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THE HINDU NEWSPAPER

15 JANUARY 2025

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PATRIOTIC

PCS Special:	15 January 2026
1.	Government appoints new chiefs for BSF, ITBP and NIA सरकार ने बीएसएफ, आईटीबीपी और एनआईए के लिए नए प्रमुख नियुक्त किए
2.	QUIZ

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Government appoints new chiefs for BSF, ITBP and NIA

PCS
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) on Wednesday approved the proposal of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to appoint Shatrueet Singh Kapoor, former Haryana Director General of Police (DGP), as the chief of the Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).

Mr. Kapur was sent on leave and then relieved of the State DGP charge last year amid the controversy surrounding the suicide of Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Y.S Puram Kumar.

The ACC also approved the appointment of 1993-batch IPS officer of West Bengal cadre, Praveen Kumar, who is at present working as Director General, ITBP, to the post of Director General, Border Security Force (BSF) from the date of assumption of charge of the post and up to September 30, 2030, the date of his superannuation or until further orders.

The ACC approved the posting of 1994-batch IPS officer Rakesh Aggarwal as Director General, National Investigation Agency.

Government appoints new chiefs for BSF, ITBP and NIA सरकार ने बीएसएफ, आईटीबीपी और एनआईए के लिए नए प्रमुख नियुक्त किए

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) on Wednesday approved the proposal of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to appoint **Shatrueet Singh Kapoor**, former **Haryana Director General of Police (DGP)**, as the chief of the **Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)**.

कैबिनेट की नियुक्ति समिति (एसीसी) ने बुधवार को गृह मंत्रालय (एमएचए) के प्रस्ताव को मंजूरी दी, जिसके तहत हरियाणा के पूर्व पुलिस महानिदेशक (डीजीपी) शत्रुजीत सिंह कपूर को भारत-तिब्बत सीमा पुलिस (आईटीबीपी) का प्रमुख नियुक्त किया गया।

Mr. Kapur was sent on leave and then relieved of the State DGP charge last year amid the controversy surrounding the suicide of Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Y.S Puram Kumar.

श्री कपूर को पिछले वर्ष राज्य डीजीपी पद से अवकाश पर भेजा गया और बाद में हटा दिया गया, यह कार्रवाई भारतीय पुलिस सेवा (आईपीएस) अधिकारी वाई.एस. पुरम कुमार की आत्महत्या से जुड़े विवाद के बीच हुई।

The ACC also approved the appointment of 1993-batch IPS officer of West Bengal cadre, **Praveen Kumar**, who is at present working as **Director General, ITBP**, to the post of **Director General, Border Security Force (BSF)** from the date of assumption of charge of the post and up to **September 30, 2030**, the date of his **superannuation** or until further orders.

एसीसी ने पश्चिम बंगाल कैडर के 1993 बैच के आईपीएस अधिकारी प्रवीण कुमार, जो वर्तमान में आईटीबीपी के महानिदेशक के रूप में कार्यरत हैं, को सीमा सुरक्षा बल (बीएसएफ) के महानिदेशक पद पर नियुक्त करने को भी मंजूरी दी, यह नियुक्ति पदभार ग्रहण करने की तिथि से 30 सितंबर 2030 तक, उनकी सेवानिवृत्ति की तिथि तक या आगे के आदेश तक होगी।

The ACC approved the posting of 1994-batch IPS officer **Rakesh Aggarwal** as **Director General, National Investigation Agency**.

एसीसी ने 1994 बैच के आईपीएस अधिकारी राकेश अग्रवाल की राष्ट्रीय जांच एजेंसी (एनआईए) के महानिदेशक के रूप में तैनाती को मंजूरी दी।

QUIZ: Mahasweta Devi

• **Mahasweta Devi** was one of India's most influential **writers, social activists, and intellectuals**, known for her powerful writings on **tribal communities, marginalised groups, and social injustice**.

• She wrote extensively in **Bengali**, and many of her works were later translated into **English and other Indian languages**.

• **Mahasweta Devi** was born on **January 14, 1926**, in **Dacca**, which was then part of the **Bengal Presidency in British India**.

The Title of Mahasweta Devi's First Published Novel: Jhansir Rani (The Queen of Jhansi)

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:

1. The birthplace of Mahasweta Devi. **Ans: Dacca, Bengal Presidency, British India (now Dhaka, Bangladesh)**
 2. The title of Mahasweta Devi's first published novel. **Ans: Jhansir Rani (The Queen of Jhansi)**
 3. The English translation of her novel *Aranyer Adhikar*. **Ans: The Right of the Forest**
 4. The distinguished international award she received in 1997. **Ans: Ramon Magsaysay Award**
 5. The prestigious Indian literary prize she won in 1996. **Ans: Jnanpith Award**
 6. Devi's short stories were translated into English by this scholar. **Ans: Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak**
 7. She received this civil award in 1986. **Ans: Padma Shri**
- Visual: Name this 1998 movie directed by Govind Nihalani. **Ans: Hajar Churashir Maa**
Early Birds: K.N. Viswanathan| Tamal Biswas| Arun Kumar Singh| Sonali Das| Dodo Jayaditya



- Year of publication: 1956
- Original language: Bengali

The English Translation of Mahasweta Devi's Novel *Aranyer Adhikar: The Right of the Forest*

- The novel is a powerful **historical and political narrative** centred on the life of **Birsa Munda**, the legendary tribal leader of the **Munda Rebellion (Ulgulan)** against British colonial rule.
- The novel is based on the life of **Birsa Munda (1875–1900)**.
- Birsa led the **Ulgulan movement** in the **Chotanagpur plateau** region (present-day Jharkhand).

The Distinguished International Award Received by Mahasweta Devi in 1997

- In 1997, **Mahasweta Devi** received the **Ramon Magsaysay Award**, one of the most prestigious international honours in Asia.

About the Ramon Magsaysay Award

- The **Ramon Magsaysay Award** was established in 1957 in memory of **Ramon Magsaysay**, the former President of the **Philippines**.
- It is often called the “**Asian Nobel Prize**” because of its prestige and moral authority.
- The award honours individuals and organisations in **Asia** who demonstrate
 - integrity in governance
 - courageous leadership
 - service to the people
 - social transformation.

The Prestigious Indian Literary Prize Won by Mahasweta Devi in 1996

- In 1996, **Mahasweta Devi** was honoured with the **Jnanpith Award**, the highest literary award in India.

Jnanpith Award

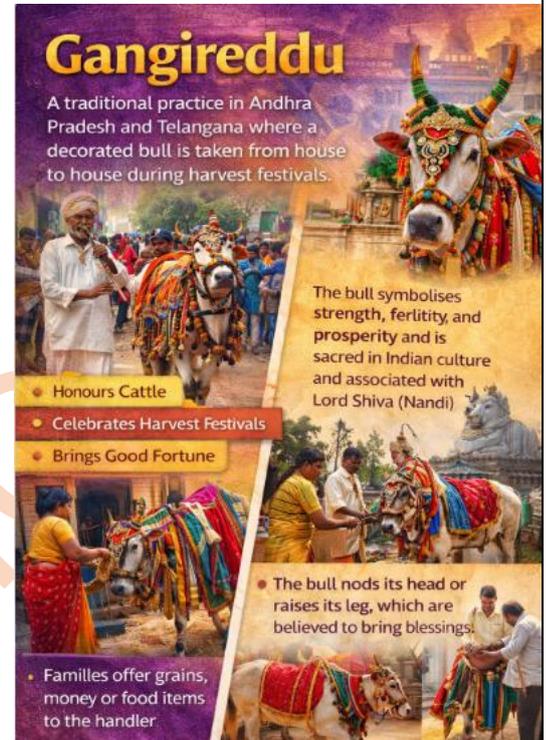
- The **Jnanpith Award** was instituted in 1961 by the **Bharatiya Jnanpith Trust**.
- It is awarded annually to an author for
 - **outstanding contribution to literature**
 - **writing in any of the languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution**.
- The award includes
 - a **citation**
 - a **cash prize**
 - a **bronze replica of Saraswati**, the goddess of learning.
- In 1986, **Mahasweta Devi** was honoured with the **Padma Shri**, one of India's most respected civilian awards.



GS Paper 1: History,	
TOPICS COVERED	15 January 2026

Gangireddu

- **Gangireddu** refers to a traditional cultural practice in **Andhra Pradesh and Telangana**, where a decorated bull is taken from house to house by its handler.
- The tradition is closely associated with **harvest festivals** such as **Sankranti** and represents respect for cattle in agrarian society.
- Gangireddu literally means “**Bull of Ganga**”, symbolising strength, fertility, and prosperity.
- The bull is considered a **sacred animal** in Indian culture and is associated with **Lord Shiva (Nandi)** and agricultural prosperity.
- In the Gangireddu tradition, the bull is seen as a **messenger of good fortune** for households.
- The ritual reflects the deep bond between **farmers and their cattle**, which are essential for ploughing fields and rural livelihoods.



How the Tradition is Performed

- A trained bull is **decorated with colourful clothes, bells, and ornaments**.
- The handler, often called a **Gangiredduvala**, guides the bull through villages and urban neighbourhoods.
- At each house, the bull performs simple acts such as **nodding its head** or **raising its leg**, which are believed to bring blessings.
- In return, families offer **grains, money, or food items** to the handler.

GS Paper II: Polity,	
TOPICS COVERED	15 January 2026
1.	SC to decide today on plea for passive euthanasia निष्क्रिय इच्छामृत्यु की याचिका पर आज फैसला करेगा सुप्रीम कोर्ट
2.	Lokpal scraps plaint against BJP MP Dubey as 'frivolous' लोकपाल ने भाजपा सांसद दुबे के खिलाफ शिकायत को 'तुच्छ' बताते हुए खारिज किया
3.	The continued custody in Delhi Riots cases, an injustice दिल्ली दंगों के मामलों में लगातार हिरासत, एक अन्याय



SC to decide today on plea for passive euthanasia

GS II: Polity

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled to pass a final order on Thursday in a plea for passive euthanasia by means of withdrawing artificial life support to a 31-year-old man. The judges personally met his parents and siblings, who said they did not want him to suffer anymore.

"All the three, i.e., the father, mother and younger brother, in one voice and with a lot of pain in their hearts, made a fervent appeal before us to take necessary steps to ensure that Harish [Rana] does not suffer any more... According to them, if the medical treatment is not making any difference, then there is no point in

continuing with such medical treatment and making Harish suffer for no good reason," a Bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and K.V. Viswanathan recorded in a 12-page order published on Wednesday.

The court also recorded the submission made by Additional Solicitor-General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, that primary and secondary boards of doctors who visited Harish Rana were also of the opinion that medical treatment should be discontinued and "nature should be allowed to take its own course".

"The doctors are of the opinion that Harish would remain in this permanent vegetative state (PVS) for years to come, with the tubes inserted all over his

Living in pain

Harish Rana, 31, has been bedridden for 13 years

He had sustained severe head injuries and 100% quadriplegic disability after a fall from the fourth floor of his paying guest accommodation

According to them [relatives], if the medical treatment is not making any difference, then there is no point in continuing with such medical treatment and making Harish suffer for no good reason

SUPREME COURT



body. However, he would never be able to recover and live a normal life," the court recounted.

The order stated that the judges had met with the parents and Harish's brother for an exhaustive talk on Tuesday.

Harish sustained severe head injuries and 100% quadriplegic disability af-

ter falling from the fourth floor of his paying guest accommodation as a Panjab University student in 2013. He has been bedridden for over 13 years now.

The court order reproduced a joint report submitted by Ms. Bhati and the family's counsel, advocate Rashmi Nandakumar.

The report said the legal

team had met with the parents and family, once through videoconferencing and the second time at their home in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh.

Harish's father, Ashok Rana, narrated to the team the family's years of long care for their son.

He said they had done "everything within their human capacity" during this period.

"He said that their son no longer has a voice of his own, and therefore they feel it is their moral responsibility to speak for him... He shared his deep worry that both parents are now ageing, and asked, with visible concern, who would take care of Mr. Harish if anything were to happen to either of them," the report narrated.

SC to decide today on plea for passive euthanasia

निष्क्रिय इच्छामृत्यु की याचिका पर आज फैसला करेगा सुप्रीम कोर्ट

- The **Supreme Court** is scheduled to pass a **final order** on **Thursday** in a plea for **passive euthanasia** by means of withdrawing **artificial life support** to a **31-year-old man**.
सुप्रीम कोर्ट गुरुवार को 31 वर्षीय व्यक्ति के लिए कृत्रिम जीवन रक्षक प्रणाली हटाकर निष्क्रिय इच्छामृत्यु की याचिका पर अंतिम आदेश पारित करने वाला है।
- The judges personally met his **parents and siblings**, who said they did not want him to **suffer anymore**.
न्यायाधीशों ने स्वयं उसके माता-पिता और भाई-बहनों से मुलाकात की, जिन्होंने कहा कि वे उसे और कष्ट में नहीं देखना चाहते।
- "All the three, i.e., the **father, mother and younger brother**, in one voice and with a lot of pain in their hearts, made a fervent appeal before us to take necessary steps to ensure that **Harish [Rana]** does not suffer any more... According to them, if the medical treatment is not making any difference, then there is no point in continuing with such medical treatment and making Harish suffer for no good reason," a **Bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and K.V. Viswanathan** recorded in a **12-page order** published on **Wednesday**.
"पिता, माता और छोटे भाई—तीनों ने एक स्वर में और अत्यंत पीड़ा के साथ हमारे समक्ष यह भावपूर्ण अपील की कि आवश्यक कदम उठाए जाएँ ताकि हरिश [राणा] को और कष्ट न हो... उनके अनुसार, यदि चिकित्सा उपचार से कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ रहा है, तो ऐसे उपचार को जारी रखने और बिना कारण हरिश को कष्ट देने का कोई औचित्य नहीं है," न्यायमूर्ति जे.बी. पारदीवाला और के.वी. विश्वनाथन की पीठ ने बुधवार को प्रकाशित 12-पृष्ठीय आदेश में दर्ज किया।

Lokpal scraps plaint against BJP MP Dubey as 'frivolous'

लोकपाल ने भाजपा सांसद दुबे के खिलाफ शिकायत को 'तुच्छ' बताते हुए खारिज किया

- "The allegations made against **RPS (Respondent Public Servant)** are **frivolous and vexatious**, including complainant indulging in **whataboutery**," said the order issued on **Tuesday** by a **Lokpal Bench** headed by its **Chairperson Justice A.M. Khanwilkar**.
"RPS (प्रतिवादी लोक सेवक) के खिलाफ लगाए गए आरोप तुच्छ और दुराशयपूर्ण हैं, जिनमें शिकायतकर्ता द्वारा ढाढ़ाअबाउटरी करना भी शामिल है," यह मंगलवार को लोकपाल पीठ द्वारा जारी आदेश में कहा गया, जिसकी अध्यक्षता अध्यक्ष न्यायमूर्ति ए.एम. खानविलकर ने की।



The continued custody in Delhi Riots cases, an injustice

CS II: Polity

The order of the Supreme Court of India on January 5, 2026, in the Delhi Riots 'Larger Conspiracy' Case, where it granted bail to five individuals but denied it to Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam has, once again, raised questions about the way in which our legal system deals with crucial questions of personal liberty.

The seven students and activists, who had been involved in protests in Delhi in 2020 against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 - were arrested and accused of instigating or being involved in the riots that took place after the protests. The veracity of the allegations apart, by the time the case came to the Court, they had spent upwards of five years in jail, without trial (at the time of writing, the trial has yet to commence). Previous judgments of the Court have frequently observed that the right to speedy trial is a constitutionally guaranteed right under Article 21 of the Constitution; only recently, the Court noted that if the state is unable to guarantee a trial within a reasonable period of time, it has no business objecting to a plea for bail. In light of this, one would have thought that half a decade in jail - with the trial yet to commence - is an adequate ground for bail.

Unconvincing reasoning

While the Court found it an adequate ground for five individuals, it denied bail to Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam on the basis that these two individuals had been accused of "conceptualising" or orchestrating the riots, and, therefore, stood on a different footing from the other accused. This reasoning is unconvincing. The accusations against the two, at this stage, are nothing more than accusations, and the right not to be incarcerated for an indefinite period without trial is a human right that belongs to every person. It cannot be that an individual has less of a right to a speedy trial just by virtue of what the state has accused them of.

The Court also noted that the delay in the trial so far was not solely due to the prosecution or the court, but had also been at the instance of the accused. This, also, is unconvincing. Accused individuals cannot control the pace of a trial or the proceedings of a courtroom. It is the judge who does so. The judge is empowered to refuse requests for adjournments, if indeed this was what was happening, and proceed with the trial. The Court also did not consider the likelihood of



Gautam Bhatia

is a Delhi-based lawyer

The top court's denial of bail to Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam raises questions about the way in which India's legal system deals with crucial questions of personal liberty

the trial concluding within any meaningful period of time such as, for example, by looking at the total number of witnesses in the case (a number that runs into many hundreds).

This creates a situation where, solely on the basis of the state's accusations, individuals can be incarcerated for decades before a final verdict in their cases. One hopes that the Court's observation at the end - namely, that Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam can re-apply for bail on grounds of delay after one year - indicates a judicial belief that if five-and-a-half years of imprisonment without trial is not too long, then, at least, six and a half years is. But for that, we will have to wait and see.

The critical issues

The Court's examination of the merits of the bail cases also raises critical issues. Section 15 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) defines the offence of terrorism, and after setting out the basic ingredients of the offence (such as the use of violence or weapons), uses the phrase "by any other means". There is a general principle in criminal law that courts will interpret ambiguous or vague phrases narrowly in order to protect the individual from state excess. However, the Court departs from that principle by giving the phrase "by any other means" a broad interpretation, and seemingly including "chakka jams" within the ambit of the phrase. This broad reading is problematic for many reasons.

First, it vests a vast discretion in the prosecution, that is, the state, in deciding which kinds of protests (including *chakka jams*) will be dealt with under the UAPA's stringent provisions, and those under ordinary law. Indeed, the vaguer and more expansive a definition in criminal law, the more unbridled power it vests in the state.

Second, this has a downstream impact on bail. Under Section 43(D)(5) of the UAPA, bail is not to be granted if the court is satisfied - to put it simply - that there is a "prima facie" case against the accused. This provision, which was originally used by the colonial British government to imprison Indian nationalists, is, therefore, closely linked to the substantive provisions of the UAPA, as the question of whether or not there is a "prima facie" case will depend on what exactly the ingredients of the offence are.

By widening the scope of Section 15 of the UAPA, denial of bail becomes far more likely, as it is much easier to establish a "prima facie" case,

which is based entirely on the Prosecution's materials. Once again, there is a long-established principle in criminal law that the more draconian or stringent a law, the more cautiously it should be interpreted, in order to prevent state abuse. The Court's judgment departs from that principle. One hopes that this interpretation - which is, at the moment, provisional, as it was delivered in a bail case - will be revised by the Court in due course.

Need for scrutiny, not deference

Finally, the expansive nature of Section 15 apart, the Court's scrutiny of the prosecution's actual case is highly deferential. The actual evidence against Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam - evidence on the record - only demonstrates the organisation and facilitation of protests (and, at its highest, *chakka jams*) against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, none of which can be remotely called a "terrorist act", even under the broadest of definitions. To fill in the gaps, the Prosecution has argued that Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam have "managerial responsibility" for the riots, as they were at the head of a "conspiracy" to cause these riots.

The Court notes that such a possibility "cannot be ruled out" and that any deeper scrutiny of the Prosecution's case would be beyond its remit as it cannot consider possible defences at the stage of bail. However, there is a difference between considering defences and accepting the Prosecution's inferences that go well beyond the actual record, especially when individual liberty - after five years of incarceration - hangs in the balance.

It is worth remembering that across time, and across space, right from the days of the Dreyfus Affair in 19th century France, the idea of a "conspiracy" has been frequently deployed to compensate for the absence of actual evidence, and to keep people in jail endlessly. The evidence of history should inform the present: allegations of conspiracy, without evidence, deserve searching scrutiny, not deference. At the very least, the absence of direct evidence should not become a reason for an endless imprisonment without trial, and a blurring of the right to protest with acts of violence.

In this context, the continued imprisonment of Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam is an injustice; it is an injustice that, one hopes, is remedied sooner rather than later.

The continued custody in Delhi Riots cases, an injustice दिल्ली दंगों के मामलों में लगातार हिरासत, एक अन्याय

- Previous judgments of the Court have frequently observed that the **right to speedy trial is a constitutionally guaranteed right under Article 21** of the Constitution.
अदालत के पिछले कई फैसलों में बार-बार कहा गया है कि तेज़ सुनवाई का अधिकार संविधान के अनुच्छेद 21 के तहत एक गारंटीकृत मौलिक अधिकार है।
- **Only recently, the Court noted that if the state is unable to guarantee a trial within a reasonable period of time, it has no business objecting to a plea for bail.**
हाल ही में अदालत ने यह भी कहा कि यदि राज्य उचित समय में मुकदमे की गारंटी नहीं दे सकता, तो उसे जमानत की अर्जी का विरोध करने का कोई अधिकार नहीं है।
- **Accused individuals cannot control the pace of a trial or courtroom proceedings, it is the judge who does so.**
अभियुक्त मुकदमे की गति या अदालत की कार्यवाही को नियंत्रित नहीं कर सकते, यह काम न्यायाधीश का होता है।
- **The judge is empowered to refuse requests for adjournments and proceed with the trial.**
न्यायाधीश के पास स्थगन के अनुरोधों को अस्वीकार कर मुकदमा आगे बढ़ाने का अधिकार होता है।
- **This creates a situation where, solely on the basis of the state's accusations, individuals can be incarcerated for decades before a final verdict.**
इससे ऐसी स्थिति बनती है जहाँ केवल राज्य के आरोपों के आधार पर किसी व्यक्ति को अंतिम फैसले से पहले दशकों तक जेल में रखा जा सकता है।



- The Court's examination of the merits of the bail cases also raises **critical issues**. जमानत मामलों के गुण-दोष पर अदालत की समीक्षा कई महत्वपूर्ण मुद्दे भी उठाती है।
- **Section 15 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) defines the offence of terrorism**, and after setting out the basic ingredients of the offence, such as the use of violence or weapons, uses the phrase **"by any other means"**.
गैरकानूनी गतिविधियाँ (रोकथाम) अधिनियम (UAPA) की धारा 15 आतंकवाद के अपराध को परिभाषित करती है और अपराध के बुनियादी तत्व, जैसे हिंसा या हथियारों के प्रयोग, बताने के बाद **"by any other means"** शब्दों का प्रयोग करती है।
- There is a general principle in criminal law that courts will interpret **ambiguous or vague phrases narrowly to protect the individual from state excess**.
आपराधिक कानून में एक सामान्य सिद्धांत है कि अदालतें **अस्पष्ट या अनिश्चित शब्दों** की संकीर्ण व्याख्या करती हैं ताकि व्यक्ति को **राज्य की अति** से बचाया जा सके।
- First, it vests **vast discretion in the prosecution**, that is, the state, in deciding which kinds of protests will be dealt with under the **stringent provisions of the UAPA** and which under ordinary law.
पहला, इससे **अभियोजन पक्ष**, यानी राज्य, को यह तय करने में **व्यापक विवेकाधिकार** मिल जाता है कि किन प्रकार के विरोध प्रदर्शनों से **UAPA के कठोर प्रावधानों** के तहत निपटा जाएगा और किनसे सामान्य कानून के तहत।
- Under **Section 43(D)(5) of the UAPA**, bail is not to be granted if the court is satisfied that there is a **"prima facie" case against the accused**.
UAPA की धारा **43(D)(5)** के तहत यदि अदालत यह मान ले कि अभियुक्त के खिलाफ **"प्रथम दृष्टया"** मामला बनता है, तो जमानत नहीं दी जाती।
- This provision, originally used by the **colonial British government to imprison Indian nationalists**, is closely linked to the substantive provisions of the UAPA.
यह प्रावधान, जिसे मूल रूप से **औपनिवेशिक ब्रिटिश सरकार** ने भारतीय राष्ट्रवादियों को कैद करने के लिए इस्तेमाल किया था, UAPA के मूल प्रावधानों से गहराई से जुड़ा है।
- The question of whether there is a **"prima facie" case** depends on what exactly the **ingredients of the offence** are.
"प्रथम दृष्टया" मामला है या नहीं, यह इस पर निर्भर करता है कि अपराध के **तत्व** वास्तव में क्या हैं।
- By widening the scope of **Section 15 of the UAPA**, denial of bail becomes far more likely, as it is much easier to establish a **prima facie case**.
UAPA की धारा **15** के दायरे को बढ़ाने से जमानत से इनकार की संभावना बहुत बढ़ जाती है, क्योंकि **प्रथम दृष्टया मामला** स्थापित करना आसान हो जाता है।
- This is based entirely on the **prosecution's materials**.
यह पूरी तरह से **अभियोजन पक्ष की सामग्री** पर आधारित होता है।
- Once again, there is a long-established principle in criminal law that the more **draconian or stringent** a law, the more **cautiously** it should be interpreted.
फिर से, आपराधिक कानून का एक पुराना सिद्धांत है कि जितना अधिक कोई कानून **कठोर या दमनकारी** होगा, उसकी व्याख्या उतनी ही **सावधानी** से की जानी चाहिए।
- Finally, the expansive nature of **Section 15** apart, the Court's scrutiny of the prosecution's actual case is highly **deferential**.
अंततः, धारा **15** की व्यापक प्रकृति से अलग, अभियोजन के वास्तविक मामले पर अदालत की जाँच अत्यधिक **सम्मानजनक** रही है।
- It is worth remembering that across time and space, right from the days of the **Dreyfus Affair in 19th century France**, the idea of a **"conspiracy"** has been frequently deployed to compensate for the absence of actual evidence.
यह याद रखना ज़रूरी है कि समय और स्थान के पार, **19वीं सदी के फ्रांस में ड्रेफ़स कांड** के दिनों से ही, **"साज़िश"** का विचार अक्सर वास्तविक साक्ष्य की कमी को पूरा करने के लिए इस्तेमाल किया गया है।

GS Paper II: Governance,

TOPICS COVERED

15 January 2026

1. Who pays starting salaries of over ₹2 crore per year to fresh graduates?



	कौन नई स्नातकों को सालाना ₹2 करोड़ से अधिक की शुरुआती सैलरी देता है?
2.	Prime Minister's Internship Scheme falters as funds largely remain unused प्रधानमंत्री इंटरनशिप योजना कमजोर पड़ रही है क्योंकि अधिकांश धन अप्रयुक्त बना हुआ है

Who pays starting salaries of over ₹2 crore per year to fresh graduates?

High frequency trading firms are offering fresh graduates starting salaries in the ₹2 crore range, reflecting a growing trend of high-paying job offers in India's premier educational institutions. Such jobs offer exciting career opportunities both in terms of money and job satisfaction

GS II: Governance

O.R.S. Rao

The story so far:

Iptive, a Netherlands-based global trading company, has offered a starting salary of ₹2.5 crore to a B.Tech (Computer Science) student of IIT Hyderabad.

What is behind the rise of the ₹2-crore recruiter club?

Such high starting salaries are not new. Last year, a student at IIT Madras received a record-breaking offer of ₹4.3 crore per year, for the role of a Quantitative Trader in Jane Street, a Wall Street trading firm from the U.S. The competitive landscape of campus placements of over ₹1 crore per year is estimated to have tripled from about 60 offers in 2021 to 180 in 2025. The share of ₹2-crore+ offers, though still small, has been growing steeply. This phenomenon is not a blip any longer.

The large-ticket "Day-1" financial trading recruiters of the current placement season at IIT Bombay are reported to have offered salaries ranging from ₹2.2 crore to ₹3.6 crore per year. It clearly shows that the trend will continue, despite the impact of artificial intelligence (AI).

In the last five years, the "₹2-Crore Club" has grown to be a robust technology-driven financial stock trading ecosystem. It is helmed by Quantitative Trading (QT) firms, who leverage technology for quick trades in a fraction of seconds. High Frequency Traders (HFT) further automate the trades, without any need for human intervention, using the power of efficient algorithms.

Jane Street and Optiver are not alone. Hudson River Trading (HRT) offered over ₹2.2 crore for an Algorithmic Developer post, whereas Da Vinci Derivatives offered salary packages exceeding ₹2 crore for the role of a Quant Researcher. NK Securities

followed with around ₹1.65 crore while Rubrik has extended ₹1.49-crore offers. Other firms in this league include Citadel Securities, IMC Trading, Graviton Research, APT Portfolio, Atlas Research, Quadeye, Quantbox, The Trade Desk, and others.

Around 70% of them have been repeat recruiters, who view the IITs as their primary talent pipeline globally. A few years back, the hunting ground for these recruiters was limited to first generation IITs, but recent years have seen entry of second generation IITs like Hyderabad, IIT(BHU) and IITs like Allahabad and Raipur.

How can they afford to pay such high salaries?

In order to understand why and how these firms pay such high salaries, one must look at their business model, particularly, of how they make money. Most of them are medium-sized proprietary financial trading houses and earn profits by leveraging price arbitrage, buying and selling stocks between two stock exchanges like NASDAQ and New York Stock Exchange, for tiny profits – as low as \$0.01 per share. By executing millions of such trades in seconds they make massive profits.

A software developer at an HFT firm, who can reduce even a few microseconds in execution of a program can generate an extra profit of millions of dollars in a month. As the intellectual efforts of the developer are directly and quickly translated into profit, it is not difficult for the firm to share a part of the profit. This is why these firms hire the best of engineers to optimise every line of the program. These firms are lean with low overheads, with only 200-500 employees, which allows them to distribute a significant portion of their trading profit as bonuses to the employees. A significant

portion of the "2 crore" packages, going up to 40%, is the performance bonus.

What are the roles offered and skills needed?

A quantitative trader takes trading decisions in a live trading desk, using game theory and probability. A quantitative researcher analyses historical data to find patterns or "signals" that predict future price movements and devise trading strategies using advanced Statistics, Stochastic Calculus, and Machine Learning. A low-latency developer builds the ultra-fast engines that execute the trades, leveraging the mastery of low-latency expertise in areas like memory management and concurrency.

Typically, these firms look for people with a deep knowledge of algorithms, low level systems and mastery in areas like probability, linear algebra, and game theory. While financial literacy is not always mandatory, an understanding of the financial market microstructure and derivatives is an advantage.

Prior work experience is not essential for these roles, as the firms look for youngsters with exceptional quantitative aptitude, deep conceptual understanding of Mathematics, proficiency in programming, and smart problem-solving abilities. Most firms prefer fresh graduates for their innovative and out-of-the-box thinking ability. In terms of behavioural traits, they look for people that can work under pressure, without losing balance of mind.

Generally, the aspirants go through multiple rounds of rigorous interviews, involving "Brainteaser" rounds, probability puzzles and low-latency C++ coding skills. Most Quant and HFT firms prefer the Pre-Placement Offer (PPO) route for recruitment, where students are selected after a rigorous internship of

eight weeks.

What are domestic posting salaries?

Total compensation called Cost-To-Company (CTC) often includes base salary, guaranteed/target bonus, relocation/sign-on bonus, and Restricted Stock Units (RSUs) as employee stock options, and profit-sharing bonus. Because most of the roles are based abroad, in locations like Amsterdam, Dublin, Hong Kong, London and New York, the salary packages convert into Indian Rupees of 2 crore or more. Some companies offer domestic postings, with salaries ranging from ₹60 lakh to ₹1.2 crore.

A ₹2 crore international offer (based in Europe) is roughly equal to a ₹60 lakh offer in India in terms of lifestyle and savings, considering the cost of living and taxes. Students need to keep this in mind, while comparing international offers with domestic offers.

Are there career growth avenues?

Such jobs offer exciting career opportunities both in terms of money and job satisfaction, particularly for students that are strong in mathematics and enjoy solving probability brainteasers. However, there will be intense day-to-day job pressure, due to the live trading environment, which does not tolerate even small mistakes. Besides burn-out, career growth may be limited to the financial technology sector.

While the volume of entry-level roles in traditional IT services is shrinking, due to AI-driven automation, the demand for specialised talent is growing. The Quant and High-Frequency Trading sector is just one example of competitive bidding for the natural human intelligence needed to solve problems that AI is yet to master.

O.R.S. Rao is Chancellor of the ICAFI university, Sikkim. Views are personal.

Who pays starting salaries of over ₹2 crore per year to fresh graduates?

कौन नई स्नातकों को सालाना ₹2 करोड़ से अधिक की शुरुआती सैलरी देता है?

- The competitive landscape of campus placements of over ₹1 crore per year is estimated to have tripled from about 60 offers in 2021 to 180 in 2025.

₹1 करोड़ प्रति वर्ष से अधिक के कैम्पस प्लेसमेंट ऑफर्स का परिदृश्य 2021 में लगभग 60 से बढ़कर 2025 में 180 होने का अनुमान है।



- The share of **₹2-crore+ offers**, though still small, has been growing steeply.

₹2 करोड़ से अधिक के ऑफर्स की हिस्सेदारी भले ही अभी कम हो, लेकिन इसमें तेज़ी से वृद्धि हो रही है।

- In the last five years, the “**₹2-Crore Club**” has grown to be a robust **technology-driven financial stock trading ecosystem**.

पिछले पाँच वर्षों में “**₹2-करोड़ क्लब**” एक मज़बूत तकनीक-संचालित वित्तीय स्टॉक ट्रेडिंग इकोसिस्टम बन चुका है।



- Hudson River Trading (HRT)** offered over **₹2.2 crore** for an **Algorithmic Developer** post, whereas **Da Vinci Derivatives** offered salary packages exceeding **₹2 crore** for the role of a **Quant Researcher**.

हडसन रिवर ट्रेडिंग (HRT) ने एल्गोरिदमिक डेवलपर पद के लिए **₹2.2 करोड़ से अधिक** का ऑफर दिया, जबकि **दा विंची डेरिवेटिव्स** ने क्वांट रिसर्चर की भूमिका के लिए **₹2 करोड़ से अधिक** के पैकेज दिए।

- Other firms in this league include **Citadel Securities, IMC Trading, Graviton Research, APT Portfolio, Atlas Research, Quadeye, Quantbox, The Trade Desk, and others**.

इस श्रेणी की अन्य कंपनियों में **सिटाडेल सिक्योरिटीज़, आईएमसी ट्रेडिंग, ग्रैविटॉन रिसर्च, एपीटी पोर्टफोलियो, एटलस रिसर्च, क्वाडआई, क्वांटबॉक्स, द ट्रेड डेस्क** आदि शामिल हैं।

- Around **70%** of them have been **repeat recruiters**, who view the **IITs** as their primary **talent pipeline globally**.

इनमें से लगभग **70%** कंपनियाँ दोबारा भर्ती करने वाली हैं, जो **आईआईटी** को वैश्विक स्तर पर अपनी मुख्य **टैलेंट पाइपलाइन** मानती हैं।

- A few years back, the hunting ground for these recruiters was limited to **first generation IITs**, but recent years have seen entry of **second generation IITs** like **Hyderabad, IIT(BHU)** and **IITs like Allahabad and Raipur**.

कुछ साल पहले तक इन रिक्रूटर्स का दायरा केवल **पहली पीढ़ी के आईआईटी** तक सीमित था, लेकिन हाल के वर्षों में **हैदराबाद, आईआईटी (बीएचयू)** जैसे **दूसरी पीढ़ी के आईआईटी** और **इलाहाबाद व रायपुर** जैसे **आईआईआईटी** भी इसमें शामिल हो गए हैं।

- Most of them are medium-sized **proprietary financial trading houses** and earn profits by leveraging **price arbitrage**, buying and selling stocks between two stock exchanges like **NASDAQ** and **New York Stock Exchange**, for tiny profits — as low as **\$0.01 per share**.

इनमें से अधिकांश मध्यम आकार की **प्रोप्राइटरी फाइनेंशियल ट्रेडिंग कंपनियाँ** हैं, जो **प्राइस आर्बिट्राज** का लाभ उठाकर **नैस्डैक** और **न्यूयॉर्क स्टॉक एक्सचेंज** जैसे दो स्टॉक एक्सचेंजों के बीच शेयरों की खरीद-बिक्री से बहुत कम मुनाफ़ा — मात्र **\$0.01 प्रति शेयर** तक — कमाती हैं।

- By executing **millions of such trades in seconds** they make **massive profits**.

ऐसे **लाखों ट्रेड सेकंडों** में करके ये कंपनियाँ **भारी मुनाफ़ा** कमाती हैं।

- A software developer at an **HFT firm**, who can reduce even a few **microseconds** in execution of a program can generate an extra profit of **millions of dollars in a month**.

किसी **HFT कंपनी** का सॉफ़्टवेयर डेवलपर यदि किसी प्रोग्राम के निष्पादन में केवल कुछ **माइक्रोसेकंड** भी कम कर दे, तो वह एक महीने में **लाखों डॉलर का अतिरिक्त मुनाफ़ा** पैदा कर सकता है।

- This is why these firms hire the **best engineers** to optimise every line of the program.

इसी कारण ये कंपनियाँ प्रोग्राम की हर लाइन को बेहतर बनाने के लिए **सर्वश्रेष्ठ इंजीनियरों** को नियुक्त करती हैं।

- A **quantitative trader** takes trading decisions in a live trading desk, using **game theory and probability**.

एक **क्वांटिटेटिव ट्रेडर** लाइव ट्रेडिंग डेस्क पर **गेम थ्योरी और प्रायिकता** का उपयोग करके ट्रेडिंग निर्णय लेता है।

- A **quantitative researcher** analyses historical data to find patterns or “**signals**” that predict future price movements and devise trading strategies using advanced **Statistics, Stochastic Calculus, and Machine Learning**.

एक **क्वांटिटेटिव रिसर्चर** ऐतिहासिक डेटा का विश्लेषण कर ऐसे “**सिग्नल्स**” खोजता है जो भविष्य की कीमतों का अनुमान लगाएँ, और उन्नत **सांख्यिकी, स्टोकेस्टिक कैलकुलस और मशीन लर्निंग** से ट्रेडिंग रणनीतियाँ बनाता है।

- A **low-latency developer** builds the ultra-fast engines that execute the trades, leveraging mastery in areas like **memory management and concurrency**.



एक लो-लेटेंसी डेवलपर बेहद तेज़ इंजन बनाता है जो ट्रेड को अंजाम देते हैं, और मेमोरी मैनेजमेंट व कन्करेंसी जैसे क्षेत्रों में महारत का उपयोग करता है।

- Typically, these firms look for people with a deep knowledge of **algorithms, low level systems** and mastery in areas like **probability, linear algebra, and game theory**.
आमतौर पर ये कंपनियाँ एल्गोरिदम, लो-लेवल सिस्टम्स का गहरा ज्ञान और प्रायिकता, रैखिक बीजगणित व गेम थ्योरी में दक्षता रखने वाले लोगों की तलाश करती हैं।
- While **financial literacy** is not always mandatory, an understanding of the **financial market microstructure and derivatives** is an advantage.
हालाँकि वित्तीय साक्षरता हमेशा अनिवार्य नहीं होती, लेकिन वित्तीय बाज़ार की माइक्रोस्ट्रक्चर और डेरिवेटिव्स की समझ एक अतिरिक्त लाभ है।
- Prior **work experience** is not essential for these roles, as the firms look for youngsters with **exceptional quantitative aptitude**, deep conceptual understanding of **Mathematics**, proficiency in **programming**, and smart **problem-solving abilities**.
इन भूमिकाओं के लिए पूर्व कार्य अनुभव आवश्यक नहीं है, क्योंकि कंपनियाँ असाधारण क्वांटिटेटिव क्षमता, गणित की गहरी समझ, प्रोग्रामिंग में दक्षता और तेज़ समस्या-समाधान कौशल वाले युवाओं को तलाशती हैं।
- Most firms prefer **fresh graduates** for their **innovative and out-of-the-box thinking ability**.
अधिकांश कंपनियाँ नवीन और अलग सोच की क्षमता के कारण फ्रेश ग्रेजुएट्स को प्राथमिकता देती हैं।
- In terms of **behavioural traits**, they look for people that can work **under pressure**, without losing **balance of mind**.
व्यवहारिक गुणों में, वे ऐसे लोगों को चाहते हैं जो दबाव में भी काम कर सकें और मानसिक संतुलन न खोएँ।
- Generally, the aspirants go through **multiple rounds of rigorous interviews**, involving **“Brainteaser” rounds, probability puzzles and low-latency C++ coding skills**.
आमतौर पर उम्मीदवारों को कठोर साक्षात्कारों के कई दौर से गुजरना पड़ता है, जिनमें “ब्रेनटीज़र” राउंड, प्रायिकता पहेलियाँ और लो-लेटेंसी C++ कोडिंग स्किल्स शामिल होती हैं।
- Most **Quant and HFT firms** prefer the **Pre-Placement Offer (PPO)** route for recruitment, where students are selected after a **rigorous internship of eight weeks**.
अधिकांश क्वांट और HFT कंपनियाँ भर्ती के लिए प्री-प्लेसमेंट ऑफर (PPO) मार्ग को पसंद करती हैं, जिसमें छात्रों का चयन आठ सप्ताह की कठोर इंटर्नशिप के बाद किया जाता है।

What are domestic posting salaries?

घरेलू पोस्टिंग में वेतन कितना होता है?

- Total compensation called **Cost-To-Company (CTC)** often includes **base salary, guaranteed/target bonus, relocation/sign-on bonus, and Restricted Stock Units (RSUs)** as employee stock options, and **profit-sharing bonus**.
कुल पारिश्रमिक जिसे कॉस्ट-टू-कंपनी (CTC) कहा जाता है, उसमें अक्सर मूल वेतन, गारंटीड/टारगेट बोनस, रिलोकेशन/साइन-ऑन बोनस, कर्मचारी स्टॉक विकल्प के रूप में रिस्ट्रिक्टेड स्टॉक यूनिट्स (RSUs) और प्रॉफिट-शेयरिंग बोनस शामिल होते हैं।
- A **₹2 crore international offer (based in Europe)** is roughly equal to a **₹60 lakh offer in India** in terms of **lifestyle and savings**, considering the **cost of living and taxes**.
यूरोप आधारित ₹2 करोड़ का अंतरराष्ट्रीय ऑफर, जीवनशैली और बचत के लिहाज़ से भारत में ₹60 लाख के ऑफर के बराबर होता है, यदि जीवन-यापन लागत और करों को ध्यान में रखा जाए।



Prime Minister's Internship Scheme falters as funds largely remain unused

GS II: Governance

Shishir Sinha
NEW DELHI

The poor performance of the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme (PMIS) is now clearly reflected in government spending data. The Ministry of Corporate Affairs spent just around 4% of its budget allocation during April-November FY26, highlighting the scheme's limited traction on the ground.

Data from the Controller General of Accounts show that against a budget allocation of over ₹11,500 crore, the Ministry spent only a little over ₹500 crore in the first eight months of the financial year. Nearly 94% of the allocation, more than ₹10,800 crore, was earmarked for PMIS, indicating that weak utilisation is directly linked to the scheme's performance.

This pattern is not new. In FY25, the Ministry's allocation was sharply cut to ₹1,078 crore from ₹2,667 crore, after large sums remained unspent.

The Ministry had told the Parliamentary Standing Committee that funds were surrendered mainly due to poor utilisation under the internship scheme. Actual expenditure that year was only around ₹680 crore.

Few takers

Official data also point to limited interest among candidates.

In a written reply to Parliament on December 15, 2025, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that

While firms made over 82,000 offers, only about 28,000 were accepted, an acceptance rate of just 34%

in the first round of the PMIS pilot, 6.21 lakh applications were received against 1.27 lakh internship opportunities.

While companies made over 82,000 offers, only about 28,000 were accepted, an acceptance rate of just 34%. As of November 30, 2025, only 2,066 interns had completed their internships.

The second round showed a similar trend. More than 83,000 offers were made against 1.18 lakh opportunities, but fewer than 24,600 were accepted, pushing the acceptance rate below 30%.

'Meagre assistance'

While no official explanation has been offered, government officials believe the meagre financial assistance may be the deterrent.

Interns receive ₹5,000 a month for 12 months, along with a one-time grant of ₹6,000 and insurance coverage.

Announced in the 2024-25 Budget, PMIS aims to provide one crore internships in five years.

So far, however, spending and participation data suggest the scheme is struggling to take off even in its pilot phase.

(The writer is with The Hindu businessline)

completed their internships.

30 नवंबर 2025 तक केवल 2,066 इंटरन ही अपनी इंटरनशिप पूरी कर पाए थे।

- The second round showed a similar trend. दूसरे चरण में भी ऐसा ही रुझान देखने को मिला।
- **More than 83,000 offers were made against 1.18 lakh opportunities, but fewer than 24,600 were accepted, pushing the acceptance rate below 30%. 1.18 लाख अवसरों के मुकाबले 83,000 से अधिक ऑफर दिए गए, लेकिन 24,600 से भी कम स्वीकार हुए, जिससे स्वीकार्यता दर 30% से नीचे चली गई।**

Prime Minister's Internship Scheme falters as funds largely remain unused प्रधानमंत्री इंटरनशिप योजना कमजोर पड़ रही है क्योंकि अधिकांश धन अप्रयुक्त बना हुआ है

- Prime Minister's Internship Scheme falters as funds largely remain unused
प्रधानमंत्री इंटरनशिप योजना कमजोर पड़ रही है क्योंकि अधिकांश धन अप्रयुक्त बना हुआ है

- The poor performance of the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme (PMIS) is now clearly reflected in government spending data.

प्रधानमंत्री इंटरनशिप योजना (PMIS) का कमजोर प्रदर्शन अब सरकारी व्यय आंकड़ों में स्पष्ट रूप से दिखाई देता है।

- The Ministry of Corporate Affairs spent just around 4% of its budget allocation during April-November FY26, highlighting the scheme's limited traction on the ground.

कॉर्पोरेट कार्य मंत्रालय ने अप्रैल-नवंबर FY26 के दौरान अपने बजट आवंटन का केवल लगभग 4% ही खर्च किया, जिससे ज़मीनी स्तर पर योजना की सीमित पकड़ उजागर होती है।

- Data from the Controller General of Accounts show that against a budget allocation of over ₹11,500 crore, the Ministry spent only a little over ₹500 crore in the first eight months of the financial year.

नियंत्रक महालेखा परीक्षक के आंकड़े दिखाते हैं कि ₹11,500 करोड़ से अधिक के बजट आवंटन के मुकाबले मंत्रालय ने वित्त वर्ष के पहले आठ महीनों में केवल ₹500 करोड़ से थोड़ा अधिक खर्च किया।

- Actual expenditure that year was only around ₹680 crore.

उस वर्ष वास्तविक व्यय केवल लगभग ₹680 करोड़ रहा।

- Official data also point to limited interest among candidates.

आधिकारिक आंकड़े भी उम्मीदवारों के बीच सीमित रुचि की ओर इशारा करते हैं।

- In a written reply to Parliament on December 15, 2025, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that in the first round of the PMIS pilot, 6.21 lakh applications were received against 1.27 lakh internship opportunities.

15 दिसंबर 2025 को संसद में लिखित उत्तर में वित्त मंत्री निर्मला सीतारमण ने कहा कि PMIS पायलट के पहले चरण में 1.27 लाख इंटरनशिप अवसरों के मुकाबले 6.21 लाख आवेदन प्राप्त हुए।

- While companies made over 82,000 offers, only about 28,000 were accepted, an acceptance rate of just 34%. जहां कंपनियों ने 82,000 से अधिक ऑफर दिए, वहीं केवल लगभग 28,000 स्वीकार किए गए, यानी स्वीकार्यता दर केवल 34% रही।

- As of November 30, 2025, only 2,066 interns had



'Meagre assistance' 'अल्प वित्तीय सहायता'

- While no official explanation has been offered, government officials believe the **meagre financial assistance may be the deterrent**.
हालांकि कोई आधिकारिक स्पष्टीकरण नहीं दिया गया है, लेकिन सरकारी अधिकारियों का मानना है कि **अल्प वित्तीय सहायता** ही हतोत्साहन का कारण हो सकती है।
- Interns receive **₹5,000 a month for 12 months**, along with a **one-time grant of ₹6,000 and insurance coverage**.
इंटरन को **12 महीनों तक ₹5,000 प्रति माह**, इसके साथ **₹6,000 की एकमुश्त सहायता** और बीमा कवरेज मिलता है।
- Announced in the 2024-25 Budget, PMIS aims to provide one crore internships in five years.**
2024-25 के बजट में घोषित PMIS का लक्ष्य पांच वर्षों में एक करोड़ इंटरनशिप प्रदान करना है।
- So far, however, spending and participation data suggest the scheme is struggling to take off even in its **pilot phase**.
हालांकि अब तक के व्यय और भागीदारी के आंकड़े बताते हैं कि योजना अपने **पायलट चरण** में ही उड़ान भरने के लिए संघर्ष कर रही है।

GS Paper II: International Relations	
TOPICS COVERED	15 January 2026
2.	An exploration of India's minerals diplomacy भारत की खनिज कूटनीति की पड़ताल
3.	Fuel gamble crowns China the clean-energy king ईंधन पर दांव ने चीन को स्वच्छ ऊर्जा का बादशाह बना दिया
4.	Trump revives Greenland threat, says U.S. needs it for 'vital security' ट्रंप ने ग्रीनलैंड को लेकर धमकी फिर दोहराई, कहा अमेरिका को 'महत्वपूर्ण सुरक्षा' के लिए इसकी जरूरत है
5.	Some personnel at U.S. base in Qatar advised to evacuate कतर में अमेरिकी अड्डे पर कुछ कर्मियों को निकासी की सलाह
6.	Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards, the force behind the state crackdown ईरान के इस्लामिक रिवोल्यूशनरी गार्ड्स, राज्य की कार्रवाई के पीछे की शक्ति
7.	West Bank Bedouin community driven out by increasing Israeli settler violence बढ़ती इज़राइली बसने वालों की हिंसा से वेस्ट बैंक का बेडौइन समुदाय विस्थापित



An exploration of India's minerals diplomacy

GS II: IR

MOB

Today, India's clean energy transitions are impossible without imported critical minerals and rare earths. The country needs these minerals now, and China's tightening export controls only heighten the urgency. Just like other countries around the world, India is also committing to diversify mineral trade linkages, promote responsible production and build standards-based markets.

India needs a two-pronged strategy to build long-term capability at home while securing immediate access abroad. Realising this, over the past five years, New Delhi has pursued close to a dozen bilateral and multilateral partnerships across continents while bolstering domestic mineral policies. The question is about what these engagements have delivered to India and whether there is a need for recalibration.

The two sides to partnerships

Some partnerships have advanced more meaningfully than others. Australia emerges as reliable, offering political stability, large reserves and a strategic vision. Cooperation here is active with long-term supply discussions, joint research and targeted investments. In 2022 under the India-Australia Critical Minerals Investment Partnership, the two countries identified five target projects for potential investment in lithium and cobalt.

Japan provides a template for resilience, exemplifying an institutional model for long-term planning rather than reactive deals. When China restricted rare earth exports to Tokyo a decade ago, Japan responded with diversification, stockpiling, recycling and sustained research and development. Beyond its long-standing cooperation with Indian Rare Earths Limited, the partnership has now extended into potential joint extraction processing and stockpiling minerals, both bilaterally and in third countries, under a cooperation agreement last year.

African nations, given their long-standing trade linkages with India, offer similar opportunities, with mineral abundance paired with rising demands for local value creation. India's recent agreements with Namibia for lithium, rare earths and uranium as well as asset-acquisition talks in Zambia for copper and cobalt reflect a growing



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India must use its country-by-country approach to build resilience across the value chain

push to turn towards Africa. India must approach Africa with a long-term industrial mindset or risk losing ground to more coordinated competitors.

Despite previous political enthusiasm around "friend-shoring", cooperation on critical minerals has struggled to move beyond dialogue with the United States. Recent American tariffs on Indian goods, shifting trade rules and restrictive Inflation Reduction Act incentives complicate stable engagement. The volatility of the U.S.'s trade policy makes it hard for New Delhi to rely on Washington, even though the U.S. could be a significant technology and downstream innovation partner. The Transforming the Relationship Utilizing Strategic Technology (TRUST) Initiative and the Strategic Minerals Recovery Initiative propose frameworks for joint work on rare-earth processing, battery recycling and clean separation technologies.

The European Union (EU)'s Critical Raw Materials Act, the European Battery Alliance and its circular economy agenda show how regulation, sustainability and industrial strategy can reinforce each other. Progress requires India to align with the EU's requirements on transparency, lifecycle standards and environmental norms.

West Asia holds potential but lacks institutional depth and long-term frameworks. The United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia are investing heavily in battery materials, refining capacity and green hydrogen, with sovereign wealth funds acquiring mining stakes across Africa and Latin America. For India, West Asia could become an important midstream partner, processing minerals sourced elsewhere.

Russia's reserves of rare earths, cobalt and lithium are substantial, and scientific ties with India are longstanding. Yet, sanctions, financing challenges and logistical unpredictability constrain reliability. Russia could be an important hedge, not a foundation.

New frontiers

Latin America presents India's new frontiers with expanded engagement in Argentina, Chile, Peru and, increasingly, Brazil. These countries are becoming central to global copper, nickel and rare-earth strategies. There have been substantial

investments by public and private sector companies from India into projects in these regions. Khanij Bidesh India Limited (KABIL) has signed a ₹200 crore exploration and development agreement with Argentina. However, competition for Indian companies is intense, and engagement remains at an early stage. A lasting presence will require value-chain partnerships and local processing, not extraction-only agreements.

With the restoration of diplomatic ties with Canada recently, Ottawa emerges as an important player. With reserves of nickel, cobalt, copper and rare earths, and a recently signed trilateral agreement with Australia and India, Canada has potential to become a strong minerals partner. Yet, political stability between the two countries will be key.

Develop integrated partnerships

Across all regions, lessons converge. Securing ore is not enough. The choke point is processing. Without domestic refining and midstream capability, India remains exposed to supply chain vulnerabilities. Technology, innovation and on-ground project implementation matters far more than announcements. India must use its country-by-country approach to build resilience across the value-chain. Africa, Australia, Canada and Latin America for upstream ore extraction; West Asia (the Gulf) and Japan for midstream processing of the mineral ores; the EU and the U.S. for downstream technology creation such as batteries and recycling, and Russia for diversification.

While it is important for India to be also open to cooperation with additional partners, such as South Korea and Indonesia, it first needs to have a clear strategic vision for existing partnerships. None of this will deliver results unless India strengthens its domestic framework for responsible mining with issues such as Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and transparency increasingly becoming a key issue in international partnerships.

India has built an impressive web of critical minerals partnerships. The next step is to deepen what works, rethink what does not, and ensure technology, processing and long-term certainty.

An exploration of India's minerals diplomacy

भारत की खनिज कूटनीति की पड़ताल

- India needs a **two-pronged strategy** to build long-term capability at home while securing immediate access abroad.
भारत को देश में दीर्घकालिक क्षमता विकसित करने के साथ-साथ विदेशों में तत्काल पहुँच सुनिश्चित करने के लिए **दो-आयामी रणनीति** की आवश्यकता है।
- Australia emerges as reliable, offering political stability, large reserves and a strategic vision.**
ऑस्ट्रेलिया एक भरोसेमंद साझेदार के रूप में उभरता है, जो राजनीतिक स्थिरता, बड़े भंडार और रणनीतिक दृष्टि प्रदान करता है।
- Cooperation includes long-term supply talks, joint research and targeted investments.**
सहयोग में दीर्घकालिक आपूर्ति वार्ताएँ, **संयुक्त अनुसंधान और लक्षित निवेश** शामिल हैं।
- In **2022**, under the **India-Australia Critical Minerals Investment Partnership**, the two countries identified **five target projects** for potential investment in **lithium and cobalt**.
2022 में **भारत-ऑस्ट्रेलिया क्रिटिकल मिनरल्स इन्वेस्टमेंट पार्टनरशिप** के तहत दोनों देशों ने **लिथियम और कोबाल्ट** में संभावित निवेश के लिए **पाँच लक्षित परियोजनाएँ** पहचानीं।
- When China restricted rare earth exports to Tokyo a decade ago, Japan responded with **diversification, stockpiling, recycling and sustained R&D**.
एक दशक पहले जब चीन ने टोक्यो को रेयर अर्थ निर्यात सीमित किया, तो जापान ने **विविधीकरण, भंडारण, पुनर्चक्रण और सतत अनुसंधान एवं विकास** के साथ प्रतिक्रिया दी।
- Beyond cooperation with Indian Rare Earths Limited**, the partnership has expanded to **joint extraction, processing and stockpiling, including in third countries**, under a cooperation



agreement last year.

इंडियन रेयर अर्थ्स लिमिटेड के साथ सहयोग से आगे बढ़ते हुए, पिछले वर्ष के समझौते के तहत साझेदारी संयुक्त खनन, प्रसंस्करण और भंडारण तक विस्तारित हुई है, जिसमें तीसरे देश भी शामिल हैं।

- **African nations offer opportunities with mineral abundance and rising demand for local value creation.**
अफ्रीकी देश खनिज समृद्धि और स्थानीय मूल्य सृजन की बढ़ती माँग के साथ अवसर प्रदान करते हैं।
- India's recent agreements with **Namibia for lithium, rare earths and uranium, and asset talks in Zambia for copper and cobalt**, reflect a growing push towards Africa.
नामीबिया के साथ लिथियम, रेयर अर्थ और यूरेनियम तथा ज़ाम्बिया में तांबा और कोबाल्ट के लिए परिसंपत्ति वार्ताएँ अफ्रीका की ओर बढ़ते रुझान को दर्शाती हैं।
- **India must approach Africa with a long-term industrial mindset or risk losing ground to coordinated competitors.**
भारत को अफ्रीका के साथ दीर्घकालिक औद्योगिक दृष्टिकोण अपनाना होगा, नहीं तो वह संगठित प्रतिस्पर्धियों से पिछड़ सकता है।
- **Despite enthusiasm for "friend-shoring", cooperation with the United States on critical minerals has struggled to move beyond dialogue.**
"फ्रेंड-शोरिंग" के प्रति उत्साह के बावजूद, संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका के साथ महत्वपूर्ण खनिजों पर सहयोग संवाद से आगे नहीं बढ़ पाया है।
- Recent American **tariffs, shifting trade rules and restrictive Inflation Reduction Act incentives** complicate stable engagement.
हालिया अमेरिकी टैरिफ, बदलते व्यापार नियम और इन्फ्लेशन रिडक्शन एक्ट की सीमित प्रोत्साहन नीतियाँ स्थिर सहयोग को जटिल बनाती हैं।
- The volatility of U.S. trade policy makes it hard for New Delhi to rely on Washington, even though the U.S. could be a major **technology and downstream innovation partner.**
अमेरिकी व्यापार नीति की अनिश्चितता नई दिल्ली के लिए वाशिंगटन पर निर्भर रहना कठिन बनाती है, भले ही अमेरिका एक बड़ा प्रौद्योगिकी और डाउनस्ट्रीम नवाचार साझेदार हो सकता है।
- The **TRUST Initiative and the Strategic Minerals Recovery Initiative** propose frameworks for joint work on **rare-earth processing, battery recycling and clean separation technologies.**
TRUST पहल और स्ट्रेटेजिक मिनेरल्स रिकवरी पहल रेयर-अर्थ प्रसंस्करण, बैटरी रीसाइक्लिंग और क्लीन सेपरेशन टेक्नोलॉजी पर संयुक्त कार्य के ढाँचे सुझाती हैं।
- The **European Union (EU)'s Critical Raw Materials Act, European Battery Alliance and circular economy agenda** show how regulation, sustainability and industrial strategy reinforce each other.
यूरोपीय संघ का क्रिटिकल रॉ मैटेरियल्स एक्ट, यूरोपियन बैटरी एलायंस और सर्कुलर इकॉनमी एजेंडा दिखाते हैं कि नियमन, स्थिरता और औद्योगिक रणनीति एक-दूसरे को कैसे मज़बूत करते हैं।
- **West Asia holds potential but lacks institutional depth and long-term frameworks.**
पश्चिम एशिया में संभावनाएँ हैं, लेकिन वहाँ संस्थागत गहराई और दीर्घकालिक ढाँचे की कमी है।
- The **United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia** are investing heavily in **battery materials, refining capacity and green hydrogen, with sovereign wealth funds** acquiring mining stakes across **Africa and Latin America.**
संयुक्त अरब अमीरात और सऊदी अरब बैटरी सामग्री, रिफाइनिंग क्षमता और ग्रीन हाइड्रोजन में भारी निवेश कर रहे हैं, जहाँ सॉवरेन वेल्थ फंड अफ्रीका और लैटिन अमेरिका में खनन हिस्सेदारी खरीद रहे हैं।
- **For India, West Asia could become an important midstream partner, processing minerals sourced elsewhere.**
भारत के लिए पश्चिम एशिया एक महत्वपूर्ण मिडस्ट्रीम साझेदार बन सकता है, जो अन्य जगहों से आए खनिजों का प्रसंस्करण करे।
- **Russia's reserves of rare earths, cobalt and lithium are substantial, and scientific ties with India are longstanding.**
रूस के पास रेयर अर्थ, कोबाल्ट और लिथियम के बड़े भंडार हैं, और भारत के साथ उसके वैज्ञानिक संबंध लंबे समय से चले आ रहे हैं।
- **Yet, sanctions, financing challenges and logistical unpredictability** constrain reliability.
लेकिन प्रतिबंध, वित्तीय चुनौतियाँ और लॉजिस्टिक अनिश्चितता इसकी विश्वसनीयता को सीमित करती हैं।
- Russia could be an important **hedge, not a foundation.**
रूस एक महत्वपूर्ण सुरक्षा विकल्प हो सकता है, लेकिन आधार नहीं।



New frontiers नई सीमाएँ

- Latin America presents India's **new frontiers** with expanded engagement in **Argentina, Chile, Peru** and increasingly **Brazil**.
लैटिन अमेरिका भारत के लिए **नई सीमाएँ** प्रस्तुत करता है, जहाँ **अर्जेंटीना, चिली, पेरू** और बढ़ते तौर पर **ब्राज़ील** के साथ सहभागिता बढ़ रही है।
- **Khanij Bidesh India Limited (KABIL)** has signed a **₹200 crore** exploration and development agreement with **Argentina**.
खनिज विदेश इंडिया लिमिटेड (KABIL) ने **अर्जेंटीना** के साथ **₹200 करोड़** का अन्वेषण और विकास समझौता किया है।
- However, **competition for Indian companies is intense**, and engagement remains at an **early stage**.
हालाँकि, भारतीय कंपनियों के लिए प्रतिस्पर्धा **कड़ी** है और सहभागिता अभी **प्रारंभिक चरण** में है।
- **A lasting presence will require value-chain partnerships and local processing, not extraction-only agreements**.
स्थायी उपस्थिति के लिए केवल खनन समझौतों के बजाय **वैल्यू-चेन साझेदारियाँ** और **स्थानीय प्रसंस्करण** आवश्यक होंगे।
- **With the restoration of diplomatic ties with Canada, Ottawa emerges as an important player**.
कनाडा के साथ राजनयिक संबंध बहाल होने के बाद **ओटावा** एक महत्वपूर्ण खिलाड़ी के रूप में उभरता है।
- **With reserves of nickel, cobalt, copper and rare earths, and a recently signed trilateral agreement with Australia and India, Canada has potential to become a strong minerals partner**.
निकेल, कोबाल्ट, तांबा और रेयर अर्थ के भंडार और **ऑस्ट्रेलिया व भारत** के साथ हालिया **त्रिपक्षीय समझौते** के चलते कनाडा एक मजबूत खनिज साझेदार बन सकता है।
- **Technology, innovation and on-ground project implementation matter more than announcements**.
प्रौद्योगिकी, नवाचार और ज़मीनी स्तर पर परियोजना क्रियान्वयन घोषणाओं से कहीं अधिक महत्वपूर्ण हैं।
- **India must use its country-by-country approach to build resilience across the value chain**.
भारत को अपनी **देश-वार रणनीति** से पूरी **वैल्यू-चेन** में लचीलापन बनाना होगा।
- **Africa, Australia, Canada and Latin America for upstream ore extraction**.
अफ्रीका, ऑस्ट्रेलिया, कनाडा और लैटिन अमेरिका को **अपस्ट्रीम अयस्क खनन** के लिए।
- **West Asia and Japan for midstream processing of mineral ores**.
पश्चिम एशिया और जापान को खनिज अयस्कों के **मिडस्ट्रीम प्रसंस्करण** के लिए।
- **The EU and the U.S. for downstream technology creation such as batteries and recycling**.
यूरोपीय संघ और अमेरिका को **डाउनस्ट्रीम तकनीक निर्माण**, जैसे **बैटरियाँ और रीसाइक्लिंग**, के लिए।
- **And Russia for diversification**.
और **रूस** को **विविधीकरण** के लिए।
- While it is important for India to also be open to cooperation with partners such as **South Korea and Indonesia**, it first needs a **clear strategic vision** for existing partnerships.
हालाँकि भारत के लिए **दक्षिण कोरिया** और **इंडोनेशिया** जैसे साझेदारों के साथ सहयोग के लिए खुला रहना ज़रूरी है, लेकिन पहले मौजूदा साझेदारियों के लिए **स्पष्ट रणनीतिक दृष्टि** चाहिए।
- None of this will deliver results unless India strengthens its **domestic framework for responsible mining**.
इनमें से कुछ भी परिणाम नहीं देगा जब तक भारत **जिम्मेदार खनन** के लिए अपना **घरेलू ढाँचा** मज़बूत नहीं करता।
- **Issues such as Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and transparency are becoming key in international partnerships**.
पर्यावरण, सामाजिक और शासन (ESG) तथा **पारदर्शिता** जैसे मुद्दे अंतरराष्ट्रीय साझेदारियों में निर्णायक बनते जा रहे हैं।
- **India has built an impressive web of critical minerals partnerships**.
भारत ने **महत्वपूर्ण खनिज साझेदारियों** का एक प्रभावशाली नेटवर्क बनाया है।
- **The next step is to deepen what works, rethink what does not, and ensure technology, processing and long-term certainty**.



अगला कदम है जो काम करता है उसे **और गहरा करना**, जो काम नहीं करता उसे **पुनर्विचार करना**, और **प्रौद्योगिकी, प्रसंस्करण व दीर्घकालिक निश्चितता** सुनिश्चित करना।

Fuel gamble crowns China the clean-energy king

CS II IR

Reuters
LONDON

President Donald Trump's bid to ignite American industry with cheap oil and gas is a high-stakes gamble that, win or lose, will leave China the world's leading low-carbon technology powerhouse.

These opposing energy strategies reflect deep geopolitical divides that will shape the contest between the world's two largest economies for industrial supremacy in the coming decades.

Mr. Trump has made no secret of his fondness for fossil fuels and distaste for renewables. He's slashed government support for electric vehicles and low-carbon technologies, expanded oil drilling access, and loosened environmen-



Electrostate in making: EVs made up more than half of Chinese domestic passenger car sales last year. AFP

tal rules. Washington's recent ouster of Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro and subsequent push for U.S. firms to tap the country's vast proven oil reserves - **the largest in the world at 303 billion barrels**, according to OPEC - offer the clearest signal yet of the administration's intention to lock the U.S. economy into a fossil-fuel-dri-

ven future. This ambition was spelled out in the White House national security strategy released late last year. It argued that abundant U.S. oil, gas, coal and nuclear resources will "fuel reindustrialisation" and preserve America's edge in technologies such as artificial intelligence.

The U.S., the world's biggest economy and lar-

gest oil consumer, accounted for around one-fifth of global demand in 2025, or some 20.6 million barrels per day. After a decade-long shale boom, it is now also the top oil and gas producer.

The U.S. is also now the largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) exporter, shipping over 110 million metric tons last year, or roughly a quarter of global trade.

Given this access to massive, affordable energy supplies, it is understandable that the U.S. would double down on fossil fuels. But this strategy may be short-sighted, and not just because of the climate implications. The White House appears to be ceding the energy future to America's biggest economic rival.

America's recommit-

ment to a 20th-century industrial model diverges sharply from Beijing's effort to break its dependence on fossil fuels, which were the foundation of its economic ascent this century.

Beijing's latest five-year plan underscores its drive for self-reliance in energy, critical minerals, and advanced technologies such as semiconductors and artificial intelligence. To complete this ambitious shift, China has launched an economy-wide electrification push and built entire industries to support an "electrostate," becoming the unrivalled global leader in solar, batteries, and electric vehicles.

EVs made up more than half of Chinese domestic passenger car sales last year, while Chinese manu-

facturers produced over 70% of the world's EVs. Electric truck sales are also rising in China, steadily displacing diesel demand.

The country is deploying renewable energy at breakneck speed. It installed more than 500 gigawatts (GW) of new solar and wind capacity last year, the largest single-year build out in history, according to government data. The International Energy Agency expects China to account for more than two-thirds of global solar and wind additions in 2025.

Future U.S. administrations may reverse Mr. Trump's policies, but even if they do, policy whiplash will hamper America's ability to catch up with China in the race for new energy dominance.

Fuel gamble crowns China the clean-energy king

ईंधन पर दांव ने चीन को स्वच्छ ऊर्जा का बादशाह बना दिया

- President **Donald Trump's** bid to ignite American industry with cheap oil and gas is a high-stakes gamble that, win or lose, will leave **China** the world's leading **low-carbon technology powerhouse**.
सस्ते तेल और गैस से अमेरिकी उद्योग को गति देने की **डोनाल्ड ट्रंप** की कोशिश एक बड़ा जोखिम भरा दांव है, जो जीत हो या हार, **चीन** को दुनिया की अग्रणी **निम्न-कार्बन प्रौद्योगिकी** शक्ति बना देगा।
- It argued that abundant U.S. **oil, gas, coal and nuclear resources** will "**fuel reindustrialisation**" and preserve America's edge in technologies such as **artificial intelligence**.
इसमें कहा गया कि अमेरिका के प्रचुर **तेल, गैस, कोयला और परमाणु संसाधन** "**पुनः औद्योगीकरण को ईंधन देंगे**" और **कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता** जैसी तकनीकों में अमेरिका की बढ़त बनाए रखेंगे।
- The **U.S.**, the world's biggest economy and largest oil consumer, accounted for around **one-fifth of global demand in 2025**, or some **20.6 million barrels per day**.
अमेरिका, दुनिया की सबसे बड़ी अर्थव्यवस्था और सबसे बड़ा तेल उपभोक्ता, **2025** में वैश्विक मांग का लगभग **एक-पांचवां हिस्सा**, यानी करीब **20.6 मिलियन बैरल प्रतिदिन**, रखता था।
- After a decade-long shale boom, **it is now also the top oil and gas producer**.
एक दशक लंबे शेल बूम के बाद, यह अब शीर्ष **तेल और गैस उत्पादक** भी है।
- The **U.S. is also now the largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) exporter**, shipping over **110 million metric tons** last year, or roughly **a quarter of global trade**.
अमेरिका अब सबसे बड़ा **तरलीकृत प्राकृतिक गैस (LNG) निर्यातक** भी है, जिसने पिछले साल **110 मिलियन मीट्रिक टन** से अधिक निर्यात किया, जो वैश्विक व्यापार का लगभग **एक-चौथाई** है।
- **EVs** made up more than **half** of Chinese domestic passenger car sales last year, while Chinese manufacturers produced over **70%** of the world's EVs.
पिछले वर्ष चीन में घरेलू यात्री कार बिक्री में **EVs** की हिस्सेदारी **आधे से अधिक** थी, जबकि चीनी निर्माताओं ने दुनिया के **70% से अधिक EVs** का उत्पादन किया।
- Electric truck sales are also rising in China, steadily displacing **diesel demand**.
चीन में इलेक्ट्रिक ट्रकों की बिक्री भी बढ़ रही है, जो धीरे-धीरे **डीज़ल की मांग** को कम कर रही है।



- The country is deploying **renewable energy at breakneck speed**. देश नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा को अत्यंत तेज़ गति से तैनात कर रहा है।
- It installed more than **500 gigawatts (GW)** of new solar and wind capacity last year, the **largest single-year build out in history**, according to government data. सरकारी आंकड़ों के अनुसार, पिछले वर्ष इसने **500 गीगावाट (GW)** से अधिक नई सौर और पवन क्षमता स्थापित की, जो इतिहास का सबसे बड़ा एकल-वर्षीय विस्तार है।
- The **International Energy Agency** expects China to account for more than **two-thirds** of global solar and wind additions in **2025**. अंतरराष्ट्रीय ऊर्जा एजेंसी का अनुमान है कि 2025 में वैश्विक सौर और पवन वृद्धि का दो-तिहाई से अधिक हिस्सा चीन का होगा।

Trump revives Greenland threat, says U.S. needs it for 'vital security'

'NATO becomes far more formidable and effective with Greenland in the hands of the United States. Anything less than that is unacceptable,' says Trump; Greenland Prime Minister Nielsen says the island would choose Denmark over the U.S.

GS II: IR

Stanly Johnny

U.S. President Donald Trump on Wednesday reiterated his threat to take control of Greenland, a self-governing Danish island of some 57,000 people, saying it is "vital" for America's national security.

"The United States needs Greenland for the purpose of National Security. It is vital for the Golden Dome that we are building. NATO should be leading the way for us to get it," Mr. Trump wrote in a social media post, referring to the multi-layer missile defence system the U.S. has proposed to develop.



Vivian Motzfeldt and Lars Lokke Rasmussen at Denmark's embassy, ahead of talks with the U.S., in Washington on Wednesday. AFP

"If we don't [take over Greenland], Russia or China will, and that's not going to happen. Militarily, without the vast power of the United States... NATO

would not be an effective force or deterrent - Not even close! NATO becomes far more formidable and effective with Greenland in the hands of the United

States," added Mr. Trump. "Anything less than that is unacceptable," Mr. Trump insisted. Mr. Trump's repeated remarks have triggered concerns among European powers as Denmark is one of the founding members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Mr. Trump's pledge to annex Greenland threatens the collective security principle of NATO.

Danish Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen and his Greenlandic counterpart Vivian Motzfeldt are in the U.S. to hold talks with Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Vice President Vance on Wednesday.

On Tuesday, Green-

land's Prime Minister Jens Frederik Nielsen said in a joint press conference with his Danish counterpart in Copenhagen that the island would choose Denmark over the U.S. if it was asked to make such a choice.

Greenland's location between North America and the Arctic makes it strategically placed for early warning systems in the event of missile attacks, and for monitoring vessels in the region. The island also has vast untapped resources. Greenland is estimated to have 36 million tonnes of rare earths - an area which is currently dominated by China.

Trump revives Greenland threat, says U.S. needs it for 'vital security'

ट्रंप ने ग्रीनलैंड को लेकर धमकी फिर दोहराई, कहा अमेरिका को 'महत्वपूर्ण सुरक्षा' के लिए इसकी जरूरत है

- **U.S. President Donald Trump** on Wednesday reiterated his threat to take control of **Greenland**, a self-governing **Danish** island of some **57,000 people**, saying it is "vital" for America's **national security**. अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप ने बुधवार को ग्रीनलैंड पर नियंत्रण करने की अपनी धमकी दोहराई, जो लगभग 57,000 लोगों वाला एक स्वशासित डेनिश द्वीप है, और कहा कि यह अमेरिका की राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा के लिए "अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण" है।
- "The **United States** needs **Greenland** for the purpose of **National Security**. It is vital for the **Golden Dome** that we are building. **NATO** should be leading the way for us to get it," Mr. **Trump** wrote in a **social media post**, referring to the **multi-layer missile defence system** the **U.S.** has proposed to develop.



“संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका को राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा के उद्देश्य से ग्रीनलैंड की आवश्यकता है। यह उस गोल्डन डोम के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है जिसे हम बना रहे हैं। नाटो को इसे हासिल करने में हमारे लिए नेतृत्व करना चाहिए,” ट्रंप ने एक सोशल मीडिया पोस्ट में लिखा, जिसमें अमेरिका द्वारा विकसित किए जाने वाले बहु-स्तरीय मिसाइल रक्षा प्रणाली का उल्लेख किया गया।

- Mr. Trump's repeated remarks have triggered concerns among European powers as **Denmark is one of the founding members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.** ट्रंप की बार-बार की गई टिप्पणियों ने यूरोपीय शक्तियों के बीच चिंता पैदा कर दी है क्योंकि डेनमार्क उत्तर अटलांटिक संधि संगठन के संस्थापक सदस्यों में से एक है।
- **Greenland's location between North America and the Arctic makes it strategically placed for early warning systems in the event of missile attacks, and for monitoring vessels in the region.** उत्तरी अमेरिका और आर्कटिक के बीच ग्रीनलैंड का स्थान इसे मिसाइल हमलों की स्थिति में पूर्व चेतावनी प्रणालियों और क्षेत्र में जहाजों की निगरानी के लिए रणनीतिक रूप से महत्वपूर्ण बनाता है।
- **The island also has vast untapped resources. Greenland is estimated to have 36 million tonnes of rare earths — an area which is currently dominated by China.** द्वीप के पास विशाल अप्रयुक्त संसाधन भी हैं। अनुमान है कि ग्रीनलैंड में 36 मिलियन टन रेयर अर्थ्स हैं — यह क्षेत्र फिलहाल चीन के वर्चस्व में है।

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards, the force behind the state crackdown

The Guards, known as 'Pasdaran' in Persian, were founded in 1979 by then Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini to propagate the ideas of the Islamic revolution; it is a powerful parallel military force with up to 200,000 personnel and an estimated annual budget of about \$6 to \$9 billion

GS II: IR

NEWS ANALYSIS

Agence France Presse
PARIS

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or IRGC, is the ideological arm of Tehran's military, answering to supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and stands accused by Western countries of orchestrating and perpetrating the crackdown on protesters.

Who are they?

The Guards, known as "Pasdaran" in Persian, were founded in 1979 by then supreme leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini "to propagate the ideas of the Islamic revolution", said Clement Therme, a researcher at the International Institute of Iranian Studies.

"It's an army of 1,50,000 to 1,80,000 people in service of an ideology."

A Western diplomat who requested anonymity to speak said its membership was thought to be around 2,00,000.

"It's an armed force that functions like an elite military with terrestrial, maritime and aerospace capabilities, while it is better trained, better equipped

and better paid than the regular military", the diplomat said.

The IRGC also serves as Tehran's link to its regional allies, such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and pro-Iran militias in Iraq.

Its leadership is entirely appointed by the supreme leader.

Last June, Mr. Khamenei named Mohammad Pakpour as its head to replace Hossein Salami, killed on the first day of the recent war with Israel.

Mr. Pakpour is a veteran of the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

"It's an empire within an empire," said David Khalfa, a researcher at the France-based Jean-Jaures Foundation.

The Guards control or own companies across the Iranian economy, including major strategic sectors.

They exercise near-monopolistic control of infrastructure, energy, technology, telecoms and finance, Mr. Khalfa said.

How do they operate?

Their annual military budget is estimated at around \$6 billion to \$9 billion, or 40% of Iran's official military budget, according to data collated by Mr. Khalfa. "They effectively control the Iranian economy," he added.

The Guards have put in



Supporters participate in a solidarity rally calling for the British government to proscribe the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps outside Downing Street, in London. REUTERS

place a vast intelligence network that is "the most extensive, the most effective in the Iranian regime," said Mr. Khalfa.

In the past, they have proved capable of dismantling protest networks rapidly, identifying leaders within minutes.

To enforce their will, the Guards rely on the Basij paramilitary, which is recruited mainly from young Iranians and acts as an ideological organisation

embedded in all institutions and levels of society.

There are thought to be around 6,00,000 to 9,00,000 Basij members, Mr. Khalfa said, pointing to cross-referenced data from several U.S. think tanks.

Their role in protests?

"They play a central role in the repression because today, more than ever, they are a pillar of the regime, a pillar of its continuity and its survival, said Mr. Khalfa.

"They have a set political and operational line regarding the protests which is zero tolerance", he added.

At least 734 people have been killed during the protests, according to the Norway-based NGO Iran Human Rights, though it has warned that the true toll is likely much higher.

Experts believe that at the start of the demonstrations last month, the Guards were likely staying

in the background and relying on local security forces and the Basij to handle the demonstrators.

However, "since the beginning, they have been steering the repressive apparatus," said Mr. Khalfa.

With the protests defying that repression, the Guards sent their ground forces and their special units in, he added.

Mr. Therme, the researcher, said that the Guards were operating in civilian clothing as part of efforts to deny their involvement in human rights violations.

Are they terrorists?

In 2019, the United States designated the Guards a terrorist organisation.

Australia designated it a state sponsor of terrorism in November, having blamed it for two 2024 arson attacks on its Jewish community.

In Europe there have been calls from officials and members of the European Parliament for the IRGC to be designated a terrorist group to increase pressure on Tehran.

A diplomatic source said Germany, in particular, would back listing the guards' Quds Force, its elite overseas unit, which it has linked to a 2021 attack against a German synagogue.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards, the force behind the state crackdown
ईरान के इस्लामिक रिवालयूशनरी गार्ड्स, राज्य की कार्रवाई के पीछे की शक्ति



- The **Guards**, known as '**Pasdarān**' in Persian, were founded in **1979** by then **Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini** 'to propagate the ideas of the **Islamic revolution**'; it is a powerful **parallel military force** with up to **2,00,000 personnel** and an estimated annual budget of about **\$6 to \$9 billion**
गार्ड्स, जिन्हें फ़ारसी में '**पसदरान**' कहा जाता है, की स्थापना **1979** में तत्कालीन **सुप्रीम लीडर अयातुल्ला रुहोल्लाह खोमैनी** द्वारा '**इस्लामिक क्रांति के विचारों को फैलाने**' के लिए की गई थी; यह एक शक्तिशाली **समानांतर सैन्य बल** है, जिसमें **2,00,000 तक कर्मी** हैं और अनुमानित वार्षिक बजट लगभग **\$6 से \$9 अरब** है।
- **Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or IRGC, is the ideological arm of Tehran's military**, answering to **supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei**, and stands accused by **Western countries** of orchestrating and perpetrating the **crackdown on protesters**.
ईरान की इस्लामिक रिवोल्यूशनरी गार्ड कॉर्प्स या **आईआरजीसी**, **तेहरान की सेना** की वैचारिक शाखा है, जो **सुप्रीम लीडर अयातुल्ला अली खामेनेई** को जवाबदेह है, और **पश्चिमी देशों** द्वारा **प्रदर्शनकारियों पर कार्रवाई** को अंजाम देने का आरोप झेल रही है।
- "It's an **armed force** that functions like an **elite military with terrestrial, maritime and aerospace capabilities**, while it is **better trained, better equipped and better paid** than the regular military", the diplomat said.
"यह एक **सशस्त्र बल** है जो **थल, नौसैनिक और एयरोस्पेस क्षमताओं** के साथ एक **एलीट सेना** की तरह काम करता है, और यह नियमित सेना से **बेहतर प्रशिक्षित, बेहतर सुसज्जित और बेहतर वेतनभोगी** है," राजनयिक ने कहा।
- The **IRGC also serves as Tehran's link to its regional allies, such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and pro-Iran militias in Iraq**.
आईआरजीसी, **तेहरान** और उसके क्षेत्रीय सहयोगियों जैसे **लेबनान में हिज़्बुल्लाह** और **इराक में ईरान समर्थक मिलिशिया** के बीच कड़ी का भी काम करता है।
- **Its leadership is entirely appointed by the supreme leader**.
इसका नेतृत्व पूरी तरह से **सुप्रीम लीडर** द्वारा नियुक्त किया जाता है।
- **They exercise near-monopolistic control of infrastructure, energy, technology, telecoms and finance**, Mr. Khalfa said.
वे **अवसंरचना, ऊर्जा, प्रौद्योगिकी, दूरसंचार और वित्त** पर लगभग **एकाधिकार नियंत्रण** रखते हैं, **श्री खाल्फ़ा** ने कहा।
- **The Guards have put in place a vast intelligence network that is "the most extensive, the most effective in the Iranian regime,"** said Mr. Khalfa.
गार्ड्स ने एक विशाल **खुफिया नेटवर्क** स्थापित किया है जो "ईरानी शासन में **सबसे व्यापक और सबसे प्रभावी**" है, **श्री खाल्फ़ा** ने कहा।

West Bank Bedouin community driven out by increasing Israeli settler violence

ISRAEL
Agence France Presse
RAS 'EIN AL 'AUJA

With heavy hearts, Bedouins in a West Bank village dismantle their sheep pens and load belongings onto trucks, forced from their homes in the Israeli-occupied territory by rising settler violence.

While attacks by Israeli settlers affect communities across the West Bank, the semi-nomadic Bedouins are among the territory's most vulnerable, saying they suffer from forced displacement due in large part to a lack of law enforcement.

"What is happening today is the complete collapse of the community as a result of the settlers' continuous and repeated attacks, day and night, for

the past two years," Farhan Jahaleen, a Bedouin in the village of Ras Ein al-Auja, said.

Since Israel took control of the West Bank in 1967, Israeli outposts have steadily expanded, with more than 5,000 settlers now living in the territory, which is also home to three million Palestinians.

A minority of settlers engage in violence towards the locals aimed at coercing them to leave, with the UN recording an unprecedented 260 attacks in October last year.

The threat of displacement has long hung over Mr. Jahaleen's community, but the pressure has multiplied in recent months as about half of the hamlet's 130 families decided to flee. Among them, 20 families

from the local Ka'abneh clan left last week, Mr. Jahaleen said, while around another 50 families have been dismantling their homes.

'We can't do anything'

The trailers of settlers dot the landscape around the village but are gradually being replaced by houses with permanent foundations, some built just 100 metres (300 feet) from Bedouin homes.

In May last year, settlers diverted water from the village's most precious resource – the spring after which it is named.

Nestled between rocky hills to the west and the flat Jordan Valley that climbs up the Jordanian plateau to the east, the spring had allowed the community to



Garbage being burnt as Bedouin families gather their belongings to leave their homes in Ras Ein al-Auja. AFP

remain self-sufficient.

But Bedouin families have been driven away by the constant need to stand guard to avoid settlers cutting the power supply and irrigation pipes, or bringing their herds to graze near Bedouin houses.

"If you defend your

home, [the Israeli] police or army will come and arrest you. We can't do anything," lamented Naif Zayed, another local.

'Pastoral colonialism'

"There is no specific place for people to go; people are acting on their

own, to each their own."

Most Palestinian Bedouins are herders, which leaves them particularly exposed to violence when Israeli settlers bring their own herds that compete for grazing land in isolated rural areas.

It is a strategy that settlement watchdog organisations have called "pastoral colonialism".

Israel's military chief Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir said in November that he wanted to put a stop to the violence. This month the army announced new monitoring technology to enforce movement restrictions on both Israelis and Palestinians, with Israeli media reporting the move was largely aimed at reining in settler attacks.

Asked for comment, the Israeli military said: "Incidents in the Ras al-Ain are well known. [Israeli military] forces enter the area in accordance with calls and operational needs, aiming to prevent friction between populations and to maintain order and security in the area."

It said it had increased its presence in the area "due to the many recent friction incidents".

'Bedouin way of life'

Naaman Ehrizat, another herder from Ras Ein al-Auja, said he had already moved his sheep to the southern West Bank city of Hebron ahead of his relocation.

But Mr. Jahaleen said moving to other rural parts of the territory risks exposing

the herders to yet more displacement in the future.

He pointed to other families pushed out of the nearby village of Jiftlik, who were again displaced after moving to a village in the Jordan Valley.

Slogans spray-painted in Arabic have appeared along major roads in the West Bank in recent months that read: "No future in Palestine".

For Mr. Jahaleen, whose family has lived in Ras Ein al-Auja since 1991, the message sums up his feelings.

"The settlers completely destroyed the Bedouin way of life, obliterated the culture and identity, and used every method to change the Bedouin way of life in general, with the complete destruction of life," he said.



West Bank Bedouin community driven out by increasing Israeli settler violence बढ़ती इज़राइली बसने वालों की हिंसा से वेस्ट बैंक का बेडौइन समुदाय विस्थापित

- With **heavy hearts, Bedouins in a West Bank** village dismantle their **sheep pens and load belongings onto trucks, forced from their homes in the Israeli-occupied territory by rising settler violence.**
भारी मन से, वेस्ट बैंक के एक गाँव में बेडौइन अपने भेड़ों के बाड़े तोड़ रहे हैं और अपना सामान ट्रकों में लाद रहे हैं, बढ़ती बसने वालों की हिंसा के कारण उन्हें इज़राइली-कब्जे वाले क्षेत्र में अपने घरों से मजबूरन निकलना पड़ रहा है।
- While attacks by Israeli settlers affect communities across the West Bank, the **semi-nomadic Bedouins are among the territory's most vulnerable**, saying they suffer from forced displacement due in large part to a lack of law enforcement.
जबकि इज़राइली बसने वालों के हमले पूरे वेस्ट बैंक में समुदायों को प्रभावित करते हैं, अर्ध-घुमंतू बेडौइन इस क्षेत्र के सबसे अधिक असुरक्षित लोगों में शामिल हैं, जिनका कहना है कि क़ानून प्रवर्तन की कमी के कारण उन्हें बड़े पैमाने पर जबरन विस्थापन झेलना पड़ रहा है।
- **Since Israel took control of the West Bank in 1967**, Israeli outposts have steadily expanded, with more than **5,00,000 settlers** now living in the territory, which is also home to **three million Palestinians.**
1967 में इज़राइल द्वारा वेस्ट बैंक पर नियंत्रण करने के बाद से, इज़राइली चौकियाँ लगातार बढ़ी हैं, और अब इस क्षेत्र में **5,00,000 से अधिक बसने वाले** रहते हैं, जहाँ **तीन मिलियन फ़िलिस्तीनी** भी रहते हैं।
- Nestled between rocky hills to the west and the flat Jordan Valley that climbs up the Jordanian plateau to the east, the spring had allowed the community to remain self-sufficient. पश्चिम में पथरीली पहाड़ियों और पूर्व में जॉर्डन घाटी के समतल क्षेत्र के बीच स्थित इस झरने ने समुदाय को आत्मनिर्भर बने रहने की अनुमति दी थी।
- **Most Palestinian Bedouins are herders**, which leaves them particularly exposed to violence when Israeli settlers bring their own herds that compete for grazing land in isolated rural areas.
अधिकांश फ़िलिस्तीनी बेडौइन पशुपालक हैं, जिससे वे विशेष रूप से हिंसा के शिकार होते हैं जब इज़राइली बसने वाले अपने झुंड लाते हैं जो अलग-थलग ग्रामीण इलाकों में चरागाह भूमि के लिए प्रतिस्पर्धा करते हैं।
- It is a strategy that settlement watchdog organisations have called "**pastoral colonialism**". यह एक ऐसी रणनीति है जिसे बस्तियों पर नज़र रखने वाले संगठनों ने "**चरागाह औपनिवेशिकरण**" कहा है।

GS Paper III: Economy	
TOPICS COVERED	15 January 2026
1. Moving on	
आगे बढ़ते हुए	



GS III: Economy

MQB

Moving on

India is getting rid of an outdated dataset for measuring inflation

The retail inflation figure for December 2025 is the final instalment of the current series of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), with a base year of 2012, before it is updated to a new base year and with new weightages. The CPI data this year have been particularly useful in highlighting the problems with relying on a dataset that has not been updated in more than a decade. The inflation figure for December 2025 stood at 1.33%. The fact that it was a three-month high is merely a statistical curiosity since it was also the third lowest since the current series began. Overall, in the April-December 2025 period, inflation has averaged 1.7%, substantially lower than the 4.9% average in the same period of 2024. But it does not feel that way. Anecdotal evidence and hard data show that the inflation that people are really experiencing is far higher than what the official data show. For example, the government's own first advance estimates for GDP growth this year show that it expects private consumption to grow slower than it did last year. If inflation had indeed eased to the degree that the official data suggest, surely consumption should have picked up. According to its latest edition of the Reserve Bank of India's inflation expectations survey from December, households perceived inflation to be 6.6% – a far cry from the official 1.33% – and felt that it would accelerate to 7.6% in three months and to 8% in a year. The feeling clearly is that not only are prices rising, but they are rising at a faster rate. Failing to capture this is where the official data let policymakers down.

The most basic issue with any inflation data is that a single figure is expected to capture the variety of price changes that take place across the country. The national inflation number aggregates price levels and movements from districts in Kashmir to villages in Kerala and everywhere in between, for both urban and rural. Naturally it will lose nuances in the process. Further, while this is the natural peril of computing national statistics for a diverse country such as India, the outdated nature of the CPI makes matters significantly worse. The weightages of the various sub-sectors in the index were based on consumption patterns in 2012. People consume very differently now, especially because of various central and State subsidies being offered. Thankfully, on February 12, the government will release the January inflation data based on the new series of the CPI. This series will see the base year updated to 2024, and will incorporate new weights based on the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2023-24. It is an update sorely needed.

both urban and rural areas.

राष्ट्रीय महंगाई आंकड़ा कश्मीर के जिलों से लेकर केरल के गाँवों तक, शहरी और ग्रामीण दोनों क्षेत्रों की कीमतों के स्तर और बदलावों को समेटता है।

- People consume very differently now, especially because of various central and State subsidies being offered.

अब लोग बहुत अलग तरीके से उपभोग करते हैं, खासकर विभिन्न केंद्र और राज्य सब्सिडी के कारण।

- Thankfully, on February 12, the government will release the January inflation data based on the new series of the CPI.

सौभाग्य से, 12 फरवरी को सरकार CPI की नई श्रृंखला पर आधारित जनवरी के महंगाई आँकड़े जारी करेगी।

Moving on आगे बढ़ते हुए

- Retail inflation figure for December 2025 is the final instalment of the current series of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) with a base year of 2012, before it is updated to a new base year and with new weightages.

दिसंबर 2025 का खुदरा महंगाई आंकड़ा उपभोक्ता मूल्य सूचकांक (CPI) की वर्तमान श्रृंखला का अंतिम चरण है, जिसका आधार वर्ष 2012 है, इससे पहले कि इसे नए आधार वर्ष और नए वेटेज के साथ अद्यतन किया जाए।

- Overall, in the April-December 2025 period, inflation has averaged 1.7%, substantially lower than the 4.9% average in the same period of 2024.

कुल मिलाकर अप्रैल-दिसंबर 2025 की अवधि में महंगाई औसतन 1.7% रही, जो 2024 की इसी अवधि के 4.9% औसत से काफी कम है।

- But it does not feel that way. लेकिन ऐसा महसूस नहीं होता।

- Anecdotal evidence and hard data show that the inflation that people are really experiencing is far higher than what the official data show.

अनौपचारिक अनुभव और ठोस आँकड़े बताते हैं कि लोग जिस महंगाई का वास्तव में सामना कर रहे हैं, वह आधिकारिक आँकड़ों से कहीं अधिक है।

- For example, the government's own first advance estimates for GDP growth this year show that it expects private consumption to grow slower than it did last year.

उदाहरण के लिए, सरकार के इस वर्ष के GDP वृद्धि के पहले अग्रिम अनुमान बताते हैं कि निजी उपभोग पिछले वर्ष की तुलना में धीमी गति से बढ़ने की उम्मीद है।

- If inflation had indeed eased to the degree that the official data suggest, surely consumption should have picked up.

यदि महंगाई वास्तव में उतनी कम हुई होती जितनी आधिकारिक आँकड़े बताते हैं, तो निश्चित रूप से उपभोग में तेजी आनी चाहिए थी।

- According to the latest edition of the Reserve Bank of India's inflation expectations survey from December, households perceived inflation to be 6.6%, a far cry from the official 1.33%.

दिसंबर की भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक की महंगाई अपेक्षा सर्वेक्षण की ताज़ा रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, परिवारों ने महंगाई को 6.6% महसूस किया, जो आधिकारिक 1.33% से काफी अलग है।

- They also felt that it would accelerate to 7.6% in three months and to 8% in a year.

उन्हें यह भी लगा कि यह तीन महीनों में 7.6% और एक साल में 8% तक पहुँच सकती है।

- The national inflation number aggregates price levels and movements from districts in Kashmir to villages in Kerala, for



- This series will see the base year updated to **2024**.
इस श्रृंखला में आधार वर्ष को **2024** तक अद्यतन किया जाएगा।
- It will incorporate new weights based on the **Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2023–24**.
इसमें **घरेलू उपभोग व्यय सर्वेक्षण 2023–24** पर आधारित नए वेटेज भी शामिल किए जाएँगे।
- It is an update sorely needed.
यह एक ऐसा अद्यतन है जिसकी अत्यंत आवश्यकता थी।

GS Paper III: S&T,	
TOPICS COVERED	15 January 2026
1.	Scientists urged to rethink ‘smoking gun’ signals in topological physics टोपोलॉजिकल भौतिकी में ‘स्मोकिंग गन’ संकेतों पर पुनर्विचार करने का आग्रह
2.	What is futuristic marine and space biotechnology? भविष्यवादी समुद्री और अंतरिक्ष जैवप्रौद्योगिकी क्या है?

Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle

- It was ISRO’s **intermediate launch vehicle programme** between SLV and PSLV.
- Operated mainly during the **1980s to early 1990s**.
- Designed to place **small satellites (up to about 150 kg)** into Low Earth Orbit.
- Helped ISRO gain critical experience in
 - **Multistage rocket design**
 - **Strap-on boosters**
 - **Guidance and control systems**

Timeline

- First launch: **1987**
- Last launch: **1994**
- Total launches: **4**

Although the ASLV had limited success, it played a **crucial developmental role** in paving the way for the highly successful **PSLV programme**.



GS III: S&T

Visual question:

Between the SLV and the PSLV programmes, ISRO ran the Y programme for seven years. Name Y (in its full form), one of whose launches is shown here. ISRO



Scientists urged to rethink 'smoking gun' signals in topological physics

When scientists study materials at small scales, things can get messy in ways they may not anticipate; these materials can produce signals that look like the **exotic phenomena** scientists are searching for but are actually caused by ordinary effects; a new review calls this the 'smoking gun' problem

CS, III, S&T
Vasudevan Mukunth
CHENNAI

Imagine you're a detective looking for proof of something extraordinary. You find what looks like the perfect clue, a smoking gun that seems to prove your theory. But what if that clue could be explained by something more ordinary?

Many physicists around the world are trying to create and identify special materials with unusual electronic properties called topological materials. They could potentially revolutionise quantum computing, but finding them also requires a willingness to question initial results that seem too good to be true, even when millions of dollars or great academic prestige are at stake.

There have already been many high-profile cases in this area where physicists have announced sensational findings only to withdraw them later after independent scientists spotted mistakes or even fraud in their work. Recently, physicist Ranga Dias was found to have fabricated data to claim a room-temperature superconductor. Many parts of his work have since been discredited.

These and other such incidents have fanned a broader conversation in the community about reproducibility, the idea that scientists should be able to repeat others' experiments in the same conditions and get the same results.

Messy materials

When scientists study materials at very small scales, things can get messy in ways they may not anticipate. These materials can produce signals that look like the exotic phenomena scientists are searching for, but are actually caused by more ordinary effects.

The authors of a new review in *Science* have called this the 'smoking gun' problem. Scientists predict what a dramatic discovery should look like, then go searching for that pattern. But at the atomic scale, there are so many things happening that they can accidentally find patterns that match their expectations even when the exotic physics they're looking for isn't actually there.

To understand how, the team performed experiments with deceptively exciting signals. And based on them they've called for researchers to be honest about how they make certain discoveries and to openly discuss alternative explanations.

At the 'nanoscopic' scales at which topological effects play out, materials are complicated and different effects can create apparently similar patterns

Indian Institute of Science professor of condensed matter physics Vijay Shenoy was direct, however. "What the authors state as best practices are, in my opinion, just common sense," he told *The Hindu*. "Most folks working in the area know these points."

He also said "the race to be the first [to claim an exciting finding] is the cause of the tumult — and all this is fuelled by the editors of the fancy journals." Indeed, in addition to the other stakes to which researchers are sometimes exposed, many of the more 'prestigious' journals also have a history of expecting sensational results in the studies they publish.

Strengthening supercurrent

A superconductor is a material that conducts electricity with zero resistance.

Normally, when you apply a magnetic field to a superconductor, it weakens the superconductivity. But in the team's experiment, the opposite happened: the supercurrent got stronger as the researchers increased the strength of the magnetic field. This seemed like evidence of an exotic type of superconductivity that physicists call triplet pairing, which is connected to topological materials.

In the first experiment, the team studied small connections made of special materials. When they looked at different voltage settings, the researchers found this behaviour only happens in a specific, narrow regime. Most of the time, the magnetic field reduced the supercurrent, as expected. The strange increase turned out to be caused by mundane features in the connections between the superconductor and the detector, not exotic physics.

The LK-99 story from 2023 provides a real-world example. A South Korean team claimed to have found a material



A superconductor levitates above a magnet. In 2023, a South Korean team claimed to have found a material called **copper-doped lead apatite**, later dubbed LK-99, that it said was a superconductor in ambient conditions — an entity famously called the holy grail of materials science. HENRY MUEHLFRODT (CC BY-SA)

called copper-doped lead apatite, later dubbed LK-99, that was a superconductor in ambient conditions — an entity famously called the holy grail of materials science.

But when independent researchers synthesised the material and broadened the checks, they couldn't find definitive evidence of zero electrical resistance in ambient conditions. Subsequently, multiple researchers argued that what looked like evidence of superconductivity in LK-99 could arise from impurities introduced when it was synthesised in the lab.

Undulating plateau

Second, the team looked for Majorana particles, quantum particles that are their own antiparticles (if that sounds weird, it is). These particles would show up as peaks on a graph in their measurements. But they found something even better: a plateau, where the signal stayed constant over a range of conditions. This was exciting because fleeting peaks could be caused by ordinary effects whereas a stable plateau suggested a persistent underlying phenomenon.

When they checked other settings in the same device or measured at different times, they found plateaus at different heights: some higher than expected, some lower. This showed they could 'tune' their device to produce whatever plateau height they wanted.

This is because the plateaus were actually caused by unintended quantum dots, small regions where electrons get trapped, in their device — not Majorana particles.

There's a real-world example here as well. In 2017, a research team from the University of California, Los Angeles, reported an exciting result while studying a material that could carry electricity only along its edges in an unusual way. They connected this material to a superconductor and measured how easily electric current

What the authors state as best practices are, in my opinion, just common sense. Most folks working in the area know these points... the race to be the first [to claim an exciting finding] is the cause of the tumult — and all this is fuelled by the editors of the fancy journals

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flowed through the device, and saw a flat plateau where the signal stayed almost constant over a range of settings. Many people thought it might be a sign of an exotic kind of quantum behaviour linked to Majorana particles.

But later work revealed that in devices of this kind, a plateau can sometimes emerge from the way the metal contacts touch the material, among other factors. And these effects could 'trap' the readings into a flat value for a while even if no Majorana particles are involved.

Staircase illusion

When studying how certain electric circuits behave when struck by radio waves, scientists expect to see a staircase pattern called Shapiro steps: the current increases in steps when the voltage is changed, not continuously. For the exotic fractional Josephson effect associated with Majorana particles, every other step should disappear, i.e. you'd only see steps 2, 4, 6, but not 1, 3, 5. And that's exactly what they observed.

But at different settings and frequencies, the pattern changed. Sometimes even-numbered steps disappeared. Sometimes extra steps appeared. The team realised that the device wasn't in the right conditions for topological effects anyway. Among others, it needed a strong magnetic field, which wasn't applied.

The missing steps were probably caused by other effects in the circuit, like heating or electrical noise, not exotic physics. It's like looking at a staircase in dim lighting where every other step is in shadow: it might look like those steps are missing, but they're hidden by ordinary circumstances.

Fractional charges

The researchers studied a quantum dot, a small artificial

An approximately 1-mm diameter sample of lutetium hydride is pictured through a microscope in the lab of Ranga Dias, December 15, 2022. Mr. Dias said he used the material in a high pressure diamond anvil cell in his goal to create novel quantum materials such as superconductors with a critical temperature at or near room temperature. J. ADAM FENSTER/UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

atom (its inventors won the 2023 Nobel Prize for chemistry). As they varied the voltage, they expected to see a regular pattern as electrons were added one by one. Instead, they saw the pattern shift by fractions, especially by about 1/3. This could mean particles with fractional charges, like 1/3rd of an electron's charge, were being added to the dot. Fractional charges could be evidence of anyons.

Fractional charges should only appear in very specific conditions, specifically in something called the fractional quantum Hall effect, which requires strong magnetic fields. But the researchers observed their readings with no magnetic field.

The real explanation turned out to be simpler: there were (undesirable) regions nearby that could trap electrons. When an electron jumped into one of these nearby traps, it changed the electrical environment of the main quantum dot by just the right amount to make it look like a fractional charge had been added.

In all four cases, the initial data looked promising. But when the researchers measured over wider ranges of conditions, collected more data over more time, studied multiple samples instead of just one, and actively looked for alternative explanations, they found the exciting signals probably weren't evidence of the exotic physics they were hoping for.

Share all data

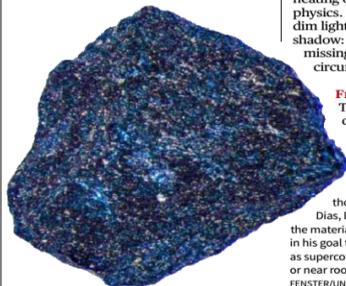
The new review isn't saying these discoveries are impossible or that the researchers were doing bad science but that at the 'nanoscopic' scales at which topological effects play out, materials are complicated and many different effects can create apparently similar patterns.

To navigate this landscape, the team recommended some changes to the way researchers research. The first was for them to share all their data rather than just the 'exciting' parts. For instance, if they collect data from 10 devices over six months, they're better off sharing all of it, not just the one device that looked most promising.

Second, the team recommended researchers should look for data to confirm their hypothesis as well as search for conditions in which the effect should disappear or change, and confirm that it actually does. Further, scientists should also openly discuss alternative explanations in their papers.

Finally, the team said researchers should be transparent about how much they had to fine-tune their setup until the effect they were looking for appeared. If they had to adjust five different settings to very precise values to see the effect, that could mean they've accidentally found a quirk of their specific device rather than a fundamental physical phenomenon.

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Scientists urged to rethink 'smoking gun' signals in topological physics टोपोलॉजिकल भौतिकी में 'स्मोकिंग गन' संकेतों पर पुनर्विचार करने का आग्रह

- A **superconductor** is a material that conducts electricity with **zero resistance**.
एक **सुपरकंडक्टर** ऐसी सामग्री होती है जो **शून्य प्रतिरोध** के साथ बिजली प्रवाहित करती है।
- Normally, when you apply a **magnetic field** to a superconductor, it weakens the superconductivity.
सामान्यतः जब किसी सुपरकंडक्टर पर **चुंबकीय क्षेत्र** लगाया जाता है, तो उसकी सुपरकंडक्टिविटी कमजोर हो जाती है।
- A South Korean team claimed to have found a material called **copper-doped lead apatite**, later dubbed **LK-99**, that was a superconductor in **ambient conditions**, an entity famously called the **holy grail of materials science**.
दक्षिण कोरिया की एक टीम ने दावा किया कि उन्होंने **कॉपर-डोप्ड लेड एपेटाइट** नामक एक सामग्री खोजी है, जिसे बाद में **LK-99** कहा गया, जो **सामान्य परिस्थितियों** में सुपरकंडक्टर थी, जिसे अक्सर **मैटेरियल साइंस का होली ग्रेल** कहा जाता है।
- But when independent researchers synthesised the material and broadened the checks, they couldn't find definitive evidence of **zero electrical resistance** in ambient conditions.
लेकिन जब स्वतंत्र शोधकर्ताओं ने उस सामग्री को बनाया और परीक्षणों का दायरा बढ़ाया, तो उन्हें सामान्य परिस्थितियों में **शून्य विद्युत प्रतिरोध** का ठोस प्रमाण नहीं मिला।
- Subsequently, multiple researchers argued that what looked like evidence of superconductivity in **LK-99** could arise from **impurities** introduced when it was synthesised in the lab.
इसके बाद कई शोधकर्ताओं ने तर्क दिया कि **LK-99** में जो सुपरकंडक्टिविटी का प्रमाण दिख रहा था, वह प्रयोगशाला में बनाए जाने के दौरान आई **अशुद्धियों** के कारण हो सकता है।
- Second, the team looked for **Majorana particles**, quantum particles that are their own antiparticles.
दूसरे चरण में टीम ने **मेजोराना कणों** की तलाश की, जो ऐसे क्वॉंटम कण होते हैं जो स्वयं ही अपने एंटीपार्टिकल होते हैं।
- This is because the plateaus were actually caused by unintended **quantum dots**, small regions where electrons get trapped, in their device, not Majorana particles.
ऐसा इसलिए हुआ क्योंकि ये पठार वास्तव में उनके उपकरण में बने अनजाने **क्वॉंटम डॉट्स** के कारण थे, जहाँ इलेक्ट्रॉन फँस जाते हैं, न कि मेजोराना कणों के कारण।
- The researchers studied a **quantum dot**, a small artificial atom, its inventors won the **2023 Nobel Prize for chemistry**.
शोधकर्ताओं ने एक **क्वॉंटम डॉट** का अध्ययन किया, जो एक छोटा कृत्रिम परमाणु होता है, और जिसके आविष्कारकों को **2023 का रसायन विज्ञान नोबेल पुरस्कार** मिला।
- Fractional charges could be evidence of **anyons**.
आंशिक आवेश **एनीऑन** का प्रमाण हो सकते हैं।
- Fractional charges should only appear in very specific conditions, specifically in something called the **fractional quantum Hall effect**, which requires strong **magnetic fields**.
आंशिक आवेश केवल बहुत विशेष परिस्थितियों में ही दिखाई देने चाहिए, विशेष रूप से **फ्रैक्शनल क्वॉंटम हॉल प्रभाव** में, जिसके लिए मजबूत **चुंबकीय क्षेत्र** चाहिए होता है।
- The real explanation turned out to be simpler, there were undesirable regions nearby that could **trap electrons**.
वास्तविक कारण ज्यादा सरल निकला, पास में ऐसे अवांछित क्षेत्र थे जो **इलेक्ट्रॉनों को फँसा** सकते थे।



- If they had to adjust **five different settings** to very precise values to see the effect, that could mean they've accidentally found a quirk of their specific device rather than a fundamental physical phenomenon.

यदि उन्हें प्रभाव देखने के लिए पाँच अलग-अलग सेटिंग्स को बहुत सटीक मानों पर समायोजित करना पड़ा, तो इसका मतलब यह हो सकता है कि उन्होंने किसी मौलिक भौतिक घटना की बजाय अपने विशेष उपकरण की कोई विशेषता ही खोज ली है।

What is futuristic marine and space biotechnology?

How can India position itself as a leader in biomanufacturing?

GS III: S&T

MOB

Shambhavi Naik

The story so far:

Futuristic space and marine biotechnology research focuses on using underexplored environments, such as the deep oceans and outer space, to develop new biological knowledge, materials, and manufacturing processes. Marine biotechnology involves studying microorganisms, algae, and other marine life to discover bioactive compounds, enzymes, biomaterials, food ingredients, and biostimulants. These organisms have evolved to survive high pressure, salinity, low light, and nutrient-poor conditions. Space biotechnology, meanwhile, studies how microbes, plants, and human biological systems behave under microgravity and radiation.

Why does India need them?

India's long coastline of over 11,000 km

and a vast Exclusive Economic Zone of over 2 million sq. km give it access to rich marine biodiversity and biomass. Yet its share of global marine outputs remains low, indicating significant untapped potential. Investing in marine biomanufacturing can unlock new sources of food, energy, chemicals, and biomaterials, while reducing pressure on land, freshwater, and agricultural systems. Similarly, space biotechnology is critical for India's long-term ambitions in space exploration, enabling safe food production, human health management, and biological manufacturing in extreme environments. Together, futuristic marine and space biotechnology can position India as a leader in biomanufacturing.

Where does India stand today?

India's domestic production of marine biomass such as seaweed remains modest, with an annual cultivated output of around 70,000 tonnes. As a result,

India continues to import seaweed-derived components such as agar, carrageenan, and alginates for use in food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and medical applications. Targeted initiatives under the Blue Economy agenda, the Deep Ocean Mission, and, more recently, the BioES are pushing the sector toward integrated marine biomanufacturing, linking cultivation, extraction, and downstream applications. A small number of private players, such as Sea6 Energy and ClimaCrew, along with ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute and state-led initiatives such as the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference, are exploring pathways to scale marine biomass into high-value ingredients, and bio-based products. In space biotechnology, ISRO's microgravity biology programme is conducting experiments on microbes, algae, and biological systems to study food production, life-support regeneration,

and human health in space. However, private-sector participation is limited as these technologies are still nascent.

What are other countries doing?

The European Union funds large-scale programmes on marine bioprospecting, algae-based biomaterials, and bioactive compounds, supported by shared research infrastructure such as the European Marine Biological Resource Centre. China has rapidly expanded seaweed aquaculture and marine bioprocessing. In space biotechnology, the U.S. leads through NASA and the International Space Station, where research on microbial behaviour, protein crystallisation, stem cells, and closed-loop life-support systems informs drug discovery, regenerative medicine, and long-duration human missions.

What next?

Marine and space biotechnology remain relatively unexplored frontiers, where early movers are likely to gain lasting strategic and technological advantages. The primary risk lies in slow and fragmented progress in research and development. A dedicated roadmap that defines timelines and outcomes for marine and space biotechnology would help channel resources more effectively.

Shambhavi Naik is chairperson, Takshashila Institution's Health & Life Sciences Policy.

THE GIST

Futuristic space and marine biotechnology research focuses on using underexplored environments, such as the deep oceans and outer space, to develop new biological knowledge, materials, and manufacturing processes.

In space biotechnology, ISRO's microgravity biology programme is conducting experiments on microbes, algae, and biological systems to study food production, life-support regeneration, and human health in space.

Marine and space biotechnology remain relatively unexplored frontiers, where early movers are likely to gain lasting strategic and technological advantages.

What is futuristic marine and space biotechnology?

भविष्यवादी समुद्री और अंतरिक्ष जैवप्रौद्योगिकी क्या है?

- **Futuristic space and marine biotechnology research focuses on using underexplored environments, such as the deep oceans and outer space, to develop new biological knowledge, materials, and manufacturing processes.**

भविष्यवादी अंतरिक्ष और समुद्री जैव-प्रौद्योगिकी अनुसंधान गहरे महासागरों और बाह्य अंतरिक्ष जैसे कम-अन्वेषित परिवेशों का उपयोग करके नई जैविक जानकारी, सामग्री और निर्माण प्रक्रियाएँ विकसित करने पर केंद्रित है।

- **Marine biotechnology involves studying microorganisms, algae, and other marine life to discover bioactive compounds, enzymes, biomaterials, food ingredients, and biostimulants.**

समुद्री जैव-प्रौद्योगिकी में सूक्ष्मजीवों, शैवाल और अन्य समुद्री जीवों का अध्ययन किया जाता है ताकि जैव-सक्रिय यौगिक, एंजाइम, बायोमैटीरियल, खाद्य अवयव और बायोस्टिमुलेंट्स खोजे जा सकें।

- **These organisms have evolved to survive high pressure, salinity, low light, and nutrient-poor conditions.**

इन जीवों ने उच्च दबाव, अधिक लवणता, कम रोशनी और पोषक-तत्वों की कमी जैसी परिस्थितियों में जीवित रहने के लिए विकास किया है।

- **Space biotechnology, meanwhile, studies how microbes, plants, and human biological systems behave under microgravity and radiation.**

इसी बीच, अंतरिक्ष जैव-प्रौद्योगिकी यह अध्ययन करती है कि सूक्ष्मजीव, पौधे और मानव जैविक प्रणालियाँ सूक्ष्म गुरुत्वाकर्षण और विकिरण में कैसे व्यवहार करती हैं।

Why does India need them?

भारत को इनकी आवश्यकता क्यों है?



- India's long coastline of over **11,000 km** and a vast **Exclusive Economic Zone of over 2 million sq. km** give it access to rich **marine biodiversity and biomass**.
भारत की **11,000 किमी** से अधिक लंबी तटरेखा और **20 लाख वर्ग किमी** से अधिक के विशेष आर्थिक क्षेत्र उसे समृद्ध **समुद्री जैव-विविधता और बायोमास** तक पहुँच प्रदान करते हैं।
- Yet its share of **global marine outputs** remains low, indicating significant **untapped potential**.
फिर भी **वैश्विक समुद्री उत्पादन** में भारत की हिस्सेदारी कम है, जो बड़े **अप्रयुक्त संभावनाओं** की ओर इशारा करती है।
- Investing in **marine biomanufacturing** can unlock new sources of **food, energy, chemicals, and biomaterials**, while reducing pressure on **land, freshwater, and agricultural systems**.
समुद्री बायोमैनुफैक्चरिंग में निवेश से **भोजन, ऊर्जा, रसायन और बायोमैटीरियल** के नए स्रोत खुल सकते हैं और **भूमि, मीठे पानी व कृषि प्रणालियों** पर दबाव कम हो सकता है।
- Similarly, **space biotechnology** is critical for India's long-term ambitions in **space exploration, enabling safe food production, human health management, and biological manufacturing** in extreme environments.
इसी तरह, **अंतरिक्ष जैव-प्रौद्योगिकी** भारत की **अंतरिक्ष अन्वेषण** की दीर्घकालिक महत्वाकांक्षाओं के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है, जो चरम परिस्थितियों में सुरक्षित **खाद्य उत्पादन, मानव स्वास्थ्य प्रबंधन और जैविक निर्माण** को संभव बनाती है।
- India's domestic production of marine biomass such as **seaweed** remains modest, with an annual cultivated output of around **70,000 tonnes**.
सीवीड जैसे समुद्री बायोमास का भारत में घरेलू उत्पादन सीमित है, जिसकी वार्षिक खेती लगभग **70,000 टन** है।
- As a result, India continues to import **seaweed-derived components** such as **agar, carrageenan, and alginates** for use in **food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and medical applications**.
नतीजतन, भारत **एगर, कैरेजीनन और एल्जिनेट्स** जैसे **सीवीड-व्युत्पन्न घटकों** का आयात करता रहता है, जिनका उपयोग **खाद्य, औषधि, सौंदर्य प्रसाधन और चिकित्सा** में होता है।
- Targeted initiatives under the **Blue Economy agenda, the Deep Ocean Mission, and, more recently, the BioE3** are pushing the sector toward **integrated marine biomanufacturing, linking cultivation, extraction, and downstream applications**.
ब्लू इकोनॉमी एजेंडा, डीप ओशन मिशन और हाल में **BioE3** के तहत लक्षित पहलें इस क्षेत्र को **एकीकृत समुद्री बायोमैनुफैक्चरिंग** की ओर ले जा रही हैं, जो **खेती, निष्कर्षण और डाउनस्ट्रीम अनुप्रयोगों** को जोड़ती हैं।
- A small number of private players, such as **Sea6 Energy** and **ClimaCrew**, along with **ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute** and state-led initiatives such as the **Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference**, are exploring pathways to scale marine biomass into **high-value ingredients and bio-based products**.
कुछ निजी कंपनियाँ जैसे **Sea6 Energy** और **ClimaCrew**, साथ ही **ICAR-केंद्रीय समुद्री मत्स्य अनुसंधान संस्थान** और राज्य-स्तरीय पहलें जैसे **वाइब्रेंट गुजरात क्षेत्रीय सम्मेलन**, समुद्री बायोमास को **उच्च-मूल्य अवयवों और जैव-आधारित उत्पादों** में बदलने के रास्ते तलाश रही हैं।
- In **space biotechnology, ISRO's microgravity biology programme** is conducting experiments on **microbes, algae, and biological systems** to study **food production, life-support regeneration, and human health in space**.
अंतरिक्ष जैव-प्रौद्योगिकी में, **इसरो का माइक्रोग्रैविटी बायोलॉजी कार्यक्रम सूक्ष्मजीवों, शैवाल और जैविक प्रणालियों** पर प्रयोग कर रहा है ताकि **अंतरिक्ष में खाद्य उत्पादन, जीवन-समर्थन पुनर्जनन और मानव स्वास्थ्य** का अध्ययन किया जा सके।
- The **European Union** funds large-scale programmes on **marine bioprospecting, algae-based biomaterials, and bioactive compounds**, supported by shared research infrastructure such as the **European Marine Biological Resource Centre**.
यूरोपीय संघ समुद्री बायोप्रॉस्पेक्टिंग, शैवाल-आधारित बायोमैटीरियल और जैव-सक्रिय यौगिकों पर बड़े पैमाने की योजनाओं को वित्तपोषित करता है, जिन्हें **यूरोपीय समुद्री जैव संसाधन केंद्र** जैसी साझा अनुसंधान अवसंरचना का समर्थन मिलता है।



- Marine and space biotechnology remain relatively **unexplored frontiers**, where early movers are likely to gain lasting **strategic and technological advantages**.
समुद्री और अंतरिक्ष जैव-प्रौद्योगिकी अभी भी अपेक्षाकृत **कम-अन्वेषित क्षेत्र** हैं, जहाँ शुरुआती पहल करने वालों को दीर्घकालिक **रणनीतिक और तकनीकी लाभ** मिल सकते हैं।
- **The primary risk lies in slow and fragmented progress in research and development**.
मुख्य जोखिम **अनुसंधान और विकास में धीमी और बिखरी हुई प्रगति** में निहित है।
- **A dedicated roadmap that defines timelines and outcomes for marine and space biotechnology would help channel resources more effectively**.
समुद्री और अंतरिक्ष जैव-प्रौद्योगिकी के लिए **समर्पित रोडमैप**, जो **समय-सीमा और परिणाम** तय करे, संसाधनों को अधिक **प्रभावी** ढंग से दिशा देने में मदद करेगा।

GS Paper III: Environment,	
TOPICS COVERED	15 January 2026
1.	Vulture Safe Zones will be created in Tamil Nadu, State govt. tells Madras HC तमिलनाडु में गिद्ध सुरक्षित क्षेत्र बनाए जाएंगे, राज्य सरकार ने मद्रास उच्च न्यायालय को बताया
2.	Over 77% of Rajasthan's illegal mining FIRs filed in Aravalli districts राजस्थान में अवैध खनन से जुड़ी 77% से अधिक एफआईआर अरावली जिलों में दर्ज

PATRIOTIC IAS



Vulture Safe Zones will be created in Tamil Nadu, State govt. tells Madras HC

GS III: Environment

Mohamed Imranullah S.
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu Forest Department has informed the Madras High Court of having begun the process of establishing Vulture Safe Zones (VSZs) in the State in order to create a safe environment for the species that is free from threats, especially the use of toxic veterinary non-steroidal and anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), like diclofenac, used to treat cattle, which have been a major cause of vulture mortality.

In a status report placed before the first Division Bench of Chief Justice Manindra Mohan Shrivastava and Justice G. Arul Murugan, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests-cum-Chief Wildlife Warden Rakesh Kumar Dogra said, the first of the VSZs would be established around Moyar River Valley in the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve as per the 'Vision Document for Vulture Conservation in Tamil Nadu 2025-30'.

The status report was filed in response to a pu-



The first of the Vulture Safe Zones will be established around Moyar River Valley in the Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve. FILE PHOTO

blic interest litigation petition filed by Vandalur-based K. Surya Kumar, through his counsel S.P. Chockalingam, to save the carrion-eating vultures, which were facing mass deaths and near-extinction, primarily due to the presence of NSAIDs in the carcass they feed upon.

Mr. Dogra said strict vigil would be kept to prevent the use of the banned NSAIDs by veterinarians to treat cattle. He said a field-level monitoring committee, chaired by the Field Director of Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR), had already been constituted for establishing the VSZs. It would comprise the district forest officers of the

Nilgiris, Gudalur, Coimbatore, and Erode, besides the deputy directors of MTR in Masinagudi and Udhagamandalam as well as the deputy directors of Anamalai and Sathyaman-galam Tiger Reserves.

The committee will also consist of a representative from Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation in Vandalur. "Instructions have been issued to the above committee to take action and to create and submit a map, duly marking the vulture nesting and habitat usage sites and for monitoring carcass hot-spots, which meet our conditions for declaring an area as a Vulture Safe Zone," Mr. Dogra said.

Vulture Safe Zones will be created in Tamil Nadu, State govt. tells Madras HC
तमिलनाडु में गिद्ध सुरक्षित क्षेत्र बनाए जाएंगे, राज्य सरकार ने मद्रास उच्च न्यायालय को बताया

- The **Tamil Nadu Forest Department** has informed the **Madras High Court** of having begun the process of establishing **Vulture Safe Zones (VSZs)** in the State in order to create a **safe environment** for the species that is free from threats, especially the **use of toxic veterinary non-steroidal and anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)**, like **diclofenac**, used to treat cattle, which have been a **major cause of vulture mortality**.

तमिलनाडु वन विभाग ने मद्रास उच्च न्यायालय को बताया है कि राज्य में गिद्ध सुरक्षित क्षेत्र (VSZs) स्थापित करने की प्रक्रिया शुरू कर दी गई है ताकि इस प्रजाति के लिए सुरक्षित वातावरण बनाया जा सके, जो



विशेष रूप से विषैले पशु-चिकित्सकीय नॉन-स्टेरॉइडल और एंटी-इन्फ्लेमेटरी दवाओं (NSAIDs) जैसे डाइक्लोफेनाक के उपयोग से मुक्त हो, जिन्हें मवेशियों के उपचार में प्रयोग किया जाता है और जो गिद्धों की मृत्यु का प्रमुख कारण रही हैं।

- He said a **field-level monitoring committee**, chaired by the **Field Director of Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR)**, had already been constituted for establishing the **VSZs**.
उन्होंने कहा कि **VSZs** की स्थापना के लिए **मुदुमलाई टाइगर रिज़र्व (MTR)** के **फील्ड डायरेक्टर** की अध्यक्षता में एक **क्षेत्र-स्तरीय निगरानी समिति** पहले ही गठित की जा चुकी है।

Over 77% of Rajasthan's illegal mining FIRs filed in Aravalli districts

Recent proposed changes threaten to aggravate the situation by removing protections

GS II: Environment

DATA POINT

Devvanshi Bihani

The districts in Rajasthan, which host roughly 70% of the entire Aravalli range, are suffering from a disproportionately high volume of illegal mining, data show. While these Aravalli districts account for less than 45% of the State's mining leases and contribute only 40% of its total mineral output, their share of illegal mining cases exceeds 56%. The Aravalli districts also account for more than 77% of all First Information Reports (FIRs) lodged for illegal mining in the State.

Clearly, the Aravalli landscape is the epicentre of Rajasthan's mining crisis. Recent proposed changes to the legal definition of what constitutes an 'Aravalli hill' threaten to further aggravate this situation by potentially removing protections against mining from vast stretches of the range. Ironically, the changes proposed were actually initiated as a measure to curb illegal mining in the first place.

Legal tussle

The Aravalli hills, among the oldest mountain systems in the world, have become the focus of an ongoing legal and policy dispute over their definition and the rules governing mining activity. While examining issues related to mining in the region, the Supreme Court observed in May 2024 that the lack of a consistent definition of the Aravalli hills and ranges across States has been a key factor enabling illegal mining.

Since 2010, expert agencies, such as the Forest Survey of India (FSI), have identified the Aravalli hills based on a set of physical parameters, including a slope greater than three degrees, a 100-metre foothill buffer, an inter-hill distance or valley width of 500 metres, and an area enclosed by such hills from all sides.

To address the lack of uniformi-

ty in how the range is defined, the Court set up a committee led by the Union Environment Secretary, bringing together officials from the FSI, State Forest Departments, the Geological Survey of India, and the Central Empowered Committee. The panel was mandated to evolve a scientifically robust definition of the Aravallis that could be applied across the country.

The technical committee (comprising officials from scientific agencies and not the Environment Ministry) in 2024 suggested that any landform with a slope of at least 4.57 degrees and a height of at least 30 metres be identified as an Aravalli hill. The Environment Ministry, however, advanced a different approach, suggesting that only landforms in Aravalli districts rising at least 100 metres above the local relief be classified as Aravalli hills, and that hills within 500 metres of each other be treated collectively as part of the Aravalli range. This approach eventually reflected in the Supreme Court's November 2025 order.

Experts including the FSI, which was part of the committee, raised red flags saying this may exclude most of the hills, leaving them potentially open to mining. The amicus curiae, K. Parameswar, also objected to this conclusion, stating that it was too narrow and could open hills below 100 metres to mining, thereby compromising the continuity and integrity of the Aravalli system.

With protests intensifying across the State, the Court subsequently kept the judgment in abeyance, ordering that the stay would remain until the matter reached finality. In the interim, the Union government imposed a freeze on granting new mining leases in the Aravalli landscape.

Impact on Rajasthan

Reclassification carries significant implications for mining regulation. If a landform is no longer classified as part of the Aravallis, it falls outside the specific mining controls

and moratorium linked to the Aravalli framework.

The stakes are particularly high in Rajasthan. Of the roughly 800-km-long Aravalli range, around 560 km lie within Rajasthan. The range passes through 37 districts (Map 1) of which 20 are in Rajasthan. Moreover, Rajasthan hosts 16 of the 22 wildlife sanctuaries located in the Aravalli landscape, including three tiger reserves (Ranthambore, Sariska, Mukundra).

In 2021-22, States across India reported 90,173 illegal mining cases. Rajasthan accounted for more than 10% of these cases (Chart 2), placing it among the States with the highest number of reported incidents nationally. More importantly, within the State, the burden of these violations falls heavily on one specific geographic region.

Between 2020 and 2023, Rajasthan recorded 28,166 illegal mining cases, of which 15,772 (or 56%) were registered in Aravalli districts, even though these districts account for less than 45% of the State's mining leases issued in the same period. Policing data show that of the 2,671 FIRs related to illegal mining lodged during this period, 2,070 (nearly 77.5%), originated from Aravalli districts between 2020 and 2023 (Chart 3).

Moreover, between 2015 and 2022, Aravalli districts produced 918.8 million tonnes of minerals, accounting for only 40.6% of Rajasthan's total output of 2.26 billion tonnes. Together, these figures reveal a stark reality: the Aravallis contribute a smaller portion of the State's legal mineral wealth, but they bear a vastly disproportionate share of its mining-related lawlessness.

Beyond questions of legal classification, the Aravallis are ecologically vital. They slow the spread of sand and dust from the Thar Desert towards eastern Rajasthan, Haryana, and western Uttar Pradesh. They support groundwater recharge in an arid region, stabilise the local climate, and function as an important wildlife corridor.

Mining hotspot

The data for the charts were sourced from Lok Sabha replies, the Department of Mines and Geology, Government of Rajasthan; the Union Ministry of Mines and the Environment Ministry's affidavit in the Aravalli case, submitted to the Supreme Court



At stake: The Aravalli hills seen from the Sun Temple at Galta Ji in Jaipur on January 3, 2026. PTI

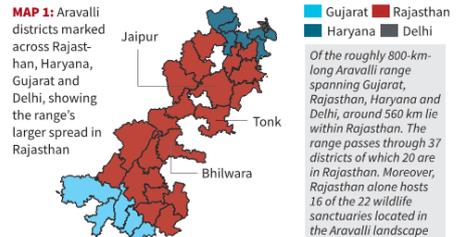
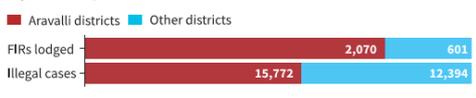


CHART 2: Number of illegal mining-related cases reported by States in 2021-22



CHART 3: Number of FIRs and illegal mining cases filed in Aravalli districts in Rajasthan compared with other districts in the State between 2020 and 2023



Over 77% of Rajasthan's illegal mining FIRs filed in Aravalli districts राजस्थान में अवैध खनन से जुड़ी 77% से अधिक एफआईआर अरावली ज़िलों में दर्ज

- While examining issues related to mining in the region, the **Supreme Court** observed in **May 2024** that the **lack of a consistent definition** of the Aravalli hills and ranges across States has been a key factor enabling illegal mining.



क्षेत्र में खनन से जुड़े मुद्दों की जांच करते हुए **सुप्रीम कोर्ट** ने **मई 2024** में कहा कि राज्यों में अरावली पहाड़ियों और पर्वतमालाओं की **एकरूप परिभाषा** का अभाव अवैध खनन को बढ़ावा देने वाला प्रमुख कारण रहा है।

- Since **2010**, expert agencies, such as the **Forest Survey of India (FSI)**, have identified the Aravalli hills based on a set of **physical parameters**, including a **slope greater than three degrees, a 100-metre foothill buffer, an inter-hill distance or valley width of 500 metres, and an area enclosed by such hills from all sides.**

2010 से, **फॉरेस्ट सर्वे ऑफ इंडिया (FSI)** जैसी विशेषज्ञ एजेंसियाँ अरावली पहाड़ियों की पहचान कुछ **भौतिक मानकों** के आधार पर करती रही हैं, जिनमें **तीन डिग्री से अधिक ढाल, 100 मीटर का तलहटी बफर, 500 मीटर की पहाड़ियों के बीच दूरी या घाटी की चौड़ाई, और चारों ओर से पहाड़ियों से घिरा क्षेत्र** शामिल हैं।

- To address the lack of **uniformity** in how the range is defined, the Court set up a **committee led by the Union Environment Secretary**, bringing together officials from the **FSI, State Forest Departments, the Geological Survey of India, and the Central Empowered Committee.**

पर्वत श्रृंखला की परिभाषा में **एकरूपता** की कमी दूर करने के लिए न्यायालय ने **केंद्रीय पर्यावरण सचिव** की अध्यक्षता में एक **समिति** गठित की, जिसमें **FSI, राज्य वन विभाग, भारतीय भूवैज्ञानिक सर्वेक्षण, और केंद्रीय सशक्त समिति** के अधिकारी शामिल थे।

- The panel was mandated to evolve a **scientifically robust definition** of the Aravallis that could be applied across the country.

इस पैनल को पूरे देश में लागू की जा सकने वाली **वैज्ञानिक रूप से सुदृढ़ परिभाषा** विकसित करने का दायित्व दिया गया।

- The **technical committee** (comprising officials from **scientific agencies and not the Environment Ministry**) in **2024** suggested that any landform with a **slope of at least 4.57 degrees and a height of at least 30 metres** be identified as an **Aravalli hill.**

2024 में बनी **तकनीकी समिति** (जिसमें **वैज्ञानिक एजेंसियों** के अधिकारी थे, न कि पर्यावरण मंत्रालय के) ने सुझाव दिया कि **कम से कम 4.57 डिग्री की ढाल और कम से कम 30 मीटर की ऊँचाई** वाला कोई भी भू-आकृतिक रूप **अरावली पहाड़ी** माना जाए।

- The **Environment Ministry**, however, advanced a different approach, suggesting that only landforms in **Aravalli districts** rising at least **100 metres above the local relief** be classified as Aravalli hills, and that hills within **500 metres** of each other be treated collectively as part of the **Aravalli range.**

हालाँकि **पर्यावरण मंत्रालय** ने एक अलग दृष्टिकोण रखा, जिसमें सुझाव दिया गया कि केवल **अरावली जिलों** में वे भू-आकृतियाँ, जो स्थानीय सतह से कम से कम **100 मीटर ऊँची हों, अरावली पहाड़ियाँ** मानी जाएँ, और **500 मीटर** के भीतर स्थित पहाड़ियों को सामूहिक रूप से **अरावली श्रृंखला** का हिस्सा माना जाए।

- This approach eventually reflected in the **Supreme Court's November 2025 order.**

यह दृष्टिकोण अंततः **सुप्रीम कोर्ट के नवंबर 2025 के आदेश** में परिलक्षित हुआ।

- **Experts including the FSI, which was part of the committee, raised red flags saying this may exclude most of the hills, leaving them potentially open to mining.**

FSI सहित विशेषज्ञों ने, जो समिति का हिस्सा थे, **रेड फ्लैग** उठाते हुए कहा कि इससे अधिकांश पहाड़ियाँ बाहर हो सकती हैं, जिससे वे **खनन** के लिए संभावित रूप से खुली रह जाएँगी।

- The **amicus curiae, K. Parameswar**, also objected to this conclusion, stating that **it was too narrow and could open hills below 100 metres to mining, thereby compromising the continuity and integrity of the Aravalli system.**

एमिकस क्यूरी, के. परमेश्वर, ने भी इस निष्कर्ष पर आपत्ति जताई और कहा कि यह बहुत **संकीर्ण** है तथा इससे **100 मीटर** से नीचे की पहाड़ियाँ खनन के लिए खुल सकती हैं, जिससे **अरावली प्रणाली** की निरंतरता और **अखंडता** प्रभावित होगी।

- **Of the roughly 800-km-long Aravalli range, around 560 km lie within Rajasthan.**

लगभग **800 किमी** लंबी **अरावली श्रृंखला** में से करीब **560 किमी** हिस्सा **राजस्थान** में स्थित है।

- The **range passes through 37 districts (Map 1) of which 20 are in Rajasthan.**

यह श्रृंखला **37 जिलों** (मानचित्र 1) से होकर गुजरती है, जिनमें से **20** राजस्थान में हैं।

- Moreover, **Rajasthan hosts 16 of the 22 wildlife sanctuaries located in the Aravalli landscape, including three tiger reserves (Ranthambore, Sariska, Mukundra).**

इसके अलावा, अरावली क्षेत्र में स्थित **22 वन्यजीव अभयारण्यों** में से **16** राजस्थान में हैं, जिनमें **तीन टाइगर रिजर्व (रणथंभौर, सरिस्का, मुकुंद्रा)** शामिल हैं।

- **In 2021-22, States across India reported 90,173 illegal mining cases.**

2021-22 में, पूरे भारत के राज्यों ने **90,173 अवैध खनन मामलों** की रिपोर्ट की।



- **Rajasthan** accounted for more than **10%** of these cases (Chart 2), placing it among the States with the **highest number of reported incidents** nationally.
इनमें से **10% से अधिक** मामले राजस्थान के थे (चार्ट 2), जिससे यह देश में **सबसे अधिक घटनाओं** वाले राज्यों में शामिल हो गया।
- They slow the spread of **sand and dust** from the **Thar Desert** towards **eastern Rajasthan, Haryana, and western Uttar Pradesh**.
वे थार मरुस्थल से **रेत और धूल** के फैलाव को **पूर्वी राजस्थान, हरियाणा और पश्चिमी उत्तर प्रदेश** की ओर बढ़ने से धीमा करती हैं।
- They support **groundwater recharge** in an arid region, **stabilise the local climate**, and function as an important **wildlife corridor**.
वे शुष्क क्षेत्र में **भूजल पुनर्भरण** को सहारा देती हैं, **स्थानीय जलवायु** को स्थिर करती हैं और एक महत्वपूर्ण **वन्यजीव गलियारे** के रूप में कार्य करती हैं।

GS Paper III: DM,	
TOPICS COVERED	15 January 2026
1.	'Losses due to disasters drop in 2025, picture still alarming' '2025 में आपदाओं से होने वाला नुकसान घटा, लेकिन स्थिति अब भी चिंताजनक'

PATRIOTIC IAS



Losses due to disasters drop in 2025, picture still alarming'

CS III: Disaster Management
Agence France-Presse

Natural disaster losses worldwide dropped sharply to \$224 billion in 2025, reinsurer Munich Re said on Tuesday, but warned of a still "alarming" picture of extreme weather events likely driven by climate change.

The figure was down nearly 40% from a year earlier, in part because no hurricane struck the U.S. mainland for the first time in several years.

Nevertheless, "the big picture was alarming with regard to floods, severe... storms and wildfires in 2025", said Munich Re, a Germany-based provider of insurance for the insurance industry.

The costliest disaster of 2025 came in the form of Los Angeles wildfires in January, with total losses of \$53 billion and insured losses of around \$40 billion, Munich Re said in its annual disaster report. It was followed by the devastating earthquake that hit Myanmar in March, which is estimated to have caused \$12 billion in losses, only a small share of which was insured.

It was striking how many extreme events were likely influenced by climate change in 2025 and it was just chance that the world was spared potentially higher losses, according to the group.

"The planet has a fever, and as a result we are seeing a cluster of severe and intense weather events," Tobias Grimm, Munich Re's chief climate scientist, said.

According to Munich Re's report, insured losses for 2025 came in at \$108 billion, also sharply down on last year.

Around 17,200 lives were lost in natural disasters worldwide, significantly higher than about 11,000 in 2024, but below the

impact.

अब स्थानीय बाढ़ और जंगल की आग जैसी छोटी स्तर की आपदाओं की संचयी लागत का सबसे अधिक प्रभाव पड़ रहा है।

- Losses from these events amounted to **\$166 billion** last year, according to Munich Re. म्यूनिख री के अनुसार पिछले वर्ष इन घटनाओं से नुकसान **166 अरब डॉलर** तक पहुँचा।
- **Tropical cyclones** caused around **\$37 billion** in losses. उष्णकटिबंधीय चक्रवातों से लगभग **37 अरब डॉलर** का नुकसान हुआ।
- **Jamaica was battered by Hurricane Melissa**, one of the strongest hurricanes ever to make landfall, generating losses of around **\$9.8 billion**. जमैका को हुरिकेन मेलिसा ने बुरी तरह प्रभावित किया, जो अब तक ज़मीन से टकराने वाले सबसे शक्तिशाली तूफानों में से एक था, और इससे लगभग **9.8 अरब डॉलर** का नुकसान हुआ।
- **Australia had its second most expensive year** in terms of overall losses from natural disasters since **1980** due to a series of severe storms and flooding. ऑस्ट्रेलिया के लिए **1980** के बाद से प्राकृतिक आपदाओं से कुल नुकसान के लिहाज से यह दूसरा सबसे महंगा वर्ष रहा, जिसका कारण भीषण तूफानों और बाढ़ की श्रृंखला थी।

Munich Re's, a Germany-based provider of insurance for the insurance industry, puts insured losses for 2025 at \$108 billion

10-year average of of 17,800, it said.

Mr. Grimm said 2025 was a year with "two faces". "The first half of the year was the costliest loss period the insurance industry has ever experienced," he said, but the second half saw the lowest losses in a decade.

It is now the cumulative costs of smaller-scale disasters – like local floods and forest fires – that are having the greatest impact. Losses from these events amounted to \$166 billion last year, according to Munich Re.

Tropical cyclones caused around \$37 billion in losses. Jamaica was battered by Hurricane Melissa, one of the strongest hurricanes ever to make landfall, generating losses of around \$9.8 billion.

By region, total losses in the United States amounted to \$118 billion, \$88 billion of which was insured – around the same as an estimate of \$115 billion total losses from U.S. nonprofit Climate Central. The Asia-Pacific region had losses of about \$73 billion – but only \$9 billion was insured, according to the report.

Australia had its second most expensive year in terms of overall losses from natural disasters since 1980 due to a series of severe storms and flooding.

The report comes at a time when scepticism towards green policies is growing, particularly since the return to power of U.S. President Donald Trump, who derides climate science as a "hoax".

"More heat means more humidity, stronger rainfall, and higher wind speeds – climate change is already contributing to extreme weather," Mr. Grimm said.

like local floods and forest fires that are having the greatest

'Losses due to disasters drop in 2025, picture still alarming'

'2025 में आपदाओं से होने वाला नुकसान घटा, लेकिन स्थिति अब भी चिंताजनक'

• "The planet has a fever, and as a result we are seeing a cluster of severe and intense weather events," Tobias Grimm, Munich Re's chief climate scientist, said.

म्यूनिख री के मुख्य जलवायु वैज्ञानिक टोबियास ग्रिम ने कहा, "धरती को बुखार है, और इसके परिणामस्वरूप हम गंभीर और तीव्र मौसम घटनाओं का समूह देख रहे हैं।"

• Around **17,200 lives** were lost in natural disasters worldwide, significantly higher than about **11,000** in 2024, but below the **10-year average of 17,800**, it said.

दुनिया भर में प्राकृतिक आपदाओं में लगभग **17,200** लोगों की जान गई, जो **2024** के लगभग **11,000** से काफी अधिक है, लेकिन **10 वर्षों के औसत 17,800** से कम है।

• It is now the cumulative costs of smaller-scale disasters



GS Paper III: IS

TOPICS COVERED

15 January 2026

1. Kuki-Zo Council reiterates its demand for a separate Union Territory for tribes

कुकी-जो परिषद ने जनजातियों के लिए अलग केंद्र शासित प्रदेश की माँग दोहराई

Kuki-Zo Council reiterates its demand for a separate Union Territory for tribes

GS III: Internal Security

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

The Kuki-Zo Council (KZC) has reiterated the demand for a Union Territory for Kuki-Zo tribes in Manipur, saying that elements of the State government were “complicit in, or failed to prevent”, atrocities against them.

The council apprised Union Home Minister Amit Shah of the “grave, prolonged, and unresolved concerns confronting our people in Manipur today”, in a memorandum submitted through the Deputy Commissioner of Chura-chandpur after a “mass rally” on Wednesday.

The ethnic conflict that broke out in Manipur on May 3, 2023, left more than 250 Kuki-Zo people dead, 7,000 houses destroyed, 360 places of worship desecrated or vandalised, and more than 40,000 people displaced, mostly driven out of Imphal Valley, the KZC said.

‘Difficult co-existence’

“It is widely perceived and documented that elements of the State government machinery were complicit in, or failed to prevent, these atrocities. Under such circumstances, there exists no scope whatsoever for the Kuki-Zo people to continue under the same administration,” the KZC said.

Insisting that it would be difficult for the Kuki-Zos to coexist with the non-tribal Meiteis, the KZC also warned against resettling the internally displaced persons (IDPs) belonging to the Meitei community in the “buffer zone” or close



Hundreds of internally displaced people at a protest demanding a response on their resettlement, in Imphal on Monday. PTI

Insurgent groups warned against violating rules

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

After a two-day review of the operations of Meitei and Kuki-Zo insurgent groups, officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and the Manipur

administration have warned the outfits that they will face action if they violate ground rules, a senior government official told *The Hindu*.

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» PAGE 4

to Kuki-Zo areas. Buffer zone refers to a narrow strip of land, separating the Meitei-dominated Imphal Valley and the surrounding hills inhabited by the Kuki-Zo people.

The KZC said these issues were existential in nature, demanding urgent constitutional and political intervention by the Central government.

“For nearly three years, the Kuki-Zo people have been unable to access the Imphal Valley, leading to severe humanitarian, economic, medical and administrative hardships. Our demand for a union territory with legislature is well within the ambit of the Constitution of India,” it said, urging Mr. Shah to expedite a political solution

to ensure lasting peace, dignity and security for Kuki-Zos.

‘Act on encroachments’

“The buffer zone was instituted precisely to prevent confrontation and bloodshed. Any violation, dilution, or selective enforcement of this arrangement undermines public confidence, weakens law and order and threatens the fragile peace,” it added.

The KZC further sought action against “encroachments due to incorrect district and police jurisdiction boundaries” and attempts to halt construction and development of inter-village roads in the Kuki-Zo areas, apart from protecting Kuki-Zo land and properties in Imphal Valley.

Kuki-Zos to coexist with the non-tribal Meiteis, the KZC also warned against resettling the internally displaced persons (IDPs) belonging to the Meitei community in the “buffer zone” or close to Kuki-Zo areas.

कुकी-जो और गैर-जनजातीय मैतेई समुदाय के बीच सह-अस्तित्व को कठिन बताते हुए, KZC ने मैतेई समुदाय के आंतरिक रूप से विस्थापित लोगों (IDPs) को “बफर ज़ोन” या कुकी-जो क्षेत्रों के पास बसाने के खिलाफ चेतावनी दी।

- **Buffer zone** refers to a narrow strip of land, separating the Meitei-dominated Imphal Valley and the surrounding hills inhabited by the Kuki-Zo people.

बफर ज़ोन उस संकरी भूमि पट्टी को कहा जाता है जो मैतेई-बहुल इंपाल घाटी और कुकी-जो लोगों द्वारा बसे आसपास के पहाड़ी क्षेत्रों को अलग करती है।

Kuki-Zo Council reiterates its demand for a separate Union Territory for tribes

कुकी-जो परिषद ने जनजातियों के लिए अलग केंद्र शासित प्रदेश की माँग दोहराई

- The **Kuki-Zo Council (KZC)** has reiterated the demand for a **Union Territory** for **Kuki-Zo tribes** in **Manipur**, saying that elements of the **State government** were “**complicit in, or failed to prevent**”, atrocities against them.

कुकी-जो परिषद (KZC) ने मणिपुर में कुकी-जो जनजातियों के लिए केंद्र शासित प्रदेश की माँग दोहराते हुए कहा कि राज्य सरकार के तत्व “सहभागी थे या रोकने में विफल रहे” और उनके खिलाफ अत्याचार हुए।

- The **ethnic conflict** that broke out in Manipur on **May 3, 2023**, left more than **250 Kuki-Zo people dead**, **7,000 houses destroyed**, **360 places of worship desecrated or vandalised**, and more than **40,000 people displaced**, mostly driven out of **Imphal Valley**, the KZC said.

3 मई 2023 को मणिपुर में भड़के जातीय संघर्ष में 250 से अधिक कुकी-जो लोग मारे गए, 7,000 घर नष्ट हुए, 360 पूजा स्थल अपवित्र या क्षतिग्रस्त किए गए, और 40,000 से अधिक लोग विस्थापित हुए, जिन्हें अधिकतर इंपाल घाटी से बाहर खदेड़ा गया, ऐसा KZC ने कहा।

- “It is widely perceived and documented that elements of the **State government machinery** were complicit in, or failed to prevent, these atrocities. Under such circumstances, there exists no scope whatsoever for the **Kuki-Zo people** to continue under the same administration,” the KZC said.

“KZC ने कहा, यह व्यापक रूप से माना और दर्ज किया गया है कि राज्य सरकार की मशीनरी के तत्व इन अत्याचारों में सहभागी थे या उन्हें रोकने में विफल रहे। ऐसी परिस्थितियों में कुकी-जो लोगों के लिए उसी प्रशासन के तहत बने रहने की कोई गुंजाइश नहीं है।”

- Insisting that it would be difficult for the KZC also warned against resettling the internally displaced persons (IDPs) belonging to the Meitei community in the “buffer zone” or close to Kuki-Zo areas.



- “The **buffer zone** was instituted precisely to prevent confrontation and bloodshed. Any **violation, dilution, or selective enforcement** of this arrangement undermines **public confidence**, weakens **law and order** and threatens the **fragile peace**,” it added.
“बफर ज़ोन को टकराव और रक्तपात रोकने के लिए ही स्थापित किया गया था। इसकी किसी भी तरह की उल्लंघन, शिथिलता या चयनात्मक लागू सार्वजनिक विश्वास को कमजोर करती है, कानून-व्यवस्था को नुकसान पहुँचाती है और नाजुक शांति को खतरे में डालती है,” यह जोड़ा गया।

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