

"This was already the outcome of the 'First Trade War' introduced by the first Trump administration," he added.

Trade tensions and uncertainty have already reduced pledges for new foreign investments in Vietnam. In April, it fell to \$2.84 billion, a 30% drop from March and a decline of about 8% year-on-year.

In Mexico, President Claudia Sheinbaum has repeatedly emphasised Mexico's comparative advantage on U.S. tariffs. Most exports to the U.S. under the U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade deal are tariff free, although Mr. Trump has imposed sizeable levies on steel, aluminium, vehicles and auto parts.

Jorge Guajardo, a former Mexican ambassador to China and a consultant on international trade, said even if Monday's trade deal with China sticks, multinational companies will be wary of depending on Chinese manufacturing - and Mexico stands to benefit.

## U.S. Tariff Pause on Beijing Puts Pressure on 'China-Plus-One' Countries

अमेरिका द्वारा बीजिंग पर टैरिफ विराम ने 'चाइना-प्लस-वन' देशों पर दबाव बढ़ाया

- A new **U.S.-China agreement** to pause high tariffs is pressuring manufacturing hubs like **Vietnam** and **Mexico** to make better deals with the U.S. to continue benefiting from the "China-plus-one" strategy.



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- अमेरिका-चीन के नए समझौते में उच्च टैरिफ को रोकने से वियतनाम और मैक्सिको जैसे विनिर्माण केंद्रों पर अमेरिका के साथ बेहतर समझौते करने का दबाव है ताकि वे “चाइना-प्लस-वन” रणनीति से लाभ उठाते रहें।
- In this new system shaped by **President Donald Trump's** tariff announcements, countries evaluate success not by direct U.S. deals but by how they compare with **other nations' tariff rates**.
- राष्ट्रपति **डोनाल्ड ट्रम्प** द्वारा घोषित टैरिफ प्रणाली में, देश अपनी सफलता का मूल्यांकन अमेरिका के साथ सीधे समझौतों से नहीं बल्कि **अन्य देशों की तुलना में अपनी दरों** से करते हैं।
- Over the past **five weeks**, nations burdened by **Trump's “reciprocal” global tariff regime** were reassured by having **lower rates than China**, which saw tariffs jump from **20% to 145%** between **March and May**.
- पिछले पांच हफ्तों में, ट्रम्प के “पारस्परिक” वैश्विक टैरिफ शासन से प्रभावित देशों को इस बात से राहत मिली कि चीन की तुलना में उनके टैरिफ कम थे, जबकि मार्च से मई के बीच चीन पर टैरिफ **20% से बढ़कर 145%** हो गया।
- **Vietnam had a rate of 46%, Thailand 36%, and Malaysia 24%**—all much lower than China's.
- वियतनाम पर **46%**, थाईलैंड पर **36%** और मलेशिया पर **24%** का टैरिफ था—जो चीन से काफी कम था।
- This gave hope to manufacturing countries expecting a rise in **multinational investment** and a continued shift away from **China** under the “**China-plus-one**” model.
- इससे उत्पादनशील देशों को उम्मीद मिली कि **मल्टीनेशनल निवेश** बढ़ेगा और **चाइना-प्लस-वन मॉडल** के तहत चीन पर निर्भरता कम होगी।
- But now, following a breakthrough in **U.S.-China trade talks**, there's a **90-day pause** in the high tariffs, setting a base import tax of **30%** for Chinese goods.
- लेकिन अब अमेरिका-चीन व्यापार वार्ता में हुई प्रगति के बाद, **90 दिनों के लिए टैरिफ पर विराम** लगा है और चीन से आयातित वस्तुओं पर **30% का मूल कर** तय किया गया है।
- Even with this pause, tariffs on China are still higher than other industrial hubs paying around **10%**.
- इस विराम के बावजूद, चीन पर लगाए गए टैरिफ **अन्य औद्योगिक केंद्रों की तुलना में अधिक** हैं जो लगभग **10%** का भुगतान कर रहे हैं।
- Experts warn that this could **slow down** the momentum for companies to shift **supply chains** out of China.
- विशेषज्ञों का कहना है कि इससे कंपनियों का **चीन से सप्लाय चैन हटाने का उत्साह धीमा** हो सकता है।
- According to **Diego Marroquin Bitar**, a North American trade consultant, companies may **delay investments** due to uncertain rules.



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• डिएगो मैरोक्विन बीतार, जो एक उत्तरी अमेरिकी व्यापार सलाहकार हैं, का मानना है कि नियमों की अनिश्चितता के कारण कंपनियां निवेश में देरी करेंगी।

## U.S. Tariff Strategy and Shifting Supply Chains

### अमेरिकी टैरिफ रणनीति और बदलती आपूर्ति शृंखलाएँ

• In his first term, **Trump** imposed tariffs to push companies to **reshore manufacturing** to the U.S., but most companies **did not return**.

• अपने पहले कार्यकाल में, ट्रंप ने कंपनियों को अमेरिका में निर्माण वापस लाने के लिए टैरिफ लगाए थे, लेकिन ज्यादातर कंपनियाँ नहीं लौटीं।

• Over the last decade, firms like **Apple** began exploring **lower-labor-cost countries** like Vietnam and India.

• पिछले दशक में, एप्पल जैसी कंपनियों ने कम श्रम लागत वाले देशों जैसे वियतनाम और भारत में विकल्प तलाशने शुरू किए।

• **Southeast Asian countries** and **Mexico** have been major beneficiaries of this shift.

• दक्षिण-पूर्व एशियाई देश और मैक्सिको इस बदलाव के मुख्य लाभार्थी रहे हैं।

• If the **U.S.-China tariff pause** continues, countries like Vietnam and Thailand may **lose their comparative advantage**.

• यदि अमेरिका-चीन टैरिफ विराम जारी रहता है, तो वियतनाम और थाईलैंड जैसे देश अपना तुलनात्मक लाभ खो सकते हैं।

• **Vietnam, Thailand, and Malaysia** are now **negotiating individual tariff deals** with the U.S.

• वियतनाम, थाईलैंड, और मलेशिया अब अमेरिका के साथ स्वतंत्र टैरिफ समझौते करने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं।

• **Mexico**, not facing reciprocal tariffs, is seeking to reduce import duties on products like **automobiles**.

• मैक्सिको, जिसे पारस्परिक टैरिफ का सामना नहीं करना पड़ा, अब ऑटोमोबाइल जैसे उत्पादों पर आयात शुल्क कम करने का प्रयास कर रहा है।

## Impact of Trade Thaw on Company Decisions

### व्यापारिक शांति का कंपनियों के फैसलों पर प्रभाव

• According to **Wu Xinbo** of Fudan University, companies might **slow down offshoring** from China but still **maintain major operations** there.

• फुदान विश्वविद्यालय के वू जिनबो के अनुसार, कंपनियाँ चीन से उत्पादन हटाने की गति धीमी कर सकती हैं लेकिन मुख्य संचालन वहीं बनाए रखेंगी।

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- **Sun Chenghao** of Tsinghua University said companies are **still wary** of U.S. policy uncertainty and fear **tariffs could return**.
- त्सिंगहूआ विश्वविद्यालय के सुन चेंघाओ ने कहा कि कंपनियाँ अभी भी अमेरिकी नीतिगत अनिश्चितता से चिंतित हैं और उन्हें डर है कि टैरिफ फिर से लग सकते हैं।
- For countries like **Vietnam**, which gained from Chinese factory relocations during Trump's first term, the new **U.S.-China rapprochement** adds **pressure to strike better deals**.
- वियतनाम जैसे देशों के लिए, जो ट्रंप के पहले कार्यकाल में चीनी कारखानों के स्थानांतरण से लाभान्वित हुए थे, यह नया अमेरिका-चीन मेलमिलाप अब बेहतर सौदे करने का दबाव बनाता है।
- **Leif Schneider**, head of **Luther International Law Firm** in Vietnam, said if Vietnam secures a **better deal than China**, it could **enhance its appeal for investment**.
- वियतनाम में लूथर इंटरनेशनल लॉ फर्म के प्रमुख लीफ शनाइडर ने कहा कि यदि वियतनाम को चीन से बेहतर समझौता मिलता है, तो वह निवेश के लिए अधिक आकर्षक बन जाएगा।
- This pattern is similar to what happened in the **first U.S.-China trade war** under Trump.
- यह पैटर्न ट्रंप के तहत पहले अमेरिका-चीन व्यापार युद्ध जैसा ही है।

## Investment Trends in Vietnam and Mexico

### वियतनाम और मैक्सिको में निवेश के रुझान

- Due to trade uncertainty, **foreign investment pledges in Vietnam** dropped to **\$2.84 billion in April**, a **30% fall from March** and **8% year-on-year decline**.
- व्यापारिक अनिश्चितता के कारण, वियतनाम में विदेशी निवेश प्रतिबद्धताएँ अप्रैल में घटकर \$2.84 अरब रह गईं, जो मार्च से 30% कम और वार्षिक रूप से 8% गिरावट है।
- **Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum** highlights Mexico's **tariff-free advantage** under the **U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade agreement**, though Trump imposed tariffs on **steel, aluminium, and vehicles**.
- मैक्सिको की राष्ट्रपति क्लाउडिया शेनबाउम ने यूएस-मैक्सिको-कनाडा व्यापार समझौते के तहत मैक्सिको के टैरिफ-फ्री लाभ को प्रमुखता दी, हालांकि ट्रंप ने स्टील, एल्यूमीनियम और वाहनों पर टैरिफ लगाए थे।
- **Jorge Guajardo**, former Mexican ambassador to China, said companies will still be **cautious** about depending on **Chinese manufacturing**, so **Mexico will benefit**.
- चीन में मैक्सिको के पूर्व राजदूत जॉर्ज गुआजार्डो ने कहा कि कंपनियाँ चीनी विनिर्माण पर निर्भरता को लेकर अभी भी सतर्क रहेंगी, इसलिए मैक्सिको को लाभ मिलेगा।



# India rolls over Treasury Bill worth \$50 million to help the Maldives

GS Paper II: India-Maldives

**Meera Srinivasan**

COLOMBO

Even as the Maldives attempts to stabilise its economy amid challenges of high public debt and a widening fiscal deficit, India has rolled over a \$50-million Treasury Bill to support the neighbouring island nation.

In a statement on Monday, the High Commission of India in capital Malé said that following a request from the Government of Maldives, the State Bank of India subscribed to the Treasury Bill, as part of India's ongoing support with annual rollovers of Treasury Bills since 2019. "This has been done under a unique Government-to-Government arrangement, as emergency financial assistance to Maldives," the Indian mission said.

Thanking External Af-



**Better prospects:** In 2024, the scenic island country saw tourist arrivals reach an all-time high of 2.05 million. AP

fairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Maldivian Foreign Minister Abdulla Khaleel said on social media platform 'X': "This timely assistance reflects the close bonds of friendship between Maldives & India and will support the Government's ongoing efforts to implement fiscal reforms for economic resilience."

In 2024, the scenic is-

land country saw tourist arrivals increase by 8.9% from the previous year, and reach an all-time high of 2.05 million.

## Currency swap

In an attempt to cash in on tourism revenue, the country's chief foreign exchange earner, the government brought in new regulations late last year,

mandating tourist resorts to exchange \$500 per tourist per month to the local currency or Maldivian Rufiyaa. Earlier this month, President Mohamed Muizzu said the revised banking regulations saw the tourism sector exchange \$214 million into Maldivian Rufiyaa, thereby boosting foreign reserves.

## RBI's assistance

While the Indian Ocean archipelago's economy is on relatively stable grounds this year, the government has debt servicing commitments nearing a billion dollars each this year and next. Last year, the Reserve Bank of India agreed to extend currency swap facilities amounting to \$400 million and ₹30 billion, extending critical assistance when the Maldives faced a severe financial crunch.

## India rolls over Treasury Bill worth \$50 million to help the Maldives

भारत ने मालदीव की मदद के लिए 50 मिलियन डॉलर का ट्रेजरी बिल रोल ओवर किया

• Even as the Maldives attempts to stabilize its economy amid challenges of high public debt and a **widening fiscal deficit**, India has rolled over a **\$50-million Treasury Bill** to support the neighbouring island nation.

• मालदीव अपने उच्च सार्वजनिक ऋण और विस्तारित वित्तीय घाटे की चुनौतियों के बीच



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अपनी अर्थव्यवस्था को स्थिर करने की कोशिश कर रहा है, भारत ने पड़ोसी द्वीप राष्ट्र की मदद के लिए 50 मिलियन डॉलर का ट्रेजरी बिल रोल ओवर किया है।

• In a statement on **Monday**, the **High Commission of India** in capital **Malé** said that following a request from the **Government of Maldives**, the **State Bank of India** subscribed to the Treasury Bill, as part of India's ongoing support with annual rollovers of Treasury Bills since **2019**.

• सोमवार को, भारत के उच्च आयोग ने राजधानी माले में एक बयान में कहा कि मालदीव सरकार के अनुरोध पर, स्टेट बैंक ऑफ इंडिया ने ट्रेजरी बिल को सब्सक्राइब किया, जो 2019 से भारत की लगातार समर्थन योजना का हिस्सा है, जिसमें हर साल ट्रेजरी बिल रोल ओवर किए जाते हैं।

• "This has been done under a unique **Government-to-Government arrangement**, as emergency **financial assistance** to **Maldives**," the Indian mission said.

• "यह सरकार-से-सरकार समझौते के तहत, मालदीव को आपातकालीन वित्तीय सहायता के रूप में किया गया है," भारतीय मिशन ने कहा।

• Thanking **External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar**, Maldivian **Foreign Minister Abdulla Khaleel** said on social media platform 'X': "This timely assistance reflects the close bonds of friendship between **Maldives & India** and will support the Government's ongoing efforts to implement fiscal reforms for economic resilience."

• विदेशी मंत्री एस. जयशंकर को धन्यवाद देते हुए, मालदीव के विदेशी मंत्री अब्दुल्ला खलील ने सोशल मीडिया प्लेटफॉर्म 'X' पर कहा: "यह समय पर दी गई सहायता मालदीव और भारत के बीच गहरे दोस्ती के रिश्ते को दर्शाती है और सरकार के आर्थिक सहनशक्ति के लिए वित्तीय सुधारों को लागू करने के प्रयासों का समर्थन करेगी।"

• In **2024**, the scenic island country saw **tourist arrivals increase by 8.9%** from the previous year, and reach an all-time high of **2.05 million**.

• 2024 में, इस सुंदर द्वीप देश ने पिछले वर्ष से 8.9% की वृद्धि के साथ पर्यटक आगमन देखा और यह 2.05 मिलियन के ऐतिहासिक उच्चतम स्तर पर पहुंचा।

## Currency swap

### मुद्रा स्वैप

• In an attempt to cash in on tourism revenue, the country's chief **foreign exchange earner**, the government brought in new regulations late last year, mandating **tourist resorts** to exchange **\$500 per tourist per month** to the local currency or **Maldivian Rufiyaa**.

• पर्यटन राजस्व का लाभ उठाने के प्रयास में, देश के मुख्य विदेशी मुद्रा अर्जक, सरकार ने पिछले साल अंत में नए नियम लागू किए, जिसमें पर्यटन रिसॉर्ट्स को प्रत्येक पर्यटक से प्रति माह 500 डॉलर स्थानीय मुद्रा या मालदीवियन रूफिया में बदलने का आदेश दिया।

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• Earlier this month, **President Mohamed Muizzu** said the revised **banking regulations** saw the **tourism sector** exchange \$214 million into **Maldivian Rufiyaa**, thereby boosting **foreign reserves**.

• इस महीने की शुरुआत में, राष्ट्रपति मोहम्मद मुइज्जू ने कहा कि संशोधित बैंकिंग नियमों के तहत पर्यटन क्षेत्र ने 214 मिलियन डॉलर को मालदीवियन रूफिया में बदला, जिससे विदेशी भंडार में वृद्धि हुई।

## RBI's assistance

### आरबीआई की सहायता

• While the **Indian Ocean archipelago's economy** is on relatively stable grounds this year, the government has **debt servicing commitments** nearing a **billion dollars** each this year and next.

• इस साल भारतीय महासागर द्वीपसमूह की अर्थव्यवस्था अपेक्षाकृत स्थिर स्थिति में है, लेकिन सरकार के पास इस साल और अगले साल के लिए ऋण सेवा प्रतिबद्धताएँ हैं जो प्रत्येक एक अरब डॉलर के करीब हैं।

• Last year, the **Reserve Bank of India** agreed to extend **currency swap facilities** amounting to **\$400 million** and **₹30 billion**, extending critical assistance when the **Maldives** faced a severe **financial crunch**.

• पिछले साल, भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक ने मुद्रा स्वैप सुविधाओं का विस्तार करने पर सहमति जताई, जिसका मूल्य 400 मिलियन डॉलर और 30 बिलियन रुपए था, जब मालदीव को गंभीर वित्तीय संकट का सामना करना पड़ा था।

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

### 1. Govandi residents up in arms over Deonar waste-to-energy project

गोवंडी के निवासी देवनार कचरे से ऊर्जा बनाने की परियोजना के खिलाफ विरोध में

### 2. T.N. CM inaugurates houses for mahouts in Nilgiris district

तमिलनाडु मुख्यमंत्री ने नीलगिरी जिले में महावतों के लिए आवासों का उद्घाटन किया

### 3. Payment Firms Must Reveal Client Info in Crime Cases: HC

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अपराध के मामलों में ग्राहक की जानकारी का खुलासा करना जरूरी:

उच्च न्यायालय

4. India notifies WTO of plan to impose retaliatory tariffs on U.S. imports

भारत ने WTO को अमेरिकी आयात पर प्रतिशोधात्मक टैरिफ लगाने की योजना की सूचना दी

5. JCI increases MSP of jute to stop distress selling of crop

फसल की मजबूरी में बिक्री रोकने के लिए जेसीआई ने जूट का एमएसपी बढ़ाया

6. Scientists have found a cricket evolving rapidly to beat a new threat

वैज्ञानिकों ने एक कीट के बारे में पाया जो तेजी से नया खतरा टालने के लिए विकसित हो रहा है

7. Gold, as usual at great cost

सोने का, जैसे हमेशा, बड़ी कीमत पर

8. Big Deal

बड़ी डील

9. Ecology is the world's permanent economy

पारिस्थितिकी विश्व की स्थायी अर्थव्यवस्था है

10. A Death that Spotlights Irrigation Problems

एक मृत्यु जो सिंचाई समस्याओं को उजागर करती है

11. What war hysteria hides: deaths, destruction, disinformation

युद्ध उन्माद क्या छिपाता है: मौतें, विनाश, और भ्रामक सूचना

12. Retail Inflation Slows to 3.16% in April, Lowest in 69 Months



अप्रैल में खुदरा महंगाई 3.16% तक घटी, 69 महीनों में सबसे कम स्तर पर

### 13. MSMEs Lack Staff, Access to Formal Credit: SIDBI Study

एमएसएमई को स्टाफ और औपचारिक ऋण तक पहुंच की कमी: सिडबी अध्ययन

## Govandi residents up in arms over Deonar waste-to-energy project

GS Paper III: Environment

**Snehal Mutha**  
MUMBAI

Residents and activists from Mumbai's Govandi area have raised strong objections to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) proposed waste-to-energy (WtE) plant at Deonar, the country's largest dumping ground, claiming that the ₹2,648-crore facility will worsen air quality and endanger public health.

The upcoming plant, to be set up by Chennai MSW Pvt Ltd over 8.2 hectares, is expected to process 1,800 tonnes per day of municipal waste and generate eight megawatts of electricity by October 2025. However, residents from nearby Baiganwadi and Shivaji Nagar fear it will emit toxic gases, aggravating respiratory diseases in an already vulnerable population.

"The prevalence of TB and asthma is already high



**Raising a stink:** People say the plant will add to the woes of residents, already battling TB and asthma. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

here. Every other house has a patient. Adding another pollutant-heavy project is dangerous," said Zakir (30), a resident of Baiganwadi for 25 years.

Another Baiganwadi resident, employed at the dumping ground, echoed the sentiment: "No technology can fully control emissions. This will only get dangerous."

The area, home to over 10 lakh people across 200

slum pockets, also faces further crowding due to planned relocations from the Dharavi redevelopment project.

#### Legal battle

Bombay High Court lawyer Abid Abbas Sayyed, representing concerned citizens, has filed objections with the BMC Commissioner, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB), and others. "The plant will re-

lease carcinogens, dioxins, furans, carbon monoxide, and sulphur oxides. Respiratory diseases like asthma and COPD are already rampant here. What is the guarantee that emissions will be controlled?" he said.

While the BMC insists the plant is environmentally sound and MPCB-cleared, residents remain unconvinced. "The biomedical waste facility here was also promised to be safe. Now, we wake up to black dust on our vehicles and a constant foul smell," said Aditya, a 35-year-old Shivaji Nagar resident working at the dumping ground.

According to a Tata Institute of Social Sciences study, the average life expectancy in Govandi is just 39 years. "We are already breathing methane and other toxic gases from existing waste units. How much more can we take?" said Mr. Aditya.

Mr. Sayyed also highlighted that the biomedical waste facility operated for five years without MPCB clearance. Despite a court order for its relocation six months ago, no action has been taken. "How can we trust the same agencies [MPCB and BMC] now?" he said.

Citizens' group Govandi New Sangam Welfare Society filed a High Court petition in October 2022, demanding the facility's closure. In response, MPCB officer Rakesh Dafade stated the WtE project was evaluated for over a year, and measures like scrubbers, a 50-metre chimney, and leachate treatment systems are planned to curb pollution.

However, for residents, the core concern remains unaddressed - waste segregation. "Deonar's waste is a toxic mix of wet, dry, plastic, and even biomedical material. With-

out proper segregation, how can this project work without causing harm?" said Mr. Aditya.

Mr. Sayyed's objection letter accuses BMC of violating the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, particularly Rule 15, which mandates segregation at source and scientific processing. It noted that the low calorific value of Mumbai's waste due to its high organic content makes it unsuitable for energy recovery, adding that seven of the 14 WtE plants in India have already shut down for similar reasons.

Residents are demanding a stay on the project until a thorough Environmental Impact Assessment and medical and environmental studies in Govandi are conducted.

An RTI application has also been filed to access clearance documentation and environmental reports related to the project.

## Govandi residents up in arms over Deonar waste-to-energy project

गोवंडी के निवासी देवनार कचरे से ऊर्जा बनाने की परियोजना के खिलाफ विरोध में

Concerns over BMC's proposed Waste-to-Energy (WtE) plant  
BMC की प्रस्तावित कचरे से ऊर्जा (WtE) परियोजना को लेकर चिंता



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• Residents and activists from **Govandi in Mumbai** have strongly objected to the BMC's **waste-to-energy plant** at **Deonar**, India's **largest dumping ground**, claiming it will **worsen air quality** and **harm public health**.

• मुंबई के गोवंडी के निवासी और कार्यकर्ता BMC की देवनार स्थित देश की सबसे बड़ी डंपिंग ग्राउंड पर प्रस्तावित कचरे से ऊर्जा बनाने की परियोजना का विरोध कर रहे हैं, उनका कहना है कि इससे वायु गुणवत्ता बिगड़ेगी और जनस्वास्थ्य को नुकसान होगा।

• The plant, to be developed by **Chennai MSW Pvt Ltd** on **8.2 hectares**, will process **1,800 tonnes of municipal waste per day** and generate **8 megawatts of electricity** by **October 2025**.

• यह संयंत्र चेन्नई एमएसडब्ल्यू प्राइवेट लिमिटेड द्वारा 8.2 हेक्टेयर में विकसित किया जाएगा, जो प्रतिदिन 1,800 टन नगर कचरा प्रसंस्कृत करेगा और अक्टूबर 2025 तक 8 मेगावाट बिजली उत्पन्न करेगा।

• Nearby residents from **Baiganwadi** and **Shivaji Nagar** fear **toxic gas emissions** may worsen **respiratory diseases** in an already vulnerable area.

• बैगनवाड़ी और शिवाजी नगर के पास के निवासी डरते हैं कि इससे **विषैली गैसें** निकलेंगी, जो पहले से ही संवेदनशील क्षेत्र में **श्वसन रोगों** को और बढ़ा सकती हैं।

## Local Testimonies and Health Concerns

### स्थानीय अनुभव और स्वास्थ्य संबंधी चिंताएँ

• Zakir, a 30-year-old resident of **Baiganwadi**, says the area already has **high rates of TB and asthma**, and adding another **pollutant-heavy project** is dangerous.

• बैगनवाड़ी के 30 वर्षीय निवासी जाकिर ने कहा कि इस क्षेत्र में पहले से ही टीबी और अस्थमा के मामले अधिक हैं और एक और प्रदूषक परियोजना जोड़ना खतरनाक है।

• Another resident who works at the dumping ground said **emission control technology** cannot **fully eliminate risks**, and the situation will become **more dangerous**.

• डंपिंग ग्राउंड में काम करने वाले एक अन्य निवासी ने कहा कि **उत्सर्जन नियंत्रण तकनीक** पूरी तरह से **जोखिम को खत्म नहीं** कर सकती, और स्थिति और भी **खतरनाक** हो जाएगी।

• The area houses **over 10 lakh people** across **200 slum pockets**, and additional crowding is expected due to **Dharavi redevelopment relocation**.

• यह क्षेत्र **200 झुग्गी बस्तियाँ** में **10 लाख से अधिक लोगों** का घर है, और धारावी पुनर्विकास परियोजना के कारण यहां और भी **भीड़ बढ़ने** की आशंका है।

## Legal Battle and Environmental Objections

### कानूनी लड़ाई और पर्यावरणीय आपत्तियाँ

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- Bombay High Court lawyer **Abid Abbas Sayyed** has filed objections with the **BMC Commissioner** and **Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB)**.
- बॉम्बे हाई कोर्ट के वकील आबिद अब्बास सैयद ने **BMC आयुक्त** और **महाराष्ट्र प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड (MPCB)** के समक्ष आपत्तियाँ दर्ज की हैं।
- He said the plant would release **carcinogens, dioxins, furans, carbon monoxide, and sulphur oxides**, which could increase **asthma** and **COPD** cases.
- उन्होंने कहा कि संयंत्र से **कैंसरकारी तत्व, डाइऑक्सीजन, फ्यूरोन, कार्बन मोनोऑक्साइड, और सल्फर ऑक्साइड** निकलेंगे, जिससे **अस्थमा** और **COPD** जैसे रोग बढ़ सकते हैं।
- Despite BMC's claim that the project is **environmentally sound** and cleared by **MPCB**, residents remain **skeptical** due to past failures.
- भले ही BMC यह दावा कर रही हो कि यह परियोजना **पर्यावरण के अनुकूल** है और इसे **MPCB** द्वारा मंजूरी मिली है, फिर भी निवासी **संदेह** में हैं।
- A **biomedical waste facility** in the area was also promised to be safe, but now residents face **black dust** and **foul smell** daily.
- इस क्षेत्र में एक **बायोमेडिकल कचरा संयंत्र** को भी पहले **सुरक्षित** बताया गया था, लेकिन अब वहां **काली धूल** और **दुर्गंध** रोज अनुभव होती है।
- A **TISS study** found the **average life expectancy in Govandi** is only **39 years**.
- **TISS** के एक अध्ययन के अनुसार, **गोवंडी** में औसत जीवन प्रत्याशा मात्र **39 वर्ष** है।

## Previous Violations and Trust Deficit

### पिछले उल्लंघन और विश्वास की कमी

- Sayyed pointed out that the biomedical waste facility **operated for 5 years without MPCB clearance**, and no action has been taken even after a **court order** six months ago.
- सैयद ने बताया कि बायोमेडिकल संयंत्र ने **MPCB की मंजूरी के बिना 5 साल तक काम किया**, और **छह महीने पहले अदालत के आदेश** के बावजूद कोई कार्रवाई नहीं हुई।
- He questioned how the **same agencies (MPCB and BMC)** can be trusted again.
- उन्होंने पूछा कि **वही एजेंसियाँ (MPCB और BMC)** अब कैसे **भरोसेमंद** मानी जा सकती हैं।

## Citizens' Petition and Technical Claims

### नागरिक याचिका और तकनीकी दावे

- The **Govandi New Sangam Welfare Society** filed a **High Court petition** in **October 2022**, demanding **closure of the facility**.



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• गोवंडी न्यू संगम वेलफेयर सोसाइटी ने अक्टूबर 2022 में उच्च न्यायालय में याचिका दायर की, जिसमें परियोजना बंद करने की मांग की गई।

• MPCB officer **Rakesh Dafade** stated that the project was **evaluated for over a year**, and it includes **pollution control measures** like **scrubbers**, **50-metre chimney**, and **leachate treatment systems**.

• MPCB अधिकारी राकेश दफाडे ने कहा कि इस परियोजना की एक वर्ष से अधिक समय तक जांच की गई, और इसमें **स्क्रबर**, **50 मीटर ऊँची चिमनी**, और **लीचेट ट्रीटमेंट सिस्टम** जैसी प्रदूषण नियंत्रण व्यवस्थाएँ शामिल हैं।

## Core Issues and Policy Violations

### मुख्य समस्याएँ और नीति उल्लंघन

• Residents argue that the **lack of waste segregation** is the core problem, as Deonar's waste is a **toxic mix of wet, dry, plastic, and biomedical waste**.

• निवासियों का कहना है कि **कचरे का पृथक्करण नहीं होना** सबसे बड़ी समस्या है, क्योंकि देवनार का कचरा **गीले, सूखे, प्लास्टिक और बायोमेडिकल कचरे का खतरनाक मिश्रण** है।

• Sayyed's objection letter accuses BMC of **violating Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016**, especially **Rule 15**, which mandates **segregation at source**.

• सैयद की आपत्ति पत्र में आरोप है कि BMC ने **ठोस कचरा प्रबंधन नियम, 2016**, विशेष रूप से **नियम 15** का उल्लंघन किया है, जो **स्रोत पर कचरे के पृथक्करण** को अनिवार्य करता है।

• The letter also states that **Mumbai's waste** has **low calorific value** due to its **high organic content**, making it **unsuitable for energy recovery**.

• पत्र में यह भी कहा गया है कि **मुंबई का कचरा उच्च जैविक सामग्री** के कारण **कम ऊष्मा मान** वाला है, जिससे यह **ऊर्जा उत्पादन के लिए अनुपयुक्त** है।

• It noted that **7 of 14 WtE plants in India** have **shut down** for similar reasons.

• इसमें उल्लेख किया गया कि **भारत के 14 में से 7 WtE संयंत्र** इसी कारण से **बंद हो चुके** हैं।

## Demands and Transparency Measures

### मांगें और पारदर्शिता की पहल

• Residents are demanding a **stay on the project** until a thorough **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)** and **health studies** in Govandi are conducted.

• निवासी मांग कर रहे हैं कि जब तक **गोवंडी में पर्यावरण प्रभाव मूल्यांकन (EIA)** और **स्वास्थ्य अध्ययन** नहीं हो जाते, तब तक इस परियोजना पर **रोक** लगाई जाए।

• An **RTI application** has been filed to access the project's **clearance documents** and **environmental reports**.

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• परियोजना की स्वीकृति दस्तावेजों और पर्यावरण रिपोर्टों तक पहुंच के लिए एक RTI आवेदन भी दायर किया गया है।

## T.N. CM inaugurates houses for mahouts in Nilgiris district

**The Hindu Bureau**  
UDHAGAMANDALAM

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Tuesday visited the Theppakadu Elephant Camp in the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) in the Nilgiris, where he also inaugurated 44 houses built for mahouts.

Mr. Stalin inaugurated the mahout village, where 44 houses for as many families had been constructed at a cost of ₹5.6 crore.

Addressing the media following the inauguration of the mahout village, Mr. Stalin said more development works were planned for the tiger reserve. He said he was a regular visitor to the Nilgiris, and praised the district's salubrious climate.

The Chief Minister also flagged off 32 vehicles that were handed over to the Forest Department, and fed elephants at the camp.

Mr. Stalin was accompanied by Secretary of the Environment, Climate

**M.K. Stalin inaugurated the mahout village, where 44 houses had been constructed at a cost of ₹5.6 crore**

Change and Forest Department, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Srinivas Reddy, Chief Wildlife Warden Rakesh Dogra, Nilgiris Lok Sabha MP A. Raja, Collector Lakshmi Bhavya Tanneeru, and other top officials from the Forest Department.

**Interaction with tribals**  
Earlier, Mr. Stalin made a stop on the route to Theppakadu and spoke to Adivasi residents near Mavannallah.

He enquired with them whether they had any grievances that needed to be addressed.

Mr. Stalin will inaugurate the 127<sup>th</sup> annual flower show in Udhagamandalam on Thursday.

## T.N. CM inaugurates houses for mahouts in Nilgiris district

तमिलनाडु मुख्यमंत्री ने नीलगिरी जिले में महावतों के लिए आवासों का उद्घाटन किया

• Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Tuesday visited the Theppakadu Elephant Camp in the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) in the Nilgiris, where he inaugurated 44 houses built for mahouts.

• तमिलनाडु के मुख्यमंत्री एम.के. स्टालिन ने मंगलवार को नीलगिरी जिले के मुदुमलाई टाइगर रिजर्व (MTR) में स्थित थेप्पकाडु हाथी शिविर का दौरा किया, जहां उन्होंने महावतों के लिए बनाए गए 44 मकानों का उद्घाटन किया।

• Mr. Stalin inaugurated the mahout village, where 44 houses for as many families had been constructed at a cost of ₹5.6 crore.

• श्री स्टालिन ने महावत गांव का उद्घाटन किया, जहां 44 परिवारों के लिए ₹5.6 करोड़ की लागत से 44 मकान बनाए गए हैं।

• Addressing the media after the inauguration, Mr. Stalin said that more development works were planned for the tiger reserve.

• उद्घाटन के बाद मीडिया से बातचीत करते हुए श्री स्टालिन ने कहा कि टाइगर रिजर्व के लिए और विकास कार्यों की योजना बनाई गई है।

• He said he was a regular visitor to the Nilgiris and praised the district's salubrious climate.

• उन्होंने कहा कि वे नीलगिरी के नियमित आगंतुक हैं और जिले की स्वस्थ जलवायु की प्रशंसा की।



GS Paper III: Environment

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin feeding an elephant at the Theppakadu camp in the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve on Tuesday. M. SATHYAMOORTHY



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

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

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• The Chief Minister also **flagged off 32 vehicles** that were handed over to the **Forest Department**.

• मुख्यमंत्री ने वन विभाग को सौंपे गए 32 वाहनों को रवाना भी किया।

• He also **fed elephants** at the camp.

• उन्होंने शिविर में हाथियों को चारा भी खिलाया।

• Mr. Stalin was accompanied by **Secretary of the Environment, Climate Change and Forest Department, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Srinivas Reddy, Chief Wildlife Warden Rakesh Dogra, Nilgiris Lok Sabha MP A. Raja, Collector Lakshmi Bhavya Tanneeru**, and other senior **Forest Department officials**.

• श्री स्टालिन के साथ पर्यावरण, जलवायु परिवर्तन और वन विभाग के सचिव, मुख्य प्रधान वन संरक्षक श्रीनिवास रेड्डी, मुख्य वन्यजीव संरक्षक राकेश डोगरा, नीलगिरी के सांसद ए. राजा, जिलाधिकारी लक्ष्मी भव्या तन्नेरु और अन्य वरिष्ठ वन विभाग अधिकारी उपस्थित थे।

## Interaction with tribals

### आदिवासियों से बातचीत

• Earlier, Mr. Stalin made a **stop on the route to Theppakadu** and spoke to **Adivasi residents** near **Mavanallah**.

• इससे पहले श्री स्टालिन ने थेप्पकाडु के रास्ते में मवनल्लाह के पास कुछ समय के लिए रुककर आदिवासी निवासियों से बातचीत की।

• He enquired whether they had any **grievances** that needed to be addressed.

• उन्होंने उनसे पूछा कि क्या उनकी कोई शिकायतें हैं जिन्हें सुलझाने की आवश्यकता है।

## Upcoming Event: Flower Show Inauguration

### आगामी कार्यक्रम: फूल प्रदर्शनी का उद्घाटन

• Mr. Stalin will **inaugurate the 127th annual flower show** in **Udhagamandalam** on **Thursday**.

• श्री स्टालिन गुरुवार को उधगमंडलम में आयोजित होने वाली 127वीं वार्षिक फूल प्रदर्शनी का उद्घाटन करेंगे।

## Project Tiger and Tiger Reserves

### प्रोजेक्ट टाइगर और टाइगर रिज़र्व्स

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- **Project Tiger** is a **wildlife conservation initiative** launched by the **Government of India** in **1973** to protect the declining population of tigers in the country.

प्रोजेक्ट टाइगर एक वन्यजीव संरक्षण पहल है जिसे भारत सरकार द्वारा 1973 में देश में

घटती बाघों की संख्या की रक्षा के लिए शुरू किया गया था।

- The project aims to create a **viable population of wild tigers** in their **natural habitat** and ensure their **conservation**, along with the **ecosystems** they inhabit.

इस परियोजना का उद्देश्य उनके प्राकृतिक आवास में जंगली बाघों की एक व्यावहारिक आबादी तैयार करना और उनके साथ-साथ उनके पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र का संरक्षण सुनिश्चित करना है।

### Historical Background

### ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठभूमि

- Project Tiger was initiated on **April 1, 1973**, by then **Prime Minister Indira Gandhi** in response to the **alarming decline in tiger numbers** due to **poaching, habitat loss, and human encroachment**.

प्रोजेक्ट टाइगर की शुरुआत 1 अप्रैल 1973 को तत्कालीन प्रधानमंत्री इंदिरा गांधी द्वारा की गई थी, जो शिकार, आवास की हानि और मानव अतिक्रमण के कारण बाघों की गंभीर गिरावट की प्रतिक्रिया में थी।

- **First Tiger Reserve:** The first tiger reserve established under this project was **Jim Corbett National Park** in **Uttarakhand**.

पहला टाइगर रिज़र्व: इस परियोजना के तहत स्थापित पहला टाइगर रिज़र्व उत्तराखंड में **जिम कॉर्बेट राष्ट्रीय उद्यान** था।

**Tiger Reserves in India (2025)**

**भारत में बाघ अभयारण्य (2025)**





- As of **March 2025**, India has **58 tiger reserves**, covering approximately **82,836.44 square kilometers**, which is about **2.3%** of the country's total land area.  
मार्च 2025 तक, भारत में 58 बाघ अभयारण्य हैं, जो लगभग 82,836.44 वर्ग किलोमीटर क्षेत्रफल में फैले हैं, जो देश के कुल भौगोलिक क्षेत्र का लगभग 2.3% है।
- These reserves are established under **Project Tiger**, initiated in **1973**, and are administered by the **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)**.  
ये अभयारण्य प्रोजेक्ट टाइगर, जो कि 1973 में शुरू किया गया था, के तहत स्थापित किए गए हैं और इनका प्रशासन राष्ट्रीय बाघ संरक्षण प्राधिकरण (NTCA) द्वारा किया जाता है।
- India is home to approximately **3,682 wild tigers**, accounting for nearly **75%** of the world's wild tiger population.  
भारत में लगभग 3,682 वन्य बाघ हैं, जो विश्व की कुल वन्य बाघ जनसंख्या का लगभग 75% हैं।

### Notable Tiger Reserves

#### प्रमुख बाघ अभयारण्य

- **Nagarjunsagar-Srisaillam Tiger Reserve (Andhra Pradesh & Telangana):** The largest in India, spanning **3,296.31 sq km**.  
नागरजुनसागर-श्रीशैलम टाइगर रिज़र्व (आंध्र प्रदेश और तेलंगाना): भारत का सबसे बड़ा बाघ अभयारण्य है, जिसका क्षेत्रफल 3,296.31 वर्ग किमी है।
- **Bor Tiger Reserve (Maharashtra):** The smallest, covering only **138.12 sq km**.  
बोर टाइगर रिज़र्व (महाराष्ट्र): भारत का सबसे छोटा बाघ अभयारण्य है, जो केवल 138.12 वर्ग किमी में फैला है।
- **Sundarbans Tiger Reserve (West Bengal):** Famous for its unique **mangrove ecosystem**.  
सुंदरबन टाइगर रिज़र्व (पश्चिम बंगाल): अपनी विशिष्ट मैंग्रोव पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र के लिए प्रसिद्ध है।
- **Bandhavgarh National Park (Madhya Pradesh):** Known for a **high density** of tigers.  
बांधवगढ़ राष्ट्रीय उद्यान (मध्य प्रदेश): बाघों की उच्च घनता के लिए जाना जाता है।
- **Ranthambore National Park (Rajasthan):** Popular for **tiger sightings** and **historical ruins**.



रणथंभौर राष्ट्रीय उद्यान (राजस्थान): बाघों के दर्शन और ऐतिहासिक खंडहरों के लिए प्रसिद्ध है।

- **Kaziranga National Park (Assam):** Renowned for the **one-horned rhinoceros** and tigers.
- **काज़ीरंगा राष्ट्रीय उद्यान (असम):** एक सींग वाले गैंडे और बाघों के लिए प्रसिद्ध है।

### State-wise Distribution

#### राज्यवार वितरण

- **Madhya Pradesh:** Leads with **9 tiger reserves**, including the latest addition, **Madhav Tiger Reserve**, declared on **March 9, 2025**.

मध्य प्रदेश: 9 बाघ अभयारण्यों के साथ अग्रणी है, जिसमें 9 मार्च 2025 को घोषित किया गया माधव टाइगर रिज़र्व भी शामिल है।

- **Maharashtra and Karnataka:** Each has **multiple reserves** contributing significantly to tiger conservation.

महाराष्ट्र और कर्नाटक: दोनों राज्यों में कई बाघ अभयारण्य हैं, जो बाघ संरक्षण में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान देते हैं।

### Objectives

#### उद्देश्य

- **Habitat Protection:** Tiger reserves serve as critical habitats for tigers and other wildlife species, contributing to biodiversity conservation.
- **Eco-tourism:** Many reserves promote eco-tourism, which helps generate revenue for local communities and conservation efforts.
- **Research and Education:** These areas serve as important sites for wildlife research and education, helping raise awareness about conservation.

- **Population Viability:** To ensure a **viable population** of tigers in the wild by **safeguarding their habitats**.

जनसंख्या व्यवहार्यता: बाघों के आवासों की रक्षा करके जंगल में उनकी व्यावहारिक आबादी सुनिश्चित करना।

- **Biodiversity Conservation:** To protect not only **tigers** but also the **diverse flora and fauna** within their **ecosystems**.



जैव विविधता संरक्षण: केवल बाघों ही नहीं बल्कि उनके पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र में पाई जाने वाली विविध वनस्पति और जीवों की भी रक्षा करना।

- **Community Participation:** To involve **local communities** in conservation efforts and promote **eco-friendly practices**.

सामुदायिक भागीदारी: स्थानीय समुदायों को संरक्षण प्रयासों में शामिल करना और पर्यावरण-अनुकूल प्रथाओं को बढ़ावा देना।

# Payment firms must reveal client info in crime cases: HC

Confidentiality must coexist with accountability, says court; PhonePe contended that digital payment intermediaries had immunity from disclosing information to anyone, except courts

GS Paper III: Internal Security

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

Observing that “the duty to protect data must yield where public interest and criminal investigation intersect”, the Karnataka High Court has said that digital payment intermediaries such as PhonePe has no complete immunity under the law from disclosing confidential information about transaction details/account credentials of registered users to the police for investigation in a criminal case.

“The protection of consumer privacy cannot eclipse the lawful imperative of investigating officers to secure evidence and



PhonePe contended that it is protected from disclosing information to anyone.

take the investigation to its logical conclusion. Confidentiality must coexist with accountability,” the court observed. Justice M. Nagaprasanna made these observations while dismissing

a plea filed by PhonePe Pvt. Ltd.

## Summons questioned

The company had questioned the summons issued by CEN police station, Bengaluru Rural district, asking the company to give certain information about transactions on a complaint lodged by a person alleging that he had lost money in 2022 while using several digital payment gateways.

It was contended by PhonePe that digital payment intermediaries had immunity from disclosing information to anyone, including the police, except the courts, under the provisions of the Payment and Settlement Systems (PSS)

Act, 2007 and the Bankers Books Evidence (BBE) Act.

“The provision itself carves out that except where such disclosure would be required in obedience to the orders passed by the court of competent jurisdiction or a statutory authority in exercise of power conferred under the statute,” the court noted.

Hence, the court said that the investigating officer was a statutory authority, who was acting in terms of the powers conferred under the Code of Criminal Procedure while conducting investigation, and therefore the contention that details could not be divulged could not be accepted.



## Payment Firms Must Reveal Client Info in Crime Cases: HC

### अपराध के मामलों में ग्राहक की जानकारी का खुलासा करना जरूरी: उच्च

#### न्यायालय

- The Karnataka High Court has ruled that **digital payment intermediaries** like **PhonePe** must disclose **transaction details** and **account credentials** of registered users to the **police** for criminal investigations.
- कर्नाटका उच्च न्यायालय ने यह निर्णय लिया है कि **डिजिटल भुगतान मध्यस्थों** जैसे **PhonePe** को **पुलिस** को **लेन-देन विवरण** और **खाता विवरण** खोलने होंगे, ताकि **अपराध जांच** हो सके।
- The court emphasized that **confidentiality** must coexist with **accountability**, and **privacy protection** cannot overshadow the **legal obligation** of investigators to secure evidence.
- अदालत ने यह जोर दिया कि **गोपनीयता** को **जवाबदेही** के साथ सह-अस्तित्व में रहना चाहिए, और **गोपनीयता की रक्षा** को **कानूनी जिम्मेदारी** के सामने नहीं आना चाहिए, जो **जांचकर्ताओं** को **सबूत जुटाने** के लिए आवश्यक है।
- Justice **M. Nagaprasanna** made these observations while dismissing a plea filed by **PhonePe Pvt. Ltd.**, challenging the summons issued by the **CEN police** in **Bengaluru**.
- न्यायमूर्ति **एम. नागप्रसन्ना** ने यह टिप्पणियाँ करते हुए **PhonePe Pvt. Ltd.** द्वारा दायर याचिका को खारिज किया, जिसमें **बंगलुरु** में **CEN पुलिस** द्वारा जारी समन को चुनौती दी गई थी।
- **PhonePe** argued that digital payment intermediaries had immunity from revealing information to anyone, including the **police**, except under court orders.
- **PhonePe** ने तर्क किया कि डिजिटल भुगतान मध्यस्थों को **पुलिस** को जानकारी देने से छूट प्राप्त है, केवल **कोर्ट के आदेशों** के तहत ही यह जानकारी दी जा सकती है।
- However, the court clarified that the **investigating officer**, acting under the **Criminal Procedure Code**, is a statutory authority who can demand such information.
- हालांकि, अदालत ने स्पष्ट किया कि **जांच अधिकारी**, जो **क्रिमिनल प्रोसीजर कोड** के तहत कार्य करता है, एक वैधानिक प्राधिकरण है जो इस प्रकार की जानकारी मांग सकता है।
- The court ruled that **consumer privacy** cannot override the **public interest** and **criminal investigation** imperatives.
- अदालत ने यह निर्णय दिया कि **उपभोक्ता गोपनीयता** को **सार्वजनिक हित** और **अपराध जांच** की आवश्यकता से अधिक महत्व नहीं दिया जा सकता।



# India notifies WTO of plan to impose retaliatory tariffs on U.S. imports

This comes in retaliation for the imposition of 25% import duties on steel and aluminium by U.S.; India says that proposed measures will be in form of a suspension of concessions or other obligations on selected products originating in the U.S.

GS Paper III: WTO

**T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan**  
NEW DELHI

**A**t a time when India and the U.S. are in talks over a trade deal, fresh tensions have emerged as India has notified the World Trade Organization (WTO) of its proposal to impose tariffs on \$7.6 billion worth of imports from the U.S. in retaliation for that country raising its import duties on steel and aluminium to 25%.

According to a communication from the WTO, India's reciprocal measures could kick in 30 days from the date it sent its notification to the WTO – May 9. The WTO said it was circulating the communication “at the request of the delegation of India”.

The matter first became a point of friction during U.S. President Donald Trump's first term, when in 2018, he had first imposed higher tariffs on steel and aluminium imports. Then, in February 2025, with effect from March, at the start of his second term, he modified



India's move to impose tariffs on American imports is in response to the U.S. raising its import duties on steel. REUTERS

this by imposing tariffs of 25% on imports of steel and aluminium and removing all country-specific and product-specific exemptions that most countries had managed to obtain.

While the U.S. had declined overtures from India in April for talks over the matter, saying these higher tariffs were not safeguard measures but were taken in the interest of national security, India has maintained that they are

**India's reciprocal measures could kick in 30 days from the date it sent its notification to WTO**

safeguard measures.

“The measures have not been notified by the United States to the WTO, but are, in essence, safeguard measures,” India asserted in its communication to the WTO. “India maintains

that the measures taken by the United States are not consistent with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, 1994 (GATT 1994) and Agreement on Safeguards (AoS).”

Further, it said that since the U.S. did not hold mandatory consultations under Article 12.3 of the AoS, India had the right to retaliate.

It added that “India reserves the right to suspend concessions or other obligations... that are substantially equivalent to the adverse effects of the measure to India's trade”.

India further said that its proposed measures would be in the form of a suspension of concessions or other obligations on selected products originating in the U.S., which would in effect result in an increase in tariffs on these items.

“India reserves its right to suspend concessions or other obligations after the expiration of thirty days from the date of this notification (May 9, 2025),” it added.

The communication further said that the U.S.

measures would affect \$7.6 billion worth of imports into the U.S. from India, on which the duty collection would be \$1.91 billion.

“Accordingly, India's proposed suspension of concessions would result in an equivalent amount of duty collected from products originating in the U.S.,” it added.

India said it would inform both the Council for Trade in Goods and the Committee on Safeguards of the WTO on “the next appropriate steps”.

**Not the first time**

If India does go ahead with its retaliatory measures, it would not be the first time. In June 2019, India imposed higher tariffs on 28 products from the U.S. after the U.S. removed India from its Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) and refused to discontinue its 2018 steel and aluminium tariffs.

The duties – covering \$240 million in trade value – were withdrawn in September 2023, after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to Washington.

**India notifies WTO of plan to impose retaliatory tariffs on U.S. imports**

**भारत ने WTO को अमेरिकी आयात पर प्रतिशोधात्मक टैरिफ लगाने की योजना की सूचना दी**



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• India has notified the World Trade Organization (WTO) of its plan to impose tariffs on \$7.6 billion worth of imports from the U.S.

• भारत ने विश्व व्यापार संगठन (WTO) को अमेरिका से होने वाले 7.6 अरब डॉलर के आयात पर टैरिफ लगाने की अपनी योजना की सूचना दी है।

• This move comes in retaliation to the 25% import duties imposed by the U.S. on steel and aluminium.

• यह कदम अमेरिका द्वारा स्टील और एल्युमिनियम पर 25% आयात शुल्क लगाने के प्रतिशोध में उठाया गया है।

• India said the proposed action would be in the form of a **suspension of concessions or other obligations** on selected products from the U.S.

• भारत ने कहा कि प्रस्तावित कार्रवाई चुनिंदा अमेरिकी उत्पादों पर रियायतों या अन्य दायित्वों को निलंबित करने के रूप में होगी।

## WTO Notification and Timelines

### WTO को सूचना और समयसीमा

• According to the WTO, India's reciprocal measures could begin **30 days** after the **May 9** notification.

• WTO के अनुसार, भारत की प्रतिशोधात्मक कार्रवाई **9 मई** की सूचना के **30 दिनों** बाद शुरू हो सकती है।

• The WTO stated it circulated the communication "**at the request of the delegation of India.**"

• WTO ने कहा कि यह सूचना "भारत के प्रतिनिधिमंडल के अनुरोध पर" साझा की गई थी।

## Background of the Trade Dispute

### व्यापार विवाद की पृष्ठभूमि

• The issue started in **2018** during **U.S. President Donald Trump's first term**, when he imposed higher tariffs on steel and aluminium imports.

• यह मुद्दा **2018** में अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति **डोनाल्ड ट्रंप** के पहले कार्यकाल में शुरू हुआ था, जब उन्होंने स्टील और एल्युमिनियम पर अधिक टैरिफ लगाया था।

• In **February 2025**, at the start of Trump's **second term**, the U.S. imposed **25% tariffs** again and **removed all exemptions**.

• **फरवरी 2025** में ट्रंप के दूसरे कार्यकाल की शुरुआत में अमेरिका ने फिर से **25% टैरिफ** लगाए और **सभी छूटों** को हटा दिया।



## India's Position at WTO

### WTO में भारत की स्थिति

- The U.S. rejected India's request in **April 2025** for talks, stating the tariffs were for **national security**, not **safeguard measures**.
  - अमेरिका ने **अप्रैल 2025** में भारत के साथ बातचीत के अनुरोध को यह कहकर खारिज कर दिया कि यह टैरिफ **राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा** के लिए हैं, **सुरक्षा उपाय** नहीं।
- India responded that these are **safeguard measures** and **not notified** by the U.S. to the WTO.
  - भारत ने जवाब दिया कि ये **सुरक्षा उपाय** हैं और अमेरिका ने इन्हें WTO को **सूचित नहीं किया** है।
- India argued that the U.S. actions violate the **General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, 1994 (GATT 1994)** and the **Agreement on Safeguards (AoS)**.
  - भारत ने तर्क दिया कि अमेरिकी कार्रवाई **GATT 1994** और **सुरक्षा उपायों पर समझौते (AoS)** का उल्लंघन करती है।
- India also said that the U.S. failed to conduct **mandatory consultations under Article 12.3 of the AoS**.
  - भारत ने यह भी कहा कि अमेरिका **AoS के अनुच्छेद 12.3 के तहत अनिवार्य परामर्श** आयोजित करने में विफल रहा।

## India's Proposed Measures

### भारत के प्रस्तावित उपाय

- India stated it has the right to **retaliate** and **suspend concessions or obligations** equivalent to the damage caused to its trade.
  - भारत ने कहा कि उसे अपने व्यापार को हुए नुकसान के बराबर **प्रतिशोध लेने और रियायतों या दायित्वों को निलंबित करने** का अधिकार है।
- These measures will take the form of **tariff hikes** on selected U.S. products.
  - ये उपाय **चुनिंदा अमेरिकी उत्पादों पर टैरिफ बढ़ाने** के रूप में होंगे।
- India reserves the right to **implement these suspensions 30 days after May 9, 2025**.
  - भारत ने कहा कि वह इन **निलंबनों को 9 मई 2025 के 30 दिन बाद लागू करने** का अधिकार रखता है।
- The U.S. measures affect **\$7.6 billion** of Indian exports, leading to **\$1.91 billion** in duties.
  - अमेरिकी उपायों से भारत के **7.6 अरब डॉलर** के निर्यात प्रभावित होते हैं, जिससे **1.91 अरब डॉलर** का शुल्क एकत्र होता है।



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- India will impose **equivalent duties** on imports from the U.S.
- भारत अमेरिका से आयात पर **बराबर की इयूटी** लगाएगा।
- India said it will inform both the **Council for Trade in Goods** and the **Committee on Safeguards** of the WTO regarding further steps.
- भारत ने कहा कि वह WTO की **वस्तु व्यापार परिषद** और **सुरक्षा उपाय समिति** को आगे की कार्रवाई की जानकारी देगा।

## Previous Retaliatory Action by India

### भारत की पिछली प्रतिशोधात्मक कार्रवाई

- In **June 2019**, India imposed **higher tariffs on 28 U.S. products** after the U.S. removed India from the **GSP** and continued the **2018 steel-aluminium tariffs**.
- **जून 2019** में, अमेरिका द्वारा भारत को **GSP से बाहर** करने और **2018 के स्टील-एल्युमिनियम टैरिफ** जारी रखने के बाद भारत ने **28 अमेरिकी उत्पादों पर उच्च टैरिफ** लगाया।
- These duties, covering **\$240 million** in trade, were **withdrawn in September 2023** following **Prime Minister Modi's state visit** to Washington.
- **240 मिलियन डॉलर** के व्यापार को कवर करने वाले ये शुल्क, **प्रधानमंत्री मोदी की वाशिंगटन यात्रा** के बाद **सितंबर 2023 में हटा लिए गए** थे।



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## JCI increases MSP of jute to stop distress selling of crop

## JCI increases MSP of jute to stop distress selling of crop

फसल की मजबूरी में बिक्री रोकने के लिए जेसीआई ने जूट का एमएसपी बढ़ाया

GS Paper III: MSP

The Hindu Bureau  
KOLKATA

The Jute Corporation of India (JCI) has increased the minimum selling price (MSP) of jute from ₹5,335 to ₹5,650 per quintal to discourage distress selling of crops by farmers for the crop year 2025-26.

The JCI officials have also asked farmers not to fall into the trap of middlemen and dealers and sell their crop below the MSP to ensure the growth of the industry.

The new MSP will be applicable from the crop year which starts on July 1 for middle grade jute, and the prices for other grades will also increase in parity.

“For the past three or four years, we have been working with the Indian Space Research Organisation to help understand crop cultivation and environmental factors, check soil quality, moisture, production, and more,” Moly Chandan Chakraborty, Jute Commissioner, said.

He said the authorities were doing active data collection through remote sensing to mitigate problems and make positive changes.

• The Jute Corporation of India (JCI) has increased the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of jute from ₹5,335 to ₹5,650 per quintal for the crop year 2025–26, to discourage distress selling by farmers.

• जूट कॉर्पोरेशन ऑफ इंडिया (JCI) ने किसानों द्वारा मजबूरी में फसल बेचने से रोकने के लिए 2025–26 फसल वर्ष के लिए जूट का न्यूनतम समर्थन मूल्य (MSP) ₹5,335 से बढ़ाकर ₹5,650 प्रति क्विंटल कर दिया है।

• JCI officials have urged farmers not to fall into the trap of middlemen and dealers and not to sell their crop below the MSP, to ensure the growth of the jute industry.

• जेसीआई अधिकारियों ने किसानों से आग्रह किया है कि वे बिचौलियों और डीलरों के जाल में न फंसे और अपनी फसल एमएसपी से कम कीमत पर न बेचें, ताकि जूट उद्योग की वृद्धि सुनिश्चित की जा सके।

• The new MSP will be applicable from the crop year starting July 1, and it applies to middle-grade jute; prices of other grades will also rise proportionately.

• नई एमएसपी 1 जुलाई से शुरू होने वाले फसल वर्ष से लागू होगी, और यह मध्यम श्रेणी के जूट पर लागू होगी; अन्य श्रेणियों की कीमतें भी अनुपात में बढ़ेंगी।

• For the past three or four years, JCI has been working with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to monitor crop cultivation, soil quality, moisture, production, and other environmental factors.

• पिछले तीन या चार वर्षों से जेसीआई भारतीय अंतरिक्ष अनुसंधान संगठन (ISRO) के साथ मिलकर फसल की खेती, मृदा गुणवत्ता, नमी, उत्पादन और अन्य पर्यावरणीय कारकों की निगरानी कर रहा है।

• Moly Chandan Chakraborty, Jute Commissioner, said that remote sensing is being used for active data collection to address problems and bring about positive changes.

• जूट आयुक्त मोलॉय चंदन चक्रवर्ती ने कहा कि रिमोट सेंसिंग के माध्यम से सक्रिय डेटा संग्रह किया जा रहा है ताकि समस्याओं को दूर किया जा सके और सकारात्मक बदलाव लाया जा सके।

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# Scientists have found a cricket evolving rapidly to beat a new threat

Pacific field crickets in Hawaii evolved quieter songs to evade invasive parasitoid flies introduced by climate-driven migrations; the flies, however, rapidly adapted their hearing to detect these new sounds; the **escalating arms race highlights how climate change can force unpredictable evolutionary shifts in vulnerable ecosystems**

CS Paper III: Environment

Rupsy Khurana

Climate change is reshaping the world – and perhaps nowhere more so than in the wild. As ecosystems change, species are forced to move to new locations in search of the resources they need to live. Unlike some human-made borders that are visible as fences and walls, the wild at large has numerous borders invisible to humans crisscrossing each other. When climate change causes an animal to migrate, it may cross one of these borders – and there new challenges await.

Some newcomers quietly adapt to their new environs. Others go rogue and become invasive, throwing the lives of native species into chaos. These invasions are becoming more common, which means more and more native species are being forced to make a choice: evolve to survive or perish.

## A love song vanishes

On the Hawaiian islands, Pacific field crickets (*Teleogryllus oceanicus*) evolved – and how. To avoid being hunted by an invasive parasitoid fly called *Ormia ochracea*, they have started remixing the songs they've been using to find mates. But according to a study published recently in *Current Biology*, these escape plans might not be foolproof, at least not yet.

About 30 years ago, as *O. ochracea* flies flew into Hawaii from tropical America, the sound of Pacific field crickets' love songs vanished from the islands. Using their acute sense of hearing, the flies were able to zero in on male crickets as they sang and lay their eggs inside the crickets' bodies. When the larvae hatched, they fed on the nutrients around them and eventually burrowed out, killing the crickets.

"About 20 years ago, we discovered a population on Kauai [in Hawaii] that had gone completely silent because a mutation on their wing erased the sound-producing structures in these crickets," University of Denver professor Robin Tinghitella said. "Males still rubbed their wings together, but no sound came out. It was a pretty wild discovery. The mutation swept through the island because it protected crickets from flies."

Recently, however, Tinghitella's group discovered populations of Pacific field crickets that still sang – but the music was somewhat different: it contained some additional subdued purrs and rattles. It differed in both frequency and amplitude from the original music. The researchers found that it was still loud enough to attract females but quiet enough to evade *O. ochracea* flies.



Two domestic crickets feed on a carrot in this representative image. The populations of insects are falling in many parts of the world. Their extinction rates are estimated to be eight-times higher than those of birds, mammals or reptiles. SEAN WALLACE (CC BY-SA)

To Tinghitella, the crickets' new adaptation signalled a "rapid pace of evolutionary change."

**Step by step? No, thanks**  
"This got us wondering: could the flies be evolving to keep up?" she continued. "This kicked off a series of lab and field experiments to see if the neural and behavioural responses of flies were responding to changes in cricket songs."

To test if the flies were evolving in sync with their prey, the researchers compared the sensitivity of Hawaiian flies to certain sounds and frequencies with that of lab-maintained native flies from Florida. The ancestral Floridian flies were most sensitive to sounds around 4-6 kHz, which is also the frequency most field crickets call at. On the other hand, the researchers found, the *O. ochracea* flies had broadened their hearing range, tuning into sounds from 6 to 20 kHz.

Next, they placed a live fly on a spherical treadmill with speakers on either side. When they played synthetic pre-recorded cricket songs, the Hawaiian flies were more responsive to the purrs and rattles of Pacific field crickets than their ancestral counterparts.

Despite the crickets' efforts to stay under the radar, the flies could still find them.

"What we are seeing isn't a classic incremental step-by-step co-evolution, where the cricket changes a little bit in one direction and then the fly carefully tracks that, and so on," said Tinghitella.

**Ancestral Floridian flies were most sensitive to sounds around 4-6 kHz, which is the frequency most crickets call at. On the other hand, the *O. ochracea* flies had broadened their hearing range, tuning into sounds from 6 to 20 kHz**

"Instead, the flies have become more responsive to a broad range of sounds that might allow them to track a variety of changes in cricket song."

When the male crickets make new sounds, they aren't changing the way they interact with flies alone. Female crickets have also become less picky in this time about male songs. "If the females had still preferred only the traditional song, males with the mutations [that cause purrs and rattles] would not have succeeded. They would have gone locally extinct," Tinghitella said.

## A new challenge

How much and how quickly a species can evolve depends on its resilience, generation time, the plasticity of its traits, and ecological pressure. For example, organisms with short generation times, like insects, reproduce rapidly, so they have more chances to evolve, potentially allowing them to respond faster to new threats. Likewise, more long-lived species may be more vulnerable. Even beyond these considerations, unexpected and

synergistic pressures may still destabilise either type of species, Viraj Torsekar, an ecologist at GITAM Deemed to be University, Hyderabad, said.

The populations of insects are falling in many parts of the world. Their extinction rates are estimated to be eight-times higher than those of birds, mammals, or reptiles. Their vulnerability means even if conditions become more unfavourable than usual for a short period – e.g., a year with bad weather – populations are more liable to collapse than longer lived organisms that can better face a fluctuating threat, Cleo Bertelsmeier, professor in the department of ecology and evolution at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland, said.

As global warming, extreme weather, and biological invasions intensify, predicting how species with varying ecological needs will respond to compounding pressures is becoming increasingly challenging. Many researchers are looking at the genomic architecture of wild insect species to predict their ability to adapt.

According to Tinghitella, rapid evolution could explain why some invaders do so well or why some species manage to cope. To predict how these interactions are going to play out in the long-term, understanding how evolution happens in these situations is key.

(Rupsy Khurana is Science Communication and Outreach Lead at the National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bengaluru. khurana.rupsy@gmail.com)

## THE GIST

After *O. ochracea* flies arrived, the love songs of Pacific field crickets vanished. The flies were able to zero in on male crickets and lay their eggs inside their bodies. When the larvae hatched, they burrowed out, killing the crickets

Crickets adapted by changing the song. Female crickets also became less picky by accepting males with the mutations that allowed them to change their tune, without this adaptation, they would have gone extinct

Rapid evolution could explain why some invaders do so well or why some species manage to cope. To predict how these interactions are going to play out in the long term, understanding how evolution happens in these situations is key



## Scientists have found a cricket evolving rapidly to beat a new threat

वैज्ञानिकों ने एक कीट के बारे में पाया जो तेजी से नया खतरा टालने के लिए विकसित हो रहा है

• Pacific field crickets in Hawaii evolved to produce quieter songs to avoid being detected by the invasive parasitoid fly *Ormia ochracea*.

• हवाई में पैसिफिक फील्ड क्रिकेट्स ने *Ormia ochracea* नामक आक्रमणकारी परासाइटोइड फ्लाय से बचने के लिए शांत गीतों का उत्पादन करना शुरू किया।

• These changes are in response to the flies that evolved their hearing to detect the crickets' songs.

• ये बदलाव फ्लायज़ की प्रतिक्रिया हैं, जिन्होंने क्रिकेट्स के गीतों का पता लगाने के लिए अपनी सुनने की क्षमता विकसित की।

• The ongoing evolutionary "arms race" highlights how **climate change** can force unpredictable shifts in vulnerable ecosystems.

• जारी विकासात्मक "हथियारों की दौड़" यह दर्शाती है कि जलवायु परिवर्तन कैसे संवेदनशील पारिस्थितिकी प्रणालियों में अनियोजित बदलाव ला सकता है।

## Climate Change and Its Impact on Species

### जलवायु परिवर्तन और इसके प्रजातियों पर प्रभाव

• Climate change is forcing species to migrate to new locations in search of resources.

• जलवायु परिवर्तन प्रजातियों को संसाधनों की तलाश में नए स्थानों पर प्रवास करने के लिए मजबूर कर रहा है।

• While some species adapt quietly, others become invasive and disrupt native species.

• जबकि कुछ प्रजातियाँ चुपचाप अनुकूलित हो जाती हैं, अन्य आक्रमणकारी बनकर स्थानीय प्रजातियों को विघटित कर देती हैं।

• Native species must decide whether to evolve or perish in the face of invasions.

• स्थानीय प्रजातियों को आक्रमणों के सामने यह निर्णय लेना होता है कि वे विकसित होंगी या मर जाएंगी।

## A Love Song Vanishes

एक प्रेम गीत गायब हो जाता है



• Pacific field crickets in Hawaii began to evolve silent mutations in response to the threat posed by the invasive fly *Ormia ochracea* about 30 years ago.

• हवाई में पैसिफिक फील्ड क्रिकेट्स ने लगभग 30 साल पहले आक्रमणकारी फ्लाय *Ormia ochracea* से उत्पन्न खतरे के जवाब में मौन उत्परिवर्तन विकसित करना शुरू किया।

• The mutation that erased their sound-producing wing structures became widespread, protecting crickets from the flies.

• वह उत्परिवर्तन जो उनके ध्वनि उत्पन्न करने वाली पंख संरचनाओं को मिटा देता था, व्यापक हो गया और क्रिकेट्स को फ्लायज़ से बचाया।

• More recently, crickets have adapted by creating quieter songs with additional purrs and rattles to evade detection by the flies.

• हाल ही में, क्रिकेट्स ने फ्लायज़ द्वारा पहचान से बचने के लिए अतिरिक्त गड़गड़ाहट और खर्राटों के साथ शांत गीतों का निर्माण करके अनुकूलन किया है।

## Evolving to Keep Up

### अनुकूलन के साथ आगे बढ़ना

• The invasive flies quickly adapted their hearing to detect the new cricket songs, increasing the evolutionary arms race.

• आक्रमणकारी फ्लायज़ ने जल्दी से अपनी सुनने की क्षमता को नए क्रिकेट गीतों का पता लगाने के लिए अनुकूलित किया, जिससे विकासात्मक हथियारों की दौड़ बढ़ी।

• Studies showed that Hawaiian flies have broadened their hearing range, from 6 to 20 kHz, allowing them to track a variety of cricket songs.

• अध्ययनों ने दिखाया कि हवाई की फ्लायज़ ने अपनी सुनने की सीमा को 6 से 20 kHz तक बढ़ा दिया है, जिससे वे क्रिकेट गीतों की विभिन्न श्रेणियों का पता लगाने में सक्षम हो गए हैं।

• Researchers found that Hawaiian flies were more responsive to the purrs and rattles of the new cricket songs than the ancestral flies.

• शोधकर्ताओं ने पाया कि हवाई की फ्लायज़ नए क्रिकेट गीतों की गड़गड़ाहट और खर्राटों के प्रति पूर्वजों की फ्लायज़ से अधिक संवेदनशील थीं।

• Despite the crickets' efforts to remain under the radar, the flies were still able to find them.

• क्रिकेट्स की रेडार से बाहर रहने की कोशिशों के बावजूद, फ्लायज़ अभी भी उन्हें ढूंढने में सक्षम थीं।

## Not Just a Cricket Issue

यह सिर्फ क्रिकेट का मुद्दा नहीं है



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• The crickets' new song adaptation also altered female preferences; females became less picky about male songs.

• क्रिकेट्स के नए गीत के अनुकूलन ने मादा की प्राथमिकताओं को भी बदल दिया; मादाएँ अब नर गीतों के बारे में कम चयनात्मक हो गईं।

• Without this change, males with the new mutations would have gone locally extinct.

• इस बदलाव के बिना, नए उत्परिवर्तनों वाले नर स्थानीय रूप से विलुप्त हो गए होते।

## A New Challenge

### नई चुनौती

• The ability of a species to evolve depends on factors such as its **resilience**, **generation time**, the **plasticity** of its traits, and **ecological pressure**.

• किसी प्रजाति के विकसित होने की क्षमता इसके **सहनशीलता**, **पीढ़ी का समय**, इसके लक्षणों की **लचीलापन** और **पारिस्थितिकी दबाव** जैसे कारकों पर निर्भर करती है।

• For example, organisms with **short generation times**, like **insects**, reproduce rapidly, increasing their chances to evolve and allowing faster responses to new threats.

• उदाहरण के लिए, जो जीवों का **कम पीढ़ी का समय** होता है, जैसे **कीट**, वे तेजी से प्रजनन करते हैं, जिससे उनके विकसित होने की संभावनाएँ बढ़ जाती हैं और नए खतरों से जल्दी प्रतिक्रिया करने में सक्षम होते हैं।

• Longer-lived species may be more vulnerable, as they have fewer opportunities to evolve rapidly.

• लंबी उम्र वाले प्रजातियाँ अधिक संवेदनशील हो सकती हैं, क्योंकि उनके पास तेजी से विकसित होने के कम मौके होते हैं।

• Unexpected and **synergistic pressures** can destabilize both short-lived and long-lived species.

• अप्रत्याशित और **सहयोगी दबाव** दोनों प्रकार की प्रजातियों को अस्थिर कर सकते हैं, चाहे वे छोटी उम्र वाली हों या लंबी उम्र वाली।

• **Insect populations** are declining globally, with their extinction rates estimated to be **eight times higher** than those of birds, mammals, or reptiles.

• **कीट जनसंख्याएँ** दुनिया भर में घट रही हैं, और उनके विलुप्त होने की दर **पक्षियों, स्तनधारियों या सरीसृपों** की तुलना में **आठ गुना अधिक** मानी जाती है।

• The vulnerability of insects means they are more likely to collapse during short-term unfavourable conditions, like a **bad weather year**, compared to longer-lived species that can withstand fluctuating threats.

• कीटों की संवेदनशीलता का मतलब है कि वे **खराब मौसम वर्ष** जैसे **कम समय के प्रतिकूल परिस्थितियों** के दौरान अधिक आसानी से नष्ट हो सकते हैं, जबकि लंबी उम्र वाली प्रजातियाँ बदलते हुए खतरों का सामना करने में सक्षम होती हैं।

• As global warming, extreme weather, and **biological invasions** intensify, predicting how species will respond to compounding pressures becomes increasingly challenging.

• जैसे-जैसे **वैश्विक तापन**, चरम मौसम और **जैविक आक्रमण** बढ़ते हैं, प्रजातियाँ संकुचित दबावों के प्रति किस

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प्रकार प्रतिक्रिया करेंगी, यह भविष्यवाणी करना कठिन होता जा रहा है।

- Researchers are studying the **genomic architecture** of wild insect species to predict their ability to adapt.
- शोधकर्ता **जंगली कीट प्रजातियों की जीनोमिक संरचना** का अध्ययन कर रहे हैं ताकि उनकी अनुकूलन क्षमता का अनुमान लगाया जा सके।
- According to Tinghitella, rapid evolution may explain why some invaders succeed and why certain species manage to cope with challenges.
- **टिंगहितेला** के अनुसार, तीव्र विकास यह समझा सकता है कि कुछ आक्रमणकारी क्यों सफल होते हैं और क्यों कुछ प्रजातियाँ चुनौतियों का सामना करने में सक्षम होती हैं।
- Understanding how evolution works in such scenarios is key to predicting long-term outcomes.
- ऐसे परिदृश्यों में विकास कैसे काम करता है, इसे समझना दीर्घकालिक परिणामों की भविष्यवाणी करने की कुंजी है।

## Gold, as usual at great cost

GS Paper III: S&T

**Q**

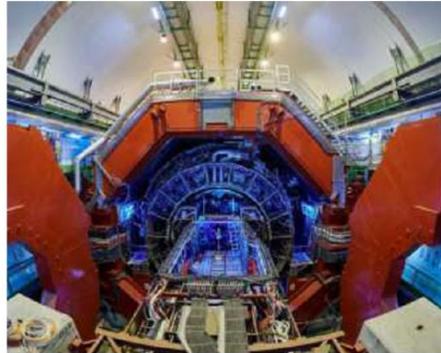
**Q: Is it possible to turn lead into gold?**

**A:** In India and other parts of the world,

some ancient natural philosophers practised an enterprise called alchemy. It was in some ways an early form of chemistry, but guided by less-than-scientific ideas of the time. One form of alchemy was concerned with converting base metals like lead into gold. We know today that doing this requires us to change the composition of the nucleus of the lead atom, which is not easy.

In a new study, scientists working with the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) in Europe have reported turning lead atoms into gold atoms for a fraction of a second.

The LHC is famous for accelerating protons to high energies and smashing billions of them head on. But in the study, the researchers energised heavy lead nuclei and had them pass close to each other, without colliding, giving rise to so-called ultra-peripheral collisions. Even though the nuclei don't physically touch, they interact



The ALICE detector, which researchers used to track near-miss collisions between lead nuclei in the LHC. CERN

via their powerful electromagnetic fields, which caused some of the nuclei to break up. The team found that when a lead nucleus emitted protons, it essentially became a gold nucleus. Also, current theoretical models could only roughly predict these emissions: the researchers said this was because their models tended to underestimate how often one or two protons were emitted. In other words, scientists have room to improve their understanding of how these electromagnetic breakups work.

**For feedback and suggestions** for 'Science', please write to [science@thehindu.co.in](mailto:science@thehindu.co.in) with the subject 'Daily page'

## Gold, as usual at great cost

**सोनें का, जैसे हमेशा, बड़ी कीमत पर**

Some ancient natural philosophers practiced an enterprise called **alchemy**, an early form of chemistry, based on less-than-scientific ideas of the time.

• कुछ प्राचीन प्राकृतिक दार्शनिकों ने रसायनशास्त्र के प्रारंभिक रूप, जिसे रसायनविज्ञान कहा जाता था, का अभ्यास किया, जो उस समय के विज्ञान से कमतर विचारों पर आधारित था।

• One form of alchemy aimed at converting **base metals like lead into gold**.

• रसायनविज्ञान का एक रूप **आधार धातुओं**, जैसे



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सीसा, को सोने में बदलने का प्रयास करता था।

- Today, we know that to achieve this, the **nucleus** of the lead atom must be altered, which is extremely difficult.

- आज, हम जानते हैं कि इसे प्राप्त करने के लिए **सीसे** के परमाणु के **नाभिक** में बदलाव करना पड़ता है, जो अत्यंत कठिन है।

- In a new study, scientists using the **Large Hadron Collider (LHC)** in Europe have reported turning lead atoms into gold atoms for a fraction of a second.

- एक नए अध्ययन में, यूरोप में **लार्ज हैड्रोन कोलाइडर (LHC)** का उपयोग करने वाले वैज्ञानिकों ने **सीसा** परमाणुओं को **सोने** के परमाणुओं में बदलने की रिपोर्ट दी है, और यह सिर्फ एक क्षण के लिए था।

- The LHC is known for accelerating **protons** to high energies and smashing billions of them.

- LHC को **प्रोटॉनों** को उच्च ऊर्जा तक तेज़ करने और उनके अरबों टुकड़ों में टकराने के लिए जाना जाता है।

- In this study, the researchers **energized heavy lead nuclei** and had them pass close to each other without colliding, resulting in **ultra-peripheral collisions**.

- इस अध्ययन में, शोधकर्ताओं ने **भारी सीसा नाभिकों** को ऊर्जा प्रदान की और उन्हें एक-दूसरे के पास से गुजरने दिया बिना टकराए, जिसके परिणामस्वरूप **अल्ट्रा-पेरिफेरल टकराव** हुए।

- Even though the nuclei did not physically collide, their **electromagnetic fields** interacted, causing some nuclei to break up.

- हालांकि नाभिकों ने भौतिक रूप से टकराव नहीं किया, उनके **विद्युतचुंबकीय क्षेत्रों** के माध्यम से परस्पर क्रिया हुई, जिससे कुछ नाभिक टूट गए।

- The team found that when a lead nucleus emitted **protons**, it essentially became a **gold nucleus**.

- टीम ने पाया कि जब एक सीसा नाभिक ने **प्रोटॉन** उत्सर्जित किए, तो यह मूलतः एक **सोने का नाभिक** बन गया।

- Current theoretical models only roughly predicted these emissions, as they tended to **underestimate** how often **protons** were emitted.

- वर्तमान सैद्धांतिक मॉडल इन उत्सर्जनों का केवल मोटे तौर पर अनुमान लगा पाए, क्योंकि वे **प्रोटॉनों** के उत्सर्जन की आवृत्ति को कम आंकते थे।

- The researchers said that this indicates that there is still room to improve our understanding of how **electromagnetic breakups** occur.

- शोधकर्ताओं ने कहा कि यह इस बात का संकेत है कि **विद्युतचुंबकीय टूटनों** के होने के तरीके को समझने में सुधार की अभी भी गुंजाइश है।

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GS Paper III: External Sector

## Big deal

The U.S.-China trade deal will have implications for India

The trade agreement between the U.S. and China, the two biggest economies in the world, serves as a breather in an otherwise tense global trade environment. The U.S. has agreed to temporarily lower, for 90 days, its overall tariffs on Chinese goods from 145% to 30%, while China will cut its tariffs on American imports from 125% to 10%. Markets across the world cheered the announcement, jumping between 2%-3.8% following the news. The thaw comes on the back of tensions and tariffs being ratcheted up by both sides, starting with U.S. President Donald Trump's February 1 announcement of a varying tariff on imports from China, Mexico and Canada. Notably, he excluded China from the 90-day pause on 'reciprocal' tariffs announced in early April. One way to look at this latest development is that it shows Mr. Trump is backing down from his tariff war-footing, acknowledging the importance of China to the U.S. economy. Indeed, the joint statement by both countries begins by mentioning "the importance of their bilateral economic and trade relationship". However, another view is that his heavy-handed approach has succeeded in convincing China to come to the negotiation table. Tariffs of 145% were unsustainable but served their purpose. The fact also is that Mr. Trump's main grievance, of a ballooning trade deficit with China, remains unaddressed. The two sides have agreed to continue talks, which will be key in determining whether this seemingly intractable problem can be worked around or result in tensions again.

For India, this brings both uncertainties and certainties. If further talks between the U.S. and China are successful, investors who have moved to other countries will likely start viewing China favourably again. The advantages of manufacturing there – scale and costs – are still significant. The China+1 model, which India in any case has not been able to leverage adequately, might start to lose its sheen. The other uncertainty is around India's own trade talks with the U.S. It has now informed the World Trade Organisation of potential reciprocal measures to the U.S.'s increased duties on steel and aluminium imports. Even though talks on a U.S.-India trade deal are ongoing, this latest statement shows that tensions remain high. The certainties are two-fold. The first is that India's trade deficit with China remains vast and rising, and the U.S.-China agreement will not reduce this. 'Make in India' is currently inextricably linked to 'Import from China'. The second certainty carries over from the first. The Centre must lean heavily on States to adopt labour and land reforms that can allow scalable manufacturing to become cost-effective here. Without this, India will remain dependent on Chinese imports, regardless of its dealings with the rest of the world.

## Big Deal बड़ी डील

The U.S.-China trade deal will have implications for India

अमेरिका-चीन व्यापार समझौते के भारत पर प्रभाव होंगे

- The trade agreement between the **U.S. and China**, the two **biggest economies** in the world, serves as a breather in an otherwise tense global trade environment.
- **अमेरिका और चीन**, जो दुनिया की दो सबसे बड़ी अर्थव्यवस्थाएं हैं, के बीच यह व्यापार समझौता एक तनावपूर्ण वैश्विक व्यापार माहौल में एक राहत के रूप में आया है।
- The **U.S.** has agreed to **temporarily lower** its overall tariffs on **Chinese goods from 145% to 30% for 90 days**, while **China** will cut its tariffs on **American imports from 125% to 10%**.
- **अमेरिका ने चीनी वस्तुओं पर अपने कुल टैरिफ को 145% से घटाकर 30% तक 90 दिनों के लिए अस्थायी रूप से कम करने पर सहमति दी है**, जबकि **चीन ने अमेरिकी आयातों पर टैरिफ को 125% से घटाकर 10% करने का फैसला किया है।**
- Markets across the world reacted positively, jumping between **2%–3.8%** after the announcement.
- इस घोषणा के बाद दुनिया भर के बाजारों में **2% से 3.8%** तक की तेज़ी देखी गई।
- This thaw follows a period of increased tensions and tariffs initiated by **U.S. President Donald Trump** since his **February 1** announcement on tariffs for imports from **China, Mexico, and Canada**.
- यह नरमी उस समय आई है जब **अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप ने 1 फरवरी को चीन, मैक्सिको और कनाडा से आयात पर टैरिफ लगाने की घोषणा के साथ तनाव और टैरिफ को बढ़ाया था।**
- Notably, China was **excluded** from the **90-day pause on 'reciprocal' tariffs** announced in early April.
- खास बात यह है कि **अप्रैल की शुरुआत में घोषित 'पारस्परिक' टैरिफ पर 90 दिनों की रोक में चीन को शामिल नहीं किया गया था।**

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- One interpretation is that Mr. Trump is **backing down** from the tariff war, acknowledging **China's importance** to the U.S. economy.
  - एक दृष्टिकोण यह है कि श्री ट्रंप टैरिफ युद्ध से पीछे हट रहे हैं, और अमेरिकी अर्थव्यवस्था में चीन के महत्व को स्वीकार कर रहे हैं।
- The **joint statement** by both countries emphasized “the importance of their **bilateral economic and trade relationship**”.
  - दोनों देशों द्वारा जारी **संयुक्त बयान** में उनके **द्विपक्षीय आर्थिक और व्यापार संबंधों के महत्व** पर ज़ोर दिया गया।
- Another perspective is that Trump's **hardline approach** successfully brought **China to the negotiation table**.
  - एक और दृष्टिकोण यह है कि ट्रंप की **कठोर रणनीति** ने चीन को **बातचीत की मेज़ पर लाने में सफलता पाई है**।
- Though **tariffs of 145%** were unsustainable, they **served their purpose**.
  - हालांकि **145% का टैरिफ** टिकाऊ नहीं था, लेकिन इसने **अपना उद्देश्य पूरा किया**।
- However, the core issue of the **ballooning U.S.-China trade deficit** remains **unresolved**.
  - फिर भी, **अमेरिका-चीन के बढ़ते व्यापार घाटे की मुख्य समस्या अभी भी हल नहीं हुई है**।
- Both sides have agreed to **continue talks**, which will be crucial in determining whether tensions are truly reduced or resurface.
  - दोनों पक्षों ने **बातचीत जारी रखने पर सहमति व्यक्त की है**, जो यह तय करने में महत्वपूर्ण होगी कि तनाव वास्तव में कम हुआ है या फिर से बढ़ेगा।

## Implications for India

### भारत पर प्रभाव

- For India, this development brings **both uncertainties and certainties**.
  - भारत के लिए यह घटनाक्रम **अनिश्चितताओं और निश्चितताओं** दोनों को लेकर आता है।
- If talks between the **U.S. and China** succeed, investors may **shift focus back to China** due to its **scale and cost advantages** in manufacturing.
  - यदि **अमेरिका और चीन** के बीच बातचीत सफल होती है, तो निवेशक **चीन की ओर फिर से ध्यान केंद्रित कर सकते हैं**, क्योंकि वहां **निर्माण के पैमाने और लागत में लाभ है**।
- The **China+1 model**, which India has **not fully leveraged**, might lose relevance.
  - **चीन+1 मॉडल**, जिसे भारत ने **पूरी तरह से उपयोग नहीं किया**, उसकी महत्ता कम हो सकती है।
- Another uncertainty is India's **ongoing trade talks with the U.S.**
  - एक और अनिश्चितता है भारत और अमेरिका के बीच **चल रही व्यापार वार्ताएं**।



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- India has informed the **World Trade Organisation (WTO)** about potential **reciprocal measures** against U.S. tariffs on **steel and aluminium**.
- भारत ने विश्व व्यापार संगठन (WTO) को अमेरिका द्वारा स्टील और एल्यूमीनियम पर लगाए गए टैरिफ के खिलाफ पारस्परिक कदमों की संभावना की सूचना दी है।
- Despite talks on a **U.S.-India trade deal**, tensions remain **high**.
- भारत-अमेरिका व्यापार समझौते पर बातचीत के बावजूद, तनाव अभी भी काफ़ी बना हुआ है।

## Certainties for India

### भारत के लिए निश्चितताएँ

- First, India's **trade deficit with China** is vast and increasing. The **U.S.-China agreement** will **not reduce** this.
- पहली बात, भारत का चीन के साथ व्यापार घाटा काफी बड़ा और बढ़ता हुआ है। यह अमेरिका-चीन समझौता इसे कम नहीं करेगा।
- Currently, **'Make in India'** is deeply tied to **'Import from China'**.
- वर्तमान में, 'मेक इन इंडिया' का 'चीन से आयात' से गहरा संबंध है।
- Second, the **Central Government** must push **States** to implement **labour and land reforms** to enable **scalable and cost-effective manufacturing**.
- दूसरी बात, केंद्र सरकार को राज्यों पर ज़ोर देना होगा कि वे श्रम और भूमि सुधार लागू करें ताकि बड़े पैमाने पर और किफायती निर्माण संभव हो सके।
- Without such reforms, India will continue to **depend on Chinese imports**, regardless of its trade relations with other countries.
- इन सुधारों के बिना, भारत चीनी आयातों पर निर्भर रहेगा, भले ही वह अन्य देशों के साथ कैसा भी व्यापार संबंध रखे।



# Ecology is the world's permanent economy

GS paper III: Environment

The phrase, "Ecology is the permanent economy", made popular by environmentalist Sunderlal Bahuguna, is much more than a slogan. It is a profound reminder of the foundational truth that human prosperity is inextricably linked to ecological health. It is true that economic development without exploiting natural resources and economic stability without conserving them are impossible. As we face serious challenges such as climate change and the rapid loss of biodiversity, we must ask ourselves whether we have truly understood and embraced this idea.

## Striking the right balance

Understanding nature's complexity is at the heart of science. In this pursuit, humans have made tremendous efforts through observation, experimentation, and modelling, as this understanding is crucial for addressing environmental challenges such as climate change and for informing sustainable practices. While these scientific discussions are valuable, there is an even more urgent and fundamental truth we need to focus on: ecology is the real economy – our survival, security and progress depend on it. In simple terms, this might be the clearest way to define sustainability – finding the right balance between protecting the environment and supporting economic development. Without this balance, neither the environment nor the economy can thrive in the long run.

Despite being part of the animal kingdom, human evolution, through the course of civilisation, has led to a growing disconnection from nature. This disconnection with nature has been identified as a reason for the ongoing biodiversity loss (the recent Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services or IPBES Transformative Change report).

In the early stages of human history, a nomadic lifestyle compelled individuals to rely on and exploit natural resources solely for their basic, day-to-day survival needs. Over time, this



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Acknowledging this principle will lead to a focus on ecological health as the basis for human survival, economic stability and climate resilience

individual-centric resource use evolved into collective consumption aimed at meeting the needs of growing communities. As human societies expanded and organised themselves into nations, this demand scaled further to cater to the needs of entire countries. Eventually, this progression gave rise to global competition, where nations began to exploit nature not only to satisfy present demands but also to secure resources for future development. Unlike humans, no other species in the animal kingdom exhibits this pattern of large-scale, anticipatory exploitation of natural resources. Other animals live in harmony with their environments, taking only what they need for immediate survival, without disturbing the long-term balance of the ecosystems they inhabit.

## New complications

The ever-intensifying cycle of human consumption and global competition has placed an unprecedented strain on the planet's ecosystems and significantly accelerated the pace of climate change – a natural phenomenon now dangerously amplified by human activities. In response to these growing environmental challenges, nature-based solutions have been widely advocated in global conservation efforts. These approaches aim to leverage the inherent resilience of ecosystems to mitigate climate impacts, restore biodiversity, and support sustainable development. However, a paradox emerges: we continue to exploit nature to satisfy our needs and greed, while simultaneously relying on the same natural systems to act as a buffer against the consequences of such exploitation. This dual dependence risks creating deeper ecological imbalances and may further complicate the ability to address the climate crisis effectively.

In this context, rather than merely attempting to understand the intricate complexity of ecological systems from a scientific standpoint, it is far more critical to recognise a fundamental truth – that ecology is the permanent economy.

Acknowledging this principle shifts our perspective from short-term exploitation to long-term stewardship, positioning ecological health not as a constraint, but as the very foundation of human survival, economic stability, and climate resilience.

This realisation is not just timely – it is essential to confronting the ongoing environmental crisis and shaping a sustainable future. It is only through this reframing that humanity can move from reactive conservation to proactive planetary sustainability. The climate crisis is not just a scientific challenge. It is a moral and existential reckoning with the ecological foundations of our existence.

## The need to reconnect with nature

Climate change and change in distribution patterns of biological diversity are not new for planet earth. However, the rate at which it is now occurring is detrimental to the planet's biological diversity, including people, due to past unsustainable developmental activities by humans. Therefore, the change we need must come from within.

Since all developmental activities across the globe are aimed at fulfilling human needs, adopting a sustainable lifestyle is every individual's responsibility in order to ensure the success of global sustainability initiatives. To achieve this, we must realise that humans are an integral part of nature.

Though technological advancements have distanced modern lifestyles from nature, one unique natural trait that humans possess is the power to reconnect with nature using emotion (which still lives within us). Thus, future conservation efforts should be designed to strengthen our emotional bond with nature. To ignite this, a realisation that "ecology is the permanent economy", is more imperative than merely understanding the ecological complexity that exists in nature.

*The views expressed are personal*

## Ecology is the world's permanent economy

### पारिस्थितिकी विश्व की स्थायी अर्थव्यवस्था है

• The phrase "Ecology is the permanent economy", made popular by environmentalist Sunderlal Bahuguna, is more than just a slogan.

• "पारिस्थितिकी स्थायी अर्थव्यवस्था है" वाक्यांश, जिसे पर्यावरणविद् सुंदरलाल बहुगुणा ने लोकप्रिय बनाया, केवल एक नारा नहीं है।

• It is a profound reminder of the truth that human prosperity is closely linked to ecological health.

• यह एक गंभीर स्मरण है कि मानव समृद्धि, पारिस्थितिकीय स्वास्थ्य से घनिष्ठ रूप से जुड़ी हुई है।



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- **Economic development** without **exploiting natural resources**, and **economic stability** without **conserving them**, is impossible.
- प्राकृतिक संसाधनों के दोहन के बिना आर्थिक विकास, और उनके संरक्षण के बिना आर्थिक स्थिरता, असंभव है।
- Facing **climate change** and **biodiversity loss**, we must ask if we truly understand and embrace this idea.
- जलवायु परिवर्तन और जैव विविधता क्षरण का सामना करते हुए, हमें खुद से पूछना चाहिए कि क्या हमने इस विचार को वास्तव में समझा और अपनाया है।

## Striking the right balance

### सही संतुलन बनाना

- Understanding nature's **complexity** lies at the heart of science.
- प्रकृति की जटिलता को समझना विज्ञान का मूल है।
- Through **observation, experimentation, and modelling**, humans have made great efforts to understand the environment.
- प्रेक्षण, प्रयोग और मॉडलिंग के माध्यम से, मानव ने पर्यावरण को समझने के लिए बड़े प्रयास किए हैं।
- This understanding is essential to address **climate change** and promote **sustainable practices**.
- यह समझ जलवायु परिवर्तन से निपटने और सतत प्रथाओं को बढ़ावा देने के लिए आवश्यक है।
- Beyond science, a fundamental truth remains: **ecology is the real economy** — our **survival, security, and progress** depend on it.
- विज्ञान से परे, एक मूलभूत सत्य यह है: पारिस्थितिकी ही असली अर्थव्यवस्था है — हमारी जीविका, सुरक्षा, और प्रगति उसी पर निर्भर करती है।
- This is perhaps the clearest way to define **sustainability** — balancing **environment protection** and **economic development**.
- शायद यही स्थिरता को परिभाषित करने का सबसे स्पष्ट तरीका है — पर्यावरण संरक्षण और आर्थिक विकास के बीच संतुलन बनाना।
- Without this balance, neither the **environment** nor the **economy** can thrive long-term.
- इस संतुलन के बिना, न तो पर्यावरण और न ही अर्थव्यवस्था दीर्घकालिक रूप से फल-फूल सकती है।

## Disconnection from Nature

### प्रकृति से अलगाव



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• Despite being part of the **animal kingdom**, human evolution has increasingly **disconnected us from nature**.

• पशु जगत का हिस्सा होने के बावजूद, मानव विकास ने हमें प्रकृति से लगातार **अलग** कर दिया है।

• This **disconnection** is identified as a key cause of **biodiversity loss**, as noted in the **IPBES Transformative Change report**.

• यह **वियोग जैव विविधता हानि** का एक प्रमुख कारण माना गया है, जैसा कि **IPBES ट्रांसफॉर्मेटिव चेंज रिपोर्ट** में बताया गया है।

## Stages of Human-Nature Relationship

### मानव-प्रकृति संबंध के चरण

• In early human history, **nomadic life** made people rely on nature for **basic survival needs**.

• प्रारंभिक मानव इतिहास में, **घुमंतू जीवन** के कारण लोग **मूलभूत जीवन आवश्यकताओं** के लिए प्रकृति पर निर्भर थे।

• Over time, **individual resource use** evolved into **collective consumption** for growing communities.

• समय के साथ, **व्यक्तिगत संसाधन उपयोग** ने **सामूहिक उपभोग** का रूप ले लिया जो बढ़ते समुदायों की जरूरतें पूरी करता था।

• As societies grew into **nations**, the **demand for resources** scaled up to meet national needs.

• जब समाज **राष्ट्रों** में संगठित हुए, तो **संसाधनों की मांग** राष्ट्रों की आवश्यकताओं को पूरा करने के लिए बढ़ गई।

• Eventually, this led to **global competition**, where nations exploit nature for **present needs** and **future development**.

• अंततः, यह **वैश्विक प्रतिस्पर्धा** में बदल गया, जहाँ राष्ट्र प्रकृति का दोहन **वर्तमान जरूरतों** और **भविष्य के विकास** के लिए करते हैं।

• Unlike humans, no other species in the **animal kingdom** exploits **natural resources** on such a **large and anticipatory scale**.

• मानवों के विपरीत, **पशु जगत** में कोई अन्य प्रजाति **प्राकृतिक संसाधनों** का इतना **विस्तृत और पूर्वानुमानित** रूप से दोहन नहीं करती।

• Other animals live in **harmony** with their environment, taking only what they need for **immediate survival**.

• अन्य जानवर अपने पर्यावरण के साथ **संतुलन** में रहते हैं और केवल **तत्काल जीविका** के लिए आवश्यक चीजें लेते हैं।

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- They do not disturb the **long-term balance** of the **ecosystems** they inhabit.
- वे उन पारिस्थितिकी तंत्रों के दीर्घकालिक संतुलन को नहीं बिगाड़ते जिनमें वे रहते हैं।

## New Complications

### नई जटिलताएँ

- The ever-intensifying cycle of **human consumption** and **global competition** has placed an **unprecedented strain** on the planet's ecosystems and significantly accelerated the pace of **climate change**.
  - मानव उपभोग और वैश्विक प्रतिस्पर्धा का लगातार तीव्र होता चक्र पृथ्वी की पारिस्थितिकी प्रणालियों पर अभूतपूर्व दबाव डाल रहा है और जलवायु परिवर्तन की गति को तेज कर रहा है।
- Climate change, a **natural phenomenon**, is now **dangerously amplified** by human activities.
  - जलवायु परिवर्तन, जो एक प्राकृतिक घटना है, अब मानव गतिविधियों द्वारा खतरनाक रूप से तेज़ हो गया है।
- In response to growing environmental challenges, **nature-based solutions** are being widely promoted in global conservation efforts.
  - बढ़ती पर्यावरणीय चुनौतियों के जवाब में, वैश्विक संरक्षण प्रयासों में प्राकृतिक-आधारित समाधानों को व्यापक रूप से बढ़ावा दिया जा रहा है।
- These approaches aim to use the **resilience of ecosystems** to mitigate climate impacts, **restore biodiversity**, and support **sustainable development**.
  - ये उपाय पारिस्थितिकी प्रणालियों की लचीलापन का उपयोग कर जलवायु प्रभावों को कम करने, जैव विविधता को बहाल करने और सतत विकास को समर्थन देने का प्रयास करते हैं।
- However, a **paradox** emerges: we exploit nature to satisfy our **needs and greed**, while also relying on the same natural systems to protect us.
  - हालाँकि, एक विरोधाभास उत्पन्न होता है: हम अपनी जरूरतों और लालच को पूरा करने के लिए प्रकृति का दोहन करते हैं, लेकिन उसी प्राकृतिक प्रणाली पर सुरक्षा के लिए भी निर्भर रहते हैं।
- This **dual dependence** risks creating deeper **ecological imbalances** and may hinder our ability to address the climate crisis.
  - यह दोहरा निर्भरता और गहरी पारिस्थितिक असंतुलन उत्पन्न करने का खतरा पैदा करती है और जलवायु संकट से निपटने की हमारी क्षमता को बाधित कर सकती है।
- Instead of only trying to scientifically understand ecological systems, it is more important to realise that **“ecology is the permanent economy.”**
  - केवल पारिस्थितिक प्रणालियों को वैज्ञानिक रूप से समझने के बजाय यह महसूस करना अधिक महत्वपूर्ण है कि **“पारिस्थितिकी ही स्थायी अर्थव्यवस्था है।”**



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• This shifts our view from **short-term exploitation** to **long-term stewardship**, placing ecological health as the foundation of **human survival**, **economic stability**, and **climate resilience**.

• यह दृष्टिकोण हमें **अल्पकालिक दोहन** से **दीर्घकालिक संरक्षण** की ओर ले जाता है, और **मानव अस्तित्व**, **आर्थिक स्थिरता**, तथा **जलवायु सहनशीलता** की नींव में **पारिस्थितिकीय स्वास्थ्य** को स्थापित करता है।

• This understanding is not only timely but **essential** to confront the current environmental crisis and shape a **sustainable future**.

• यह समझ केवल समयानुकूल ही नहीं बल्कि मौजूदा पर्यावरणीय संकट का सामना करने और एक **सतत भविष्य** गढ़ने के लिए **अत्यंत आवश्यक** है।

• Only through this reframing can humanity shift from **reactive conservation** to **proactive planetary sustainability**.

• केवल इसी पुनर्चना के माध्यम से मानवता **प्रतिक्रियात्मक संरक्षण** से **सक्रिय वैश्विक स्थिरता** की ओर बढ़ सकती है।

• The climate crisis is not just a **scientific** issue but a **moral and existential** reckoning with the ecological foundations of life.

• जलवायु संकट केवल एक **वैज्ञानिक मुद्दा** नहीं है, बल्कि यह जीवन की पारिस्थितिक नींव से जुड़ा एक **नैतिक और अस्तित्वगत आत्ममंथन** है।

## The Need to Reconnect with Nature

### प्रकृति से पुनः जुड़ने की आवश्यकता

• **Climate change** and shifts in **biodiversity distribution** are not new to Earth.

• जलवायु परिवर्तन और **जैव विविधता के वितरण में बदलाव** पृथ्वी के लिए नए नहीं हैं।

• However, the current pace of change is **harmful** to the planet's biodiversity and human well-being due to past **unsustainable development**.

• हालांकि, वर्तमान परिवर्तन की गति **हानिकारक** है, क्योंकि यह पिछले **अस्थायी विकास** के कारण पृथ्वी की **जैव विविधता** और मानव जीवन को प्रभावित कर रही है।

• Therefore, the necessary change must come **from within**.

• इसलिए, आवश्यक परिवर्तन **भीतर** से आना चाहिए।

• Since all global development aims to fulfil **human needs**, adopting a **sustainable lifestyle** is every individual's **responsibility**.

• चूँकि वैश्विक विकास का उद्देश्य **मानव आवश्यकताओं** की पूर्ति है, इसलिए एक **सतत जीवनशैली** अपनाना हर व्यक्ति की **जिम्मेदारी** है।

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• To succeed in **sustainability initiatives**, we must understand that humans are an **integral part** of nature.

• **स्थिरता पहलों में सफल होने के लिए यह समझना आवश्यक है कि मानव प्रकृति का अभिन्न हिस्सा हैं।**

• Although **technological advancements** have separated modern life from nature, humans uniquely possess the ability to reconnect through **emotion**.

• हालांकि **तकनीकी प्रगति** ने आधुनिक जीवन को प्रकृति से दूर कर दिया है, लेकिन मनुष्यों के पास **भावना** के माध्यम से पुनः जुड़ने की **विशिष्ट क्षमता** है।

• Future conservation must focus on **strengthening our emotional bond** with nature.

• भविष्य के संरक्षण प्रयासों को **प्रकृति के साथ हमारे भावनात्मक संबंध** को मजबूत करने पर केंद्रित होना चाहिए।

• For this, realising that “**ecology is the permanent economy**” is more important than just understanding nature’s complexity.

• इसके लिए यह महसूस करना कि “**पारिस्थितिकी ही स्थायी अर्थव्यवस्था है**”, केवल प्रकृति की जटिलता को समझने से अधिक महत्वपूर्ण है।



# A death that spotlights irrigation problems

GS Paper III: Agriculture

**O**n March 13, 2025, Kailash Arjun Nagare, a 2020 Young Farmer Award recipient, from Maharashtra, died by suicide, citing unaddressed irrigation demands. While India reports the highest water usage in agriculture globally, access to water for irrigation remains a contentious issue. Nagare's death points towards the inequity in distribution, with social inequalities, water governance mechanisms, and policies determining the contours of allocation. The problem of water scarcity in India is thus multifaceted, indicating the co-existence of actual physical shortage with economic scarcity due to inequitable access and management.

## Untenable expansion

The agricultural sector accounts for almost 80% of the water withdrawal in India. Every year, 688 billion cubic metres of water is consumed by the farm sector, the highest in the world. Irrigation is an inevitable input for increasing agricultural production. However, its expansion has been highly untenable. The majority of the area under water-guzzling crops such as rice, wheat, and sugarcane is currently in the water-scarce north-west and sub-tropical belts of the country. According to a study published in Nature Water (2024), India alone accounted for 36% of global unsustainable irrigation expansion that happened between 2000 and 2015, with environmental and socio-economic implications.

Even as irrigation has been proven to drive economic prosperity, various studies have reported that uneven progress has reinforced existing inequalities, between and within States. Considering that ground water is the dominant water source for irrigation in India, property rights, energy pricing policy, and the existence of well-functioning water markets have remained



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It is imperative that India strengthens its knowledge, regulations, policies and programme to rationalise the use of its limited water resources

critical in determining water access to farms. Accordingly, while inequity has declined in canal, tank, and well irrigated systems, it has increased in the tube well irrigated system. Marginalised groups, especially women, are also disproportionately affected by increasing deprivation and decline of water tables with climate change intensifying disparities.

The environmental and financial consequences of aggressive groundwater extraction have also been profound. Due to over extraction, almost 17% of India's groundwater assessment units are deemed 'over-exploited' while 3.9% are in a 'critical' state. Intensive pumping has also resulted in massive energy consumption resulting in excessive carbon emissions. As per the latest data, 45.3–62.3 MMT of annual carbon emissions is attributed to groundwater irrigation, which constitutes 8–11% of India's total carbon emissions.

The operating efficiency and water use efficiency has also remained sub-optimal in Indian agriculture. While irrigation systems in India report an operating efficiency of 38%, in developed countries it is 55%. Coupled with misaligned cropping patterns and inefficient water use practices, irrigation water productivity (IWP) has also remained low in the major irrigation belts of the country. For example, Punjab, which claims the highest land productivity in rice, has one of the lowest IWPs for the crop. Similarly, in sugar cane, Tamil Nadu records the highest land productivity with IWP being dismally low. Besides water wastage, the adoption of non-optimal water management practices have been causing other negative externalities such as high GHG emissions as well. For example, with continuous flooding of rice as the major water management practice, paddy rice is the biggest contributor to global cropland emissions.

Considering the over-exploitation of ground water

resources, impending water scarcity and environmental externalities, further attempts to improve the irrigation system of the country should be built on efficient water-saving technologies, improved irrigation efficiency, and alternative sources of irrigation.

## The way forward

While change in cropping patterns and ground water usage regulations through policy decisions should also be aimed at in the medium and long term, advancing irrigation technologies and practices based on sustainable intensification should be prioritised. Better irrigation efficiency may be aimed through the improvement of conveyance and application efficiency of irrigation systems. In geographies where water withdrawals and GHG emissions have been highest, alternative water management technologies such as alternate wetting and drying, which can result in significant water saving and reduced emissions, may be popularised. Similarly, micro-irrigation systems such as drip irrigation, with minimal application losses, may be popularised in crops such as sugar cane. Promoting solar-powered irrigation and/or bundling solar pumps with micro-irrigation systems is another promising option. However, with the marginal cost of pumping being zero, this should not result in increased groundwater depletion and should be regulated through initiatives such as assured grid connection offering economic incentives for efficient utilisation. Rain water harvesting structures and tail water storage pits may be popularised as supplementary irrigation sources. Since traditional supply-based mechanisms do not necessarily promote equitable distribution of irrigation water, initiating demand-driven allocation systems run by participatory irrigation management structures should be widely promoted.



## A Death that Spotlights Irrigation Problems

### एक मृत्यु जो सिंचाई समस्याओं को उजागर करती है

• On March 13, 2025, Kailash Arjun Nagare, a 2020 Young Farmer Award recipient from Maharashtra, died by suicide due to unmet irrigation demands.

• 13 मार्च 2025 को महाराष्ट्र के कैलाश अर्जुन नागरे, जो 2020 में यंग फार्मर अवार्ड प्राप्त कर चुके थे, ने सिंचाई की अनसुलझी मांगों के कारण आत्महत्या कर ली।

• India has the highest agricultural water usage globally, yet access to irrigation remains a critical issue.

• भारत में वैश्विक स्तर पर सबसे अधिक कृषि जल उपयोग होता है, फिर भी सिंचाई की पहुंच एक गंभीर समस्या बनी हुई है।

• Nagare's death points to inequitable water distribution caused by social inequalities, governance failures, and policy gaps.

• नागरे की मृत्यु सामाजिक असमानताओं, जल शासन की विफलताओं और नीतिगत खामियों के कारण जल वितरण में असमानता को दर्शाती है।

• Water scarcity in India is multifaceted—a combination of physical shortage and economic inaccessibility due to mismanagement.

• भारत में जल संकट बहुआयामी है—यह भौतिक कमी और प्रबंधन की असमानता से उत्पन्न आर्थिक पहुंच की कमी का मिश्रण है।

## Untenable Expansion of Irrigation

### सिंचाई का अस्थिर विस्तार

• Agriculture uses 80% of India's water withdrawal, totaling 688 billion cubic metres annually—the highest in the world.

• भारत में कृषि 80% जल निकासी का उपयोग करती है, जो सालाना 688 अरब घन मीटर है—यह दुनिया में सबसे अधिक है।

• Though essential, irrigation expansion has been unsustainable, especially in water-scarce regions growing rice, wheat, and sugarcane.

• हालांकि आवश्यक है, लेकिन सिंचाई का विस्तार अस्थिर रहा है, विशेषकर जल संकटग्रस्त क्षेत्रों में जहां चावल, गेहूं और गन्ने जैसी फसलें उगाई जाती हैं।



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• A Nature Water (2024) study found that India alone contributed **36%** to **global unsustainable irrigation expansion** from **2000 to 2015**.

• नेचर वॉटर (2024) के अध्ययन के अनुसार, भारत ने 2000 से 2015 के बीच वैश्विक अस्थिर सिंचाई विस्तार में अकेले **36%** योगदान दिया।

• While irrigation drives **economic growth**, **uneven development** worsens **inequality** both **between and within states**.

• सिंचाई आर्थिक विकास को बढ़ावा देती है, लेकिन असमान विकास ने राज्यों के बीच और भीतर की असमानता को और बढ़ाया है।

## Inequity and Marginalisation in Water Access

### जल पहुंच में असमानता और हाशिए पर लोग

• **Groundwater** is the main source of irrigation in India, but access is shaped by **property rights**, **energy pricing**, and **water markets**.

• भारत में सिंचाई का मुख्य स्रोत भूजल है, लेकिन इसकी पहुंच संपत्ति अधिकारों, ऊर्जा मूल्य निर्धारण, और जल बाजारों से प्रभावित होती है।

• **Tube well** irrigation has seen a rise in inequity, while **canal**, **tank**, and **open well systems** have shown some decline in inequality.

• नलकूप सिंचाई प्रणाली में असमानता बढ़ी है, जबकि नहर, तालाब, और खुले कुएं की प्रणालियों में कुछ हद तक असमानता कम हुई है।

• **Marginalised groups**, especially **women**, suffer disproportionately due to **depleting water tables** and **climate change**.

• हाशिए पर पड़े समुदाय, विशेष रूप से महिलाएं, जल स्तर की गिरावट और जलवायु परिवर्तन के कारण असमान रूप से प्रभावित होती हैं।

## Environmental and Energy Impacts of Groundwater Extraction

### भूजल दोहन के पर्यावरणीय और ऊर्जा प्रभाव

• Due to **over-extraction**, **17%** of groundwater units are **over-exploited**, and **3.9%** are in **critical condition**.

• अत्यधिक दोहन के कारण **17%** भूजल इकाइयां अत्यधिक दोहन की श्रेणी में हैं और **3.9%** गंभीर स्थिति में हैं।

• **Excessive pumping** leads to high **energy use** and **carbon emissions**, contributing **45.3–62.3 MMT** annually—**8–11%** of India's total emissions.

• अत्यधिक पंपिंग से ऊर्जा खपत और कार्बन उत्सर्जन बढ़ता है, जो सालाना **45.3–62.3 मिलियन मीट्रिक टन** होता है—यह भारत के कुल उत्सर्जन का **8–11%** है।



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## Efficiency and Cropping Patterns

### प्रभावशीलता और फसल पैटर्न

- Indian irrigation systems operate at **38% efficiency**, compared to **55%** in developed countries.
- भारत की सिंचाई प्रणालियाँ **38% की दक्षता** से कार्य करती हैं, जबकि विकसित देशों में यह **55%** होती है।
- **Irrigation Water Productivity (IWP)** is low due to **inefficient cropping patterns** and water use.
- सिंचाई जल उत्पादकता (IWP) अप्रभावी फसल पैटर्न और जल उपयोग के कारण कम है।
- For instance, **Punjab** has **high land productivity** in rice but **low IWP**, and **Tamil Nadu** has similar trends in sugarcane.
- उदाहरण के लिए, पंजाब में चावल की भूमि उत्पादकता अधिक है लेकिन **IWP कम**, और तमिलनाडु में गन्ने के साथ यही प्रवृत्ति है।
- **Paddy rice**, managed by **continuous flooding**, is the **largest contributor** to **global cropland GHG emissions**.
- चावल, जिसे लगातार पानी भरकर उगाया जाता है, वैश्विक कृषि **GHG उत्सर्जन** में **सबसे बड़ा योगदानकर्ता** है।

## The Way Forward

### आगे का रास्ता

- **Policy changes** in **cropping patterns** and **groundwater regulation** must be implemented over the **medium and long term**.
- फसल पैटर्न और भूजल नियंत्रण में नीतिगत बदलावों को **मध्यम और दीर्घकालिक** स्तर पर लागू करना होगा।
- **Sustainable intensification** and **advanced irrigation technologies** must be prioritised.
- सतत तीव्रीकरण और उन्नत सिंचाई तकनीकों को प्राथमिकता दी जानी चाहिए।
- Improve **conveyance and application efficiency** in irrigation to boost overall **irrigation efficiency**.
- पानी पहुंचाने और उपयोग करने की दक्षता में सुधार कर **कुल सिंचाई दक्षता** को बढ़ाया जाए।
- Promote **alternate wetting and drying** methods in high-emission zones for **water saving** and **emission reduction**.
- उच्च उत्सर्जन क्षेत्रों में **वैकल्पिक गीला और सूखा** विधियों को बढ़ावा दिया जाए जिससे **जल बचत** और **उत्सर्जन** में कमी हो सके।
- Encourage **micro-irrigation systems** such as **drip irrigation**, especially in crops like **sugarcane**.
- गन्ना जैसी फसलों में **ड्रिप सिंचाई** जैसे **माइक्रो-सिंचाई प्रणालियों** को बढ़ावा दिया जाए।



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- Promote **solar-powered irrigation**, but regulate it through **assured grid connections** and **economic incentives** to prevent **groundwater overuse**.
- सौर-संचालित सिंचाई को बढ़ावा दिया जाए, लेकिन ग्रिड कनेक्शन और आर्थिक प्रोत्साहनों के माध्यम से इसे नियंत्रित किया जाए ताकि भूजल का अत्यधिक दोहन न हो।
- Build **rainwater harvesting structures** and **tailwater storage pits** for **supplementary irrigation**.
- पूरक सिंचाई के लिए वर्षा जल संचयन संरचनाएं और टेल वॉटर भंडारण गड्ढे बनाए जाएं।
- Shift from **supply-driven models** to **demand-based allocation systems** through **participatory irrigation management**.
- आपूर्ति-आधारित मॉडल से मांग-आधारित जल आवंटन प्रणालियों की ओर बढ़ें, जिसमें सहभागी सिंचाई प्रबंधन शामिल हो।

PATRIOTIC IAS



# What war hysteria hides: deaths, destruction, disinformation

ISS Paper III: IS

Jingoistic online posts calling for war hide the harsh realities of conflicts

## DATA POINT

**Sambavi Parthasarathy**  
**Vignesh Radhakrishnan**

The military escalation between India and Pakistan following the Pahalgam massacre has been accompanied by a barrage of misinformation and disinformation. Data shows that concerned citizens, particularly from the border areas, have intensely searched for war-related news since the recent conflict between the nuclear powers started.

Over the past two weeks, public interest in war-related topics surged to the highest levels in recent times in India (Chart 1). Google searches for terms such as 'war' and 'Pakistan' hit the highest point in five years. Searches for the terms 'nuclear' and 'drones' also peaked. This shows a spike in both curiosity and anxiety as tensions kept escalating.

However, many online searches led to events that never actually happened. An examination of the 'news events' that were debunked by fact-checkers following Operation Sindoor shows the extent and nature of fake narratives in circulation. One prominent example was the viral fake news about the 'destruction of Karachi port', shared by a user on X and viewed over 2.5 million times. The image was actually from an Israeli air strike on Rafah in Gaza. Another widely circulated and inflammatory post claimed that an Indian drone had struck an area near a mosque in Islamabad; that was, in fact, a fire accident from the previous year.

A search on AltNews, a fact-checking platform, reveals the many hyper-nationalistic claims that have been circulating on social media handles in both Pakistan and India. These posts have often been accompanied by commentary – subtle or explicit – calling for war. Such commentary tends to obscure the harshest reality of war – its toll on human lives.

A look at the death tolls from past wars and major operations involving India (where reliable data is available) reveals the human cost of conflict (Chart 2). Over 13,140 defence personnel laid down their lives in the J&K Operation (1947-48), India-China War (1962), India-Pakistan War (1965), India-Pakistan War (1971), Kargil War (1999), and Operation Pawan undertaken by Indian peacekeeping forces for the disarmament of the LTTE. In addition, over 26,500 defence personnel were wounded in these wars/operations.

Frequent clashes with hostile neighbours also come at a financial cost, as weapons are amassed over years. Over the past three decades, India has consistently featured among the world's top arms importers. Chart 3 shows India's position globally. The country has featured in the list of top five arms importers since 2000. India was not in the list of top 10 arms importers only once since 1991, in 1993. Apart from importing arms, India also spends a substantial sum in manufacturing weapons and maintaining the armed forces.

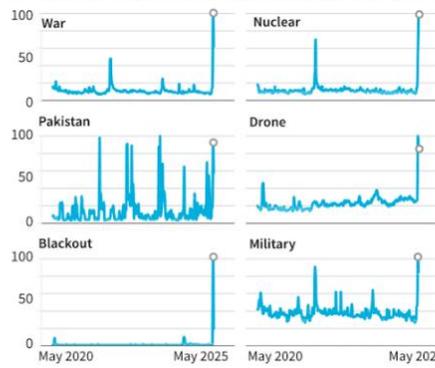
War places a heavy burden on a country's economy and also hampers trade. Sanctions on warring nations often trigger a financial downturn. A look at the figures of countries that are currently at war shows that their GDP growth rate had taken a hit during the conflict (Chart 4). For instance, Russia rebounded from the COVID-19 pandemic with a 5.6% GDP growth in 2021, only to see its GDP fall to -2.1% in 2022 following the start of its war with Ukraine. Similarly, Ukraine's GDP had been steadily growing at around 2-3% annually from 2016, except during the pandemic year of 2020. But the outbreak of war in 2022 caused Ukraine's GDP to plummet to an unprecedented -28.8%. Israel, which has been at war with Hamas since 2023, also recorded its lowest GDP growth in almost eight years in 2023 (with the exception of the pandemic year of 2020).

## The real cost of war

The data for the charts were sourced from Parliament Q&A, SIPRI, Google Trends and World Bank



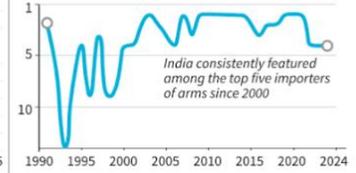
**Chart 1:** This shows the interest in terms such as 'war' and related topics in the last five years in India on Google. The value 100 corresponds to the peak number of searches in the given time period



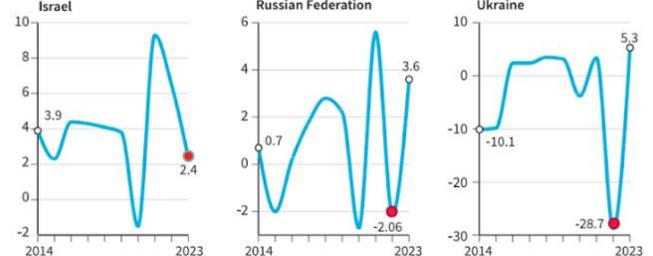
**Chart 2:** Indian defence personnel killed/wounded in select wars and major operations

	Killed	Wounded
J&K Operation (1947-48)	1,104	3,152
India-China War (1962)	3,250	548
Indo-Pak War (1965)	3,264	8,623
Indo-Pak War (1971)	3,843	9,851
Op Pawan (Sri Lanka)	1,157	3,009
Kargil (1999)	524	1,363

**Chart 3:** The chart shows India's rank among the world's top arms importers in the 1991-2024 period



**Chart 4:** The chart shows the GDP growth rate for select countries that are currently at war. The ● signifies the year in which the conflicts began. For instance, Russia saw its GDP fall to -2.1% in 2022 following the start of its war with Ukraine



## What war hysteria hides: deaths, destruction, disinformation

युद्ध उन्माद क्या छिपाता है: मौतें, विनाश, और भ्रामक सूचना

### Rising Public Interest in War

युद्ध में बढ़ती जन-रुचि

• Following the Pahalgam massacre, military escalation between India and Pakistan led to a



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surge in **misinformation and disinformation.**

- **पहलगाम हत्याकांड** के बाद भारत और पाकिस्तान के बीच सैन्य तनाव बढ़ा, जिससे **भ्रामक और गलत सूचनाओं** में वृद्धि हुई।

- Citizens, especially from **border areas**, started searching intensely for **war-related news.**

- नागरिकों, विशेष रूप से **सीमा क्षेत्रों** के लोगों ने, **युद्ध संबंधी समाचारों** की तीव्रता से खोज शुरू कर दी।

- Over the past **two weeks**, **Google searches** for terms like '**war**' and '**Pakistan**' hit a **five-year high.**

- पिछले दो सप्ताहों में, 'युद्ध' और 'पाकिस्तान' जैसे शब्दों की **गूगल खोजें पांच वर्षों में सबसे अधिक** रहीं।

- Searches for '**nuclear**' and '**drones**' also **peaked**, showing rising **curiosity and anxiety.**

- '**न्यूक्लियर**' और '**ड्रोन**' जैसे शब्दों की खोज भी **चोटी पर पहुंच गई**, जो **जिज्ञासा और चिंता** में वृद्धि को दर्शाता है।

## **Fake News and Disinformation Online**

### **ऑनलाइन फेक न्यूज़ और गलत जानकारी**

- Many searches led to **non-existent events.**

- कई खोजों ने ऐसे **घटनाओं** की ओर इशारा किया जो **वास्तव में हुई ही नहीं।**

- After **Operation Sindoor**, fact-checkers debunked numerous **fake narratives.**

- **ऑपरेशन सिंदूर** के बाद, फेक्ट-चेकर्स ने कई **झूठी कहानियों** को उजागर किया।

- A viral post claimed **Karachi port** was destroyed — the image was actually from an **Israeli airstrike on Rafah (Gaza).**

- एक वायरल पोस्ट में **कराची बंदरगाह** के नष्ट होने का दावा किया गया — लेकिन तस्वीर **गाजा में राफा पर इजरायली हवाई हमले** की थी।

- Another false post showed an **Indian drone strike** near a mosque in **Islamabad** — but it was a **fire accident** from the **previous year.**

- एक अन्य झूठे पोस्ट में **इस्लामाबाद** में एक मस्जिद के पास **भारतीय ड्रोन हमले** का दावा किया गया — लेकिन वह तो **पिछले वर्ष की आग की घटना** थी।

- According to **AltNews**, several **hyper-nationalistic claims** were shared on social media in both **India and Pakistan.**

- **AltNews** के अनुसार, **भारत और पाकिस्तान** दोनों में सोशल मीडिया पर कई **अतिराष्ट्रवादी दावे** साझा किए गए।

- These posts often included **commentary promoting war**, hiding the **real human cost** of conflict.

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• इन पोस्टों में अक्सर युद्ध को बढ़ावा देने वाली टिप्पणियाँ होती हैं, जो संघर्ष की वास्तविक मानवीय कीमत को छुपा देती हैं।

## Human Cost of Wars

### युद्धों की मानवीय लागत

- Past wars and operations involving India show the **scale of loss**.
- भारत से जुड़े पिछले युद्धों और अभियानों से **नुकसान की व्यापकता** का पता चलता है।
- Over **13,140 defence personnel** lost their lives in major operations including:
  - **13,140 से अधिक रक्षा कर्मियों** ने इन प्रमुख अभियानों में अपनी जान गंवाई:
    - **J&K Operation (1947–48)**
    - **जम्मू-कश्मीर अभियान (1947–48)**
    - **India-China War (1962)**
    - **भारत-चीन युद्ध (1962)**
    - **India-Pakistan Wars (1965, 1971)**
    - **भारत-पाकिस्तान युद्ध (1965, 1971)**
    - **Kargil War (1999)**
    - **कारगिल युद्ध (1999)**
    - **Operation Pawan (Sri Lanka)**
    - **ऑपरेशन पवन (श्रीलंका में)**
- More than **26,500 defence personnel** were **wounded** in these operations.
- इन अभियानों में **26,500 से अधिक रक्षा कर्मी घायल हुए।**

## Economic Burden of Military Conflicts

### सैन्य संघर्षों का आर्थिक बोझ

- Frequent military tensions result in **long-term arms accumulation**.
- बार-बार की सैन्य तनातनी से **लंबे समय तक हथियारों का संग्रहण** होता है।
- For over **three decades**, India has been among the **top arms importers** globally.
- पिछले तीन दशकों से भारत **दुनिया के शीर्ष हथियार आयातकों** में रहा है।
- Since **2000**, India has mostly remained in the **top five arms importers** globally (Chart 3).
- **2000 से भारत वैश्विक शीर्ष पांच हथियार आयातकों** में शामिल रहा है (चार्ट 3)।



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- Only in **1993**, India did not appear in the **top 10**.
- केवल **1993** में भारत शीर्ष **10** में शामिल नहीं था।
- India also spends **significantly** on **weapon manufacturing and force maintenance**.
- भारत हथियार निर्माण और बलों के रखरखाव पर भी काफी खर्च करता है।

## Impact of War on GDP and Economy

### जीडीपी और अर्थव्यवस्था पर युद्ध का प्रभाव

- War affects **trade**, invites **sanctions**, and leads to **economic downturn**.
- युद्ध से व्यापार प्रभावित होता है, प्रतिबंध लगते हैं और आर्थिक मंदी आती है।
- Example:
  - **Russia** saw a **GDP growth of 5.6%** in **2021** but it **fell to -2.1%** in **2022** after its war with **Ukraine** began.
  - रूस की जीडीपी **2021** में **5.6%** थी, जो यूक्रेन के साथ युद्ध शुरू होने के बाद **2022** में **-2.1%** हो गई।
  - **Ukraine's** GDP was growing at **2-3%** annually since **2016** but **plunged to -28.8%** in **2022**.
  - यूक्रेन की जीडीपी **2016** से **2-3%** वार्षिक दर से बढ़ रही थी, लेकिन **2022** में **-28.8%** तक गिर गई।
  - **Israel**, at war with **Hamas** since **2023**, had its **lowest GDP growth** in **eight years** (excluding the pandemic year).
  - इज़राइल, जो **2023** से **हमास** के साथ युद्ध में है, ने आठ वर्षों में सबसे कम जीडीपी वृद्धि दर्ज की (कोविड वर्ष को छोड़कर)।



# The right to repair movement in India

What is the Repairability Index? What does 'planned obsolescence' with respect to electronics mean? How different is the right to repair movement in the U.S. as compared to India? How are consumer advocates and electronic manufacturers responding to the Index?

GS Paper III: RI

## EXPLAINER

Aroon Deep

### The story so far:

The Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA) last week announced that a report for a "Framework on Repairability Index (RI) in Mobile and Electronic Sector" had been submitted to the government. Under the RI, consumer electronics and electronic appliances would be assigned a score depending on how easy they are to repair by evaluating products under criteria like availability of spare parts, cost of repair, software updates, and availability of information.

### Why a focus on repairing products?

The home appliance industry is full of examples of products like washing machines and air conditioners which if purchased several years ago work for a long time without any problems, while the newer ones face frequent failures. While "planned obsolescence" – selling consumers less durable products intentionally so that they come back to buy a newer model – is often cited as a reason for this, there is often a simpler reason: companies are cutting corners on raw materials and manufacturing, under the strain of increasing metal costs and price competition.

Attero Recycling CEO Nitin Gupta said in an interaction with *The Hindu* in 2023 that the "amount of metal content on [appliance] units" had come down, and that shortages in materials like copper have led to leaner engineering choices. India is a net importer of metals, Mr. Gupta said, increasing pressures to maintain existing electronic products.

These developments have made repair a much bigger issue in many electronics, and a looming factor for consumers to consider when purchasing a product. This isn't a uniquely Indian problem. U.S. lawmaker Marie Gulesenkamp Perez recently described a draft law she had



GETTY IMAGES

introduced requiring appliance makers to display average annual maintenance and repair costs alongside the price of a product, and said that longer-lasting older appliances (and potentially newer ones built to last) like washing machines were a form of "durable wealth" as they last longer. Prolonging the life of an appliance ties into other priorities, like promoting e-waste recycling (part of what Indian officials have described as a "circular economy," where parts and metals go back into a value chain, a long-held but inadequately achieved aim), and regulating the demand for "virgin" metals that have been freshly mined.

The main impetus, however, is likely the end-consumer benefit of having

longer-lasting products. Since the processing power of smartphones and computers in particular have not grown as much in recent years as in the 2010s, ecological and economic imperatives align on making sure that consumers have products that last, or at least products that can be repaired cheaply and quickly.

### What is the right to repair?

Consumer groups around the world have been fighting for the right to repair, a broad umbrella term referring to greater flexibility for a consumer in terms of how they can get their products repaired. In India, the DoCA has launched a right to repair portal, which lists the authorised service centres of various manufacturers

and repair literature published by them.

This is a non-confrontational interpretation of the right to repair. In the U.S., consumer groups have rallied around the term to resist companies that seek to monopolise the repair of their products, such as by restricting access to spare parts, and penalising customers who choose third party repair services. Protections for such customers have emerged from the American right to repair movement, but the Indian interpretation aligns closely with equipment manufacturers' insistence that the availability of authorised service channels are sufficient.

With the RI framework, the government indicated that it would work to pursue such scoring "without causing any impediment to the industry with regard to innovation and ease of doing business". Electronics makers have strenuously fought some right to repair legislations in the U.S., cautious of the business impact of losing repair revenue, which has emerged as a key revenue stream in some sectors. McDonald's ice cream machines are a commonly cited example, as they break down frequently and franchisees have only been permitted to have them repaired by technicians of the Taylor Company, which makes the machines.

The committee that drafted the RI framework was dominated in membership by industry groups and electronics manufacturers. However, that does not mean that the deliberations and the report's outcome will completely favour them, like the right-to-repair portal did. Pushpa Girimaji, a consumer rights advocate and lawyer who has closely tracked the intricacies of the right to repair, was part of the committee; Ms. Girimaji recently described a manufacturer's refusal to offer repair on an aging lift as "highly exploitative and a violation of the consumers' right to choice," and hit many of the key notes that consumer advocates elsewhere have advocated for, including accommodation of third party repair services.

## THE GIST

Under the Repairability Index, consumer electronics and electronic appliances would be assigned a score depending on how easy they are to repair.

With the RI framework, the government indicated that it would work to pursue such scoring "without causing any impediment to the industry with regard to innovation and ease of doing business".

The committee that drafted the RI framework was dominated in membership by industry groups and electronics manufacturers. However, that does not mean that the deliberations and the report's outcome will completely favour them

## The Right to Repair Movement in India

### भारत में 'मरम्मत का अधिकार' आंदोलन

## What is the Repairability Index?

### मरम्मत योग्यता सूचकांक (Repairability Index) क्या है?

• The **Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA)** recently announced that a report on a "**Framework on Repairability Index (RI) in Mobile and Electronic Sector**" has been submitted to the government.

• उपभोक्ता मामलों के विभाग (DoCA) ने हाल ही में घोषणा की कि "मोबाइल और इलेक्ट्रॉनिक क्षेत्र में मरम्मत योग्यता सूचकांक (RI) के लिए रूपरेखा" पर एक रिपोर्ट सरकार को सौंपी गई है।



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• Under the **Repairability Index**, electronic products and appliances will receive a score based on how **easy they are to repair**, judged by **availability of spare parts, repair cost, software updates, and access to repair information**.

• मरम्मत योग्यता सूचकांक के तहत, इलेक्ट्रॉनिक उत्पादों और उपकरणों को इस आधार पर अंक दिए जाएंगे कि उन्हें मरम्मत करना कितना आसान है, जिसमें स्पेयर पार्ट्स की उपलब्धता, मरम्मत की लागत, सॉफ्टवेयर अपडेट और मरम्मत से जुड़ी जानकारी की उपलब्धता को आंका जाएगा।

## Why a focus on repairing products?

### उत्पादों की मरम्मत पर ध्यान क्यों दिया जा रहा है?

• Many older appliances like **washing machines** and **air conditioners** continue to work for years, while **newer models fail more often**.

• कई पुराने उपकरण जैसे कि वॉशिंग मशीन और एयर कंडीशनर सालों तक चलते हैं, जबकि नए मॉडल अक्सर जल्दी खराब हो जाते हैं।

• A common reason cited is “**planned obsolescence**”, where companies **intentionally reduce durability** so that consumers are forced to buy newer models.

• एक आम कारण "योजनाबद्ध अप्रचलन (**planned obsolescence**)" को माना जाता है, जिसमें कंपनियाँ जानबूझकर उत्पादों को कम टिकाऊ बनाती हैं ताकि उपभोक्ताओं को नए मॉडल खरीदने पड़ें।

• However, another reason is that companies are **cutting costs** due to **rising metal prices** and **market competition**, leading to use of **lower quality materials**.

• हालांकि, एक और कारण यह है कि कंपनियाँ धातुओं की बढ़ती कीमतों और बाजार प्रतिस्पर्धा के कारण लागत में कटौती कर रही हैं, जिससे कम गुणवत्ता वाली सामग्री का उपयोग हो रहा है।

• **Attero Recycling CEO Nitin Gupta** said in 2023 that the **metal content in appliances** has reduced, due to shortages in metals like **copper**.

• एटेरो रीसाइक्लिंग के सीईओ नितिन गुप्ता ने 2023 में कहा था कि उपकरणों में धातु की मात्रा कम हो गई है क्योंकि कॉपर जैसी धातुओं की कमी हो रही है।

• India being a **net importer of metals** adds further pressure to **preserve and maintain** existing electronic products.

• भारत एक धातुओं का शुद्ध आयातक (**net importer**) होने के कारण मौजूदा इलेक्ट्रॉनिक उत्पादों को संरक्षित और बनाए रखने का दबाव बढ़ जाता है।

• These issues have made **repair** an important factor for consumers while **purchasing electronics**.

• इन कारणों से मरम्मत एक महत्वपूर्ण पहलू बन गया है जब उपभोक्ता इलेक्ट्रॉनिक उत्पाद खरीदते हैं।

## What is Planned Obsolescence in Electronics?

### इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स में योजनाबद्ध अप्रचलन क्या है?

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- **Planned obsolescence** refers to the practice of **designing products** to have a **shorter lifespan**, forcing users to replace them sooner.
- **योजनाबद्ध अप्रचलन** का मतलब है उत्पादों को **जानबूझकर कम समय तक चलने लायक बनाना**, जिससे उपभोक्ताओं को जल्दी नया उत्पाद खरीदना पड़े।

- This leads to **increased e-waste** and **higher costs** for consumers over time.
- इससे ई-कचरे में वृद्धि और उपभोक्ताओं के लिए लंबी अवधि में अधिक खर्च होता है।

## U.S. and India: Differences in Right to Repair Movement

**अमेरिका और भारत: मरम्मत के अधिकार आंदोलन में अंतर**

- In the **United States**, lawmakers like **Marie Gluesenkamp Perez** are pushing legislation to require appliance makers to **display average annual maintenance and repair costs** on products.
- **संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका** में, सांसद **मैरी ग्लूसेनकैम्प पेरेज़** जैसे लोग ऐसे कानून ला रहे हैं जिससे उपकरण निर्माताओं को उत्पादों पर **औसत वार्षिक मरम्मत और रखरखाव की लागत** दिखानी होगी।
- She described **longer-lasting appliances** as a form of **“durable wealth”**, especially washing machines.
- उन्होंने **लंबे समय तक चलने वाले उपकरणों** को **“टिकाऊ संपत्ति (durable wealth)”** के रूप में वर्णित किया, खासकर **वॉशिंग मशीनों** को।
- India, on the other hand, is still **building its framework** for **repairability indexing**, and government reports are in early stages.
- **भारत** अभी भी **मरम्मत योग्यता सूचकांक** के लिए **रूपरेखा तैयार कर रहा है**, और सरकारी रिपोर्टें शुरुआती चरण में हैं।

## Responses from Consumer Advocates and Manufacturers

**उपभोक्ता कार्यकर्ताओं और निर्माताओं की प्रतिक्रियाएँ**

- The idea of a **Repairability Index** is seen as a **consumer-friendly** move that gives buyers more **transparency** at the time of purchase.
- **मरम्मत योग्यता सूचकांक** की अवधारणा को एक **उपभोक्ता हितैषी** कदम माना जा रहा है जो खरीदारों को खरीदारी के समय अधिक **पारदर्शिता** देता है।
- It also supports the idea of a **circular economy**, where **parts and metals** from old devices are **recycled back** into the production chain.
- यह एक **सर्कुलर अर्थव्यवस्था (circular economy)** की अवधारणा को भी बढ़ावा देता है, जिसमें पुराने उपकरणों से **पुर्जों और धातुओं** को फिर से उत्पादन श्रृंखला में लाया जाता है।
- **E-waste reduction**, **resource conservation**, and **cost-effective maintenance** are key outcomes expected from this initiative.

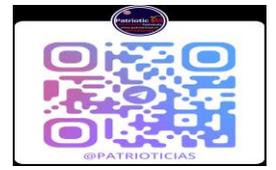
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• इस पहल से ई-कचरे में कमी, संसाधनों का संरक्षण, और कम लागत में रखरखाव जैसे महत्वपूर्ण परिणाम अपेक्षित हैं।

• Manufacturers, however, may face pressure to **increase transparency**, improve **build quality**, and offer **long-term service options**.

• हालांकि, निर्माताओं को अधिक पारदर्शिता, बेहतर निर्माण गुणवत्ता, और दीर्घकालिक सेवा विकल्प देने का दबाव हो सकता है।

## Why It Matters Now

### यह अब क्यों महत्वपूर्ण है

• Smartphones and computers are **not improving in processing power** as rapidly as they did in the 2010s.

• स्मार्टफोन और कंप्यूटर की प्रोसेसिंग क्षमता अब 2010 के दशक जितनी तेजी से नहीं बढ़ रही है।

• Hence, both **economic** and **ecological** factors now support **repair over replacement**.

• इसलिए अब आर्थिक और पर्यावरणीय दोनों कारण मरम्मत को प्राथमिकता देने के पक्ष में हैं बजाय इसके कि नया उत्पाद खरीदा जाए।

## Right to Repair

### मरम्मत का अधिकार

• The *Right to Repair* is a broad term that refers to giving **greater flexibility to consumers** in how they can get their **products repaired**.

• *मरम्मत का अधिकार* एक व्यापक शब्द है जो उपभोक्ताओं को उनके **उत्पादों की मरम्मत** कैसे करवाई जाए, इसमें **अधिक लचीलापन** देने की बात करता है।

• In **India**, the **Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA)** has launched a **Right to Repair Portal**, which lists **authorised service centres** of various manufacturers and **repair literature** published by them.

• भारत में **उपभोक्ता मामले विभाग (DoCA)** ने एक **मरम्मत अधिकार पोर्टल** लॉन्च किया है, जिसमें विभिन्न निर्माताओं के **अधिकृत सेवा केंद्रों** और उनके द्वारा प्रकाशित **मरम्मत साहित्य** की जानकारी दी गई है।

• This Indian model is seen as a **non-confrontational** interpretation of the Right to Repair.

• यह भारतीय मॉडल **मरम्मत के अधिकार** की एक **गैर-आक्रामक** व्याख्या के रूप में देखा जाता है।

• In the **United States**, consumer groups have used the term to **resist monopolies** by companies that **restrict access to spare parts** or **penalise third-party repairs**.

• **संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका** में उपभोक्ता समूहों ने इस शब्द का प्रयोग उन कंपनियों के **एकाधिकार का विरोध** करने

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के लिए किया है जो स्पेयर पार्ट्स तक पहुंच को सीमित करती हैं या थर्ड पार्टी मरम्मत के लिए ग्राहकों को दंडित करती हैं।

- As a result, **consumer protections** have emerged in the U.S. from this Right to Repair movement.
- नतीजतन, अमेरिका में इस मरम्मत के अधिकार आंदोलन से उपभोक्ता सुरक्षा उपाय सामने आए हैं।
- The **Indian interpretation**, however, aligns more with **equipment manufacturers**, who believe that providing **authorised service channels** is sufficient.
- हालांकि, **भारतीय व्याख्या** अधिकतर उपकरण निर्माताओं की सोच से मेल खाती है, जो मानते हैं कि **अधिकृत सेवा चैनलों** की उपलब्धता ही पर्याप्त है।

## Repairability Index (RI) Framework and Industry Response

### मरम्मत सूचकांक (RI) ढांचा और उद्योग की प्रतिक्रिया

- With the **Repairability Index (RI)** framework, the government stated it would promote repair scoring **without hindering innovation** or **ease of doing business**.
- **मरम्मत योग्यता सूचकांक (RI)** ढांचे के साथ, सरकार ने कहा कि वह **उद्यमिता में नवाचार और कारोबार की सरलता** में कोई बाधा डाले बिना मरम्मत स्कोरिंग को बढ़ावा देगी।
- Many **electronics manufacturers** have opposed right to repair laws in the **U.S.**, as they are **concerned** about **losing repair-related revenue**, which is a **key source of income** for some sectors.
- कई **इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स निर्माता** अमेरिका में **मरम्मत के अधिकार** से संबंधित कानूनों का **विरोध** कर रहे हैं, क्योंकि उन्हें **मरम्मत से होने वाली आय के खोने की चिंता** है, जो कुछ क्षेत्रों के लिए **महत्वपूर्ण राजस्व स्रोत** बन गया है।
- An example often cited is **McDonald's ice cream machines**, which frequently break down and can only be repaired by **technicians from Taylor Company**, the original maker.
- एक आम उदाहरण है **McDonald's की आइसक्रीम मशीनें**, जो अक्सर खराब हो जाती हैं और केवल **Taylor Company** के **तकनीशियनों** से ही मरम्मत करवाई जा सकती हैं।

## RI Framework Committee and Consumer Representation

### RI ढांचा समिति और उपभोक्ता प्रतिनिधित्व

- The **committee** that drafted the RI framework was mostly made up of **industry groups** and **electronics manufacturers**.
- RI ढांचे को तैयार करने वाली **समिति** में मुख्य रूप से **उद्योग समूहों** और **इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स निर्माताओं** का प्रतिनिधित्व था।



- However, this **does not guarantee** that the final report will fully **favour the industry**, unlike the previous **Right to Repair portal**.
- हालांकि, इसका मतलब यह नहीं है कि अंतिम रिपोर्ट पूरी तरह से **उद्योग के पक्ष** में ही होगी, जैसा कि पहले **मरम्मत पोर्टल** के मामले में हुआ था।
- **Pushpa Girimaji**, a consumer rights advocate and lawyer, was also a **member** of the committee and has strongly supported **consumer-friendly interpretations**.
- **पुष्पा गिरिमाजी**, जो एक **उपभोक्ता अधिकार कार्यकर्ता** और वकील हैं, इस समिति की **सदस्य** थीं और उन्होंने **उपभोक्ता हितैषी दृष्टिकोण** का खुलकर समर्थन किया है।
- She recently criticized a **manufacturer's refusal to repair** an aging elevator as **"highly exploitative"** and a **violation of consumer choice**.
- उन्होंने हाल ही में एक **पुराने लिफ्ट** की मरम्मत से **निर्माता के इनकार** को **"काफी शोषणकारी"** और **उपभोक्ता की पसंद के अधिकार का उल्लंघन** बताया।
- She emphasized the need to **include third-party repair options**, echoing what consumer advocates across the world demand.
- उन्होंने यह भी जोर दिया कि **थर्ड पार्टी मरम्मत विकल्पों** को **स्वीकृति दी जानी चाहिए**, जैसा कि वैश्विक **उपभोक्ता कार्यकर्ता** मांगते हैं।

## Retail inflation slows to 3.16% in April, lowest in 69 months

The fall in prices has been driven in large part by sharply easing food prices, especially those of vegetables and pulses.; inflation in food and beverages slows for sixth consecutive month to 2.14%

GS Paper III: Inflation

**T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan**  
NEW DELHI

**R**etail inflation in India cooled for the sixth consecutive month in April 2025, coming in at 3.16%, the lowest it has been in 69 months. The fall in prices has been driven in large part by sharply easing food prices, especially those of vegetables and pulses.

The monthly Consumer Price Index released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation stood at 3.34% in March 2025, and had been

### Price relief

The fall in prices has been driven in large part by sharply easing food prices



SOURCE: MOSPI

falling consistently since October 2024, when it had hit a 14-month high of 6.21%. April's inflation figures are the lowest since

July 2019. The data shows that inflation in the food and beverages category slowed for the sixth consecutive month to 2.14%,

with vegetable prices contracting 10.98%, pulses contracting 5.23%, and meat and fish prices contracting 0.35% over their levels in April last year.

Vegetable prices have been on a downward trend for a little while now, with April's data marking the third consecutive month of price contractions.

However, while prices have been cooling, a large part of this contraction has to do with a high base effect, since vegetable inflation was in the 27-30% range in the February-April period last year.



## Retail Inflation Slows to 3.16% in April, Lowest in 69 Months अप्रैल में खुदरा महंगाई 3.16% तक घटी, 69 महीनों में सबसे कम स्तर पर

- Retail inflation in India slowed to 3.16% in April 2025, marking the lowest level in 69 months.
- भारत में खुदरा महंगाई अप्रैल 2025 में घटकर 3.16% हो गई, जो 69 महीनों में सबसे कम स्तर है।
- This was the sixth consecutive month of declining inflation.
- यह लगातार छठा महीना था जब महंगाई दर में गिरावट दर्ज की गई।
- The decline has been driven largely by easing food prices, particularly vegetables and pulses.
- यह गिरावट मुख्य रूप से खाद्य पदार्थों की कीमतों, खासकर सब्जियों और दालों की कीमतों में कमी के कारण आई है।
- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) stood at 3.34% in March 2025, and has been falling consistently since October 2024, when it had reached a 14-month high of 6.21%.
- उपभोक्ता मूल्य सूचकांक (CPI) मार्च 2025 में 3.34% रहा था, और यह अक्टूबर 2024 से लगातार गिर रहा है, जब यह 6.21% के 14 महीने के उच्चतम स्तर पर था।
- The April 2025 inflation figure is the lowest since July 2019.
- अप्रैल 2025 की महंगाई दर जुलाई 2019 के बाद सबसे कम है।

## Food and Beverages Inflation Trends

### खाद्य और पेय पदार्थों में महंगाई की प्रवृत्ति

- Inflation in the food and beverages category slowed to 2.14% in April 2025, marking the sixth consecutive month of decline.
- खाद्य और पेय पदार्थों की श्रेणी में महंगाई अप्रैल 2025 में घटकर 2.14% हो गई, जो कि लगातार छठी बार गिरावट दर्शाता है।
- Vegetable prices contracted by 10.98% compared to April last year.
- सब्जियों की कीमतों में 10.98% की गिरावट दर्ज की गई, जो पिछले साल अप्रैल की तुलना में है।
- Pulses prices fell by 5.23%, and meat and fish prices dropped by 0.35% year-on-year.
- दालों की कीमतों में 5.23% और मांस व मछली की कीमतों में 0.35% की साल-दर-साल गिरावट हुई है।



- This marks the **third consecutive month** of vegetable price contractions.
- यह लगातार तीसरा महीना है जब सब्जियों की कीमतों में गिरावट आई है।

## Impact of High Base Effect

### उच्च आधार प्रभाव का असर

- Despite the cooling prices, much of the decline is due to a **high base effect**, as **vegetable inflation was in the 27-30% range** during February-April 2024.
- कीमतों में गिरावट के बावजूद, यह काफी हद तक उच्च आधार प्रभाव के कारण है, क्योंकि फरवरी-अप्रैल 2024 में सब्जियों की महंगाई दर 27-30% के बीच थी।

# MSMEs lack staff, access to formal credit: SIDBI study

GS Paper III: Industries

**The Hindu Bureau**  
COIMBATORE

Lack of access to “timely and adequate” credit and shortage of manpower are among the key challenges that Micro, Small and Medium-scale Enterprises (MSMEs) face, according to a Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) report titled “Understanding the Indian MSME Sector: Progress and Challenges”.

The report, which is based on a survey of 2,000 MSMEs in 19 sectors, says despite comprehensive policy initiatives, MSMEs do not have access to adequate credit when they need



The report is based on a survey of 2,000 MSMEs in 19 sectors.

it. About 3% of the total borrowings of small enterprises is from informal sources while the numbers stand at 2% for MSMEs and 12% for micro enterprises.

According to a press release, the study broadly es-

timates “the sector still has an addressable credit gap of about 24% or ₹30 lakh crore.” The gap is higher in services sector at 27% and higher at 35% for women-owned MSMEs too, indicating a need for targeted policy actions.

#### Digital tools

More number of MSMEs are likely to adopt digital tools for credit access when supported by platforms such as UPI as 18% of MSMEs use digital lending platforms and 90% accept digital payments.

About a fourth of the surveyed MSMEs cited lack of skilled manpower as one of their major challenges.

## MSMEs Lack Staff, Access to Formal Credit: SIDBI Study

एमएसएमई को स्टाफ और औपचारिक ऋण तक पहुंच की कमी: सिडबी अध्ययन

### Key Challenges Facing MSMEs

एमएसएमई के सामने प्रमुख चुनौतियाँ

- Lack of access to “timely and adequate” credit and shortage of manpower are major challenges for **Micro, Small, and Medium-scale Enterprises (MSMEs)**, according to a report by the **Small Industries**

### Development Bank of India (SIDBI).

• “समय पर और पर्याप्त” ऋण की अनुपलब्धता और कुशल जनशक्ति की कमी सूक्ष्म, लघु और मध्यम उद्यमों (MSMEs) की प्रमुख चुनौतियाँ हैं, जैसा कि भारतीय लघु उद्योग विकास बैंक (SIDBI) की रिपोर्ट में बताया गया है।

- The report is titled “Understanding the Indian MSME Sector: Progress and Challenges”.
- इस रिपोर्ट का शीर्षक है “भारतीय एमएसएमई क्षेत्र की समझ: प्रगति और चुनौतियाँ”।



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## Findings from the Survey

### सर्वेक्षण से प्राप्त निष्कर्ष

- The report is based on a **survey of 2,000 MSMEs** across **19 sectors**.
- यह रिपोर्ट **19 क्षेत्रों के 2,000 एमएसएमई** के सर्वेक्षण पर आधारित है।
- Despite various **policy initiatives**, MSMEs still **lack access to adequate credit when needed**.
- विभिन्न नीतिगत पहलों के बावजूद, एमएसएमई को आवश्यकता पड़ने पर अभी भी पर्याप्त ऋण की पहुंच नहीं है।
- About **3% of small enterprises' borrowings** are from **informal sources**.
- लघु उद्यमों की लगभग 3% उधारी अनौपचारिक स्रोतों से होती है।
- The number stands at **2% for MSMEs** and **12% for micro enterprises**.
- यह आंकड़ा एमएसएमई के लिए 2% और सूक्ष्म उद्यमों के लिए 12% है।

## Credit Gap in MSME Sector

### एमएसएमई क्षेत्र में ऋण अंतर

- According to the press release, the study estimates an **addressable credit gap of about 24% or ₹30 lakh crore** in the MSME sector.
- प्रेस विज्ञप्ति के अनुसार, अध्ययन अनुमान लगाता है कि एमएसएमई क्षेत्र में लगभग **24% या ₹30 लाख करोड़** का पूरा किया जा सकने वाला ऋण अंतर है।
- The **credit gap is higher at 27% in the services sector**.
- सेवा क्षेत्र में ऋण अंतर अधिक है, जो कि 27% है।
- The gap is **even higher at 35% for women-owned MSMEs**, pointing to the need for **targeted policy actions**.
- महिला स्वामित्व वाले एमएसएमई के लिए यह अंतर 35% तक है, जिससे यह स्पष्ट होता है कि लक्षित नीति हस्तक्षेप की आवश्यकता है।

## Adoption of Digital Tools

### डिजिटल टूल्स को अपनाना

- More MSMEs are likely to adopt **digital tools for credit access**, especially when supported by platforms like **UPI**.



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• अधिक एमएसएमई क्रेडिट तक पहुंच के लिए डिजिटल टूल्स को अपनाने की संभावना रखते हैं, खासकर जब उन्हें UPI जैसे प्लेटफॉर्म का समर्थन मिले।

- Currently, **18% of MSMEs use digital lending platforms.**
- वर्तमान में **18% एमएसएमई डिजिटल ऋण प्लेटफॉर्म** का उपयोग करते हैं।
- Around **90% of MSMEs accept digital payments.**
- लगभग **90% एमएसएमई डिजिटल भुगतान स्वीकार** करते हैं।

## Skilled Manpower Shortage

### कुशल जनशक्ति की कमी

- About **25% of surveyed MSMEs cited lack of skilled manpower** as a major challenge.
- सर्वेक्षण में शामिल लगभग **25% एमएसएमई ने कुशल जनशक्ति की कमी** को एक प्रमुख चुनौती बताया।