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#### PCS Special:

19 January 2026

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# Stalin flags 'interference' in Sahitya Akademi by Centre, institutes new literary award

Best works in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Bengali, Marathi will receive Semmozhi Literary Award every year, the award will carry a cash prize of ₹5 lakh for each language: T.N. CM

PCS

**The Hindu Bureau**  
CHENNAI

**T**amil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Sunday announced the institution of a national literary award for works in seven Indian languages.

Speaking at the valedictory function of Chennai International Book Fair 2026, he said, "Owing to the interference of the Union Ministry of Culture, the event to announce the Sahitya Akademi Awards 2025 was cancelled a few days ago after the list was finalised. We do not know whether the awards would be announced. Political interference in arts and literature is dangerous."

## 7 Indian languages

Mr. Stalin said writers and stakeholders in arts and literature urged the Tamil Nadu government to act in a constructive manner, responding to the political interference by the Union go-



**Promoting literature:** Chief Minister M.K. Stalin launching 180 Tamil works translated into other languages at the valediction of Chennai International Book Fair 2026. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

vernment in arts and literature.

"In the first phase, the best literary works in the Indian languages of Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Bengali, and Marathi will receive the Semmozhi Literary Award every year. The award will carry a cash prize of ₹5 lakh for each language. Once the Dravida Model 2.0 government is formed,

we will strengthen and expand this initiative, making it world-class. We will build libraries across Tamil Nadu. Let us light the flame of knowledge and emerge victorious, working in harmony with each other."

Pointing to the significance of translation and copyright transfer at the book fair, Mr. Stalin said the translation of *Heart Lamp* into English had

made Kannada writer Banu Mushtaq famous across the world.

"The visit of such a writer who shares the Dravidian ideal of social justice has brought glory to this book fair. I thank Banu Mushtaq for accepting our invitation," he said.

## 'Need for harmony'

Stressing the need for harmony and sharing of ideas among languages, he said the ideas cherished by the writers of our land should be shared with all the people of the world and the great ideas from various parts of the world should reach our people.

"Language is not a wall that separates people; rather, it bridges people across the world. This event has made us realise our dream. I congratulate our School Education Minister Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi and School Education Secretary B. Chandra Mohan on the success of this book fair," he added.

## Stalin flags 'interference' in Sahitya Akademi by Centre, institutes new literary award

स्टालिन ने केंद्र द्वारा साहित्य अकादमी में 'हस्तक्षेप' का आरोप लगाया, नया साहित्यिक पुरस्कार शुरू किया

- Best works in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Bengali, Marathi will receive Semmozhi Literary Award every year, the award will carry a cash prize of ₹5 lakh for each language: T.N. CM  
तमिल, तेलुगु, कन्नड़, मलयालम, ओडिया, बंगाली, मराठी की सर्वश्रेष्ठ कृतियों को हर वर्ष सेमोझी साहित्यिक पुरस्कार मिलेगा, प्रत्येक भाषा के लिए पुरस्कार राशि ₹5 लाख होगी: तमिलनाडु मुख्यमंत्री
- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Sunday announced the institution of a national literary award for works in seven Indian languages.  
तमिलनाडु के मुख्यमंत्री एम.के. स्टालिन ने रविवार को सात भारतीय भाषाओं में रचनाओं के लिए एक राष्ट्रीय साहित्यिक पुरस्कार की स्थापना की घोषणा की।
- Speaking at the valedictory function of Chennai International Book Fair 2026, he said, "Owing to the interference of the Union Ministry of Culture, the event to announce the Sahitya Akademi Awards 2025 was cancelled a few days ago after the list was finalised.



चेन्नई अंतरराष्ट्रीय पुस्तक मेला 2026 के समापन समारोह में बोलते हुए उन्होंने कहा, “केंद्रीय संस्कृति मंत्रालय के हस्तक्षेप के कारण साहित्य अकादमी पुरस्कार 2025 की घोषणा का कार्यक्रम सूची अंतिम होने के बाद कुछ दिन पहले रद्द कर दिया गया।

- We do not know whether the awards will be announced. हमें नहीं पता कि पुरस्कारों की घोषणा होगी भी या नहीं।
- Political interference in arts and literature is dangerous.” कला और साहित्य में राजनीतिक हस्तक्षेप खतरनाक है।”

## 7 Indian languages 7 भारतीय भाषाएँ

- Mr. Stalin said writers and stakeholders in arts and literature urged the **Tamil Nadu government** to act in a constructive manner, responding to the political interference by the **Union government** in arts and literature.  
श्री स्टालिन ने कहा कि कला और साहित्य से जुड़े लेखकों और हितधारकों ने **तमिलनाडु सरकार** से कला और साहित्य में **केंद्र सरकार** के राजनीतिक हस्तक्षेप के जवाब में रचनात्मक ढंग से कार्य करने का आग्रह किया।
- **“In the first phase, the best literary works in the Indian languages of Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Bengali, and Marathi will receive the Semmozhi Literary Award every year.**  
“पहले चरण में **तमिल, तेलुगु, कन्नड़, मलयालम, ओडिया, बंगाली और मराठी** भारतीय भाषाओं की सर्वश्रेष्ठ साहित्यिक कृतियों को हर वर्ष **सेम्मोझी साहित्यिक पुरस्कार** दिया जाएगा।
- **The award will carry a cash prize of ₹5 lakh for each language.**  
इस पुरस्कार में प्रत्येक भाषा के लिए **₹5 लाख** की नकद राशि होगी।
- Once the **Dravida Model 2.0 government** is formed, we will strengthen and expand this initiative, making it world-class.  
एक बार **द्रविड़ मॉडल 2.0 सरकार** बनने के बाद हम इस पहल को मजबूत और विस्तारित करेंगे, इसे विश्वस्तरीय बनाएंगे।
- We will build libraries across **Tamil Nadu**.  
हम **तमिलनाडु** भर में पुस्तकालय बनाएंगे।
- Let us light the flame of knowledge and emerge victorious, working in harmony with each other.”  
आइए ज्ञान की लौ जलाएं और एक-दूसरे के साथ सामंजस्य में काम करते हुए विजयी बनें।”
- Pointing to the significance of **translation** and **copyright transfer** at the book fair, Mr. Stalin said the translation of **Heart Lamp into English had made Kannada writer Banu Mushtaq** famous across the world.  
पुस्तक मेले में **अनुवाद** और **कॉपीराइट हस्तांतरण** के महत्व की ओर इशारा करते हुए श्री स्टालिन ने कहा कि **हार्ट लैम्प** का अंग्रेज़ी में अनुवाद होने से कन्नड़ लेखिका **बानू मुस्ताक** विश्व भर में प्रसिद्ध हुईं।



# Taide's timely ton sets up Vidarbha's maiden Hazare Trophy triumph

PCS

CRICKET

**N. Sudarshan**  
BENGALURU

Vidarbha produced a nerveless performance to beat Saurashtra by 38 runs and win its maiden Vijay Hazare Trophy at the BCCI Centre of Excellence, near here, on Sunday.

After Atharva Taide (128, 118b, 15x4, 3x6) helped set up a target of 318, Harvik Desai's Saurashtra could only reach 279 as Vidarbha came up with an excellent bowling effort to disprove the accepted maxim that chasing teams invariably won.

If not for a 93-run fifth-wicket stand between Prerak Mankad (88, 92b, 10x4) and Chirag Jani (64, 63b,

3x4, 2x6), Vidarbha's margin of victory might have been more comprehensive.

Both Prerak and Jani were let off once, the former on 70 and the latter on 14. But it was captain and left-arm spinner Harsh Dubey who emerged as the man with the golden arm, trapping the dangerous-looking Prerak leg-before on the backfoot.

Jani's dismissal, with 68 runs needed in less than six overs, brought the defending Ranji Trophy champion closer to the coveted white-ball trophy.

It was not long before Chetan Sakariya was excised by speedster Yash Thakur (four for 50) to earn Vidarbha the triumph that more than made up for the disappointing loss

to Karnataka in last year's final.

Earlier, after being asked to bat, the Vidarbha openers were mostly steady. There were a few top-edges and inside-edges, giving rise to a few nervous moments. However, Dubey & Co. banished those jitters with some clean and crisp hitting from time to time.

Aman Mokhadde did not score big, falling for 33 (45b, 4x4) to finish his season with 814 chart-topping runs. But Vidarbha had a new hero in Taide, who conjured his first century of the tournament in the all-important contest.

That he scored the most against this season's highest wicket-taker Ankur Panwar (31 from 18 balls) was a good indicator of the quality of his innings.

The pick-up shots off pacer Sakariya, and the rousing pulled sixes off Dharmendra Jadeja and Prerak, showcased his overall mastery.

Vidarbha stood at a dominant 213 for one when Taide scooped a low full-toss from Panwar to Prerak at mid-on. Though the outfit wobbled from there, losing wickets at regular intervals, Darshan Nalkande hit 13 of the 16 runs that came off the final over to take his team to 317 for eight. It was a cushion that eventually proved handy.

**The scores:** Vidarbha 317/8 in 50 overs (Atharva Taide 128, Yash Rathod 54, Ankur Panwar 4/65) bt Saurashtra 279 in 48.5 overs (Prerak Mankad 88, Chirag Jani 64, Yash Thakur 4/50).

**Toss:** Saurashtra.

**PoM:** Taide; **PoS:** Mokhadde.

## Taide's timely ton sets up Vidarbha's maiden Hazare Trophy triumph तैदे की समय पर शतक ने विदर्भ को पहला हजारे ट्रॉफी जीत दिलाई

- Vidarbha produced a nerveless performance to beat Saurashtra by 38 runs and win its maiden Vijay Hazare Trophy at the BCCI Centre of Excellence, near here, on Sunday. विदर्भ ने बिना घबराहट के प्रदर्शन करते हुए सौराष्ट्र को 38 रन से हराया और यहाँ BCCI सेंटर ऑफ एक्सीलेंस में रविवार को अपनी पहली विजय हजारे ट्रॉफी जीती।
- After Atharva Taide (128, 118b, 15x4, 3x6) helped set up a target of 318, Harvik Desai's Saurashtra could only reach 279 as Vidarbha came up with an excellent bowling effort to disprove the accepted maxim that chasing teams invariably won. जब अथर्व तैदे (128, 118b, 15x4, 3x6) ने 318 का लक्ष्य सेट किया, तो हरविक देसाई की सौराष्ट्र टीम केवल 279 रन ही बना पाई, क्योंकि विदर्भ ने शानदार बॉलिंग प्रदर्शन किया और यह साबित किया कि पीछा करने वाली टीम हमेशा जीतती है यह धारणा गलत है।
- If not for a 93-run fifth-wicket stand between Prerak Mankad (88, 92b, 10x4) and Chirag Jani (64, 63b, 3x4, 2x6), Vidarbha's margin of victory might have been more comprehensive. अगर प्रेरक मांकड़ (88, 92b, 10x4) और चिराग जानी (64, 63b, 3x4, 2x6) के बीच 93 रन की पांचवीं विकेट की साझेदारी नहीं होती, तो विदर्भ की जीत का अंतर और भी बड़ा हो सकता था।

**GS Paper 1: History,**

**TOPICS COVERED**

**19 January 2026**



## 1. A display plan for the Piprawaha relic पिपरावाहा अवशेषों के लिए प्रदर्शन योजना

# A display plan for the Piprawaha relics

GS I: History

After being dispersed for over a century, ancient gems, charged by their proximity to the historical Buddha's corporeal remains, have been reunited with some other extraordinary relics excavated at Piprawaha, Uttar Pradesh. This partial reunification, made possible by an Indian conglomerate's acquisition of the gems from an overseas seller and their handing it over to the government – is being celebrated by an exhibition in Delhi that Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated earlier this month. How they will be housed once the exhibition closes is an urgent question. If these artifacts are carefully displayed – with lessons absorbed from a study of the ancient cult of relics and with an eye to the future – then this restitution has the potential to shift public opinion of India's beleaguered museums, set new standards for safeguarding its composite heritage, and persuade travellers from afar to circumambulate the land of the Buddha.

Understanding the place of Buddhist relics in early India provides insights into how small, visually indistinguishable, and sometimes unattractive objects, were looked after and appreciated. After the Buddha's passing, his followers periodically divided ash, charred bones and other bodily remains among themselves. These remains were placed in vessels, occasionally with gems and other offerings, and eventually interned in the cores of large hemispherical mounds called stupas. A well-preserved stupa at Sanchi can demonstrate how reliquaries conveyed the power of relics, helped people come close to them, and transformed them. Plausibly first constructed in Ashoka's reign, the stupa was elaborated about two centuries later. New gateways built in the four cardinal directions led to a path that wrapped around the mound's circumference. The



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These historical artifacts are living entities and the museum to be their new home needs to think of long-term plans to engage viewers, historians and students

gateway posts and architraves bore relief carvings of the Buddha's life, worshippers at sacred centres, and royal and auspicious emblems. Taken together, these reliefs prepared viewers to apprehend and properly approach the relics. Figurations of spirits associated with the site acknowledged its long history while depictions of individuals in exotic clothing recognised foreign travellers who were beginning to traverse the trade routes that intersected near Sanchi. Once they were on the pathway that wrapped around the mound, visitors were partially separated from their mundane surroundings by high railings. Once outside the sacred precinct, they found themselves in the company of monastics eager to cultivate friendships.

The success of such strategies to honour and contextualise the Buddha and communicate his teachings can be attested from the support that locales such as Sanchi received from diverse social strata and their rapid growth into major sacred centres replete with many other edifices and institutions. It can also be gleaned from the gradual development of Buddhist enclaves in lands far removed from the landscapes where the historical Buddha lived. For example, in the rock-cut sanctuaries of peninsular India, the Buddha's presence was subtly communicated by monolithic stupas without relics in their cores that were thoughtfully set in spaces laden with sculptures and sometimes frescoes.

**A strategy for the future**  
As little survives of the stupa that originally accommodated the Piprawaha relics, these esteemed artifacts are likely to be moved to a public institution in India after the temporary exhibition in Delhi closes. Merely placing them in sterile vitrines in a museum, as if they are lifeless objects, risks perpetuating the colonial paradigm that privileged seeing relics over their ability to lie

concealed and yet energise and empower communities.

Thus, the museum chosen as their new home needs to publicly discuss and sensibly implement long-term plans for them. These plans should include designing spaces that prepare diverse individuals to properly approach the Piprawaha relics, give them opportunities to spend time in proximity to the relics as they wish: chanting mantras, quietly meditating, or contemplating their aesthetics, and thereafter allowing them to see the world anew. New grant and fellowship programmes should also be formulated to encourage art historians to collaborate with anthropologists, scientists, film-makers, and others to explicate how historical artifacts are living entities that shape and reflect their environments. The chosen institution must also start designing courses to acquaint postgraduate students and emerging heritage professionals with the principles and best practices of stewardship, with a focus on restitution and interpretation. As a part of this goal, the institution needs to begin collaborating with colleges across India to convene workshops that empower communities living near heritage sites by engaging them in preventing and combating the illicit traffic in antiquities.

Teaching communities how to build datasets of cultural assets, helping them understand how trafficking networks often intersect with organised crime, introducing them to the functioning of India's judicial systems, and inspiring them to advocate for updating legislation so that it is aligned to today's ethical concerns and international agreements are also advisable. Once such spaces are designed and initiatives enacted, we can then proudly say that the Piprawaha relics have truly returned to the land of the Buddha and can be fully empowered by their aura and presence.

## A display plan for the Piprawaha relics पिपरावाहा अवशेषों के लिए प्रदर्शन योजना

- After being dispersed for over a **century**, ancient **gems**, charged by their proximity to the **historical Buddha's corporeal remains**, have been **reunited** with some other **extraordinary relics** excavated at **Piprawaha, Uttar Pradesh**. एक सदी से अधिक समय तक बिखरे रहने के बाद, प्राचीन रत्न, जो ऐतिहासिक बुद्ध के भौतिक अवशेषों के निकट होने के कारण विशेष महत्व रखते हैं, उत्तर प्रदेश के पिपरावाहा से उत्खनित कुछ अन्य असाधारण अवशेषों के साथ पुनः एकत्रित किए गए हैं।
- If these **artifacts** are carefully **displayed**, with lessons absorbed from a study of the **ancient cult of relics** and with an **eye to the future**, then this **restitution** has the potential to **shift public opinion** of India's **beleaguered museums**, set **new standards** for safeguarding its



**composite heritage**, and persuade travellers from afar to **circumambulate the land of the Buddha**.

यदि इन कलाकृतियों को प्राचीन अवशेष-पूजा परंपरा के अध्ययन से प्राप्त सीखों के साथ और भविष्य को ध्यान में रखते हुए सावधानीपूर्वक प्रदर्शित किया जाए, तो यह पुनर्स्थापन भारत के संकटग्रस्त संग्रहालयों के प्रति जनमत को बदलने, मिश्रित विरासत की सुरक्षा के लिए नए मानक स्थापित करने, और दूर-दराज से यात्रियों को बुद्ध की भूमि की परिक्रमा के लिए प्रेरित करने की क्षमता रखता है।

- After the **Buddha's passing**, his followers periodically **divided ash, charred bones and other bodily remains** among themselves.

बुद्ध के महापरिनिर्वाण के बाद, उनके अनुयायियों ने समय-समय पर राख, जली हुई अस्थियाँ और अन्य शारीरिक अवशेषों को आपस में विभाजित किया।

- These remains were placed in **vessels**, occasionally with **gems and other offerings**, and eventually **interned** in the cores of large **hemispherical mounds** called **stupas**.

इन अवशेषों को पात्रों में रखा गया, कभी-कभी रत्नों और अन्य अर्पणों के साथ, और अंततः स्तूप कहलाने वाले बड़े अर्धगोलाकार टीले के केंद्र में स्थापित किया गया।

- A **well-preserved stupa at Sanchi** can demonstrate how **reliquaries** conveyed the **power of relics**, helped people **come close to them**, and **transformed** them.

सांची का एक सुव्यवस्थित स्तूप यह दर्शाता है कि कैसे अवशेष-पात्रों ने अवशेषों की शक्ति को संप्रेषित किया, लोगों को उनके निकट आने में सहायता की, और उन्हें परिवर्तित किया।

- Plausibly first constructed in **Ashoka's reign**, the **stupa was elaborated about two centuries later**.

संभवतः अशोक के शासनकाल में पहली बार निर्मित यह स्तूप, लगभग दो शताब्दी बाद और विकसित किया गया।

- **New gateways built in the four cardinal directions** led to a **path** that wrapped around the **mound's circumference**.

चारों दिशाओं में निर्मित नए तोरण द्वार, एक ऐसे पथ की ओर ले जाते थे जो टीले की परिधि के चारों ओर घूमता था।

- The **gateway posts and architraves bore relief carvings** of the **Buddha's life**, **worshippers at sacred centres**, and **royal and auspicious emblems**.

तोरण स्तंभों और शिरोबंधों पर बुद्ध के जीवन, पवित्र स्थलों पर उपासकों, तथा राजकीय और मंगल प्रतीकों की उत्कीर्ण मूर्तियाँ बनी थीं।

- Once they were on the **pathway** that wrapped around the **mound**, visitors were **partially separated** from their **mundane surroundings** by **high railings**.

जब आगंतुक टीले के चारों ओर घूमने वाले पथ पर पहुँचे, तो ऊँची रेलिंगों के कारण वे अपनी सांसारिक परिवेश से आंशिक रूप से अलग हो गए।

- It can also be gleaned from the **gradual development of Buddhist enclaves** in lands **far removed** from the landscapes where the **historical Buddha lived**.

यह ऐतिहासिक बुद्ध के निवास स्थलों से दूर स्थित क्षेत्रों में बौद्ध उपनिवेशों के क्रमिक विकास से भी स्पष्ट होता है।

### A strategy for the future भविष्य के लिए एक रणनीति

- As little survives of the **stupa** that originally accommodated the **Piprawaha relics**, these **esteemed artifacts** are likely to be **moved to a public institution in India** after the **temporary exhibition in Delhi** closes.

चूँकि पिपरावाहा अवशेषों को मूल रूप से धारण करने वाले स्तूप का बहुत कम भाग शेष है, इसलिए दिल्ली की अस्थायी प्रदर्शनी समाप्त होने के बाद इन प्रतिष्ठित कलाकृतियों को भारत के किसी सार्वजनिक संस्थान में स्थानांतरित किया जाना संभावित है।

- **New grant and fellowship programmes** should also be formulated to encourage **art historians** to collaborate with **anthropologists, scientists, film-makers**, and others to explicate how **historical artifacts** are **living entities that shape and reflect their environments**.

अनुदान और फेलोशिप की नई योजनाएँ भी बनाई जानी चाहिए ताकि कला इतिहासकार, नृविज्ञानियों, वैज्ञानिकों, फिल्म-निर्माताओं और अन्य के साथ सहयोग कर सकें और यह स्पष्ट कर सकें कि ऐतिहासिक कलाकृतियाँ कैसे जीवंत इकाइयाँ हैं जो अपने पर्यावरण को आकार देती और प्रतिबिंबित करती हैं।



<b>GS Paper 1: Society</b>	
<b>TOPICS COVERED</b>	<b>19 January 2026</b>
1.	<b>How should India tackle child trafficking? भारत को बाल तस्करी से कैसे निपटना चाहिए?</b>
2.	<b>Can the Chinese government arrest its aging problem? क्या चीनी सरकार अपनी वृद्धावस्था की समस्या को रोक सकती है?</b>
3.	<b>Ploughing through tribal sustenance जनजातीय जीविका में संघर्ष</b>

# How should India tackle child trafficking?

What is the Palermo Protocol? How does the Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 define trafficking? How does the Constitution of India protect children from exploitation? How has the Supreme Court reacted? Why is a strong Centre-State relationship important for countering exploitation?

GS I: Society

MOB

## EXPLAINER

C. B. P. Srivastava

### The story so far:

Child trafficking remains a deeply disturbing reality in India. The Supreme Court in its recent decision in *K. P. Kiran Kumar versus State* has given strict guidelines to prevent such offences, and held that trafficking grossly violates children's fundamental right to life as guaranteed by the Constitution. According to the National Crime Records Bureau, in 2022, about 3,098 children below 18 years were rescued. Between April 2024 and March 2025, over 53,000 children were rescued from child labour, trafficking and kidnapping across India. However, the conviction rate for such offences between 2018 and 2022 was only 4.8%.

### What is child trafficking?

Internationally, the Palermo Protocol (UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children), 2000 defines child trafficking as 'the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation.' Presently, Section 143 of Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) 2023 provides that "whoever, for the purpose of exploitation, recruits, transports, harbours, transfers, or receives, a person or persons by, using threats; or using force, or any other form of coercion; or by abduction; or by practising fraud, or deception; or by abuse of power; or by inducement, including the giving or receiving of payments or benefits, in order to achieve the consent of any person having control over the person recruited, transported, harboured, transferred or received, commits the offence of trafficking." The word 'exploitation' is wide enough in its scope and includes physical and sexual exploitation as well. It also includes any form of slavery, servitude, or forced



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removal of organs.

### What are the rights of children?

The Constitution extensively provides for the protection of children. Articles 23 and 24 give protection from human trafficking, begging, forced labour and employment in hazardous industries. Apart from these provisions, the state is also obliged to ensure that children are not abused, and that they are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity. They are protected against exploitation and moral and material abandonment under Clauses (e) and (f) of Article 39 respectively.

The BNS under Sections 98 and 99 specifically addresses the 'selling and buying' of minors. On the other hand, prevention of trafficking for sexual exploitation is provided in the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956.

Furthermore, care, protection and rehabilitation for victims of child trafficking is provided under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. The Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2013 also intends to check such activities by providing a more comprehensive definition of trafficking by including sexual exploitation, slavery, servitude, forced labour, and organ removal. It will cover trafficking irrespective of consent.

The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 assumes greater significance in this regard. Apart from defining offences covering sexual assault, harassment and child pornography, the Act includes stringent punishments which inter alia include life imprisonment and even death penalty in extreme cases. One of the most important aspects of the Act is that it is gender-neutral. In order to provide rapid

trials, about 400 fast track courts set up exclusively for implementing the POCSO Act are in operation across India. These courts have set a target to dispose of around 165 cases per year per court.

### What has been the judicial approach?

In *Vishal Jeet versus Union of India*, 1990 it was held that trafficking and child prostitution are serious socio-economic problems and hence a preventive and humanistic approach is essential to deal with them. In *M. C. Mehta versus State of Tamil Nadu*, 1996, the Court issued guidelines with a view to prohibiting employment of children in hazardous industries. Moreover, in the *Bachpan Bachao Andolan versus Union of India*, 2011 case, the top court issued directions to address widespread exploitation and trafficking of children.

### What next?

The guidelines point out that the socio-economic vulnerabilities of the victims must be considered, especially those from marginalised communities. Society is still unable to protect children and adolescents from being criminals or being victims of crimes. Factors such as poverty, unemployment, migration, disasters and breakdown of the family system push children into vulnerability which strengthens the trafficking chain. In recent years, the spread of social media and online platforms has contributed to such offences, especially in terms of recruitment in the name of jobs or opportunities for "modelling". The government must first ensure that the social, economic and political rights of children are well protected with the help of institutions built for the purpose. Second, it must come down heavily on traffickers and ensure that the conviction rate improves considerably so that a deterrence may be created. Moreover, a strong Union-State relationship is also required because law and order and police are State subjects.

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## THE GIST

The Supreme Court in its recent decision in *K. P. Kiran Kumar versus State* has given strict guidelines to prevent such offences, and held that trafficking grossly violates children's fundamental right to life as guaranteed by the Constitution.

The guidelines point out that the socio-economic vulnerabilities of the victims must be considered, especially those from marginalised communities.

The Constitution extensively provides for the protection of children. Articles 23 and 24 give protection from human trafficking, begging, forced labour and employment in hazardous industries.

## How should India tackle child trafficking? भारत को बाल तस्करी से कैसे निपटना चाहिए?

Child trafficking remains a deeply disturbing reality in India  
भारत में बाल तस्करी एक गहरी चिंता का विषय बनी हुई है।

- The Supreme Court, in its recent decision in *K. P. Kiran Kumar versus State*, has given strict guidelines to prevent such offences, and held that **trafficking grossly violates children's fundamental right to life as guaranteed by the Constitution**. सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने के. पी. किरण कुमार बनाम राज्य के अपने हालिया निर्णय में ऐसी घटनाओं को रोकने



हेतु कड़े दिशानिर्देश जारी किए हैं और माना है कि तस्करी संविधान द्वारा प्रदत्त बच्चों के जीवन के मौलिक अधिकार का घोर उल्लंघन है।

- According to the **National Crime Records Bureau, in 2022, about 3,098 children below 18 years were rescued.**  
राष्ट्रीय अपराध रिकॉर्ड ब्यूरो के अनुसार, 2022 में 18 वर्ष से कम आयु के लगभग 3,098 बच्चों को बचाया गया।
- **Between April 2024 and March 2025, over 53,000 children were rescued from child labour, trafficking and kidnapping across India.**  
अप्रैल 2024 से मार्च 2025 के बीच, पूरे भारत में 53,000 से अधिक बच्चों को बाल श्रम, तस्करी और अपहरण से बचाया गया।
- However, the **conviction rate for such offences between 2018 and 2022 was only 4.8%.**  
हालाँकि, 2018 से 2022 के बीच ऐसे अपराधों में **दोषसिद्धि दर** केवल 4.8% रही।

### What is child trafficking? बाल तस्करी क्या है?

- Internationally, the **Palermo Protocol, 2000** defines child trafficking as the **recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation.**  
अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर, **पालेरमो प्रोटोकॉल, 2000** बाल तस्करी को **शोषण के उद्देश्य से किसी बच्चे की भर्ती, परिवहन, स्थानांतरण, आश्रय या प्राप्ति** के रूप में परिभाषित करता है।
- Presently, **Section 143 of Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023** provides that trafficking includes recruitment, transport, harbouring, transfer or receipt of persons for exploitation by **threats, force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power, or inducement.**  
वर्तमान में, **भारतीय न्याय संहिता (BNS), 2023** की धारा 143 के अनुसार तस्करी में **धमकी, बल, दबाव, अपहरण, धोखाधड़ी, छल, शक्ति का दुरुपयोग या प्रलोभन** द्वारा शोषण हेतु व्यक्ति की भर्ती, परिवहन, आश्रय, स्थानांतरण या प्राप्ति शामिल है।
- The word **'exploitation'** is wide enough and includes **physical and sexual exploitation, slavery, servitude, or forced removal of organs.**  
**'शोषण'** शब्द का दायरा व्यापक है और इसमें **शारीरिक व यौन शोषण, दासता, बंधुआपन, तथा अंगों को बलपूर्वक निकालना** भी शामिल है।

### What are the rights of children? बच्चों के अधिकार क्या हैं?

- The **Constitution** extensively provides for the **protection of children.**  
संविधान बच्चों के **संरक्षण** के लिए व्यापक प्रावधान करता है।
- **Articles 23 and 24** provide protection from **human trafficking, begging, forced labour, and employment in hazardous industries.**  
**अनुच्छेद 23 और 24** मानव तस्करी, भिक्षावृत्ति, बलात् श्रम और खतरनाक उद्योगों में रोजगार से संरक्षण प्रदान करते हैं।
- The **State** is also obliged to ensure that children are **not abused**, and are given opportunities to develop in conditions of **freedom and dignity.**  
राज्य का दायित्व है कि बच्चों के साथ **दुरुपयोग न हो** और उन्हें **स्वतंत्रता और गरिमा** की परिस्थितियों में विकास के अवसर मिलें।
- Children are protected against **exploitation and moral and material abandonment** under **Article 39 (e) and (f).**  
बच्चों को **अनुच्छेद 39 (e) और (f)** के अंतर्गत **शोषण तथा नैतिक व भौतिक परित्याग** से संरक्षण प्राप्त है।
- The **BNS, under Sections 98 and 99, specifically addresses the selling and buying of minors.**  
**BNS** की धारा 98 और 99 विशेष रूप से **नाबालिगों की खरीद और बिक्री** से संबंधित हैं।
- Prevention of trafficking for sexual exploitation is provided under the **Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956.**  
यौन शोषण हेतु तस्करी की रोकथाम **अनैतिक तस्करी (निवारण) अधिनियम, 1956** के अंतर्गत की जाती है।



- Care, protection and **rehabilitation of victims** of child trafficking are provided under the **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015**.  
बाल तस्करी के पीड़ितों की देखभाल, संरक्षण और पुनर्वास का प्रावधान किशोर न्याय (बालकों की देखभाल और संरक्षण) अधिनियम, 2015 में है।
- The **Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2013** provides a more **comprehensive definition of trafficking**, including **sexual exploitation, slavery, servitude, forced labour and organ removal**, and covers trafficking **irrespective of consent**.  
आपराधिक कानून (संशोधन) अधिनियम, 2013 तस्करी की व्यापक परिभाषा देता है, जिसमें यौन शोषण, दासता, बंधुआपन, बलात् श्रम और अंगों को निकालना शामिल है, तथा यह सहमति की परवाह किए बिना तस्करी को अपराध मानता है।

### The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 बाल यौन शोषण से बच्चों का संरक्षण अधिनियम (POCSO), 2012

- The **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012** assumes greater **significance** in this regard.  
इस संदर्भ में **बाल यौन शोषण से बच्चों का संरक्षण अधिनियम (POCSO), 2012** का अधिक महत्व है।
- **Apart from defining offences covering sexual assault, harassment and child pornography, the Act includes stringent punishments** which inter alia include **life imprisonment and even death penalty in extreme cases**.  
**यौन हमला, उत्पीड़न और बाल अश्लीलता** से संबंधित अपराधों को परिभाषित करने के अलावा, यह अधिनियम **कठोर दंडों** का प्रावधान करता है, जिनमें **गंभीर मामलों में आजीवन कारावास और यहां तक कि मृत्युदंड** भी शामिल है।
- One of the most important aspects of the Act is that it is **gender-neutral**.  
इस अधिनियम का सबसे महत्वपूर्ण पहलुओं में से एक यह है कि यह **लैंगिक रूप से तटस्थ** है।
- In order to provide **rapid trials**, about **400 fast track courts** set up exclusively for implementing the **POCSO Act** are in operation across **India**.  
**त्वरित सुनवाई** प्रदान करने के उद्देश्य से, **POCSO अधिनियम** के क्रियान्वयन के लिए विशेष रूप से स्थापित लगभग **400 फास्ट ट्रैक अदालतें** पूरे **भारत** में कार्यरत हैं।
- In **M. C. Mehta versus State of Tamil Nadu, 1996**, the Court issued **guidelines with a view to prohibiting employment of children in hazardous industries**.  
**M. C. Mehta बनाम तमिलनाडु राज्य, 1996** में न्यायालय ने **खतरनाक उद्योगों में बच्चों के रोजगार** को प्रतिबंधित करने के उद्देश्य से **दिशानिर्देश** जारी किए।
- Moreover, in the **Bachpan Bachao Andolan versus Union of India, 2011** case, the **top court** issued **directions to address widespread exploitation and trafficking of children**.  
इसके अलावा, **Bachpan Bachao Andolan बनाम Union of India, 2011** मामले में **शीर्ष न्यायालय** ने **बच्चों के व्यापक शोषण और तस्करी** से निपटने के लिए **निर्देश** जारी किए।

### What next? आगे क्या?

- **Factors such as poverty, unemployment, migration, disasters and breakdown of the family system** push children into **vulnerability** which strengthens the **trafficking chain**.  
**गरीबी, बेरोजगारी, प्रवास, आपदाएँ और परिवार व्यवस्था का टूटना** जैसे कारक बच्चों को **संवेदनशीलता** की ओर धकेलते हैं, जिससे **तस्करी की श्रृंखला** मजबूत होती है।
- In recent years, the spread of **social media and online platforms** has contributed to such **offences**, especially in terms of **recruitment** in the name of jobs or opportunities for **“modelling”**.  
हाल के वर्षों में **सोशल मीडिया और ऑनलाइन प्लेटफॉर्म** के प्रसार ने ऐसे **अपराधों** को बढ़ावा दिया है, विशेषकर **नौकरी** या **“मॉडलिंग”** के अवसरों के नाम पर **भर्ती** के संदर्भ में।



# Can the Chinese government arrest its ageing problem?

Why did Chinese President Xi Jinping abolish the one-child policy in 2016? Why has Beijing increased its age of retirement? What are some of the policies China is implementing to increase child birth?

GS1: Society  
Gunjan Singh

## The story so far:

The Chinese population has been consistently declining since 2022. As per the UN, by 2050 the Chinese population will be around 1.3 billion from a peak of 1.4 billion. This also means that the ratio of young to old will change and that around 40% of the population will be over 60. The oft repeated idea of China getting older before it gets richer seems unavoidable. In the hopes of avoiding this very challenge, Chinese President Xi Jinping had abolished the one-child policy in 2016 and replaced it with a two-child policy. In 2021, he extended it to a three-child policy. However, the decline has continued.

What policies did they implement?  
There has been a long list of policies

which the Chinese government has implemented to mitigate the ageing challenge. The most recent one was implemented on January 1, 2026. The government added 13% VAT on contraceptives and condoms. In 2025, the government announced a subsidy of 3,600 yuan (equivalent to \$500 dollars) for new parents for the first three years.

There has also been a waiver of fees for students in the last year of kindergarten while also reducing the fees of kindergartens in the private sector. Moreover, the salaries of kindergarten teachers have been included in fiscal guarantees to ensure that they are timely.

Beijing also raised the retirement age last year. For men, this stands now at 63 (up from 60) and for women it is 58 (up from 55 in white collar jobs) and 55 (up from 50 in blue collar jobs). This was adopted not only to manage the declining workforce but also to postpone the added

strain on the government with regards to pension funds. The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) has predicted that at the current rate the state pension fund will run out of money by 2035, due to lesser number of people joining the workforce. China has also increased the age cut-off for certain civil service exams from 35 to 38 (people with masters and doctoral degrees can apply till the age of 43). There is also a government backed campaign to encourage young people to marry and have children and to build a "birth-friendly society". However, the Chinese government continues to insert itself in the lives of its citizens as there have been instances of officials calling young married women asking their menstruation dates and their plans of having children. There is also an effort to reduce the 'bride price' (transfer of money from groom's family to the bride's) too. Moreover, the government has plans

to introduce love courses for single students in universities.

## What are the challenges?

For Mr. Xi, increasing birthrates is linked to the 'rejuvenation of the Chinese nation'. At the 20th Party Congress, Mr. Xi asserted, "We will improve the population development strategy, establish a policy system to boost birth rates, and bring down the costs of pregnancy and childbirth, childrearing and schooling". Further, in a 2021 speech, Mr. Xi argued that Chinese women should be "good wives, good mothers", and "link their future and destiny with the future and destiny of the motherland". As per Xi Jinping, the onus to manage the Chinese population, rising or falling, is on the shoulders of women.

While on the surface it seems that the Chinese government has been undertaking a myriad of steps to boost child birth, they all seem to be failing. The one-child policy, rising costs of living and healthcare, the high cost of bearing and raising children, high unemployment, all play a crucial role when it comes to family planning. The Chinese government is also struggling to manage the existing gender gap. During the one-child policy, there was a push for bearing male children. There are now 30 million more men than women in China.

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## THE GIST

As per the UN, by 2050 the Chinese population will be around 1.3 billion from a peak of 1.4 billion.

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For Mr. Xi, increasing birthrates is linked to the 'rejuvenation of the Chinese nation'.

## Can the Chinese government arrest its ageing problem? क्या चीनी सरकार अपनी वृद्धावस्था की समस्या को रोक सकती है?

The Chinese population has been consistently declining since 2022  
चीनी जनसंख्या 2022 से लगातार घट रही है

- As per the UN, by 2050 the Chinese population will be around 1.3 billion from a peak of 1.4 billion.  
संयुक्त राष्ट्र (UN) के अनुसार, 2050 तक चीन की जनसंख्या 1.4 अरब के शिखर से घटकर लगभग 1.3 अरब रह जाएगी।
- This also means that the ratio of young to old will change and that around 40% of the population will be over 60.  
इसका यह भी अर्थ है कि युवा और वृद्ध का अनुपात बदलेगा और लगभग 40% जनसंख्या 60 वर्ष से अधिक आयु की होगी।
- In the hopes of avoiding this very challenge, Chinese President Xi Jinping had abolished the one-child policy in 2016 and replaced it with a two-child policy.  
इसी चुनौती से बचने की आशा में, चीनी राष्ट्रपति शी जिनपिंग ने 2016 में एक-बच्चा नीति को समाप्त कर दो-बच्चा नीति लागू की।
- In 2021, he extended it to a three-child policy.  
2021 में इसे आगे बढ़ाकर तीन-बच्चा नीति कर दिया गया।
- The government added 13% VAT on contraceptives and condoms.  
सरकार ने गर्भनिरोधक और कंडोम पर 13% वैट लगाया।
- In 2025, the government announced a subsidy of 3,600 yuan (equivalent to \$500 dollars) for new parents for the first three years.  
2025 में सरकार ने नए माता-पिता के लिए पहले तीन वर्षों तक 3,600 युआन (लगभग 500 डॉलर) की सब्सिडी की घोषणा की।
- There has also been a waiver of fees for students in the last year of kindergarten while also reducing the fees of kindergartens in the private sector.  
इसके साथ ही किंडरगार्टन के अंतिम वर्ष के छात्रों के लिए शुल्क माफी दी गई और निजी क्षेत्र के किंडरगार्टन की फीस कम की गई।
- Moreover, the salaries of kindergarten teachers have been included in fiscal guarantees to ensure that they are timely.



इसके अलावा, किंडरगार्टन शिक्षकों के वेतन को राजकोषीय गारंटी में शामिल किया गया है ताकि उनका भुगतान समय पर हो सके।

- Beijing also raised the retirement age last year. बीजिंग ने पिछले वर्ष सेवानिवृत्ति आयु भी बढ़ाई।
- For men, this stands now at 63 (up from 60) and for women it is 58 (up from 55 in white collar jobs) and 55 (up from 50 in blue collar jobs). पुरुषों के लिए यह अब 63 वर्ष (60 से बढ़ाकर) और महिलाओं के लिए 58 वर्ष (श्वेतपोश नौकरियों में 55 से बढ़ाकर) तथा 55 वर्ष (नीलपोश नौकरियों में 50 से बढ़ाकर) कर दी गई है।
- This was adopted not only to manage the declining workforce but also to postpone the added strain on the government with regards to pension funds. यह कदम न केवल घटते कार्यबल को संभालने के लिए बल्कि पेंशन फंड पर सरकार पर पड़ने वाले अतिरिक्त दबाव को टालने के लिए भी उठाया गया।
- There is also a government backed campaign to encourage young people to marry and have children and to build a "birth-friendly society". युवाओं को विवाह और संतानोत्पत्ति के लिए प्रोत्साहित करने तथा "जन्म-अनुकूल समाज" बनाने हेतु सरकार समर्थित अभियान भी चलाया जा रहा है।
- However, the Chinese government continues to insert itself in the lives of its citizens as there have been instances of officials calling young married women asking their menstruation dates and their plans of having children. हालाँकि, चीनी सरकार अपने नागरिकों के जीवन में हस्तक्षेप करती रहती है, क्योंकि ऐसे मामले सामने आए हैं जहाँ अधिकारियों ने युवा विवाहित महिलाओं को उनके मासिक धर्म की तिथियाँ और संतान की योजना पूछने के लिए फोन किया।
- There is also an effort to reduce the 'bride price' (transfer of money from groom's family to the bride's) too. इसके साथ ही 'दुल्हन मूल्य' (दूल्हे के परिवार से दुल्हन को धन का हस्तांतरण) को कम करने का प्रयास भी किया जा रहा है।
- Moreover, the government has plans to introduce love courses for single students in universities. इसके अलावा, सरकार विश्वविद्यालयों में अविवाहित छात्रों के लिए लव कोर्स शुरू करने की योजना बना रही है।

**What are the challenges?**  
चुनौतियाँ क्या हैं?

- For Mr. Xi, increasing birthrates is linked to the 'rejuvenation of the Chinese nation'. शी जिनपिंग के लिए जन्म दर बढ़ाना, 'चीनी राष्ट्र के पुनरुत्थान' से जुड़ा हुआ है।
- At the 20th Party Congress, Mr. Xi asserted, "We will improve the population development strategy, establish a policy system to boost birth rates, and bring down the costs of pregnancy and childbirth, childrearing and schooling". 20वीं पार्टी कांग्रेस में शी जिनपिंग ने कहा, "हम जनसंख्या विकास रणनीति में सुधार करेंगे, जन्म दर बढ़ाने के लिए नीतिगत प्रणाली स्थापित करेंगे और गर्भावस्था, प्रसव, पालन-पोषण और शिक्षा की लागत को कम करेंगे।"
- The one-child policy, rising costs of living and healthcare, the high cost of bearing and raising children, high unemployment, all play a crucial role when it comes to family planning. एक-बच्चा नीति, जीवनयापन और स्वास्थ्य सेवा की बढ़ती लागत, बच्चों को जन्म देने और पालने की ऊँची लागत, तथा उच्च बेरोजगारी, ये सभी परिवार नियोजन में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाते हैं।
- The Chinese government is also struggling to manage the existing gender gap. चीनी सरकार मौजूदा लैंगिक असंतुलन को संभालने में भी संघर्ष कर रही है।
- During the one-child policy, there was a push for bearing male children. एक-बच्चा नीति के दौरान पुरुष संतान को प्राथमिकता देने की प्रवृत्ति थी।
- There are now 30 million more men than women in China. अब चीन में महिलाओं की तुलना में 3 करोड़ अधिक पुरुष हैं।



<b>GS Paper II: Polity,</b>	
<b>TOPICS COVERED</b>	
<b>19 January 2026</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>8 Opposition leaders booked as row over Manikarnika Ghat intensifies</b> <b>मणिकर्णिका घाट विवाद तेज होने पर 8 विपक्षी नेताओं पर मामला दर्ज</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Telangana's stunning rise and its unhinged growth.</b> <b>तेलंगाना का शानदार उदय और उसकी असंतुलित वृद्धि।</b>

## 8 Opposition leaders booked as row over **Manikarnika Ghat** intensifies

**GS II: Polity**  
**Mayank Kumar**  
LUCKNOW

A war of words erupted on Sunday between the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Opposition parties after multiple first information reports (FIRs) were lodged in Varanasi against those allegedly spreading AI-generated images and misleading information on social media regarding redevelopment work at the Manikarnika Ghat. While Opposition parties expressed outrage over the registered cases, calling them dictatorial, the BJP hit back, alleging a calculated attempt to circulate false claims amid the government's rejuvenation push.

The eight booked individuals include Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, Lok Sabha MP Rajesh Ranjan, alias

Pappu Yadav, and Congress leader Jaswinder Kaur. The FIRs have been lodged under Section 196 (promoting enmity, hatred, or disharmony between different groups through speech, writing, signs, or electronic means) and Section 298 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023.

Reacting to the FIR against him, Mr. Singh alleged that the redevelopment work had caused destruction at Manikarnika Ghat. Temples were damaged and a statue of Ahilyabai Holkar was defaced, drawing protests from *sadhush* and others, he alleged.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday accused the Congress of spreading "false propaganda" to defame Kashi. He was responding to allegations regarding the demolition of statues and



Old structures being demolished at the Manikarnika Ghat in Varanasi. ANI VIDEO GRAB

temples at the ghat and viral videos related to it.

"Separate cases have been registered in Varanasi on the petition of Municipal Corporation officials against those allegedly spreading AI-generated images and misleading information on social media regarding the redevelopment

work at the Manikarnika Ghat. Based on the complaints received, the police have filed cases against various X handles and individuals. We are keeping a track on social media and using digital footprints to crack down on those spreading rumours," Atul Anjan Tripathi, Assistant

Commissioner of Police, Dashaswamedh, Varanasi, said. The booked individuals include leaders of political parties, including the Congress and AAP.

### 'Dictatorial attitude'

Uttar Pradesh Congress president Ajay Rai said that if the videos were AI-generated, concrete evidence should be made public, and described the cases as reflective of a dictatorial attitude. "I ask the Chief Minister directly: If the video of the statue is AI-generated, concrete evidence of this should be made public. It should also be clarified where the statue went and where it is currently located. The government is trying to conceal the truth by claiming it was an AI video. This contradiction raises questions about the government's own intentions. Yesterday, the Chief

Minister visited Varanasi and was scheduled to visit Manikarnika Ghat, but it was suddenly cancelled. The question is, why was this visit cancelled? Was it to prevent the truth from coming out? Congress makes it clear that any tampering with the faith, culture and heritage of Kashi will not be tolerated. The voice of truth cannot be suppressed," Mr. Rai said.

The BJP alleged that the Opposition's attempt to spread falsehoods and provoke outrage reflected political desperation rather than concern for culture.

"At a time when the government is undertaking transparent and sensitive rejuvenation of Kashi's heritage, the Opposition's attempt to spread falsehoods and provoke outrage reflects not concern for culture, but political despera-

tion and a calculated effort to derail development through misinformation," Pushkar Mishra, a senior BJP functionary, said.

A local Congress leader in Varanasi, Manish Kumar Upadhyay, alleged that for the past several years, the manner in which Kashi's historicity, ancient traditions, cultural and religious identity, and civilisation were being affected in the name of development by the local administration at the behest of the government was a matter of grave concern and a subject of self-reflection for residents of the city.

Manikarnika Ghat is among the holiest cremation grounds in Hinduism, believed to grant *moksha* or liberation from the cycle of birth and death, and holds deep cultural significance for devotees across the country.

## 8 Opposition leaders booked as row over Manikarnika Ghat intensifies

### मणिकर्णिका घाट विवाद तेज होने पर 8 विपक्षी नेताओं पर मामला दर्ज

- The FIRs have been lodged under **Section 196** (promoting enmity, hatred, or disharmony between different groups through speech, writing, signs, or electronic means) and **Section 298** of the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023**.

एफआईआर धारा 196 (भाषण, लेखन, संकेत या इलेक्ट्रॉनिक माध्यमों से विभिन्न समूहों के बीच शत्रुता, घृणा या वैमनस्य को बढ़ावा देना) और भारतीय न्याय संहिता (बीएनएस), 2023 की धारा 298 के तहत दर्ज की गई हैं।



# Telangana's stunning rise and its unhinged growth

However, data on this achievement point to the need for policies to be formulated to spread the fruits of growth across the State

SS II: Polity

## DATA POINT

R. Nagaraj and Vikash Vaibhav

**T**elangana is the richest among major Indian States, with highest per capita income. In 2022-23, the latest year for which data for all States are available, the figure for Telangana stood at ₹3.54 lakh (at current prices).

For Karnataka it was ₹3.44 lakh, Haryana ₹3.24 lakh, Gujarat ₹3.1 lakh, Tamil Nadu ₹3.09 lakh, Kerala ₹2.9 lakh and Maharashtra ₹2.89 lakh.

This is an impressive achievement as these States were ranked higher in 2013-14, at the time of Telangana's formation in June 2014. Using Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) and District Domestic Product (DDP) data, the State's performance can be assessed in terms of regional concentration and sectoral spread. These two issues were quite central to the demand for a separate State of Telangana. Neighbouring Andhra Pradesh serves as the comparator for this purpose.

### Economic size of Telangana

In 2004-05, Telangana's economic size was about three-fourths of Andhra Pradesh (74%). The gap became almost negligible at the time of the bifurcation (96% in 2013-14). Since then, the State's relative size has remained stable (96.5% in 2024-25). The same holds in per capita terms as well (Chart 1). Telangana's per capita income was slightly higher than Andhra Pradesh's in 2004-05 (6%). It steadily rose to 1.3 times by 2013-14, and remained constant since then (1.35 times in 2024-25).

Sectoral composition: At a sectoral level, the relative decline of the agricultural and industrial (and manufacturing) sectors in Telangana has been faster than the national average. The services sector was about 1.25 times that of Andhra Pradesh in 2013-14. This

has steadily climbed to 1.47 by 2024-25 (Chart 2)

Components of the services sector: Which part of the services sector has driven this? 'Real estate, ownership of dwelling, and Business service' (Real estate and IT) and 'Trade, Hotel, and Restaurants' (THR). Compared to Andhra Pradesh, the former sector jumped from 2 times to 2.7 times during 2013-14 and 2024-25 (Chart 3). This performance is closely matched by the second sub-sector. Due to this impressive performance, these two sub-sectors constitute about two-thirds of the services sector output in 2024-25 in Telangana: real estate and IT (35.3%), and THR (29.6%).

What about the geography of economic growth? Undivided Andhra Pradesh had 23 districts of which 10 were carved out to form Telangana. Soon after, in October 2016, Telangana was divided into 21 new districts, with two more formed in 2019. Hyderabad was the only district left undivided.

To gain a perspective, we track the output shares of the original 10 districts since 2004-05. For clarity, the illustration shows only two leading districts: Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy (RR). None of the other eight districts ever contributed more than a tenth of the economy of the State since its creation. In 2022-23, the range was between 4.4% (Nizamabad) and 8.9% (Medak).

The dominance of Metro Hyderabad: Hyderabad, along with its neighbouring RR district, is the State's economically dominant region (Chart 4). These two districts (Metropolitan Hyderabad) account for about half of the State's economy (47.5% in 2022-23). They cover less than a tenth of its area (8.7%), and are home to slightly over a fourth of its people (27.9% based on the 2011 Census). Metro Hyderabad's economic share has remained roughly stable over the last decade.

The rise of Ranga Reddy district: RR district was carved out of

Hyderabad in 1978, comprising mostly of its rural areas.

In its original creation, it surrounded Hyderabad from all sides. In 2016, as part of a State-wide strategy, RR district was subdivided into three districts. The smaller RR district covered Hyderabad from the south, Medchal-Malkajgiri from the north while the western part became Vikarabad, with Metro Hyderabad as a contiguous area.

In 2014, RR district overtook Hyderabad in the metro region to become the economically leading district, mainly due to the booming IT sector. It is a historical irony that RR district (then an undivided district) was one of India's 250 most backward districts (out of 640) in 2006. It is now one of India's richest districts, with a per capita income of ₹9.5 lakh in 2023-24.

On the flip side, Vikarabad (which was part of RR district until 2019), has now the State's lowest per capita income (₹1.8 lakh).

### Telangana's engine

Telangana's rise is stunning. Metro Hyderabad is its engine, contributing nearly one-half of the State's output, driven by two sub-sectors, namely, real estate-IT, and trade, hotel, and restaurants. However, the engine is unhinged from the rest of the State, with its neighbouring district,

Vikarabad, for instance, is lagging, with just 1.5% of Telangana's output. In a deepening democracy, such an extremely uneven growth process can lead to social and political backlash, given the State's long history of people's movements and violent struggles. The situation calls for policies to spread the fruits of growth across the State to redress severe spatial imbalances.

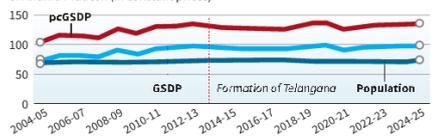
R. Nagaraj was formerly with the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research. Vikash Vaibhav teaches at the School of Liberal Arts and Humanities, O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonapat

## Concentrated growth

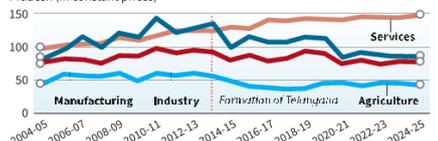
The data for the charts were sourced from the Economic & Political Weekly Research Foundation and Dataful



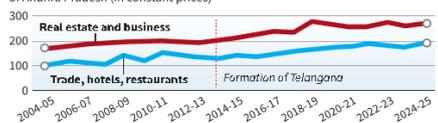
**CHART 1:** Telangana's GSDP and per capita income (pcGSDP) as a percentage of Andhra Pradesh (in constant prices)



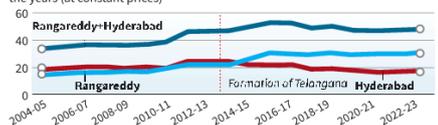
**CHART 2:** Sectoral performance of Telangana as a percentage of Andhra Pradesh (in constant prices)



**CHART 3:** Two major components of Telangana's services sector as a percentage of Andhra Pradesh (in constant prices)



**CHART 4:** Share of Rangareddy's and Hyderabad in Telangana's economy over the years (at constant prices)



## Telangana's stunning rise and its unhinged growth.

### तेलंगाना का शानदार उदय और उसकी असंतुलित वृद्धि।

- Telangana is the **richest among major Indian States**, with the **highest per capita income**. तेलंगाना प्रमुख भारतीय राज्यों में सबसे समृद्ध है, जहाँ प्रति व्यक्ति आय सबसे अधिक है।
- In **2022-23**, the latest year for which data for all States are available, the **figure for Telangana stood at ₹3.54 lakh at current prices**. 2022-23 में, जो सभी राज्यों के लिए उपलब्ध नवीनतम वर्ष है, तेलंगाना की प्रति व्यक्ति आय ₹3.54 लाख रही, जो वर्तमान मूल्यों पर है।
- For Karnataka it was ₹3.44 lakh, Haryana ₹3.24 lakh, Gujarat ₹3.1 lakh, Tamil Nadu ₹3.09 lakh, Kerala ₹2.9 lakh and Maharashtra ₹2.89 lakh. कर्नाटक के लिए यह ₹3.44 लाख, हरियाणा ₹3.24 लाख, गुजरात ₹3.1 लाख, तमिलनाडु ₹3.09 लाख, केरल ₹2.9 लाख और महाराष्ट्र ₹2.89 लाख थी।
- This is an **impressive achievement** as these States were **ranked higher in 2013-14**, at the time of **Telangana's formation in June 2014**. यह एक उल्लेखनीय उपलब्धि है क्योंकि 2013-14 में, जून 2014 में तेलंगाना के गठन के समय, ये राज्य ऊँचे स्थान पर थे।



- Using **Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP)** and **District Domestic Product (DDP)** data, the State's performance can be assessed in terms of **regional concentration** and **sectoral spread**.  
सकल राज्य घरेलू उत्पाद (GSDP) और जिला घरेलू उत्पाद (DDP) के आँकड़ों का उपयोग कर, राज्य के प्रदर्शन का मूल्यांकन क्षेत्रीय एकाग्रता और क्षेत्रीय विस्तार के संदर्भ में किया जा सकता है।
- At a **sectoral level**, the relative decline of the **agricultural** and **industrial (manufacturing)** sectors in Telangana has been **faster than the national average**.  
क्षेत्रीय स्तर पर, तेलंगाना में कृषि और औद्योगिक (निर्माण) क्षेत्रों की सापेक्ष गिरावट राष्ट्रीय औसत से अधिक तेज़ रही है।
- The **services sector** was about **1.25 times** that of **Andhra Pradesh** in **2013–14**.  
2013–14 में सेवा क्षेत्र, आंध्र प्रदेश की तुलना में लगभग 1.25 गुना था।
- This has steadily climbed to **1.47 by 2024–25**.  
यह लगातार बढ़कर 2024–25 में 1.47 तक पहुँच गया।

### Components of the services sector सेवा क्षेत्र के घटक

- Which part of the services sector has driven this.  
सेवा क्षेत्र के किस हिस्से ने इस वृद्धि को आगे बढ़ाया है।
- '**Real estate, ownership of dwelling, and Business service**' (Real estate and IT) and '**Trade, Hotel, and Restaurants**' (THR).  
'रियल एस्टेट, आवास का स्वामित्व और व्यवसायिक सेवाएँ' (रियल एस्टेट और आईटी) तथा 'व्यापार, होटल और रेस्तरां' (THR)।
- Compared to Andhra Pradesh, the former sector **jumped from 2 times to 2.7 times** during **2013–14 and 2024–25**.  
आंध्र प्रदेश की तुलना में, पूर्ववर्ती क्षेत्र 2013–14 से 2024–25 के दौरान 2 गुना से बढ़कर 2.7 गुना हो गया।
- In a deepening democracy, such an extremely uneven growth process can lead to social and political backlash, given the State's long history of people's movements and violent struggles.**  
एक परिपक्व होती लोकतांत्रिक व्यवस्था में, इस तरह की अत्यधिक असमान विकास प्रक्रिया राज्य के जन आंदोलनों और हिंसक संघर्षों के लंबे इतिहास को देखते हुए सामाजिक और राजनीतिक प्रतिक्रिया को जन्म दे सकती है।
- The situation calls for **policies to spread the fruits of growth across the State to redress severe spatial imbalances.**  
स्थिति की माँग है कि विकास के लाभ पूरे राज्य में फैलाने वाली नीतियाँ अपनाई जाएँ, ताकि गंभीर स्थानिक असंतुलन को दूर किया जा सके।

<b>GS Paper II: Governance,</b>	
<b>TOPICS COVERED</b>	<b>19 January 2026</b>
1.	<b>A.P. to launch quantum skilling course for students</b> आंध्र प्रदेश छात्रों के लिए क्वांटम स्किलिंग कोर्स शुरू करेगा
2.	<b>Fill vacant faculty positions within 4 months: SC</b> चार महीनों में रिक्त संकाय पद भरें: सुप्रीम कोर्ट
3.	<b>Media bodies seek new chairperson for Press Council of India</b> मीडिया संगठनों ने प्रेस काउंसिल ऑफ इंडिया के लिए नए अध्यक्ष की मांग की
4.	<b>Corruption and prior sanction, case of a divided house</b> भ्रष्टाचार और पूर्व स्वीकृति, विभाजित सदन का मामला



5. Crisis in education.  
शिक्षा में संकट।

A.P. to launch  
quantum  
skilling course  
for students

GS II: Governance:  
Education

VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh has enrolled 55,000 students on a mass quantum skilling course on "Quantum Computing: Quantum Algorithms and Qiskit" through the National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL) set to begin from Monday.

The programme is being organised by the Andhra Pradesh State Council of Higher Education. The NPTEL course which will be delivered by faculty from IIT-Madras and IBM Quantum will offer hands-on exposure to quantum algorithms, quantum error correction and Qiskit programming to equip students with relevant skills.

A.P. to launch quantum skilling course for students  
आंध्र प्रदेश छात्रों के लिए क्वांटम स्किलिंग कोर्स शुरू करेगा

- Andhra Pradesh has enrolled 55,000 students on a mass quantum skilling course on "Quantum Computing: Quantum Algorithms and Qiskit" through the National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL) set to begin from Monday.

आंध्र प्रदेश ने सोमवार से शुरू होने वाले नेशनल प्रोग्राम ऑन टेक्नोलॉजी एन्हांस्ड लर्निंग (एनपीटीईएल) के माध्यम से "क्वांटम कंप्यूटिंग: क्वांटम एल्गोरिदम और क्विस्किट" पर एक व्यापक क्वांटम स्किलिंग कोर्स में 55,000 छात्रों का नामांकन किया है।

- The programme is being organised by the Andhra Pradesh State Council of Higher Education.

यह कार्यक्रम आंध्र प्रदेश राज्य उच्च शिक्षा परिषद द्वारा आयोजित किया जा रहा है।

- The NPTEL course which will be delivered by faculty from IIT-Madras and IBM Quantum will offer hands-on exposure to quantum algorithms, quantum error correction and Qiskit programming to equip students with relevant skills.

आईआईटी-मद्रास और आईबीएम क्वांटम के संकाय द्वारा संचालित एनपीटीईएल कोर्स छात्रों को क्वांटम एल्गोरिदम, क्वांटम एरर करेक्शन और क्विस्किट प्रोग्रामिंग में व्यावहारिक अनुभव प्रदान करेगा, ताकि उन्हें प्रासंगिक कौशल से लैस किया जा सके।



# Media bodies seek new chairperson for Press Council of India

**GS II: Governance**  
**Press Trust of India**  
NEW DELHI

Media associations on Sunday urged the government to appoint a new chairperson for the Press Council of India as the post fell vacant after Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai completed her tenure last month.

The Press Council of India, a statutory, quasi-judicial body to safeguard press freedom, has been without a chairperson for the first time in its history, the Press Association and journalists' bodies of Mumbai, Assam, West Bengal,

Odisha, and Chandigarh-Punjab said in a joint statement in New Delhi.

"The term of the 14th Council ended more than a year ago, but the full 15th Council is yet to be formed, and the post of chairman has not been filled, while the last chairman's three-year extended term ended in December," the statement said.

The Press Council of India comprises 29 members, including the chairperson, with a tenure of three years. Currently, 14 people have been appointed to the council.

while the last chairman's three-year extended term ended in December," the statement said.

बयान में कहा गया, "14वीं काउंसिल का कार्यकाल एक साल से अधिक पहले समाप्त हो गया था, लेकिन पूरी 15वीं काउंसिल अभी तक गठित नहीं हुई है, और अध्यक्ष का पद भरा नहीं गया है, जबकि पिछले अध्यक्ष का तीन वर्षीय विस्तारित कार्यकाल दिसंबर में समाप्त हो गया।"

- The Press Council of India comprises 29 members, including the chairperson, with a tenure of three years. Currently, 14 people have been appointed to the council.

प्रेस काउंसिल ऑफ इंडिया में अध्यक्ष सहित 29 सदस्य होते हैं, जिनका कार्यकाल तीन वर्ष का होता है। वर्तमान में, परिषद में 14 लोगों की नियुक्ति की गई है।

## Media bodies seek new chairperson for Press Council of India

मीडिया संगठनों ने प्रेस काउंसिल ऑफ इंडिया के लिए नए अध्यक्ष की मांग की

- The Press Council of India, a statutory, quasi-judicial body to safeguard press freedom, has been without a chairperson for the first time in its history, the Press Association and journalists' bodies of Mumbai, Assam, West Bengal, Odisha, and Chandigarh-Punjab said in a joint statement in New Delhi.

प्रेस काउंसिल ऑफ इंडिया, जो प्रेस की स्वतंत्रता की रक्षा के लिए एक वैधानिक, अर्ध-न्यायिक निकाय है, अपने इतिहास में पहली बार बिना अध्यक्ष के है, ऐसा मुंबई, असम, पश्चिम बंगाल, ओडिशा और चंडीगढ़-पंजाब के प्रेस एसोसिएशन और पत्रकार संगठनों ने नई दिल्ली में जारी संयुक्त बयान में कहा।

- "The term of the 14th Council ended more than a year ago, but the full 15th Council is yet to be formed, and the post of chairman has not been filled,



## Corruption and prior sanction, case of a divided house

GS II: Governance: Corruption

**O**n January 13, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court of India, comprising Justice B.V. Nagarathna and Justice K.V. Viswanathan, delivered a split verdict on the challenge to the constitutional validity of Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption (PC) Act, 1988 ("the section"), in *The Centre for Public Interest Litigation (CPIL) vs Union of India*. Both judgments in this case are exhaustive, exemplifying the best tradition of the Court in bestowing the deepest judicial consideration and exercise of judicial conscience to the issues before the Court. The case had challenged the constitutionality of the section that effectively provided that no police officer would conduct any inquiry or investigation into any offence alleged to have been committed by a public servant regarding any recommendation made or decision taken in the discharge of official functions, without the prior sanction of the appropriate government.

The case was mounted on the premise that corruption is anathema to rule of law and vesting the government with the power to stall corruption investigations (where it may have a vested interest) would allow corruption to go uninvestigated and, hence, unchecked.

### Arguments of both sides

In this case, the petitioners argued that the amended section was unconstitutional, being in the teeth of two earlier judgments of the Court. When a Single Directive (a consolidated set of instructions issued to the Central Bureau of Investigation, or CBI, by various Ministries/Departments), requiring prior sanction of the designated authority before initiating investigation against certain categories of public servants, was issued, its legality was challenged.

In *Vineet Narain vs Union of India* (1998) 1 SCC 226, the Court had quashed the Single Directive and held that the final opinion whether to investigate or not has to be made by the CBI and not by anyone else. The executive on its own cannot foreclose inquiry into any allegation of corruption as that would be entering the domain of the investigative agency.

The judgment came in the backdrop of the N.N. Vohra Committee (1993) that presented the frightening criminal nexus between highly-placed politicians, high-ranking bureaucrats, and criminal elements. The Court held that equality before the law under Article 14 and the rule of law itself could only be preserved if investigative agencies are insulated from political, executive and bureaucratic interference.

To bypass the judgment in *Vineet Narain*, the central government enacted the Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003. Here it introduced Section 6A to the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act (DSPE) Act, effectively reintroducing the Single Directive. A Constitution

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The split verdict in the CPIL case is about protecting honest public servants while also ensuring an efficient anti-corruption regime

Bench in *Dr. Subramaniam Swamy vs Director, CBI & Anr* (2014) 8 SCC 682 declared Section 6A of the DSPE Act to be unconstitutional on the ground that the classification of officers based on status in government service, for the purpose of investigation was discriminatory and violative of Article 14. It also held that such power to interdict corruption investigations would encourage the criminal-bureaucrat-politician nexus and thwart unbiased and efficient inquiry/investigation to track down corrupt public servants. The Court held: "... the signature tune in *Vineet Narain* is, 'However high you may be, the law is above you' We reiterate the same. Section 6A offends this signature tune and effectively Article 14."

In the CPIL case, the petitioners argued that the Section 17A of the PC Act is distinguishable from Section 6A of the DSPE Act only in the sense that it expands the scope of protection to all levels of public servants and not just to a particular category of public servants (as 6A of the DSPE Act did). The Section does not just ignore the clear findings arrived at by the Court earlier but also chooses to defy the spirit of those findings. It was further argued that the Section runs contrary to the dictum in *Lalita Kumari vs Government of Uttar Pradesh & Ors* (2014) 2 SCC 1, which mandated registration of a first information report and consequent investigation on the disclosure of a cognisable offence.

The government on the other hand defended the constitutionality of the Section and sought to distinguish it from the earlier judgments of the Court on the ground that the Single Directive was struck down as it was merely an administrative order. It added that the Subramaniam Swamy judgment was dealing with a distinction made between officers of Joint Secretary and above versus officers below – both of which did not apply to the present challenge to the constitutionality of the Section.

### Where the judges differed

Justice Nagarathna, while upholding the petitioner's contentions, held Section 17A to be contrary to the objects of the Act and unconstitutional as the requirement of prior sanction from the government, she held, "forestalls an enquiry and thereby in substance protects the corrupt". The Section shields a class of public servants and revives an impermissible protection which was previously struck down in *Vineet Narain* and *Subramaniam Swamy*. She also held that there was a conflict of interest between the government (Minister granting sanction) and the officers whose consent for investigation was sought, since they would often be working in the same department with a meeting of minds about decisions taken, amounting to acts of corruption.

Therefore, such a provision was likely to impede investigation into corrupt officers who may, instead, find protection from higher

authorities within the same institutional nexus, thereby allowing unchecked corruption. She also held that there would be a policy bias in the officials tasked with granting sanction as they would lack neutrality while considering a request for approval for carrying out an inquiry or investigation into a complaint vis-à-vis a decision taken by a public servant in their department.

Justice Viswanathan, while agreeing with Justice Nagarathna and the petitioners that leaving the power of consent with the government would render the provision unconstitutional, found no fault with the provision of prior sanction per se. He held it to be constitutionally valid, subject to the condition that the grant or refusal of approval would rest not with the government but with an independent agency before the decision is taken by the government.

He observed that striking down the Section would lead to a policy paralysis as he felt that honest public servants needed to be insulated from frivolous and mala fide police investigations. He held that the Lokpal, conceived as an independent anti-corruption authority, would deal with such cases in an independent manner, and that its recommendations would be binding on the government as the PC Act and the Lokpal Act operate in the same normative field. "Both address allegations of corruption against public servants, both recognise the need for screening, and both seek to balance accountability with protection against misuse".

### At the core

The core disagreement between the two judges is on how to strike a constitutional balance between protecting honest decision-making public servants and ensuring an efficient anti-corruption regime. There is partial agreement between the two judges on the provision being unconstitutional if the power of granting sanction for investigation was left with the government. There remains disagreement on whether prior approval before inquiry or investigation by a police officer is an impermissible barrier (making the Section unconstitutional) or whether having an independent agency such as the Lokpal as a filter to prevent abuse would overcome this barrier (thereby upholding the Section's constitutionality).

Differing from her brother judge, Justice Nagarathna stated, "whether prior approval must be given, was the question, and not who, within or outside the government should give the approval."

The matter has been referred to the Chief Justice of India for constitution of a larger Bench to decide the issue conclusively.

*Prashant Bhushan and Cheryl D'Souza were counsels for the petitioners in this case before the Supreme Court of India*

## Corruption and prior sanction, case of a divided house

### भ्रष्टाचार और पूर्व स्वीकृति, विभाजित सदन का मामला

- On January 13, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court of India, comprising Justice B.V. Nagarathna and Justice K.V. Viswanathan, delivered a split verdict on the challenge to the constitutional validity of Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption (PC) Act, 1988, in *The Centre for Public Interest Litigation (CPIL) vs Union of India*.

13 जनवरी को, भारत के सर्वोच्च न्यायालय की दो-न्यायाधीश पीठ, जिसमें न्यायमूर्ति बी.वी. नागरत्ना और न्यायमूर्ति के.वी. विश्वनाथन शामिल थे, ने भ्रष्टाचार निवारण अधिनियम, 1988 की धारा 17A की संवैधानिक वैधता को चुनौती देने वाले मामले द सेंटर फॉर पब्लिक इंटरिस्ट लिटिगेशन (CPIL) बनाम भारत संघ में विभाजित निर्णय दिया।

- Both judgments in this case are exhaustive, exemplifying the best tradition of the Court in bestowing the deepest judicial consideration and exercise of judicial conscience to the issues before the Court.

इस मामले में दोनों निर्णय विस्तृत हैं और न्यायालय के समक्ष प्रस्तुत मुद्दों पर गहन न्यायिक विचार तथा न्यायिक अंतरात्मा के सर्वोत्तम प्रयोग की परंपरा का उदाहरण प्रस्तुत करते हैं।

- The case had challenged the constitutionality of the section that effectively provided that no police officer would conduct any inquiry or investigation into any offence alleged to have



been committed by a **public servant** regarding any **recommendation made or decision taken** in the discharge of **official functions**, without the **prior sanction** of the **appropriate government**.

इस मामले में उस प्रावधान की **संवैधानिकता** को चुनौती दी गई थी, जिसके अनुसार किसी **लोक सेवक** द्वारा **आधिकारिक कर्तव्यों** के निर्वहन में की गई किसी **सिफारिश या निर्णय** से संबंधित किसी कथित अपराध की **जांच या अन्वेषण** कोई **पुलिस अधिकारी उचित सरकार की पूर्व स्वीकृति** के बिना नहीं कर सकता।

- The case was mounted on the premise that **corruption is anathema to the rule of law** and vesting the **government** with the power to **stall corruption investigations** (where it may have a **vested interest**) would allow corruption to go **uninvestigated** and, hence, **unchecked**.

यह मामला इस आधार पर दायर किया गया था कि **भ्रष्टाचार कानून के शासन** के प्रतिकूल है और **सरकार** को **भ्रष्टाचार जांच रोकने** की शक्ति देना, जहाँ उसका **स्वार्थ** हो सकता है, **भ्रष्टाचार को बिना जांच** और इसलिए **अनियंत्रित छोड़ देगा**।

### Arguments of both sides दोनों पक्षों के तर्क

- In this case, the **petitioners** argued that the **amended section** was **unconstitutional**, being in the teeth of **two earlier judgments** of the Court.  
इस मामले में **याचिकाकर्ताओं** ने तर्क दिया कि **संशोधित धारा** न्यायालय के **दो पूर्व निर्णयों** के विपरीत होने के कारण **असंवैधानिक** है।
- When a **Single Directive** (a consolidated set of instructions issued to the **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)** by various **Ministries/Departments**), requiring **prior sanction** of the designated authority before initiating investigation against certain categories of **public servants**, was issued, its **legality** was challenged.  
जब **सिंगल डायरेक्टिव** (विभिन्न मंत्रालयों/विभागों द्वारा **केंद्रीय अन्वेषण ब्यूरो (CBI)** को जारी निर्देशों का समेकित समूह), जिसमें कुछ श्रेणियों के **लोक सेवकों** के विरुद्ध जांच शुरू करने से पहले **पूर्व स्वीकृति** आवश्यक थी, जारी किया गया, तो उसकी **वैधता** को चुनौती दी गई।
- In **Vineet Narain vs Union of India (1998) 1 SCC 226**, the **Court had quashed the Single Directive** and held that the **final opinion** whether to investigate or not has to be made by the **CBI** and not by anyone else.  
**विनीत नारायण बनाम भारत संघ (1998) 1 SCC 226** में, न्यायालय ने **सिंगल डायरेक्टिव** को **रद्द** कर दिया और यह माना कि जांच करनी है या नहीं, इसका **अंतिम निर्णय CBI** द्वारा ही लिया जाना चाहिए, न कि किसी अन्य द्वारा।
- The **executive on its own cannot foreclose inquiry** into any allegation of **corruption** as that would be entering the **domain of the investigative agency**.  
**कार्यपालिका** स्वयं किसी **भ्रष्टाचार** के आरोप की **जांच बंद** नहीं कर सकती, क्योंकि यह **जांच एजेंसी के क्षेत्र** में हस्तक्षेप होगा।
- The judgment came in the backdrop of the **N.N. Vohra Committee (1993)** that **presented the frightening criminal nexus between highly-placed politicians, high-ranking bureaucrats, and criminal elements**.  
यह निर्णय **एन.एन. वोहरा समिति (1993)** की पृष्ठभूमि में आया, जिसने **उच्च पदस्थ राजनेताओं, वरिष्ठ नौकरशाहों और आपराधिक तत्वों** के बीच **भयावह आपराधिक गठजोड़** को उजागर किया था।
- The Court held that **equality before the law** under **Article 14** and the **rule of law** itself could only be preserved if **investigative agencies** are insulated from **political, executive, and bureaucratic interference**.  
न्यायालय ने माना कि **अनुच्छेद 14** के अंतर्गत **कानून के समक्ष समानता** और स्वयं **कानून का शासन** तभी सुरक्षित रह सकता है जब **जांच एजेंसियाँ राजनीतिक, कार्यपालिका और नौकरशाही हस्तक्षेप** से मुक्त हों।
- To bypass the judgment in **Vineet Narain**, the **central government** enacted the **Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003**.  
**विनीत नारायण** के निर्णय से बचने के लिए **केंद्र सरकार** ने **केंद्रीय सतर्कता आयोग अधिनियम, 2003** अधिनियमित किया।
- Here it introduced **Section 6A to the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act (DSPE) Act**, effectively **reintroducing the Single Directive**.  
इसमें **दिल्ली विशेष पुलिस स्थापना अधिनियम (DSPE)** में **धारा 6A** जोड़ी गई, जिससे प्रभावी रूप से **सिंगल डायरेक्टिव** को पुनः लागू किया गया।



- A Constitution Bench in **Dr. Subramanian Swamy vs Director, CBI & Anr (2014) 8 SCC 682** declared **Section 6A of the DSPE Act** to be **unconstitutional** on the ground that the **classification of officers based on status** in government service, for the purpose of investigation, was **discriminatory and violative of Article 14**.  
डॉ. सुब्रमण्यम स्वामी बनाम निदेशक, CBI एवं अन्य (2014) 8 SCC 682 में संविधान पीठ ने DSPE अधिनियम की धारा 6A को असंवैधानिक घोषित किया, क्योंकि जांच के उद्देश्य से सरकारी सेवा में पद-आधारित वर्गीकरण भेदभावपूर्ण था और अनुच्छेद 14 का उल्लंघन करता था।
- It also held that such power to **interdict corruption investigations** would encourage the **criminal-bureaucrat-politician nexus** and thwart **unbiased and efficient inquiry/investigation** to track down **corrupt public servants**.  
इसने यह भी माना कि भ्रष्टाचार जांच में हस्तक्षेप की ऐसी शक्ति अपराधी-नौकरशाह-राजनीतिज्ञ गठजोड़ को बढ़ावा देगी और भ्रष्ट लोक सेवकों तक पहुँचने के लिए निष्पक्ष और प्रभावी जांच/अन्वेषण को बाधित करेगी।
- The Court held: “... the signature tune in Vineet Narain is, ‘However high you may be, the law is above you’ We reiterate the same. Section 6A offends this signature tune and effectively Article 14.”  
न्यायालय ने कहा: “... विनीत नारायण का मूल संदेश है, ‘आप चाहे कितने भी ऊँचे क्यों न हों, कानून आपसे ऊपर है’। हम इसे दोहराते हैं। धारा 6A इस मूल संदेश और प्रभावी रूप से अनुच्छेद 14 का उल्लंघन करती है।”
- In the **CPIL case**, the **petitioners** argued that **Section 17A of the PC Act** is distinguishable from **Section 6A of the DSPE Act** only in the sense that it **expands the scope of protection to all levels of public servants** and not just to a **particular category of public servants**, as **Section 6A of the DSPE Act** did.  
CPIL मामले में याचिकाकर्ताओं ने तर्क दिया कि **PC अधिनियम की धारा 17A**, **DSPE अधिनियम की धारा 6A** से केवल इस अर्थ में भिन्न है कि यह **सभी स्तरों के लोक सेवकों** को संरक्षण प्रदान करती है, न कि केवल **किसी विशेष श्रेणी के लोक सेवकों** को, जैसा कि **DSPE अधिनियम की धारा 6A** करती थी।
- The Section does not just **ignore the clear findings** arrived at by the Court earlier but also chooses to **defy the spirit** of those findings.  
यह धारा न केवल न्यायालय द्वारा पहले दिए गए स्पष्ट निष्कर्षों की अनदेखी करती है, बल्कि उन निष्कर्षों की **भावना का भी उल्लंघन** करती है।
- It was further argued that the Section runs contrary to the dictum in **Lalita Kumari vs Government of Uttar Pradesh & Ors (2014) 2 SCC 1**, which mandated **registration of a first information report** and consequent **investigation** on the disclosure of a **cognisable offence**.  
यह भी तर्क दिया गया कि यह धारा **ललिता कुमारी बनाम उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार एवं अन्य (2014) 2 SCC 1** के निर्णय के विपरीत है, जिसमें **संज्ञेय अपराध** के खुलासे पर **प्रथम सूचना रिपोर्ट के पंजीकरण** और उसके बाद **जांच** को अनिवार्य किया गया था।
- The **government**, on the other hand, defended the **constitutionality** of the Section and sought to distinguish it from the earlier judgments of the Court on the ground that the **Single Directive** was struck down as it was merely an **administrative order**.  
दूसरी ओर, **सरकार** ने इस धारा की **संवैधानिकता** का बचाव किया और इसे न्यायालय के पूर्व निर्णयों से इस आधार पर अलग बताया कि **सिंगल डायरेक्टिव** केवल एक **प्रशासनिक आदेश** होने के कारण रद्द किया गया था।
- It added that the **Subramaniam Swamy judgment** was dealing with a distinction made between **officers of Joint Secretary and above versus officers below**, both of which did not apply to the present challenge to the **constitutionality of the Section**.  
सरकार ने यह भी जोड़ा कि **सुब्रमण्यम स्वामी निर्णय** संयुक्त सचिव और उससे ऊपर के अधिकारियों तथा उससे नीचे के अधिकारियों के बीच किए गए भेद से संबंधित था, जो धारा की **संवैधानिकता** को दी गई वर्तमान चुनौती पर लागू नहीं होता।

Where the judges differed  
जहाँ न्यायाधीशों के मत भिन्न थे

- **Justice Nagarathna**, while upholding the **petitioner’s contentions**, held **Section 17A** to be **contrary to the objects of the Act** and **unconstitutional**, as the requirement of **prior sanction from the government**, she held, “forestalls an enquiry and thereby in



substance protects the corrupt”.

न्यायमूर्ति नागरत्ना ने याचिकाकर्ताओं के तर्कों को स्वीकार करते हुए धारा 17A को अधिनियम के उद्देश्यों के विपरीत और असंवैधानिक माना, क्योंकि उनके अनुसार सरकार से पूर्व स्वीकृति की शर्त “जांच को रोकती है और वस्तुतः भ्रष्टों को संरक्षण देती है”।

- The Section shields a class of public servants and revives an impermissible protection which was previously struck down in Vineet Narain and Subramaniam Swamy. यह धारा लोक सेवकों के एक वर्ग को संरक्षण देती है और उस अस्वीकार्य संरक्षण को पुनर्जीवित करती है, जिसे पहले विनीत नारायण और सुब्रमण्यम स्वामी मामलों में रद्द किया जा चुका था।

- She also held that there was a conflict of interest between the government (Minister granting sanction) and the officers whose consent for investigation was sought, since they would often be working in the same department with a meeting of minds about decisions taken, amounting to acts of corruption.

उन्होंने यह भी माना कि सरकार (स्वीकृति देने वाला मंत्री) और उन अधिकारियों, जिनके विरुद्ध जांच की अनुमति मांगी जाती है, के बीच हितों का टकराव होता है, क्योंकि वे अक्सर एक ही विभाग में कार्य करते हैं और निर्णयों पर समान सोच रखते हैं, जो भ्रष्टाचार के कृत्यों के समान हो सकता है।

- Therefore, such a provision was likely to impede investigation into corrupt officers, who may instead find protection from higher authorities within the same institutional nexus, thereby allowing unchecked corruption.

अतः ऐसी व्यवस्था भ्रष्ट अधिकारियों के विरुद्ध जांच में बाधा डाल सकती है, क्योंकि उन्हें उसी संस्थागत ढांचे के भीतर उच्च अधिकारियों से संरक्षण मिल सकता है, जिससे अनियंत्रित भ्रष्टाचार को बढ़ावा मिलता है।

- She also held that there would be a policy bias in the officials granting sanction, as they would lack neutrality while considering a request for approval for carrying out an inquiry or investigation into a complaint vis-à-vis a decision taken by a public servant in their department.

उन्होंने यह भी कहा कि स्वीकृति देने वाले अधिकारियों में नीतिगत पक्षपात होगा, क्योंकि वे अपने विभाग के लोक सेवक द्वारा लिए गए निर्णय के संबंध में शिकायत पर जांच या अन्वेषण की अनुमति देते समय तटस्थता का अभाव रखेंगे।

- Justice Viswanathan, while agreeing with Justice Nagarathna and the petitioners that leaving the power of consent with the government would render the provision unconstitutional, found no fault with the provision of prior sanction per se.

न्यायमूर्ति विश्वनाथन ने न्यायमूर्ति नागरत्ना और याचिकाकर्ताओं से इस बात पर सहमति जताई कि स्वीकृति की शक्ति सरकार के पास छोड़ना प्रावधान को असंवैधानिक बना देगा, लेकिन उन्होंने पूर्व स्वीकृति की व्यवस्था में स्वयं कोई दोष नहीं पाया।

- He held it to be constitutionally valid, subject to the condition that the grant or refusal of approval would rest not with the government but with an independent agency before the decision is taken by the government.

उन्होंने इसे संवैधानिक रूप से वैध माना, बशर्ते कि अनुमति देने या न देने का निर्णय सरकार के बजाय एक स्वतंत्र एजेंसी के पास हो, इससे पहले कि सरकार अंतिम निर्णय ले।

- He observed that striking down the Section would lead to a policy paralysis, as he felt that honest public servants needed to be insulated from frivolous and mala fide police investigations.

उन्होंने यह माना कि धारा को रद्द करना नीतिगत गतिरोध को जन्म देगा, क्योंकि उनके अनुसार ईमानदार लोक सेवकों को तुच्छ और दुर्भावनापूर्ण पुलिस जांचों से संरक्षित किया जाना आवश्यक है।

- He held that the Lokpal, conceived as an independent anti-corruption authority, would deal with such cases in an independent manner, and that its recommendations would be binding on the government, as the PC Act and the Lokpal Act operate in the same normative field.

उन्होंने कहा कि लोकपाल, जिसे एक स्वतंत्र भ्रष्टाचार-रोधी प्राधिकरण के रूप में परिकल्पित किया गया है, ऐसे मामलों से स्वतंत्र रूप से निपटेगा, और उसकी सिफारिशें सरकार पर बाध्यकारी होंगी, क्योंकि PC अधिनियम और लोकपाल अधिनियम एक ही मानक क्षेत्र में कार्य करते हैं।

- “Both address allegations of corruption against public servants, both recognise the need for screening, and both seek to balance accountability with protection against misuse”.

“दोनों लोक सेवकों के विरुद्ध भ्रष्टाचार के आरोपों को संबोधित करते हैं, दोनों स्क्रीनिंग की आवश्यकता को मान्यता देते हैं, और दोनों जवाबदेही तथा दुरुपयोग से संरक्षण के बीच संतुलन स्थापित करने का प्रयास करते हैं।”



## At the core

### मूल मुद्दा

- The **core disagreement** between the two judges is on how to strike a **constitutional balance** between **protecting honest decision-making public servants** and ensuring an **efficient anti-corruption regime**.  
दोनों न्यायाधीशों के बीच **मूल असहमति** इस बात पर है कि **ईमानदार निर्णय लेने वाले लोक सेवकों की सुरक्षा** और **प्रभावी भ्रष्टाचार-रोधी व्यवस्था** के बीच **संवैधानिक संतुलन** कैसे स्थापित किया जाए।
- There is **partial agreement** between the two judges on the provision being **unconstitutional** if the **power of granting sanction** for investigation was left with the **government**.  
यदि जांच के लिए **स्वीकृति देने की शक्ति सरकार** के पास छोड़ी जाती है, तो इस प्रावधान के **असंवैधानिक** होने पर दोनों न्यायाधीशों के बीच **आंशिक सहमति** है।
- There remains **disagreement** on whether **prior approval** before **inquiry or investigation** by a **police officer** is an **impermissible barrier** making the Section **unconstitutional**, or whether having an **independent agency** such as the **Lokpal** as a **filter** to prevent abuse would **overcome this barrier**, thereby **upholding the Section's constitutionality**.  
इस बात पर अब भी **मतभेद** बना हुआ है कि क्या **पुलिस अधिकारी** द्वारा **जांच या अन्वेषण** से पहले **पूर्व स्वीकृति** एक **अस्वीकार्य बाधा** है, जिससे धारा **असंवैधानिक** हो जाती है, या फिर **लोकपाल** जैसी **स्वतंत्र एजेंसी** को **फिल्टर** के रूप में रखने से **दुरुपयोग** रोका जा सकता है और इस प्रकार **धारा की संवैधानिकता** बनी रह सकती है।
- Differing from her brother judge, **Justice Nagarathna** stated, "**whether prior approval must be given, was the question, and not who, within or outside the government should give the approval.**"  
अपने सह-न्यायाधीश से भिन्न मत रखते हुए **न्यायमूर्ति नागरत्ना** ने कहा, "**प्रश्न यह था कि क्या पूर्व स्वीकृति दी जानी चाहिए, न कि यह कि सरकार के भीतर या बाहर कौन वह स्वीकृति दे।**"
- The matter has been **referred to the Chief Justice of India** for constitution of a larger **Bench** to decide the issue **conclusively**.  
इस मामले को **भारत के मुख्य न्यायाधीश** के पास **बड़ी पीठ** के गठन हेतु **निश्चित रूप से निर्णय** के लिए **संदर्भित** किया गया है।



GS II: Governance: Education

## Crisis in education

Higher education institutions need systemic reforms

In an ongoing case relating to student suicides, the Supreme Court of India has issued nine directions to Central and State governments. Recognising the massification of higher education front-ended by privatisation without a commensurate boost in quality, the Court has taken note of student distress covering financial, social, social injustice and academic issues. The Court has invoked Article 142 of the Constitution and seven of the nine directions relate to record-keeping, reporting, and tracking suicides in higher education institutions (HEI) separately. Two directives order the filling of the posts of Registrars and Vice-Chancellors as well as all vacant faculty positions. Evidently, the Court sees these steps as critical to student well-being.

Across India, ground reportage shows that many public HEIs, especially universities, report 50% vacancies. The University of Madras is a case study as it is the premier State-administered HEI in Tamil Nadu – a State which leads the nation in enrolment in higher education and with a stellar record in women's education. With such a storied legacy, the university was known for quality research besides awarding degrees in affiliated colleges through examinations. Teaching became an important component in the late 1970s, but in the last decade, its decline has been pronounced. No new faculty appointments have been made and the teaching strength is half of the sanctioned strength. The university's research component is just about functional. It boasts of centres for advanced studies such as in philosophy, botany and mathematics, but these are a shadow of their original selves. Today, the humanities, science-based and social science research focused on Tamil Nadu, that the government can leverage from its public universities, has been given short shrift. Vice-Chancellor appointments have been stalled by a recalcitrant Governor. The ambiguity thrown in by the Court on the Presidential reference on a Governor's powers may need to be resolved before Vice-Chancellor vacancies can be quickly filled. Filling faculty positions would have to follow UGC process that takes at least six months and a budgetary commitment that may be helped with Union government support. Availability of qualified faculty can be a hurdle. Corruption and political-ideological appointments have affected quality and need to be addressed. Although the four-month schedule prescribed by the Court might seem daunting, the order is a call to action to fulfil the basic requirements of a robust public higher education system before goals such as Viksit Bharat can be seriously aspired for.

में उत्कृष्ट रिकॉर्ड रखता है।

- With such a **storied legacy**, the university was known for **quality research** besides awarding degrees in **affiliated colleges** through examinations.

## Crisis in education. शिक्षा में संकट।

• Higher education institutions need systemic reforms.

उच्च शिक्षा संस्थानों को प्रणालीगत सुधारों की आवश्यकता है।

• In an ongoing case relating to student suicides, the Supreme Court of India has issued nine directions to Central and State governments.

छात्र आत्महत्याओं से संबंधित एक चल रहे मामले में, भारत के सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने केंद्र और राज्य सरकारों को नौ निर्देश जारी किए हैं।

• Recognising the **massification of higher education front-ended by privatisation** without a commensurate boost in quality, the Court has taken note of **student distress covering financial, social, social injustice and academic issues**.

निजीकरण के कारण उच्च शिक्षा के बड़े पैमाने पर विस्तार को, गुणवत्ता में समान वृद्धि के बिना, स्वीकार करते हुए न्यायालय ने वित्तीय, सामाजिक, सामाजिक अन्याय और शैक्षणिक मुद्दों से जुड़े छात्र संकट पर संज्ञान लिया है।

• The Court has invoked **Article 142 of the Constitution** and seven of the nine directions relate to **record-keeping, reporting, and tracking suicides in higher education institutions (HEI) separately**.

न्यायालय ने संविधान के अनुच्छेद 142 का सहारा लिया है और नौ में से सात निर्देश उच्च शिक्षा संस्थानों (HEI) में रिकॉर्ड-रखाव, रिपोर्टिंग और आत्महत्याओं की ट्रैकिंग से संबंधित हैं।

• Two directives order the **filling of the posts of Registrars and Vice-Chancellors** as well as **all vacant faculty positions**.

दो निर्देशों में रजिस्ट्रार और कुलपतियों के पदों के साथ-साथ सभी रिक्त संकाय पदों को भरने का आदेश दिया गया है।

• Evidently, the Court sees these steps as **critical to student well-being**.

स्पष्ट है कि न्यायालय इन कदमों को छात्र कल्याण के लिए अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण मानता है।

• Across India, ground reportage shows that **many public HEIs, especially universities, report 50% vacancies**.

पूरे भारत में, जमीनी रिपोर्टिंग से पता चलता है कि कई सार्वजनिक HEI, विशेषकर विश्वविद्यालय, 50% रिक्तियाँ दर्शाते हैं।

• The **University of Madras** is a case study as it is the **premier State-administered HEI in Tamil Nadu**, a State which leads the nation in **enrolment in higher education** and with a **stellar record in women's education**.

मद्रास विश्वविद्यालय एक अध्ययन का उदाहरण है क्योंकि यह तमिलनाडु का प्रमुख राज्य-प्रशासित HEI है, वह राज्य जो उच्च शिक्षा में नामांकन में देश का नेतृत्व करता है और महिला शिक्षा



ऐसी समृद्ध विरासत के साथ, यह विश्वविद्यालय संबद्ध कॉलेजों में परीक्षाओं के माध्यम से डिग्रियाँ देने के साथ-साथ गुणवत्तापूर्ण अनुसंधान के लिए जाना जाता था।

- **Teaching** became an important component in the **late 1970s**, but in the **last decade**, its **decline has been pronounced**.  
1970 के दशक के उत्तरार्ध में शिक्षण एक महत्वपूर्ण घटक बना, लेकिन पिछले दशक में इसका पतन स्पष्ट रहा है।
- No new **faculty appointments** have been made and the **teaching strength is half of the sanctioned strength**.  
कोई नई संकाय नियुक्तियाँ नहीं की गई हैं और शिक्षण क्षमता स्वीकृत क्षमता की आधी रह गई है।
- The university's **research component** is just about **functional**.  
विश्वविद्यालय का अनुसंधान घटक केवल कार्यात्मक भर रह गया है।
- It boasts of **centres for advanced studies** such as in **philosophy, botany and mathematics**, but these are a **shadow of their original selves**.  
यह दर्शन, वनस्पति विज्ञान और गणित जैसे विषयों में उन्नत अध्ययन केंद्रों का दावा करता है, लेकिन वे अब अपने मूल स्वरूप की छाया मात्र हैं।
- Today, the **humanities, science-based and social science research** focused on **Tamil Nadu**, that the **government** can leverage from its **public universities**, has been given **short shrift**.  
आज तमिलनाडु पर केंद्रित मानविकी, विज्ञान-आधारित और सामाजिक विज्ञान अनुसंधान, जिसे सरकार अपने सार्वजनिक विश्वविद्यालयों से उपयोग में ला सकती है, उसे कम महत्व दिया गया है।
- **Vice-Chancellor appointments** have been **stalled** by a **recalcitrant Governor**.  
कुलपति नियुक्तियाँ एक अड़ियल राज्यपाल के कारण अटकी हुई हैं।
- The **ambiguity** thrown in by the Court on the **Presidential reference** on a **Governor's powers** may need to be resolved before **Vice-Chancellor vacancies** can be quickly filled.  
राज्यपाल की शक्तियों पर राष्ट्रपति संदर्भ के संबंध में न्यायालय द्वारा उत्पन्न अस्पष्टता को, कुलपति रिक्तियों को शीघ्र भरने से पहले सुलझाना पड़ सकता है।
- Filling **faculty positions** would have to follow **UGC process** that takes at least **six months** and a **budgetary commitment** that may be helped with **Union government support**.  
संकाय पदों को भरने के लिए **UGC प्रक्रिया** का पालन करना होगा, जिसमें कम से कम छह महीने लगते हैं और इसके लिए बजटीय प्रतिबद्धता चाहिए, जिसे केंद्र सरकार के समर्थन से सहायता मिल सकती है।
- Availability of **qualified faculty** can be a **hurdle**.  
योग्य संकाय की उपलब्धता एक बाधा हो सकती है।
- **Corruption** and **political-ideological appointments** have **affected quality** and need to be **addressed**.  
भ्रष्टाचार और राजनीतिक-वैचारिक नियुक्तियों ने गुणवत्ता को प्रभावित किया है और इन्हें सुलझाने की आवश्यकता है।
- **Although the four-month schedule** prescribed by the Court might seem **daunting**, the order is a **call to action to fulfil the basic requirements** of a **robust public higher education system** before goals such as **Viksit Bharat** can be seriously aspired for.  
हालाँकि न्यायालय द्वारा निर्धारित चार महीने की समय-सीमा कठिन लग सकती है, यह आदेश मजबूत सार्वजनिक उच्च शिक्षा प्रणाली की मूल आवश्यकताओं को पूरा करने के लिए एक कार्रवाई का आह्वान है, ताकि विकसित भारत जैसे लक्ष्यों की गंभीर आकांक्षा की जा सके।

<b>GS Paper II: Governance,</b>	
<b>TOPICS COVERED</b>	<b>19 January 2026</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Trump's tariff threat over Greenland may imperil EU trade deal</b> <b>ग्रीनलैंड को लेकर ट्रंप की टैरिफ धमकी से ईयू व्यापार समझौता खतरे में</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>India invited to join Gaza peace board</b> <b>भारत को गाज़ा शांति बोर्ड में शामिल होने का निमंत्रण</b>



3.	<b>'Borders should not be decided by tanks or terrorists, but through negotiations'</b> <b>'सीमाएँ टैंकों या आतंकियों से नहीं, बल्कि बातचीत के ज़रिये तय होनी चाहिए'</b>
4.	<b>Bullying tactics.</b> <b>धमकाने की रणनीतियाँ।</b>
5.	<b>India-Germany ties can only soar higher</b> <b>भारत-जर्मनी संबंध केवल और ऊँचाई पर जा सकते हैं</b>

## India invited to join Gaza peace board

New Delhi has not yet responded to the invitation, officials say; the Board of Peace, to be headed by Trump and to include 'other members and heads of state', is expected to oversee funding for the 'redevelopment of Gaza' until the Palestinian Authority completes a 'reform programme'

**GS IIR**

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**  
NEW DELHI

**U**nited States President Donald Trump has invited India to be a part of the Board of Peace for Gaza, sources in New Delhi said on Sunday.

U.S. Ambassador Sergio Gor also shared a letter on social media from Mr. Trump to Prime Minister Narendra Modi inviting India.

The Board of Peace for Gaza comprises a group of countries that are being invited by the U.S. to provide a governance structure for the Gaza Strip, as Hamas is being pressured to give up its governance role in the territory as part of Mr. Trump's peace plan.

Officials unwilling to be named said that India has the "invite in hand",

though New Delhi has not responded as yet. This comes three days after Mr. Trump announced on social media that the Board of Peace had been formed and that its members would be announced "shortly".

The Trump peace plan for Gaza was first floated on September 29, 2025, when the U.S. President hosted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House. Following the announcement, Hamas agreed to return all 48 remaining hostages who were being held in Gaza in exchange for Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and Gaza detainees.

As per the plan, Gaza will be administered by the "temporary transitional governance of a technocratic apolitical Palestinian committee", which will



U.S. President Donald Trump with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the Oval Office of the White House on February 13, 2025. AFP

consist of Palestinian and international experts. This transitional outfit will be supervised by the Board of Peace, to be headed by Mr. Trump and include "other members and heads of state", as well as the United Kingdom's former Prime Minister Tony Blair.

The Board of Peace is expected to handle fund-

ing for the "redevelopment of Gaza" till the Palestinian Authority has completed a "reform programme".

The U.S. is expected to work with international partners to develop a "temporary" International Stabilisation Force (ISF) to be deployed in Gaza soon. The U.S. has been in talks with multiple countries

## UAE President arrives today

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

India will host UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, on Monday.

The UAE President will hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "The visit will provide an opportunity for the two

leaders to chart new frontiers for the India-UAE Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. It will also enable exchange of views on regional and global issues of mutual interest, where India and the UAE share a high degree of convergence," the External Affairs Ministry said.

across the world for troops to participate in the ISF.

Officials here have maintained that India would not be part of the ISF as it is not a peacekeeping force under the aegis of the United Nations.

On October 9, 2025, however, Mr. Modi had welcomed the Trump peace plan in a post on X.

"We welcome the agreement on the first phase of President Trump's peace plan. This is also a reflection of the strong leadership of PM Netanyahu," he said.

Jordan, Greece, Cyprus, and Pakistan also said on Sunday they had received invitations. (With PTI inputs)

## India invited to join Gaza peace board

### भारत को गाज़ा शांति बोर्ड में शामिल होने का निमंत्रण

- New Delhi has not yet responded to the invitation, officials say; the **Board of Peace**, to be headed by **Trump** and to include **'other members and heads of state'**, is expected to oversee funding for the **'redevelopment of Gaza'** until the **Palestinian Authority** completes a **'reform programme'**.

अधिकारियों के अनुसार, **नई दिल्ली** ने अभी तक इस निमंत्रण पर प्रतिक्रिया नहीं दी है; **बोर्ड ऑफ पीस**, जिसकी अध्यक्षता **ट्रंप** करेंगे और जिसमें **'अन्य सदस्य और राष्ट्राध्यक्ष'** शामिल होंगे, से अपेक्षा है कि वह **'गाज़ा के पुनर्विकास'** के लिए धन की निगरानी करेगा, जब तक कि **पैलेस्टिनियन अथॉरिटी 'सुधार कार्यक्रम'** पूरा नहीं कर लेती।

- United States President Donald Trump** has invited **India** to be a part of the **Board of Peace for Gaza**, sources in **New Delhi** said on **Sunday**. **संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका के राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप** ने **भारत** को **गाज़ा** के लिए **बोर्ड ऑफ पीस** का हिस्सा बनने के लिए आमंत्रित किया है, **नई दिल्ली** के सूत्रों ने **रविवार** को कहा।
- U.S. Ambassador Sergio Gor** also shared a letter on social media from **Mr. Trump** to **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inviting **India**. **अमेरिकी राजदूत सर्जियो गोर** ने भी सोशल मीडिया पर **श्री ट्रंप** की ओर से **प्रधान मंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी** को **भारत** को आमंत्रित करते हुए भेजा गया एक पत्र साझा किया।



- The **Board of Peace for Gaza** comprises a group of countries that are being invited by the **U.S.** to provide a governance structure for the **Gaza Strip**, as **Hamas** is being pressured to give up its governance role in the territory as part of Mr. **Trump's peace plan**.  
गाज़ा के लिए बोर्ड ऑफ पीस उन देशों के एक समूह से बना है जिन्हें अमेरिका द्वारा गाज़ा पट्टी के लिए एक शासन संरचना प्रदान करने हेतु आमंत्रित किया जा रहा है, क्योंकि हमास पर श्री ट्रंप की शांति योजना के हिस्से के रूप में क्षेत्र में अपनी शासन भूमिका छोड़ने का दबाव डाला जा रहा है।
- Officials unwilling to be named said that **India** has the “**invite in hand**”, though **New Delhi** has not responded as yet.  
नाम न बताने की शर्त पर अधिकारियों ने कहा कि भारत के पास “निमंत्रण मौजूद है”, हालांकि नई दिल्ली ने अभी तक प्रतिक्रिया नहीं दी है।
- This comes three days after Mr. **Trump** announced on social media that the **Board of Peace** had been formed and that its members would be announced “**shortly**”.  
यह श्री ट्रंप द्वारा सोशल मीडिया पर बोर्ड ऑफ पीस के गठन और इसके सदस्यों की घोषणा “शीघ्र” किए जाने की बात कहे जाने के तीन दिन बाद आया है।
- The **Trump peace plan** for Gaza was revisited on **September 29, 2025**, when the **U.S. President** hosted **Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu** at the **White House**.  
गाज़ा के लिए ट्रंप शांति योजना को पहली बार 29 सितंबर, 2025 को पेश किया गया था, जब अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति ने इज़राइल के प्रधानमंत्री बेंजामिन नेतन्याहू की व्हाइट हाउस में मेजबानी की थी।
- Following the announcement, **Hamas** agreed to return all **48 remaining hostages** who were being held in **Gaza** in exchange for **Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and Gaza detainees**.  
घोषणा के बाद, हमास ने गाज़ा में रखे गए शेष 48 बंधकों को इज़राइली जेलों में बंद पैलेस्टिनी कैदियों और गाज़ा बंदियों के बदले लौटाने पर सहमति जताई।
- As per the plan, **Gaza** will be administered by the “**temporary transitional governance of a technocratic apolitical Palestinian committee**”, which will consist of **Palestinian and international experts**.  
योजना के अनुसार, गाज़ा का प्रशासन “एक तकनीकी और गैर-राजनीतिक पैलेस्टिनी समिति के अस्थायी संक्रमणकालीन शासन” द्वारा किया जाएगा, जिसमें पैलेस्टिनी और अंतरराष्ट्रीय विशेषज्ञ शामिल होंगे।
- This transitional outcome will be supervised by the **Board of Peace**, to be headed by Mr. **Trump** and include “**other members and heads of state**”, as well as the **United Kingdom's former Prime Minister Tony Blair**.  
इस संक्रमणकालीन व्यवस्था की निगरानी बोर्ड ऑफ पीस द्वारा की जाएगी, जिसकी अध्यक्षता श्री ट्रंप करेंगे और जिसमें “अन्य सदस्य और राष्ट्राध्यक्ष” के साथ-साथ यूनाइटेड किंगडम के पूर्व प्रधानमंत्री टोनी ब्लेयर भी शामिल होंगे।
- The **Board of Peace** is expected to handle funding for the “**redevelopment of Gaza**” till the **Palestinian Authority** has completed a “**reform programme**”.  
बोर्ड ऑफ पीस से अपेक्षा है कि वह “गाज़ा के पुनर्विकास” के लिए धन की व्यवस्था संभालेगा, जब तक कि पैलेस्टिनी प्राधिकरण “सुधार कार्यक्रम” पूरा नहीं कर लेता।
- The **U.S.** is expected to work with **international partners** to develop a “**temporary International Stabilisation Force (ISF)**” to be deployed in **Gaza** soon.  
अमेरिका से अपेक्षा है कि वह अंतरराष्ट्रीय साझेदारों के साथ मिलकर गाज़ा में शीघ्र तैनाती के लिए एक “अस्थायी” अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्थिरीकरण बल (आईएसएफ) विकसित करेगा।
- The **U.S.** has been in talks with **multiple countries**.  
अमेरिका कई देशों के साथ बातचीत कर रहा है।
- “We welcome the agreement on the first phase of **President Trump's peace plan**. This is also a reflection of the strong leadership of **PM Netanyahu**,” he said.  
“हम राष्ट्रपति ट्रंप की शांति योजना के पहले चरण पर हुए समझौते का स्वागत करते हैं। यह प्रधानमंत्री नेतन्याहू के सशक्त नेतृत्व का भी प्रतिबिंब है,” उन्होंने कहा।
- **Jordan, Greece, Cyprus, and Pakistan** also said on **Sunday** they had received invitations.  
जॉर्डन, ग्रीस, साइप्रस, और पाकिस्तान ने भी रविवार को कहा कि उन्हें निमंत्रण प्राप्त हुए हैं।



GS II: IR

## Bullying tactics

Trump's weaponisation of tariffs over Greenland could undermine NATO

The Trump administration has vowed to slap a raft of European countries with a 10% tariff on "any and all goods" beginning on February 1 which is then set to increase to 25% on June 1, until an agreement is reached on the U.S. demand to purchase or otherwise acquire the Denmark-administered Arctic territory of Greenland. The latest round of tariffs will add to existing 15% U.S.-imposed trade duties on the countries targeted by the White House, which include Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. While French President Emmanuel Macron described the U.S. action as "unacceptable", U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the move was "completely wrong". The targeted nations have sent a small number of troops to Greenland for what they have called a reconnaissance mission, essentially for military exercises that signal and reinforce Europe's collective commitment to defending the autonomous Arctic territory. Such emphasis by the European Union (EU) clearly reflects concern stemming from the fact that American troops recently entered Venezuela and kidnapped and transported its President Nicolás Maduro to the U.S., and Mr. Trump has since gone on record effectively warning that he might consider intervention – for different purposes and in different circumstances – in Colombia, Cuba, Mexico and Iran next.

Leaving aside the neo-imperialist impulse that is implicit in the Trump administration's plans to control non-allied nations' territories based on the threat of military action, or to bully allies by weaponising tariffs against them, such actions are tantamount to a violation of international law, and in the case of the EU, risk degrading years of progress made on transatlantic trade agreements. First, there is a serious issue of no legislative backing by the U.S. Congress and legal basis for the unilateral action taken by the Trump administration in targeting Denmark and other European countries. Second, the Trump administration is likely to face, this week, a judicial ruling against its use of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act to impose tariffs across the board. Third, European nations may bring into force what is known as the "anti-coercion instrument", a counter-tariff facility that would limit the trade of major U.S. tech firms and related service providers that conduct significant business in the EU. Whatever the denouement of this Trump-made conflict, it will likely take years, if not decades to heal the worsening transatlantic rift that has beset the region. Meanwhile a weakened NATO will stand less able to assist Ukraine in facing off against the depredations of an aggressive Russia on the eastern front. The need of the hour is enlightened leadership, a far cry from what is presently on offer in Washington.

- Such emphasis by the **European Union (EU)** clearly reflects concern stemming from the fact that **American troops** recently entered **Venezuela** and **kidnapped and transported** its President **Nicolás Maduro** to the **U.S.**, and **Mr. Trump** has since gone on record effectively warning that he might consider **intervention**—for different purposes and in different

## Bullying tactics. धमकाने की रणनीतियाँ।

- Trump's weaponisation of tariffs over Greenland could undermine NATO.**  
ग्रीनलैंड को लेकर **tariffs** के **हथियारकरण** के माध्यम से ट्रंप की नीति **NATO** को कमजोर कर सकती है।

## U.S.–Europe Tariff Dispute and Geopolitical Fallout अमेरिका–यूरोप शुल्क विवाद और भू-राजनीतिक प्रभाव

- The **Trump administration** has vowed to slap a raft of **European countries** with a **10% tariff** on "**any and all goods**" beginning on **February 1**, which is then set to increase to **25% on June 1**, until an agreement is reached on the **U.S. demand** to purchase or otherwise acquire the **Denmark-administered Arctic territory of Greenland**.

ट्रंप प्रशासन ने यूरोपीय देशों के एक समूह पर "किसी भी और सभी वस्तुओं" पर **10% शुल्क** लगाने का संकल्प लिया है, जो **1 फरवरी** से लागू होगा और **1 जून** को **25%** तक बढ़ाया जाएगा, जब तक कि **ग्रीनलैंड**—जो **डेनमार्क** द्वारा प्रशासित **आर्कटिक क्षेत्र** है—को खरीदने या अन्यथा अधिग्रहित करने की **अमेरिकी मांग** पर कोई समझौता नहीं हो जाता।

- The **latest round of tariffs** will add to existing **15% U.S.-imposed trade duties** on the countries targeted by the **White House**, which include **Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom**.

शुल्कों का यह नवीनतम दौर **व्हाइट हाउस** द्वारा लक्षित देशों पर पहले से लगाए गए **15% अमेरिकी व्यापार शुल्क** में इजाफा करेगा, जिनमें **डेनमार्क, फिनलैंड, फ्रांस, जर्मनी, नीदरलैंड, नॉर्वे, स्वीडन** और **यूनाइटेड किंगडम** शामिल हैं।

- While **French President Emmanuel Macron** described the U.S. action as "**unacceptable**", **U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer** said the move was "**completely wrong**".

जहाँ **फ्रांस के राष्ट्रपति इमैनुएल मैक्रों** ने अमेरिकी कदम को "**अस्वीकार्य**" बताया, वहीं **ब्रिटेन के प्रधानमंत्री कीर स्टारमर** ने इस कदम को "**पूरी तरह गलत**" कहा।

- The **targeted nations** have sent a **small number of troops** to **Greenland** for what they have called a **reconnaissance mission, essentially for military exercises** that signal and reinforce **Europe's collective commitment** to defending the **autonomous Arctic territory**.

लक्षित देशों ने **ग्रीनलैंड** में **कम संख्या में सैनिक** भेजे हैं, जिसे उन्होंने **टोही मिशन** कहा है, मूलतः **सैन्य अभ्यास** के लिए, जो **स्वायत्त आर्कटिक क्षेत्र** की रक्षा के प्रति **यूरोप की सामूहिक प्रतिबद्धता** का संकेत और सुदृढीकरण करता है।



circumstances—in **Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, and Iran** next.

**यूरोपीय संघ (EU)** द्वारा दिया गया यह जोर स्पष्ट रूप से उस चिंता को दर्शाता है, जो इस तथ्य से उत्पन्न होती है कि हाल ही में **अमेरिकी सैनिकों ने वेनेजुएला** में प्रवेश कर उसके राष्ट्रपति **निकोलस मादुरो** का **अपहरण कर उन्हें अमेरिका ले जाया**, और **श्री ट्रंप** ने इसके बाद रिकॉर्ड पर यह चेतावनी दी कि वे **हस्तक्षेप** पर विचार कर सकते हैं—भिन्न उद्देश्यों और परिस्थितियों में—अगले क्रम में **कोलंबिया, क्यूबा, मेक्सिको और ईरान** में।

- Leaving aside the **neo-imperialist impulse** that is implicit in the Trump administration's plans to control **non-allied nations' territories** based on the threat of **military action**, or to **bully allies by weaponising tariffs** against them, such actions are tantamount to a **violation of international law**, and in the case of the **EU**, risk degrading years of progress made on **transatlantic trade agreements**.

**नव-औपनिवेशिक प्रवृत्ति** को अलग रखते हुए—जो **सैन्य कार्रवाई** की धमकी के आधार पर **गैर-सहयोगी देशों के क्षेत्रों** को नियंत्रित करने या **शुल्कों को हथियार बनाकर** सहयोगियों को **धमकाने** की ट्रंप प्रशासन की योजनाओं में निहित है—ऐसी कार्रवाइयाँ **अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून का उल्लंघन** हैं और **EU** के मामले में **अटलांटिक-पार व्यापार समझौतों** पर वर्षों की प्रगति को कमजोर करने का जोखिम रखती हैं।

- First, there is a serious issue of **no legislative backing** by the **U.S. Congress** and **legal basis** for the **unilateral action** taken by the Trump administration in targeting **Denmark** and other European countries.

पहला, **अमेरिकी कांग्रेस** द्वारा **विधायी समर्थन** और **कानूनी आधार** का गंभीर अभाव है, जिसके बिना ट्रंप प्रशासन ने **डेनमार्क** और अन्य यूरोपीय देशों को लक्षित करते हुए **एकतरफा कार्रवाई** की है।

- Second, the Trump administration is likely to face, **this week**, a **judicial ruling** against its use of the **International Emergency Economic Powers Act** to impose **tariffs across the board**. दूसरा, ट्रंप प्रशासन को **इस सप्ताह International Emergency Economic Powers Act** के तहत **सर्वत्र शुल्क** लगाने के अपने उपयोग के विरुद्ध **न्यायिक निर्णय** का सामना करना पड़ सकता है।

- Third, European nations may bring into force what is known as the “**anti-coercion instrument**”, a **counter-tariff facility** that would limit the trade of major **U.S. tech firms** and related **service providers** that conduct **significant business** in the **EU**.

तीसरा, यूरोपीय देश “**एंटी-कोएर्शन इंस्ट्रूमेंट**” को लागू कर सकते हैं, जो एक **प्रत्युत्तर-शुल्क व्यवस्था** है और **EU** में **महत्वपूर्ण व्यवसाय** करने वाली प्रमुख **अमेरिकी तकनीकी कंपनियों** और संबंधित **सेवा प्रदाताओं** के व्यापार को सीमित करेगी।

- Whatever the **denouement** of this **Trump-made conflict**, it will likely take **years, if not decades**, to heal the **worsening transatlantic rift** that has beset the region.

इस **ट्रंप-निर्मित संघर्ष** का **अंतिम परिणाम** चाहे जो भी हो, क्षेत्र को जकड़ने वाली **बढ़ती ट्रांस-अटलांटिक दरार** को भरने में संभवतः **सालों, यदि दशकों नहीं**, का समय लगेगा।

- Meanwhile a **weakened NATO** will stand less able to assist **Ukraine** in facing off against the **depredations of an aggressive Russia** on the **eastern front**.

इस बीच **कमजोर NATO** पूर्वी मोर्चे पर **आक्रामक रूस** की **लूट-खसोट** का सामना करने में **यूक्रेन** की सहायता करने में कम सक्षम रहेगा।

- The **need of the hour** is **enlightened leadership**, a **far cry** from what is presently on offer in **Washington**.

**वर्तमान समय की आवश्यकता प्रबुद्ध नेतृत्व** है, जो **वाशिंगटन** में इस समय उपलब्ध स्थिति से **कोसों दूर** है।



## India-Germany ties can only soar higher

CS II: IR

Last week, we witnessed something rather unusual. Television channels, newspapers and social media were full of images/pictures of two very important leaders – Prime Minister Narendra Modi and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz flying kites together in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. It was quite a contrast to the other images of this very substantial meeting. But I actually think that the kite is the perfect symbol to illustrate where Germany's partnership with India is going.

Germany and India have both experienced strong headwinds in recent months. The eroding international trade system is a challenge for both their economies. They both watch the increasing disregard for international law and the disruption of the rules-based global order with great worry. And they both share concerns on the stability in their neighbourhoods. Both countries want predictable conditions. This is what they need for their people to prosper. Based on hard work, on inventiveness and innovation, on education and on science. But it is only in stormy conditions that a good kite flyer shows you what it is capable of – just like the India-German partnership.

**Two countries that have economic heft** Chancellor Merz and Mr. Modi are also the leaders of the third- and fourth-biggest economies, respectively, of the world. We are talking about two economic heavyweights. In a few years, India will overtake Germany, to become the undisputed number three in the world. And let me tell you something: Germany will celebrate the day this happens. The world economy is not a zero-sum game, contrary to



**Philipp Ackermann**

is the German Ambassador to India

A kite is the apt symbol to show where Germany's partnership with India is going

what some leaders think. When India profits, Germany also profits. A stronger Indian economy means a bigger market for German products, and a stronger footprint of Indian companies in Germany spells more competitive products and services for German businesses and consumers.

One of the central messages of Chancellor Merz in India was that a free-trade agreement between Europe and India is what India and Germany need to propel their economies to the next level. And to become more resilient against unpredictable trade wars and supply chain interruptions. This was Chancellor Merz's first visit outside the Western Alliance, and his first time in India. The invitation to Ahmedabad, to Mr. Modi's home State of Gujarat, was a very special gesture of friendship for Germany. There was a lot of substance to discuss and decide upon, but the Chancellor's personal impressions of this trip are just as significant.

### The basis of the migration partnership

Here is an anecdote of the visit – it might sound like a small detail, but there is much more to it. Chancellor Merz had a conversation with young Indians who were about to move to Germany. One of these young women had a casual chat with Mr. Merz in German. This young Indian had been learning German for only four months. And I have been struggling with Hindi for four years now. My excuse is usually "Maf kije, lekin Hindi kafi mushkil hai (Sorry, but Hindi is very difficult)", but I can tell you that learning German will also feel like a case of brain jogging at times. The chat that Chancellor Merz had with that young lady epitomises what I admire so much

about Indians. They are nimble and quick to adapt, they always have a game plan, and they know how to get there – with a mix of perseverance, smartness and sometimes disarming assertiveness. Many well-established professional pathways and educational opportunities around the world are closing up. But Germany continues to welcome smart, skilled and spirited Indians. Its migration partnership with India is built on safe, legal and predictable migration.

### Platinum jubilee of ties

In 2026, Germany is celebrating 75 years of diplomatic ties with India and I cannot imagine a better start into this year than this visit. Today, India and Germany stand closer together than ever before. Not just because external shocks brought them closer together, but because in the previous years, they set a clear strategic direction for their partnership. In the same sense, I believe that the diplomatic anniversary between Germany and India will set them up for future success.

A European Union-India-Free Trade Agreement, a closer defence partnership between Germany and India, and stronger and stronger bonds between their people will be the building blocks for something truly lasting.

I am convinced that by the end of this year, when Mr. Modi and his cabinet will travel to Germany for the biennial Intergovernmental Consultations, India and Germany will celebrate a year of significant progress in their bilateral relations, a year that has started with flying their kites in the skies of Ahmedabad.

## India-Germany ties can only soar higher

### भारत-जर्मनी संबंध केवल और ऊँचाई पर जा सकते हैं

- Last week, we witnessed something rather **unusual**. पिछले सप्ताह, हमने कुछ **असामान्य** देखा।
- Television channels, newspapers and social media were full of images/pictures of two very important leaders — **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** and **German Chancellor Friedrich Merz** flying kites together in **Ahmedabad, Gujarat**. टेलीविज़न चैनल, समाचार पत्र और सोशल मीडिया दो अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण नेताओं — **प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी** और **जर्मन चांसलर फ्रेडरिक मर्ज़** — की **अहमदाबाद, गुजरात** में साथ पतंग उड़ते हुए तस्वीरों से भरे हुए थे।
- Chancellor Merz** and **Mr. Modi** are also the leaders of the **third- and fourth-biggest economies**, respectively, of the world. **चांसलर मर्ज़** और **श्री मोदी** क्रमशः विश्व की तीसरी और चौथी सबसे बड़ी अर्थव्यवस्थाओं के नेता हैं।
- But **Germany** continues to welcome **smart, skilled and spirited Indians**. लेकिन जर्मनी अब भी **मेधावी, कुशल और ऊर्जावान भारतीयों** का स्वागत करता है।
- Its **migration partnership** with **India** is built on **safe, legal and predictable migration**. **भारत** के साथ उसकी **प्रवासन साझेदारी सुरक्षित, कानूनी और पूर्वानुमेय प्रवासन** पर आधारित है।

### Platinum jubilee of ties

#### संबंधों की प्लैटिनम जयंती

- In **2026**, **Germany** is celebrating **75 years of diplomatic ties with India** and I cannot imagine a **better start** into this year than this visit. **2026** में **जर्मनी**, **भारत** के साथ **75 वर्षों के राजनयिक संबंधों** का उत्सव मना रहा है, और इस वर्ष की इससे बेहतर शुरुआत की मैं कल्पना भी नहीं कर सकता।
- Today, **India and Germany** stand **closer together than ever before**. आज **भारत और जर्मनी** पहले से कहीं अधिक निकट खड़े हैं।



- Not just because **external shocks** brought them closer together, but because in the **previous years**, they set a **clear strategic direction** for their partnership.  
केवल इसलिए नहीं कि **बाहरी झटकों** ने उन्हें करीब लाया, बल्कि इसलिए कि **पिछले वर्षों** में उन्होंने अपनी साझेदारी के लिए एक **स्पष्ट रणनीतिक दिशा** तय की।
- In the same sense, I believe that the **diplomatic anniversary** between **Germany and India** will set them up for **future success**.  
इसी संदर्भ में, मेरा मानना है कि **जर्मनी और भारत** के बीच यह **राजनयिक वर्षगांठ** उन्हें **भविष्य की सफलता** के लिए तैयार करेगी।
- A **European Union–India Free Trade Agreement**, a closer **defence partnership** between **Germany and India**, and **stronger bonds between their people** will be the **building blocks** for something **truly lasting**.  
**यूरोपीय संघ–भारत मुक्त व्यापार समझौता**, **जर्मनी और भारत** के बीच घनिष्ठ **रक्षा साझेदारी**, और **लोगों के बीच मजबूत संबंध** किसी **स्थायी उपलब्धि** की **नींव** होंगे।

GS Paper III: Economy,	
TOPICS COVERED	19 January 2026
1.	<b>Govt. is proud of Indian companies investing abroad: Commerce Minister</b> विदेश में निवेश करने वाली भारतीय कंपनियों पर सरकार को गर्व: वाणिज्य मंत्री
2.	<b>Budget an opportunity to fine-tune crypto policy, say industry players</b> बजट क्रिप्टो नीति को परिष्कृत करने का अवसर, उद्योग विशेषज्ञों का कहना
3.	<b>Nominee vs. legal heir: who is legally entitled to funds?</b> नामांकित बनाम कानूनी वारिस: कौन कानूनी रूप से धन का हकदार है?

## Govt. is proud of Indian companies investing abroad: Commerce Minister

### GS III: Economy

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

The government is proud of the high and growing amounts of investment Indian companies are making outside the country, and is actively encouraging these companies to make acquisitions and investment abroad, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said.

The statement comes at a time when the latest data

shows that **outward direct investment by Indian companies grew nearly 46% to \$20.5 billion in the April-October 2025 period.**

“We are proud of it, we are encouraging it,” Mr. Goyal told *The Hindu* in response to a query on Friday. “No country has been successful or has become a developed country by being inward looking. You have to be bold and look at going across continents,

and expand the frontiers of your own business.”

The commerce minister said the government “strongly encourages” Indian businesses to invest abroad and has made regulatory changes to further enable this. “We have relaxed a lot of rules to encourage them to acquire companies world-wide and to set up manufacturing facilities world-wide, and to provide services world-

wide,” Mr. Goyal said.

According to the Reserve Bank of India, the key destinations for outward FDI from India were Singapore, followed by the U.S. and the U.A.E., which together accounted for more than half of total outward FDI.

The central bank added that around 90% of the outward FDI was in financial, insurance, and business services.

### Govt. is proud of Indian companies investing abroad: Commerce Minister विदेश में निवेश करने वाली भारतीय कंपनियों पर सरकार को गर्व: वाणिज्य मंत्री

- The government is proud of the high and growing amounts of investment Indian companies are making outside the country, and is actively encouraging these companies to make acquisitions and investment abroad, **Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal** said.  
सरकार को देश के बाहर निवेश करने वाली भारतीय कंपनियों द्वारा किए जा रहे बढ़ते और बड़े निवेश पर गर्व



है, और वह इन कंपनियों को विदेशों में अधिग्रहण और निवेश करने के लिए सक्रिय रूप से प्रोत्साहित कर रही है, **वाणिज्य मंत्री पीयूष गोयल** ने कहा।

- The statement comes at a time when the **latest data shows that outward direct investment by Indian companies grew nearly 46% to \$20.5 billion in the April-October 2025 period.**  
यह बयान ऐसे समय आया है जब नवीनतम आंकड़े दिखाते हैं कि **अप्रैल-अक्टूबर 2025** अवधि में भारतीय कंपनियों का बाह्य प्रत्यक्ष निवेश लगभग **46%** बढ़कर **20.5 अरब डॉलर** हो गया।
- “We are proud of it, we are encouraging it,” **Mr. Goyal** told **The Hindu** in response to a query on **Friday**.  
“हमें इस पर गर्व है, हम इसे प्रोत्साहित कर रहे हैं,” **शुक्रवार** को एक सवाल के जवाब में **पीयूष गोयल** ने **द हिंदू** से कहा।
- “No country has been successful or has become a developed country by being inward looking. You have to be bold and look at going across continents, and expand the frontiers of your own business.”  
“कोई भी देश अंदरूनी सोच अपनाकर सफल या विकसित देश नहीं बना है। आपको साहसी होना होगा, महाद्वीपों के पार जाना होगा और अपने व्यवसाय की सीमाओं का विस्तार करना होगा।”
- The commerce minister said the government “**strongly encourages**” Indian businesses to invest abroad and has made regulatory changes to further enable this.  
वाणिज्य मंत्री ने कहा कि सरकार भारतीय व्यवसायों को विदेश में निवेश करने के लिए “**मज़बूती से प्रोत्साहित**” करती है और इसे और सक्षम बनाने के लिए नियामकीय बदलाव किए गए हैं।
- “We have relaxed a lot of rules to encourage them to acquire companies world-wide and to set up manufacturing facilities world-wide, and to provide services worldwide,” **Mr. Goyal** said.  
**पीयूष गोयल** ने कहा, “हमने उन्हें विश्व स्तर पर कंपनियों का अधिग्रहण करने, विश्व स्तर पर विनिर्माण सुविधाएँ स्थापित करने और विश्व स्तर पर सेवाएँ प्रदान करने के लिए कई नियमों में ढील दी है।”
- According to the **Reserve Bank of India**, the key destinations for **outward FDI from India were Singapore**, followed by the **U.S.** and the **U.A.E.**, which together accounted for more than half of total outward FDI.  
**भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक** के अनुसार, भारत से बाह्य एफडीआई के प्रमुख गंतव्य **सिंगापुर**, इसके बाद **अमेरिका** और **यूएई** थे, जो मिलकर कुल बाह्य एफडीआई का आधे से अधिक हिस्सा थे।
- The central bank added that around **90% of the outward FDI was in financial, insurance, and business services.**



# Nominee vs. legal heir: who is legally entitled to funds?

If a nominee has been appointed for a bank account, the bank may release funds to the nominee; however, ownership of those funds follows inheritance law, or a Will, not the nomination form

GS III: Economy:  
Banking  
MONEY TRANSFER



**Vaishali R. Venkat**

**W**e must plan for the seamless transfer of our money and assets to those we intend to leave them to after our demise. Unfortunately, many people mistakenly assume that merely nominating someone for each asset is sufficient and nomination per se automatically transfers ownership to the nominee after the death of the account holder or asset owner. In reality, asset ownership works very differently.

## Who is a nominee?

Let's say Karthik appointed his 21-year-old daughter, Sudha, as the nominee for all bank deposits and savings account. This means Sudha is merely the designated person to receive the money from the bank after Karthik's demise; she is not the sole owner of the funds released by the bank. In other words, nomination ensures a smooth and hassle-free release of funds by the institution, but does not confer ownership.

Legally, in most cases, a nominee merely acts as a custodian or trustee, receiving or holding the money or asset on behalf of the legal heirs who are the rightful owners under the inheritance law. For instance, assume Karthik is also survived by his mother, wife and a son. In that case, the mother, wife, his son and daughter are all his legal

In most cases, a nominee acts as a custodian or trustee, receiving or holding money/asset on behalf of legal heirs who are rightful owners under succession law

heirs and legally entitled to his monies and assets. Therefore, though the bank may hand over the funds/assets to his daughter, who is a nominee, the legal heirs are entitled to claim their lawful share in accordance with the succession law. In short, the nominee acts only as a custodian, whereas ownership of the funds or assets vests in the legal heirs.

## Why nominee is paid?

After the demise of an account holder, the bank/financial institution releases the funds to the nominee to avoid delays and administrative complications. They are more concerned with the seamless transfer of funds; questions of ownership are beyond their purview. Payment to the nominee enables the bank to close the account and discharge its responsibility.

However, such payment neither determines/transfers ownership of the funds nor overrides legal heir rights under respective succession laws.

## Who is a legal heir?

A legal heir is the one who is entitled to inherit the money/assets of the deceased person under succession law or a valid Will. In short,

Nomination eases fund transfer but does not determine ownership. With just nomination, money/assets may not be distributed/transferred as intended

they are the rightful legal owners of the funds. In Karthik's case, his mother, wife, son and daughter are all legal heirs.

Legal heirs are determined by personal laws such as the Hindu Succession Act, Indian Succession Act, the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937 or any other applicable inheritance laws.

The Hindu Succession Act is applicable to Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, Sikhs, and includes Virashaiva, a Lingayat or a follower of the Brahmo, Prarthana or Arya Samaj. The Indian Succession Act applies to Christians and Parsis and, by implication, to Jews and others not governed by the Hindu or Muslim personal law. For Muslims in India, inheritance and succession matters are governed by the Muslim Personal Law.

In the absence of a valid Will, these laws determine who the heirs are and the proportion in which they are entitled to inherit the deceased person's assets. Where a valid Will exists, it governs inheritance, but succession laws apply to assets not covered by the Will or where the Will cannot legally operate.

In Karthik's case, if he

passed away without leaving a valid Will, the manner in which his money and assets are distributed to his legal heirs will be determined by the applicable succession law based on his religion. If Karthik is a Hindu, then, as per the Hindu Succession Act, his mother, wife, son, and daughter would inherit his assets as legal heirs in the manner prescribed under that law, irrespective of who is named as the nominee. Therefore, even if Karthik had appointed his daughter Sudha as the nominee, such nomination would not make her the sole owner of the funds or assets, nor would it confer full ownership upon her.

## What if there is a Will?

If Karthik had executed a valid Will, his assets would be distributed in accordance with the Will, and the provisions of the Hindu Succession Act would apply only to any property not covered by the Will.

Succession laws would apply only to assets not covered by the Will or where the Will is invalid or incapable of being given effect to. Nomination eases fund transfer and does not determine ownership. Relying only on nomination is not estate planning and money/assets may not be distributed/transferred as intended. Note: while nomination rules and succession laws apply to most financial assets, insurance cover operates differently.

*(The writer is an NISM & CRISIL-certified Wealth Manager and certified in NISM's Research Analyst module)*



## Nominee vs. legal heir: who is legally entitled to funds? नामांकित बनाम कानूनी वारिस: कौन कानूनी रूप से धन का हकदार है?

- If a **nominee** has been appointed for a **bank account**, the bank may release funds to the nominee; however, **ownership** of those funds follows **inheritance law**, or a **Will**, not the nomination form. यदि किसी बैंक खाते के लिए **नामांकित व्यक्ति** नियुक्त किया गया है, तो बैंक धन **नामांकित व्यक्ति** को जारी कर सकता है; हालांकि, उस धन का **स्वामित्व विरासत कानून** या **वसीयत** के अनुसार होता है, न कि नामांकन फॉर्म के अनुसार।



- We must plan for the **seamless transfer** of our **money and assets** to those we intend to leave them to after our demise. हमें अपने **धन और संपत्ति** का **सुगम हस्तांतरण** उन लोगों को देने के लिए योजना बनानी चाहिए जिनके लिए हम उन्हें अपनी मृत्यु के बाद छोड़ना चाहते हैं।
- Unfortunately, many people mistakenly assume that merely **nominating someone** for each asset is sufficient and **nomination per se automatically transfers ownership** to the nominee after the death of the account holder or asset owner. In reality, **asset ownership works very differently**. दुर्भाग्यवश, कई लोग गलती से मान लेते हैं कि केवल प्रत्येक संपत्ति के लिए किसी को **नामांकित करना** पर्याप्त है और **नामांकन स्वयं स्वचालित रूप से स्वामित्व स्थानांतरित कर देता है** खातेधारक या संपत्ति मालिक की मृत्यु के बाद। वास्तविकता में, **संपत्ति का स्वामित्व** बहुत अलग काम करता है।

### Who is a nominee? नामांकित व्यक्ति कौन है?

- Let's say **Karthik** appointed his **21-year-old daughter, Sudha**, as the nominee for all **bank deposits and savings accounts**. This means Sudha is merely the **designated person** to receive the money from the bank after Karthik's demise; she is **not the sole owner** of the funds released by the bank. मान लें कि **कार्तिक** ने अपनी **21 वर्षीय बेटी, सुधा**, को सभी बैंक जमा और बचत खातों के लिए नामांकित किया। इसका मतलब है कि सुधा केवल **निर्धारित व्यक्ति** है जो कार्तिक की मृत्यु के बाद बैंक से धन प्राप्त करेगी; वह बैंक द्वारा जारी धन की **एकमात्र मालिक** नहीं है।
- In other words, **nomination ensures a smooth and hassle-free release of funds by the institution, but does not confer ownership**. दूसरे शब्दों में, **नामांकन संस्थान द्वारा धन के सुगम और बिना परेशानी के जारी होने को सुनिश्चित करता है**, लेकिन स्वामित्व प्रदान नहीं करता।
- Legally, in most cases, a nominee merely acts as a custodian or trustee, receiving or holding the money or asset on behalf of the legal heirs who are the rightful owners under the inheritance law.** कानूनी रूप से, अधिकांश मामलों में, एक नामांकित व्यक्ति केवल **संरक्षक या ट्रस्टी** के रूप में कार्य करता है, जो धन या संपत्ति को **कानूनी वारिसों** की ओर से प्राप्त या धारण करता है, जो **विरासत कानून** के तहत वास्तविक मालिक होते हैं।
- For instance, assume Karthik is also survived by his **mother, wife, and a son**. In that case, the **mother, wife, his son and daughter** are all his **legal heirs** and legally entitled to his monies and assets. उदाहरण के लिए, मान लें कि कार्तिक के **माँ, पत्नी और एक बेटा** भी जीवित हैं। उस स्थिति में, **माँ, पत्नी, बेटा और बेटी** सभी उनके **कानूनी वारिस** हैं और उनके धन और संपत्ति के **कानूनी हकदार** हैं।
- Therefore, though the bank may hand over the funds/assets to his daughter, who is a nominee, the **legal heirs** are entitled to claim their lawful share in accordance with the **succession law**. इसलिए, हालांकि बैंक धन/संपत्ति अपनी बेटी, जो कि नामांकित है, को सौंप सकता है, **कानूनी वारिसों** को उनके **कानूनी हिस्से** का दावा करने का अधिकार है **विरासत कानून** के अनुसार।
- In short, the nominee acts only as a **custodian**, whereas **ownership of the funds or assets vests in the legal heirs**.



संक्षेप में, नामांकित व्यक्ति केवल **संरक्षक** के रूप में कार्य करता है, जबकि **धन या संपत्ति का स्वामित्व कानूनी वारिसों** के पास होता है।

### Why is the nominee paid?

नामांकित व्यक्ति को भुगतान क्यों किया जाता है?

- After the demise of an account holder, the **bank/financial institution** releases the funds to the nominee to avoid **delays and administrative complications**.  
खातेधारक की मृत्यु के बाद, **बैंक/वित्तीय संस्था** धन को नामांकित व्यक्ति को जारी करती है ताकि **विलंब और प्रशासनिक जटिलताओं** से बचा जा सके।
- They are more concerned with the **seamless transfer** of funds; questions of **ownership** are beyond their purview.  
वे धन के **सुगम हस्तांतरण** के प्रति अधिक चिंतित होते हैं; **स्वामित्व** के प्रश्न उनके अधिकार क्षेत्र के बाहर हैं।
- Payment to the nominee enables the bank to **close the account and discharge its responsibility**.  
नामांकित व्यक्ति को भुगतान करने से बैंक को **खाता बंद करने और अपनी जिम्मेदारी पूरी करने** में मदद मिलती है।
- However, such payment neither determines/transfers **ownership** of the funds nor overrides **legal heir rights** under respective **succession laws**.  
हालांकि, ऐसा भुगतान धन का **स्वामित्व तय/स्थानांतरित नहीं करता** और संबंधित **विरासत कानूनों** के तहत **कानूनी वारिसों के अधिकारों** को ओवरराइड नहीं करता।

### Who is a legal heir?

कानूनी वारिस कौन है?

- A **legal heir** is the one who is entitled to inherit the **money/assets** of the deceased person under **succession law** or a valid **Will**.  
एक **कानूनी वारिस** वह है जिसे **विरासत कानून** या मान्य **वसीयत** के तहत मृत व्यक्ति की **धन/संपत्ति** विरासत में पाने का अधिकार है।
- In short, they are the rightful **legal owners** of the funds.  
संक्षेप में, वे धन के सही **कानूनी मालिक** होते हैं।
- In Karthik's case, his **mother, wife, son and daughter** are all **legal heirs**.  
कार्तिक के मामले में, उनकी **माँ, पत्नी, बेटा और बेटी** सभी **कानूनी वारिस** हैं।
- **Legal heirs are determined by personal laws** such as the **Hindu Succession Act, Indian Succession Act, the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937** or any other **applicable inheritance laws**.  
**कानूनी वारिस** तय किए जाते हैं **व्यक्तिगत कानूनों** जैसे **हिंदू उत्तराधिकार अधिनियम, भारतीय उत्तराधिकार अधिनियम, मुस्लिम पर्सनल लॉ (शरिया) एप्लिकेशन एक्ट, 1937** या किसी अन्य लागू **विरासत कानून** के अनुसार।
- **The Hindu Succession Act** is applicable to **Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, Sikhs**, and includes **Virashaiva, Lingayat, or a follower of the Brahmo, Prarthana or Arya Samaj**.  
**हिंदू उत्तराधिकार अधिनियम** लागू होता है **हिंदू, जैन, बौद्ध, सिख** पर और इसमें शामिल हैं **वीरशैव, लिंगायत, या ब्राह्मो, प्रार्थना या आर्य समाज** के अनुयायी।
- **The Indian Succession Act** applies to **Christians and Parsis** and, by implication, to **Jews and others** not governed by the **Hindu or Muslim personal law**.  
**भारतीय उत्तराधिकार अधिनियम** लागू होता है **ईसाई और पारसी** पर और तात्कालिक रूप से उन **यहूदियों और अन्य** पर जिन पर **हिंदू या मुस्लिम व्यक्तिगत कानून** लागू नहीं होता।
- For **Muslims** in India, **inheritance and succession matters** are governed by the **Muslim Personal Law**.  
भारत में **मुसलमानों** के लिए, **विरासत और उत्तराधिकार के मामले** **मुस्लिम व्यक्तिगत कानून** द्वारा नियंत्रित होते हैं।
- In the absence of a valid **Will**, these laws determine who the **heirs** are and the **proportion** in which they are entitled to inherit the deceased person's assets.  
एक वैध **वसीयत** की अनुपस्थिति में, ये कानून तय करते हैं कि कौन **वारिस** हैं और किस **अनुपात** में वे मृत व्यक्ति की संपत्ति का हकदार हैं।



- Where a valid **Will** exists, it governs **inheritance**, but **succession laws** apply to assets not covered by the **Will** or where the **Will** cannot legally operate.  
जहाँ एक वैध **वसीयत** मौजूद है, यह **विरासत** को नियंत्रित करती है, लेकिन **उत्तराधिकार कानून** उन संपत्तियों पर लागू होते हैं जो **वसीयत** में शामिल नहीं हैं या जहाँ **वसीयत** कानूनी रूप से लागू नहीं हो सकती।
- In Karthik's case, if he passed away without leaving a valid **Will**, the manner in which his **money and assets** are distributed to his **legal heirs** will be determined by the applicable **succession law** based on his religion.  
कार्तिक के मामले में, यदि उनकी मृत्यु बिना वैध **वसीयत** छोड़े हुई, तो उनके **धन और संपत्ति** को उनके **कानूनी वारिसों** में वितरित करने का तरीका उनके धर्म के अनुसार लागू **उत्तराधिकार कानून** द्वारा निर्धारित किया जाएगा।
- If Karthik is a **Hindu**, then, as per the **Hindu Succession Act**, his **mother, wife, son, and daughter** would inherit his **assets** as **legal heirs** in the manner prescribed under that law, irrespective of who is named as the **nominee**.  
यदि कार्तिक **हिंदू** हैं, तो **हिंदू उत्तराधिकार अधिनियम** के अनुसार, उनकी **माँ, पत्नी, बेटा और बेटी** उनके **संपत्ति के कानूनी वारिस** के रूप में उस कानून में वर्णित तरीके से वारिस होंगे, चाहे **नामांकित व्यक्ति** कौन हो।
- Therefore, even if Karthik had appointed his daughter **Sudha** as the **nominee**, such nomination would not make her the **sole owner** of the funds or assets, nor would it confer **full ownership** upon her.  
इसलिए, भले ही कार्तिक ने अपनी बेटी **सुधा** को **नामांकित व्यक्ति** नियुक्त किया हो, ऐसा नामांकन उसे धन या संपत्ति की **एकमात्र मालिक** नहीं बनाता, न ही इसे उस पर **पूर्ण स्वामित्व** प्रदान करता है।

### What if there is a Will? यदि वसीयत है तो क्या?

- If Karthik had executed a valid **Will**, his **assets** would be distributed in accordance with the **Will**, and the provisions of the **Hindu Succession Act** would apply only to any property not covered by the **Will**.  
यदि कार्तिक ने वैध **वसीयत** बनाई होती, तो उनकी **संपत्ति वसीयत** के अनुसार वितरित होती, और **हिंदू उत्तराधिकार अधिनियम** की धारा केवल उन संपत्तियों पर लागू होती जो **वसीयत** में शामिल नहीं हैं।
- Succession laws would apply only to assets not covered by the **Will** or where the **Will** is invalid or incapable of being given effect to.  
उत्तराधिकार कानून केवल उन संपत्तियों पर लागू होंगे जो **वसीयत** में शामिल नहीं हैं या जहाँ **वसीयत** अमान्य है या जिसे लागू नहीं किया जा सकता।
- Nomination eases fund transfer and does not determine ownership. Relying only on nomination is not estate planning and money/assets may not be distributed/transferred as intended.**  
नामांकन धन हस्तांतरण को आसान बनाता है और स्वामित्व तय नहीं करता। केवल नामांकन पर भरोसा करना संपत्ति योजना नहीं है और धन/संपत्ति अपेक्षित तरीके से वितरित/स्थानांतरित नहीं हो सकती।
- Note:** while **nomination rules** and **succession laws** apply to most financial assets, **insurance cover** operates differently.  
**नोट:** जबकि अधिकांश वित्तीय संपत्तियों पर **नामांकन नियम** और **उत्तराधिकार कानून** लागू होते हैं, **बीमा कवरेज** अलग तरीके से काम करता है।

GS Paper III: S&T,	
TOPICS COVERED	19 January 2026
1.	<b>Two children die due to GBS in M.P.'s Neemuch district</b> <b>मध्य प्रदेश के नीमच ज़िले में GBS से दो बच्चों की मौत</b>
2.	<b>Why participatory science is crucial to tackling coconut root wilt disease</b> <b>नारियल रूट विल्ट रोग से निपटने में सहभागी विज्ञान क्यों महत्वपूर्ण है</b>
3.	<b>Visibility: light's right of way</b>



	दृश्यता: प्रकाश का अधिकार मार्ग
4.	QUIZ
5.	<b>Soft matter: the unusual yet persistent physics inside your bathroom cabinet</b> सॉफ्ट मैटर: आपके बाथरूम कैबिनेट के भीतर की असामान्य लेकिन स्थायी भौतिकी

## Two children die due to GBS in M.P.'s Neemuch district

GS III: S&T

Authorities have swung into action after the death of two children due to the **Gullian-Barré Syndrome (GBS)**, an immunological nerve disorder, in Madhya Pradesh's Neemuch district and detection of 18 cases over the past few days, officials said on Sunday. Manasa sub-divisional magistrate Kiran Anjana told *The Hindu* that a special ward had been established at the Civil Hospital for new patients and existing patients had been referred to bigger hospitals.

## Two children die due to GBS in M.P.'s Neemuch district

मध्य प्रदेश के नीमच ज़िले में GBS से दो बच्चों की मौत

• Authorities have swung into action after the death of **two children** due to the **Gullian-Barré Syndrome (GBS)**, an immunological nerve disorder, in **Madhya Pradesh's Neemuch district** and detection of **18 cases** over the **past few days**, officials said on **Sunday**.

अधिकारियों ने दो बच्चों की गुलियन-बैरे सिंड्रोम (GBS), जो एक प्रतिरक्षा तंत्र से जुड़ा तंत्रिका विकार है, से मध्य

प्रदेश के नीमच ज़िले में मौत और पिछले कुछ दिनों में 18 मामलों के सामने आने के बाद कार्रवाई शुरू कर दी है, अधिकारियों ने रविवार को कहा।

- **Manasa sub-divisional magistrate Kiran Anjana** told *The Hindu* that a **special ward** had been established at the **Civil Hospital** for **new patients** and **existing patients** had been referred to **bigger hospitals**.

मानासा उप-विभागीय मजिस्ट्रेट किरण अंजना ने द हिंदू को बताया कि नए मरीजों के लिए सिविल अस्पताल में एक विशेष वार्ड स्थापित किया गया है और मौजूदा मरीजों को बड़े अस्पतालों में रेफर किया गया है।

### Guillain-Barré Syndrome

Guillain-Barré Syndrome is a **rare neurological disorder** in which the body's **immune system mistakenly attacks the peripheral nerves**. This leads to **muscle weakness, numbness, and sometimes paralysis**.

#### Why does it happen?

- GBS usually occurs **after an infection**, when the immune system gets confused and attacks nerves instead of germs.
- Common triggers include
  - Respiratory infections
  - Gastrointestinal infections (especially diarrhea)
  - Viral infections like influenza, dengue, Zika, COVID-19
  - Rarely after surgery or vaccination

#### How does it affect the body?

- Damage to the **myelin sheath or nerve fibers**
- Slowing or blocking of nerve signal transmission
- Muscles fail to receive proper signals from the brain



# Why participatory science is crucial to tackling coconut root wilt disease

**Phytoplasma-induced root wilt disease** has destroyed large tracts of coconut-growing areas in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala which together account for around 82-83% of India's coconut production; coconut palms that display tolerance under high inoculum pressure and intense vector load hold the key to combating phytoplasma

**R. Ranjith Kumar**

Coconut is one of the largest horticultural crops in peninsular India, and an increasing number of farmers are taking up coconut plantations due to a lack of labour availability and the intensive attention required to raise annual crops.

The three States of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala together account for about 82-83% of India's coconut production. Coconut is not only culturally interwoven but also defines the landscape of regions like Alappuzha and Pollachi, known for their pristine beauty.

Now, this carefully cultivated imagery is under threat from a microscopic adversary: phytoplasma. Specifically, phytoplasma-induced root wilt disease has destroyed large tracts of traditional coconut-growing areas in these three States.

**Rapid expansion**  
Root wilt disease is a debilitating condition. It is classified as a non-fatal disease and was first identified more than a century and a half ago in Erattupetta in Kerala. More than 150 years of sustained scientific research at the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI), Kayamkulam, has yet to yield a definitive cure.

The disease spreads through insect vectors, aided by the movement of wind and uninterrupted stretches of coconut plantations. While the disease has existed for decades, its spread used to be limited. Today, its rapid expansion has caught many farmers unprepared.

In fact both farmers and the scientific community concur that erratic temperatures, especially extremes, and the rise of new sucking pests, particularly whiteflies, have significantly accelerated its spread. The combined effect of abiotic stress induced by climate change and biotic stress from emerging pests has rendered coconut palms increasingly susceptible to root wilt disease. Once a few palms are infected in a region, sufficient inoculum builds up to hasten further spread. Recent assessments indicate that more than 30 lakh coconut palms have already been affected across major coconut-growing regions.

In areas such as Pollachi, where farmers have prospered by adopting intercropping systems in coconut plantations with shade-loving permanent crops like cocoa and nutmeg, the situation has turned into a double disaster. Without the shade of the coconut canopy, cocoa and nutmeg trees simply succumb to thermal stress.

**A successful tool**  
Research institutions have attempted to address this plight through two broad approaches: first by developing standardised integrated cultivation practices using a judicious mix of organic and inorganic inputs, and second by developing resistant and tolerant



**Silent battle:** Coconut trees at the Vanavarayar Institute of Agriculture at Manakkadavu in Pollachi of Tamil Nadu. K. ANANTHAN

varieties. Farmers who have religiously followed the recommended practices contend that these measures have done little to prevent the spread of the disease. Once a tree is infested, symptoms appear only after a prolonged incubation period, and often vary, since they are superimposed with those of other diseases such as leaf decay.

The tree quickly becomes unproductive, sheds all its nuts, and assumes a distorted appearance. Even if the disease is not immediately fatal, the palm continues to act as a source of pathogen inoculum. The phytoplasma challenge is not confined to coconut alone. The spread of yellow leaf disease in arecanut across parts of Karnataka serves as a parallel reminder of how vector-borne palm diseases can silently expand when early, field-based interventions are inadequate.

CPCRI Kayamkulam has released one resistant and three tolerant varieties. Institutions such as the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University and the Coconut Development Board (CDB) multiply these varieties, but production has been limited to only a few thousand seedlings a year. Breeding resistant and tolerant varieties remains one of the most successful tools for managing phytoplasma, as demonstrated by the high degree of success in addressing phytoplasma-related diseases in palms across the globe, from the Caribbean to Africa. Steps can be taken to import such varieties under strict quarantine protocols for field evaluation.

However, a more prudent and sustainable approach would be to tap into the reservoir of genetic wealth already

**The government and the scientific community must ensure that participatory selection and participatory breeding are pursued in all earnestness to confront the menace threatening coconut cultivation**

standing in farmers' fields within highly infested endemic zones. Coconut palms that display tolerance under high inoculum pressure and intense vector load hold the key to combating phytoplasma.

A participatory approach to selection offers a credible pathway to addressing the central constraint in combating phytoplasma: identifying and breeding resistant and tolerant varieties. In highly infested regions, systematic participatory selection of coconut palms, combined with structured observation, can be undertaken with farmers playing a central role.

With appropriate training, farmers can be enabled to identify potentially tolerant palms and can be instructed on the importance of careful, long-term observation and record-keeping. This would significantly reduce the burden on scientific institutions while generating richer, field-relevant datasets.

Once tolerant or resistant palms are identified and validated, they can be inducted into decentralised breeding programmes, allowing multiple small, independent selection and evaluation efforts to proceed simultaneously under scientific supervision. Such an approach also enables the isolation of locally

adapted varieties suited to specific agro-climatic conditions.

**Institutional action**  
Given the rapid expansion of root wilt disease into new frontiers, mirroring the trajectory of whittely, which was once confined to a few pockets in western Tamil Nadu but is now a pan-India pest, time is of the essence. Farmers whose palms are selected for breeding can also benefit through royalty mechanisms envisioned under the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act while being encouraged to establish nurseries to multiply planting material at scale to replace the vast number of palms being felled.

The government and the scientific community must, therefore, place renewed faith in citizen science and ensure that participatory selection and participatory breeding are pursued in all earnestness to confront the phytoplasma menace threatening coconut cultivation.

Addressing root wilt at this scale requires coordinated institutional action. Central agencies such as CPCRI and the CDB must work closely with the agricultural universities of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka. Fragmented research efforts and parallel trials no longer suffice in the face of a fast-spreading phytoplasma threat. A shared framework for data, evaluation, and field validation is essential to translate participatory science into impact.

*(R. Ranjith Kumar is managing director, Pollachi Nutmeg Farmer Producer Company, and ICAR-IARI Innovative Farmer Awardee. ranjikt@gmail.com)*

## THE GIST

Root wilt disease is a debilitating condition and is classified as a non-fatal disease

The disease spreads through insect vectors, aided by the movement of wind and uninterrupted stretches of coconut plantations

The combined effect of abiotic stress induced by climate change and biotic stress from emerging pests has rendered coconut palms increasingly susceptible to root wilt disease

Breeding resistant and tolerant varieties remains one of the most successful tools for managing phytoplasma

## Why participatory science is crucial to tackling coconut root wilt disease नारियल रूट विल्ट रोग से निपटने में सहभागी विज्ञान क्यों महत्वपूर्ण है

- **Phytoplasma-induced root wilt disease** has destroyed large tracts of **coconut-growing areas in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala** which together account for around **82-83% of India's coconut production**.
- **फाइटोप्लाज्मा-जनित रूट विल्ट रोग** ने कर्नाटक, तमिलनाडु और केरल में नारियल उगाने वाले बड़े क्षेत्रों को नष्ट कर दिया है, जो मिलकर **भारत के नारियल उत्पादन का लगभग 82-83% हिस्सा** रखते हैं।
- **Coconut palms that display tolerance under high inoculum pressure and intense vector load** hold the **key to combating phytoplasma**.
- **नारियल के पेड़ जो उच्च इनोकुलम दबाव और तीव्र वेक्टर लोड के तहत सहनशीलता** दिखाते हैं, वही **फाइटोप्लाज्मा से निपटने की कुंजी** रखते हैं।

## Coconut and Root Wilt Disease नारियल और रूट विल्ट रोग

- Coconut is one of the largest **horticultural crops in peninsular India**, and an increasing number of farmers are taking up coconut plantations due to a **lack of labour availability** and the **intensive attention** required to raise annual crops.



नारियल प्रायद्वीपीय भारत की सबसे बड़ी उद्यानिकी फसलों में से एक है, और श्रम की कमी तथा वार्षिक फसलों को उगाने में लगने वाले अत्यधिक ध्यान के कारण किसान तेजी से नारियल बागानों को अपना रहे हैं।

- The three States of **Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala** together account for about **82–83%** of **India's coconut production**.

**कर्नाटक, तमिलनाडु और केरल**—ये तीन राज्य मिलकर **भारत के नारियल उत्पादन का लगभग 82–83%** योगदान करते हैं।

- **Coconut is not only culturally interwoven but also defines the landscape of regions like Alappuzha and Pollachi, known for their pristine beauty.**

नारियल केवल सांस्कृतिक रूप से जुड़ा ही नहीं है, बल्कि अलप्पुझा और पोलाची जैसे क्षेत्रों के परिदृश्य को परिभाषित भी करता है, जो अपनी निर्मल सुंदरता के लिए प्रसिद्ध हैं।

- Now, this carefully cultivated imagery is under threat from a **microscopic adversary: phytoplasma.**

अब यह सावधानीपूर्वक विकसित की गई छवि एक सूक्ष्म शत्रु: **फाइटोप्लाज्मा** के कारण खतरे में है।

- Specifically, **phytoplasma-induced root wilt disease** has destroyed large tracts of **traditional coconut-growing areas** in these three States.

विशेष रूप से, **फाइटोप्लाज्मा-जनित रूट विल्ट रोग** ने इन तीन राज्यों के पारंपरिक नारियल उगाने वाले क्षेत्रों के बड़े हिस्से को नष्ट कर दिया है।

### Rapid expansion तेज़ प्रसार

- **Root wilt disease is a debilitating condition.**

**रूट विल्ट रोग एक दुर्बल करने वाली स्थिति है।**

- **It is classified as a non-fatal disease** and was first identified more than a century and a half ago in **Erattupetta in Kerala.**

इसे गैर-घातक रोग के रूप में वर्गीकृत किया गया है और इसे **डेढ़ सदी से अधिक पहले केरल के एरट्टुपेट्टा** में पहली बार पहचाना गया था।

- More than **150 years** of sustained **scientific research** at the **Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI), Kayamkulam**, has yet to yield a **definitive cure.**

**केंद्रीय प्लांटेशन फसल अनुसंधान संस्थान (CPCRI), कायंकुलम में 150 वर्षों से अधिक के निरंतर वैज्ञानिक अनुसंधान के बावजूद अभी तक निश्चित इलाज नहीं मिल पाया है।**

- The **disease spreads through insect vectors, aided by the movement of wind and uninterrupted stretches of coconut plantations.**

यह रोग **कीट वाहकों** के माध्यम से फैलता है, जिसमें **हवा** की गति और **नारियल बागानों की निरंतर पट्टियाँ** सहायता करती हैं।

- While the disease has existed for **decades**, its spread used to be **limited.**

यद्यपि यह रोग **दशकों** से मौजूद है, परंतु पहले इसका प्रसार **सीमित** रहता था।

- Today, its **rapid expansion** has caught many **farmers unprepared.**

आज इसका **तेज़ प्रसार** कई **किसानों को बिना तैयारी के प्रभावित** कर रहा है।

- In fact, both **farmers** and the **scientific community** concur that **erratic temperatures, especially extremes, and the rise of new sucking pests, particularly whiteflies, have significantly accelerated its spread.**

वास्तव में, **किसान और वैज्ञानिक समुदाय** दोनों इस बात पर सहमत हैं कि **अनियमित तापमान, विशेषकर अत्यधिक स्तर, और नए चूसक कीटों—विशेष रूप से सफेद मक्खियों—के बढ़ने से इसका प्रसार काफी तेज़ हो गया है।**

- The **combined effect of abiotic stress induced by climate change and biotic stress from emerging pests** has rendered coconut palms **increasingly susceptible** to root wilt disease.

**जलवायु परिवर्तन से उत्पन्न अजैविक तनाव और उभरते कीटों से होने वाले जैविक तनाव के संयुक्त प्रभाव ने नारियल के पेड़ों को रूट विल्ट रोग के प्रति अधिक संवेदनशील बना दिया है।**

- **Once a few palms are infected in a region, sufficient inoculum builds up to hasten further spread.**

किसी क्षेत्र में कुछ पेड़ों के संक्रमित होते ही **पर्याप्त इनोकुलम** बन जाता है, जो **आगे के प्रसार को तेज़** कर देता है।

- Recent assessments indicate that more than **30 lakh coconut palms** have already been **affected** across major coconut-growing regions.



हालिया आकलनों से संकेत मिलता है कि प्रमुख नारियल उत्पादक क्षेत्रों में **30 लाख से अधिक नारियल के पेड़ पहले ही प्रभावित हो चुके हैं।**

- In areas such as **Pollachi**, where farmers have prospered by adopting **intercropping systems** in coconut plantations with **shade-loving permanent crops** like **cocoa** and **nutmeg**, the situation has turned into a **double disaster**.  
**पोल्लाची** जैसे क्षेत्रों में, जहाँ किसानों ने नारियल बागानों में **अंतरफसल प्रणाली** अपनाकर **छाया-प्रिय स्थायी फसलों** जैसे **कोको** और **जायफल** से समृद्धि पाई थी, स्थिति अब **दोहरी आपदा** बन गई है।
- **Without the shade of the coconut canopy, cocoa and nutmeg trees simply succumb to thermal stress.**  
**नारियल की छत्रछाया के बिना, कोको और जायफल के पेड़ सीधे ऊष्मीय तनाव का शिकार हो जाते हैं।**

### A successful tool

#### एक सफल साधन

- Research institutions have attempted **to address this plight through two broad approaches**: first by **developing standardised integrated cultivation practices** using a **judicious mix of organic and inorganic inputs**, and second by **developing resistant and tolerant varieties**.  
अनुसंधान संस्थानों ने इस समस्या से निपटने के लिए दो व्यापक उपाय अपनाने का प्रयास किया है: पहला, **जैविक और अजैविक इनपुट** के संतुलित मिश्रण से **मानकीकृत एकीकृत खेती पद्धतियाँ** विकसित करना, और दूसरा, **प्रतिरोधी और सहनशील किस्में** विकसित करना।
- Farmers who have religiously followed the recommended practices contend that these measures have done little to prevent the **spread of the disease**.  
जिन किसानों ने अनुशंसित पद्धतियों का पूरी निष्ठा से पालन किया है, उनका कहना है कि इन उपायों से **रोग के प्रसार** को रोकने में बहुत कम मदद मिली है।
- **Once a tree is infested, symptoms appear only after a prolonged incubation period**, and **often vary, since they are superimposed with those of other diseases such as leaf decay**.  
एक बार जब कोई पेड़ संक्रमित हो जाता है, तो लक्षण केवल **लंबे ऊष्मायन काल** के बाद दिखाई देते हैं, और अक्सर भिन्न होते हैं, क्योंकि वे **लीफ डिक्** जैसी अन्य बीमारियों के लक्षणों के साथ मिल जाते हैं।
- The **tree quickly becomes unproductive, sheds all its nuts, and assumes a distorted appearance**.  
पेड़ शीघ्र ही **अनुत्पादक** हो जाता है, अपने सभी **फल** गिरा देता है, और उसका स्वरूप **विकृत** हो जाता है।
- Even if the disease is not immediately **fatal**, the palm continues to act as a source of **pathogen inoculum**.  
भले ही यह रोग तुरंत **घातक** न हो, फिर भी ताड़ का पेड़ **रोगजनक इनोकुलम** का स्रोत बना रहता है।
- The **phytoplasma challenge is not confined to coconut alone**.  
**फाइटोप्लाज्मा की चुनौती** केवल नारियल तक सीमित नहीं है।
- The spread of **yellow leaf disease in arecanut** across parts of **Karnataka** serves as a parallel reminder of how **vector-borne palm diseases** can silently expand when early, **field-based interventions** are inadequate.  
**कर्नाटक** के कुछ हिस्सों में **सुपारी** में **येलो लीफ रोग** का प्रसार इस बात की समानांतर याद दिलाता है कि जब प्रारंभिक **क्षेत्र-आधारित हस्तक्षेप** अपर्याप्त होते हैं, तो **वाहक-जनित ताड़ रोग** किस प्रकार चुपचाप फैल सकते हैं।
- **CPCRI Kayamkulam** has released **one resistant and three tolerant varieties**.  
**CPCRI कायंकुलम** ने **एक प्रतिरोधी और तीन सहनशील किस्में** जारी की हैं।
- Institutions such as the **Tamil Nadu Agricultural University** and the **Coconut Development Board (CDB)** multiply these varieties, but production has been limited to only **a few thousand seedlings a year**.  
**तमिलनाडु कृषि विश्वविद्यालय** और **नारियल विकास बोर्ड (CDB)** जैसी संस्थाएँ इन किस्मों का प्रसार करती हैं, लेकिन उत्पादन केवल **कुछ हज़ार पौधों प्रति वर्ष** तक ही सीमित रहा है।
- Breeding **resistant and tolerant varieties** remains one of the most **successful tools** for managing **phytoplasma**, as demonstrated by the **high degree of success** in addressing phytoplasma-related diseases in palms across the globe, from the **Caribbean to Africa**.  
**प्रतिरोधी और सहनशील किस्मों** का प्रजनन **फाइटोप्लाज्मा** प्रबंधन के लिए सबसे **सफल साधनों** में से एक बना हुआ है, जैसा कि **कैरेबियन से अफ्रीका** तक दुनिया भर में ताड़ों में फाइटोप्लाज्मा-संबंधित रोगों से निपटने में मिली **उच्च सफलता** से स्पष्ट है।



- Steps can be taken to import such varieties under **strict quarantine protocols** for **field evaluation**.  
ऐसी किस्मों को कड़े क्वारंटीन प्रोटोकॉल के अंतर्गत क्षेत्रीय मूल्यांकन के लिए आयात करने के कदम उठाए जा सकते हैं।
- However, a more **prudent and sustainable approach** would be to tap into the reservoir of **genetic wealth** already standing in **farmers' fields** within highly **infested endemic zones**.  
हालाँकि, अधिक विवेकपूर्ण और सतत दृष्टिकोण यह होगा कि अत्यधिक संक्रमित स्थानिक क्षेत्रों में किसानों के खेतों में पहले से मौजूद आनुवंशिक संपदा के भंडार का उपयोग किया जाए।
- Coconut palms that display **tolerance under high inoculum pressure and intense vector load** hold the key to combating **phytoplasma**.  
वे नारियल के पेड़ जो उच्च इनोकुलम दबाव और तीव्र वाहक भार के बावजूद सहनशीलता दिखाते हैं, फाइटोप्लाज़्मा से मुकाबले की कुंजी रखते हैं।

## Visibility: light's right of way

GS III: S&T

Vasudevan Mukunth

In weather science, 'visibility' is a colloquial term for a quantity called the meteorological optical range. It's defined as the distance a beam of light can travel through the atmosphere before its intensity drops to 5% of its original value.

In an older time, a human observer would stand at a point and look for predetermined landmark objects at known distances, e.g. a water tower at 1 km and a temple at 5 km. If the observer can clearly distinguish the object against the skyline, the visibility is at least that distance. At night, they used lights of known intensity.

Modern weather stations use sensors to measure the visibility. In the direction version, a transmitter shoots a laser beam at a receiver located a specific distance away (often 20-75 m). The receiver measures exactly how much light made it across. In the indirect version, a transmitter projects a beam of light past a receiver, not directly at it. If the air is clear, the receiver sees nothing; if there's fog or dust, the particles scatter the light, deflecting some into the receiver. The amount of scattered light is converted into a visibility distance. The India



Planes seen parked at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi amid dense fog on Saturday. ANI

Meteorological Department also classifies visibility depending on smog (i.e. smoke + fog) intensity. This scheme ranges from 500-1,000 m for 'shallow fog' to less than 50 m for 'very dense fog'. On Sunday, the visibility in Delhi had dropped to 'poor', i.e. 50-200 m.

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### Visibility: light's right of way

दृश्यता: प्रकाश का अधिकार मार्ग

#### Visibility in Weather Science मौसम विज्ञान में दृश्यता

- In weather science, '**visibility**' is a colloquial term for a quantity called the **meteorological optical range**.  
मौसम विज्ञान में 'विज़िबिलिटी (दृश्यता)' एक बोलचाल का शब्द है, जो मौसमीय ऑप्टिकल रेंज नामक मात्रा के लिए प्रयुक्त होता है।
- It's defined as the distance a beam of light can travel through the atmosphere before its intensity drops to **5% of its original value**.  
इसे उस दूरी के रूप में परिभाषित किया जाता है, जहाँ तक प्रकाश की किरण वायुमंडल में यात्रा कर सकती है, इससे पहले कि उसकी तीव्रता अपने मूल मान के 5% तक गिर जाए।

In an older time, a **human observer** would stand at a point

and look for **predetermined landmark objects** at known distances, e.g. a **water tower at 1 km** and a **temple at 5 km**.

पुराने समय में, एक मानव प्रेक्षक किसी स्थान पर खड़ा होकर पूर्व-निर्धारित स्थलों को ज्ञात दूरियों पर देखता था, जैसे 1 किमी पर जल टंकी और 5 किमी पर मंदिर।

- If the observer can clearly distinguish the object against the skyline, the visibility is at least that distance.  
यदि प्रेक्षक उस वस्तु को आकाश रेखा के विरुद्ध स्पष्ट रूप से पहचान सकता है, तो दृश्यता कम से कम उतनी दूरी मानी जाती है।
- At night, they used **lights of known intensity**.  
रात्रि में, ज्ञात तीव्रता वाली रोशनी का उपयोग किया जाता था।
- Modern weather stations use **sensors** to measure the visibility.  
आधुनिक मौसम केंद्र दृश्यता मापने के लिए **संसरों** का उपयोग करते हैं।



- In the **direction version**, a transmitter shoots a **laser beam** at a receiver located a specific distance away (often **20–75 m**).  
**दिशात्मक विधि** में, एक ट्रांसमीटर लेज़र किरण को एक निश्चित दूरी पर स्थित रिसीवर की ओर भेजता है, जो प्रायः **20–75 मीटर** होती है।
- **The receiver measures exactly how much light made it across.**  
रिसीवर यह मापता है कि कितनी **रोशनी** वास्तव में उस दूरी को पार कर पाई।
- In the **indirect version**, a transmitter projects a beam of light past a receiver, not directly at it.  
**अप्रत्यक्ष विधि** में, ट्रांसमीटर प्रकाश किरण को रिसीवर के पास से गुज़ारता है, सीधे उस पर नहीं।
- If the air is **clear**, the receiver sees **nothing**.  
यदि हवा **स्वच्छ** है, तो रिसीवर को **कुछ भी दिखाई नहीं देता**।
- If there's **fog or dust**, the particles scatter the light, deflecting some into the receiver.  
यदि **कोहरा या धूल** मौजूद हो, तो कण प्रकाश को बिखेर देते हैं और उसका कुछ भाग रिसीवर तक पहुँच जाता है।
- The amount of **scattered light** is converted into a **visibility distance**.  
**बिखरी हुई रोशनी** की मात्रा को **दृश्यता दूरी** में परिवर्तित किया जाता है।
- The **India Meteorological Department** also classifies visibility depending on **smog** (i.e. **smoke + fog**) intensity.  
**भारत मौसम विज्ञान विभाग** दृश्यता को **स्मॉग** (अर्थात **धुआँ + कोहरा**) की तीव्रता के आधार पर भी वर्गीकृत करता है।
- This scheme ranges from **500–1,000 m** for 'shallow fog' to **less than 50 m** for 'very dense fog'.  
यह वर्गीकरण '**हल्के कोहरे**' के लिए **500–1,000 मीटर** से लेकर '**अत्यंत घने कोहरे**' के लिए **50 मीटर से कम** तक होता है।
- On **Sunday**, the visibility in **Delhi** had dropped to '**poor**', i.e. **50–200 m**.  
**रविवार** को **दिल्ली** में दृश्यता '**खराब**' श्रेणी में पहुँच गई थी, अर्थात **50–200 मीटर**।

#### Questions and Answers to the January 15 edition of the daily quiz:

1. In 1974, ISRO acquired technology from France in exchange for 100 man-years of engineering work, helping produce parts for this European rocket. **Ans: Ariane**

2. To steer the massive first stage, the PSLV injects this chemical solution into one side of the nozzle's exhaust flow. **Ans: Strontium perchlorate**

3. In February 2017, the PSLV-C37 mission set a world record by launching 104 satellites in a single flight. This SpaceX mission broke the record. **Ans: Transporter-1**

4. Instead of discarding the PSLV's fourth stage (PS4) as debris, ISRO often repurposes it as a stabilised orbital platform called POEM. Expand POEM. **Ans: PSLV Orbital Experiment Module**

5. The PSLV rocket's first stage solid motor is encased in \_\_\_\_\_ steel. **Ans: Maraging**

Visual: Between the SLV and the PSLV programmes, ISRO ran this programme for seven years. **Ans: Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle**

**Early Birds:** Tito Shiladitya| Haridas Pal| Sukdev Shet| Gaurav Deshmukh| K.N. Viswanathan

#### QUIZ: ISRO–France Technology Exchange (1974)

- In 1974, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) acquired **advanced space and rocket-related technology from France**.
- This acquisition took place through a **technology-for-services exchange**, not a direct financial transaction.
- **India offered 100 man-years of engineering work** to European space agencies.
- In return, ISRO gained access to **critical launch vehicle design, systems integration, and manufacturing know-how**.
- The **collaboration directly supported the development of the European Ariane launch vehicle**.
- ISRO had achieved success with **sounding rockets** and was preparing for **satellite launch capability**.
- India lacked experience in **heavy launch vehicles, cryogenic propulsion, and large-scale rocket integration**.

#### France as a Strategic Space Partner

- France emerged as one of India's **earliest and most dependable partners** in space cooperation.
- **Collaboration between ISRO and France began in the 1960s**, including cooperation at **Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station**.
- France's space ecosystem later became part of the broader **European Space Agency (ESA)** framework.



## The Ariane Launch Vehicle

- **Ariane** is a family of **European expendable launch vehicles** developed to provide **independent access to space for Europe**.
- Indian engineers assisted in **design support and production of rocket components**.
- Exposure included **structural systems, propulsion subsystems, and integration methodologies**.

## Strontium Perchlorate and Steering of the PSLV First Stage

- The **Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)** uses a special method to **steer its massive first stage**, which is powered by a **solid rocket motor**.
- Solid rocket motors generate very high thrust but **do not allow easy thrust modulation or nozzle movement**.
- To overcome this limitation, ISRO uses a chemical-based steering technique that is called **Strontium perchlorate**.

## PSLV First Stage

- The **first stage of PSLV is called PS1 (S139)**.
- It uses around **139 tonnes of solid propellant**.
- This stage provides the **initial high thrust** needed to lift the rocket off the launch pad.
- Because the nozzle is **fixed**, conventional steering through nozzle gimbaling is not feasible.

## Secondary Injection Thrust Vector Control (SITVC)

- **Secondary Injection Thrust Vector Control (SITVC)** is the technique used by PSLV to control direction during the first stage burn.
- **Instead of moving the nozzle, a chemical solution is injected into the exhaust flow of the rocket**.
- This injection is done **asymmetrically**, meaning on one side of the exhaust stream.

## Role of Strontium Perchlorate

- **Strontium perchlorate** is a **highly energetic oxidising chemical compound**.
- It is stored onboard PSLV in **liquid form** specifically for SITVC operations.
- The compound is chemically stable in storage but **reacts rapidly at high temperatures**.

## Why Strontium Perchlorate Is Used

- Works efficiently in the **extreme temperature and pressure conditions** of solid rocket exhaust.
- Produces a **fast and strong control response**, essential during lift-off.
- Allows steering **without moving heavy mechanical parts**.
- Improves **reliability and simplicity** of the first-stage control system.

## PSLV-C37 Record and Its Surpassing by SpaceX's Transporter-1 Mission

- In **February 2017, ISRO's PSLV-C37 mission set a world record by launching 104 satellites in a single flight**.
- The launch was conducted from **Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota**.
- Of the **104 satellites** carried,
- **1 satellite** was India's **Cartosat-2 series** Earth observation satellite.
- **103 satellites** were **foreign nanosatellites** belonging to multiple countries.
- All satellites were placed into **Sun-Synchronous Polar Orbit** with very high precision.



## Transporter-1 Mission

- The **PSLV-C37 record was broken by SpaceX's Transporter-1 mission.**
- **Transporter-1** was launched in **January 2021** using a **Falcon 9 rocket**.
- The **mission successfully deployed 143 satellites** in a single launch.
- This became the **highest number of satellites ever launched on one rocket flight** at that time.

## POEM in PSLV Missions

- Traditionally, after completing its role, the **fourth stage of PSLV (PS4)** was left in orbit as **space debris**.
  - To address concerns related to **space sustainability** and to maximise mission utility, **ISRO repurposed PS4** as a functional orbital platform.
  - This innovative platform is known as **POEM**.
  - **POEM stands for: PSLV Orbital Experiment Module.**
- **POEM is a stabilised orbital platform** created by converting the **spent PS4 stage** of PSLV into a **space laboratory**.
  - Instead of discarding PS4, ISRO uses it to **host scientific and technological experiments** in orbit.
  - POEM operates **after satellite deployment**, without affecting the primary mission objectives.
- PS4 already reaches a **stable Low Earth Orbit (LEO)** during normal PSLV missions.
  - It has **residual power, propulsion capability, and structural integrity** suitable for orbital experiments.
  - Repurposing PS4 avoids the need for a **dedicated experimental satellite**, significantly reducing **cost and launch mass**.

## Maraging Steel and the PSLV First Stage Solid Motor

- The **first stage of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)** is a **large solid rocket motor** that operates under **extremely high internal pressure and thermal stress** during lift-off.
  - To safely contain these forces, the motor casing must be made from a **material with exceptional strength, toughness, and reliability**.
- **Maraging steel** is a class of **ultra-high-strength steel alloys**.
  - The term "maraging" comes from **martensite aging**, a heat-treatment process.
  - Unlike conventional steels, maraging steels have **very low carbon content**.
  - Their strength comes from **precipitation hardening** using alloying elements such as **nickel, cobalt, molybdenum, and titanium**.
- Provides **very high yield and tensile strength**, crucial for rocket motor casings.
  - Exhibits **excellent fracture toughness**, reducing the risk of catastrophic failure.
  - Has **good weldability**, which is essential for manufacturing large cylindrical structures.
  - Shows **minimal distortion during heat treatment**, ensuring dimensional accuracy.
  - Maintains structural integrity under **rapid temperature and pressure changes**.



# Soft matter: the unusual yet persistent physics inside your bathroom cabinet

Every morning, as you use either your toothpaste or shampoo, you engage with soft matter, materials that flow like liquids under force but hold their shape at rest. This fascinating behaviour challenges our understanding of material properties

GS III: S&T

Indresh Yadav

Every morning, you perform a small physics activity without realising it. You squeeze toothpaste out of a tube. You apply a force and the paste flows out like a liquid. When you stop squeezing, the toothpaste stays on the brush, holding its shape against gravity. It doesn't drip, spread or collapse into a puddle.

This simple act confronts us with a fundamental question in physics: how do materials respond to forces and what makes something like toothpaste flow when pushed yet remain solid when left alone?

## Solid or liquid?

In school, materials are neatly divided into solids and liquids. Solids resist deformation and maintain their shape whereas liquids flow under even the slightest force. But toothpaste, shampoo, gels, and creams do neither in the usual way. They belong to a broad class of materials that modern physics calls soft-matter materials: they can behave like solids or flow like liquids depending on the forces applied and the timescales involved.

What makes soft materials different lies in their internal structure. Their basic building blocks are far larger than atoms or simple molecules, yet far too small to see with the naked eye. In personal care products, these building blocks can be small droplets, microscopic clusters or long and flexible macromolecules suspended in a fluid. Because they are relatively large, even gentle actions like squeezing a tube, shaking a bottle or spreading with a brush or finger, can rearrange them.

Equally important are the forces holding these structures together. In hard solids, atoms are bound by strong interactions that lock them in place. In ordinary liquids, the interactions are weaker, allowing molecules to move freely. But the molecules themselves are small and their own structure doesn't change under gentle forces. In soft materials, on the other hand, the forces between the building blocks are weak and easily disrupted. This makes their internal structure fragile but also highly adaptable. As a result, how soft materials behave depends not only on how strongly they are pushed but also on how quickly. The same force applied in different ways can produce very different outcomes. A slow, gentle stress may leave the internal structure largely intact while a rapid or sudden stress can rearrange it completely, allowing the material to flow.

This sensitivity to both force and time is a defining feature of soft matter. Squeeze a tube of toothpaste slowly and it may barely budge. But squeeze it suddenly and it flows out with ease. Shake a bottle of shampoo and it will pour out freely, but handle it gently and it will feel thick and resistant. In each case, the same material responds differently depending on the rate at which it is forced to move. In fact many shampoos contain long and flexible worm-like molecules dispersed in a liquid. At rest, these molecules are tangled together, forming a loose internal network that gives the shampoo its thickness. When you shake the bottle or pour it out, the molecules are stretched and become aligned with each other, which makes it easier for them to slide past one another.

Under the influence of this motion, the network – the connections between

molecules – continually breaks and reforms. The worm-like micelles can for a brief period break into shorter segments and then reconnect, reducing the resistance to flowing. Thus the shampoo becomes more runny. Once the molecules stop moving past each other, they slowly coil back and become entangled with each other once more. This way the network is restored and the shampoo becomes thicker again.

Toothpaste behaves in a similar way, with microscopic structures that are rearranged under pressure and which reassemble when the force is removed. This behaviour is remarkable because the microscopic building blocks are constantly being reorganised, breaking apart, reconnecting, and reshaping themselves in a reversible way. This repeat making and unmaking allows soft materials to adapt smoothly to external forces.

In the end, what we usually call solids and liquids seems to depend on how a material responds to force over time. On very short time scales, even a liquid can resist deformation like a solid while a solid can slowly flow if enough force is applied or enough time is allowed.

## The pitch drop experiment

At the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia, scientists have been conducting an experiment since 1927, known as the pitch drop experiment, to test the viscosity of pitch, or bitumen, which is a substance derived from tar. At room temperature, pitch seems like a normal solid and can be shattered with a hammer. But according to scientists, pitch is really a liquid with extremely high viscosity – around 200-billion-times that of water.

To demonstrate this, a physics professor named Thomas Parnell heated pitch and poured it into a sealed glass funnel in 1927. After leaving it undisturbed for three years so it could cool and stabilise, he removed a seal from the bottom of the container, allowing the pitch to drip under gravity. In the last almost 100 years, only nine drops have fallen, with the ninth drop in April 2014. Even though this is excruciatingly slow, the fact that it's dropping at all shows that pitch is in fact a liquid. The next drop is expected by 2030. Similar experiments are underway in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

Physicists study this force and time-dependent behaviour in a field called rheology, which examines how materials deform and flow under applied stress. The roots of this study go back to the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus, who captured it in the aphorism "panta rhei", meaning "everything flows". In soft matter, this metaphor for continuous change, which is in fact a feature inherent to all matter, becomes tangible at the timescales and force levels we encounter in everyday life. Beyond their practical usefulness, soft materials offer insights into the deeper scientific principles of motion, force, flow, and change.

The next time you open your bathroom cabinet, remember you are not just handling personal care products. You are handling materials carefully engineered to balance force and flow, structure, and softness. In their gentle response to a squeeze or a shake lies a rich, hidden chapter of modern physics, playing out out of sight, every day.

Indresh Yadav is an assistant professor in the Department of Physics at IIT-Bhubaneswar.

## Soft matter: the unusual yet persistent physics inside your bathroom cabinet सॉफ्ट मैटर: आपके बाथरूम कैबिनेट के भीतर की असामान्य लेकिन स्थायी भौतिकी

- Every morning, you perform a small **physics activity** without realising it. हर सुबह, आप बिना महसूस किए एक छोटी **भौतिकी गतिविधि** करते हैं।
- You squeeze toothpaste out of a tube. आप ट्यूब से **टूथपेस्ट** निकालते हैं।
- You apply a **force** and the paste flows out like a **liquid**. आप **बल** लगाते हैं और पेस्ट **द्रव** की तरह बाहर निकलता है।
- When you stop squeezing, the toothpaste stays on the brush, holding its **shape** against **gravity**. जब आप दबाना बंद करते हैं, तो टूथपेस्ट **गुरुत्वाकर्षण** के विरुद्ध अपनी **आकृति** बनाए रखते हुए ब्रश पर टिका रहता है।



- It doesn't drip, spread or collapse into a puddle.  
यह न तो टपकता है, न फैलता है और न ही एक पोखर की तरह ढहता है।
- This simple act confronts us with a **fundamental question in physics**: how do materials respond to **forces** and what makes something like toothpaste flow when pushed yet remain solid when left alone?  
यह सरल क्रिया हमें **भौतिकी के एक मौलिक प्रश्न** से रूबरू कराती है: पदार्थ **बलों** के प्रति कैसे प्रतिक्रिया करते हैं और टूथपेस्ट जैसी वस्तु दबाने पर क्यों बहती है लेकिन अकेला छोड़ देने पर ठोस बनी रहती है?



### Solid or liquid? ठोस या द्रव?

- In school, materials are neatly divided into **solids and liquids**.  
विद्यालय में पदार्थों को स्पष्ट रूप से **ठोस और द्रव** में विभाजित किया जाता है।
- Solids resist **deformation** and maintain their **shape** whereas liquids flow under even the **slightest force**.  
ठोस **विकृति** का प्रतिरोध करते हैं और अपनी **आकृति** बनाए रखते हैं, जबकि द्रव बहुत ही **हल्के बल** पर भी बहने लगते हैं।
- But **toothpaste, shampoo, gels, and creams do neither in the usual way**.  
लेकिन टूथपेस्ट, शैम्पू, जेल और क्रीम सामान्य तरीके से इनमें से किसी की तरह व्यवहार नहीं करते।
- **They belong to a broad class of materials that modern physics calls soft-matter materials: they can behave like solids or flow like liquids depending on the forces applied and the timescales involved.**  
ये पदार्थ उस व्यापक वर्ग में आते हैं जिसे आधुनिक भौतिकी **सॉफ्ट-मैटर पदार्थ** कहती है, जो लगाए गए **बलों** और **समय-मान** के अनुसार ठोस या द्रव जैसा व्यवहार कर सकते हैं।
- What makes soft materials different lies in their **internal structure**.  
सॉफ्ट पदार्थों को अलग बनाने वाला तत्व उनकी **आंतरिक संरचना** में निहित है।
- Their basic **building blocks** are far larger than atoms or simple molecules, yet far too small to see with the **naked eye**.  
उनके मूल **निर्माण घटक** परमाणुओं या साधारण अणुओं से कहीं बड़े होते हैं, फिर भी **नग्न आँख** से देखने के लिए बहुत छोटे होते हैं।
- In personal care products, these building blocks can be **small droplets, microscopic clusters or long and flexible macromolecules** suspended in a **fluid**.  
व्यक्तिगत देखभाल उत्पादों में ये घटक **छोटी बूंदें, सूक्ष्म समूह** या **लंबे और लचीले मैक्रो-अणु** हो सकते हैं, जो एक **द्रव** में निलंबित रहते हैं।
- Because they are relatively large, even gentle actions like **squeezing a tube, shaking a bottle or spreading with a brush or finger**, can rearrange them.  
क्योंकि ये अपेक्षाकृत बड़े होते हैं, इसलिए **ट्यूब दबाना, बोतल हिलाना** या **ब्रश या उंगली से फैलाना** जैसी हल्की क्रियाएँ भी इन्हें पुनर्व्यवस्थित कर सकती हैं।
- Equally important are the **forces holding these structures together**.  
इन संरचनाओं को एक साथ रखने वाले **बल** भी उतने ही महत्वपूर्ण होते हैं।
- In hard solids, atoms are bound by **strong interactions** that lock them in place.  
कठोर ठोसों में परमाणु **मजबूत अंतःक्रियाओं** द्वारा बंधे होते हैं, जो उन्हें अपनी जगह स्थिर रखते हैं।
- In ordinary liquids, the interactions are **weaker**, allowing molecules to move freely.  
साधारण द्रवों में ये अंतःक्रियाएँ **कमजोर** होती हैं, जिससे अणु स्वतंत्र रूप से गतिशील रहते हैं।
- But the molecules themselves are small and their own structure doesn't change under **gentle forces**.  
लेकिन अणु स्वयं छोटे होते हैं और **हल्के बलों** के तहत उनकी संरचना नहीं बदलती।
- In soft materials, on the other hand, the forces between the building blocks are **weak and easily disrupted**.  
इसके विपरीत, सॉफ्ट पदार्थों में निर्माण घटकों के बीच के बल **कमजोर और आसानी से बाधित होने वाले** होते हैं।



- This makes their internal structure **fragile** but also **highly adaptable**.  
यह उनकी आंतरिक संरचना को **नाज़ुक** लेकिन साथ ही **अत्यधिक अनुकूलनीय** बनाता है।
- As a result, how soft materials behave depends not only on how **strongly** they are pushed but also on how **quickly**.  
परिणामस्वरूप, सॉफ्ट पदार्थों का व्यवहार केवल इस पर निर्भर नहीं करता कि उन्हें कितना **जोर से** धकेला गया, बल्कि इस पर भी कि कितनी **तेज़ी से**।
- The same force applied in different ways can produce very **different outcomes**.  
एक ही बल को अलग-अलग तरीकों से लगाने पर **भिन्न परिणाम** उत्पन्न हो सकते हैं।
- A slow, gentle stress may leave the internal structure largely **intact** while a rapid or sudden stress can rearrange it completely, allowing the material to **flow**.  
धीमा और कोमल तनाव आंतरिक संरचना को काफी हद तक **अक्षुण्ण** छोड़ सकता है, जबकि तेज़ या अचानक तनाव इसे पूरी तरह पुनर्व्यवस्थित कर सकता है और पदार्थ को **बहने** देता है।
- This sensitivity to both **force and time** is a defining feature of **soft matter**.  
**बल और समय** दोनों के प्रति यह संवेदनशीलता **सॉफ्ट मैटर** की एक परिभाषित विशेषता है।
- Squeeze a tube of toothpaste slowly and it may barely budge.  
यदि आप टूथपेस्ट की ट्यूब को धीरे दबाएँ, तो वह मुश्किल से हिलेगा।
- But squeeze it suddenly and it flows out with ease.  
लेकिन यदि आप उसे अचानक दबाएँ, तो वह आसानी से बाहर बहने लगता है।
- Shake a bottle of shampoo and it will pour out freely, but handle it gently and it will feel **thick and resistant**.  
शैम्पू की बोतल हिलाने पर वह आसानी से बहता है, लेकिन धीरे संभालने पर वह **गाढ़ा और प्रतिरोधी** महसूस होता है।
- In each case, the same material responds differently depending on the **rate** at which it is forced to move.  
हर स्थिति में, वही पदार्थ उस **दर** के अनुसार अलग-अलग प्रतिक्रिया करता है जिस पर उसे गतिशील होने के लिए मजबूर किया जाता है।
- **In fact many shampoos contain long and flexible worm-like molecules dispersed in a liquid.**  
वास्तव में, कई शैम्पू में **लंबे और लचीले कीड़े जैसे अणु** एक **द्रव** में फैले होते हैं।
- At rest, these molecules are **tangled together**, forming a loose internal **network** that gives the shampoo its **thickness**.  
विश्राम की अवस्था में, ये अणु **आपस में उलझे** रहते हैं और एक ढीला आंतरिक **जाल** बनाते हैं, जो शैम्पू को उसकी **गाढ़ापन** प्रदान करता है।
- When you shake the bottle or pour it out, the molecules are **stretched** and become **aligned** with each other, which makes it easier for them to **slide past** one another.  
जब आप बोतल हिलाते हैं या शैम्पू डालते हैं, तो अणु **खींचे जाते हैं** और एक-दूसरे के साथ **समानांतर** हो जाते हैं, जिससे वे एक-दूसरे के **आर-पार आसानी से फिसल** सकते हैं।
- Under the influence of this motion, the network — the **connections between molecules** — continually **breaks and reforms**.  
इस गति के प्रभाव में, यह जाल अर्थात् **अणुओं के बीच के संबंध** लगातार **टूटते और फिर बनते** रहते हैं।
- The worm-like micelles can for a brief period break into **shorter segments** and then reconnect, reducing the **resistance to flowing**.  
कीड़े जैसे माइसेल थोड़े समय के लिए **छोटे खंडों** में टूट सकते हैं और फिर जुड़ सकते हैं, जिससे **बहने का प्रतिरोध** कम हो जाता है।
- Thus the shampoo becomes more **runny**.  
इस प्रकार शैम्पू अधिक **पतला** हो जाता है।
- Once the molecules stop moving past each other, they slowly **coil back** and become **entangled** with each other once more.  
जब अणु एक-दूसरे के पास से गुजरना बंद कर देते हैं, तो वे धीरे-धीरे **फिर से कुंडली बनाते हैं** और पुनः **उलझे** जाते हैं।
- This way the network is **restored** and the shampoo becomes **thicker again**.  
इस प्रकार जाल **पुनः स्थापित** हो जाता है और शैम्पू फिर से **गाढ़ा** हो जाता है।

Toothpaste behaves in a similar way  
टूथपेस्ट भी इसी तरह व्यवहार करता है



- Toothpaste behaves in a similar way, with **microscopic structures that are rearranged under pressure and which reassemble when the force is removed.**  
दूधपेस्ट भी इसी तरह व्यवहार करता है, जिसमें **सूक्ष्म संरचनाएँ दबाव में पुनर्व्यवस्थित हो जाती हैं और बल हटने पर फिर से जुड़ जाती हैं।**
- This behaviour is remarkable because the microscopic building blocks are constantly being **reorganised, breaking apart, reconnecting, and reshaping themselves in a reversible way.**  
यह व्यवहार उल्लेखनीय है क्योंकि सूक्ष्म निर्माण खंड लगातार **पुनर्गठित, टूटते, फिर से जुड़ते, और पुनः आकार लेते** रहते हैं, वह भी **प्रतिवर्ती तरीके** से।
- This repeat making and unmaking allows **soft materials to adapt smoothly to external forces.**  
यह बार-बार बनना और टूटना **सॉफ्ट पदार्थों को बाहरी बलों के अनुसार सहज रूप से ढलने की क्षमता देता** है।
- In the end, what we usually call **solids and liquids** seems to depend on how a material responds to **force over time.**  
अंततः, जिन्हें हम सामान्यतः **ठोस और द्रव** कहते हैं, वे इस पर निर्भर करते हैं कि कोई पदार्थ **समय के साथ बल** के प्रति कैसे प्रतिक्रिया करता है।
- On very **short time scales, even a liquid can resist deformation like a solid while a solid can slowly flow if enough force is applied or enough time is allowed.**  
बहुत **कम समय-मान** पर, एक द्रव भी ठोस की तरह **विकृति** का विरोध कर सकता है, जबकि पर्याप्त बल लगाने या पर्याप्त समय देने पर एक ठोस भी धीरे-धीरे **बह** सकता है।

<b>GS Paper III: Environment,</b>	
<b>TOPICS COVERED</b>	<b>19 January 2026</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>PM unveils ₹6,957-cr. elevated corridor project in Kaziranga</b> पीएम ने काज़ीरंगा में ₹6,957 करोड़ की एलिवेटेड कॉरिडोर परियोजना का अनावरण किया
<b>2.</b>	<b>Microscopic crustacean from Kavaratti established as a new genus and species</b> कवरत्ती से प्राप्त सूक्ष्म क्रस्टेशियन को नया वंश और प्रजाति के रूप में स्थापित किया गया



# PM unveils ₹6,957-cr. elevated corridor project in Kaziranga

Modi flags off two Amrit Bharat trains from poll-bound Assam; cites recent election results to claim the BJP has become the first choice of people in the country; PM accuses Congress of aiding encroachment by infiltrators, and neglecting Kaziranga

**GS III: Environment**

**Rahul Karmakar**  
GUWAHATI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday cited the outcome of the Bihar Assembly election and the Mumbai civic polls to claim that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has become the first choice of the people in the country.

After laying the foundation stone for the ₹6,957 crore Kaziranga elevated corridor and virtually flagging off two Amrit Bharat trains from poll-bound Assam's Koliabor, he also said that the Congress had lost the trust of the nation.

The 86-km Kaziranga Elevated Corridor is a four-lane National Highway project, which includes 35 km of an elevated road passing through the Kaziranga National Park. "The elevated wildlife corridor will ensure uninterrupted move-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi inspects the model of the proposed Kaziranga elevated corridor in Koliabor, Assam, on Sunday. ANI

ment of animals and reduce human-wildlife conflict. It will also enhance road safety, reduce travel time and accident rates," an official statement said.

Mr. Modi also praised the Himanta Biswa Sarmal Assam government for stopping rhinoceros poaching in Kaziranga, the "soul of Assam" and a "priceless jewel of the

country" that he accused the Congress of neglecting.

The Prime Minister also accused the Congress of handing over Assam's land to infiltrators and helping them encroach on large swathes of land and lauded the government for tackling infiltration and freeing forests and historical and cultural sites from encroachment.

The Prime Minister said

## 'Syndicate tax' hurting Bengal's development: PM

**KOLKATA**

Accusing the Trinamool Congress government of imposing a 'syndicate tax' on development in West Bengal, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said investments would not come to the State as long as the party remained in power. » PAGE 4

growing faith and trust in the BJP in recent months, Mr. Modi said. "In the Bihar election, even after 20 years, people helped the BJP win a record number of seats. The results of the Maharashtra Municipal Corporation election were announced two days ago. For the first time, Mumbai gave the BJP a record mandate. People allowed the BJP to serve them in most other cities of Maharashtra," he said.

"The results have also shown that the voters are repeatedly rejecting the negative politics of Congress," he added. He asserted that the Congress has lost the country's trust due to its lack of a development agenda. "Congress took the fourth or fifth spot in Mumbai, where it was born. It has shrunk significantly in Maharashtra, which it ruled for years," Mr. Modi pointed out.

that election results across States – including in Kerala's capital Thiruvananthapuram, where the BJP secured the Mayor's post for the first time – reflected a consistent national trend. "The voters today want good governance and development. That is why they like the BJP," he said.

## Mumbai's faith in BJP

The country has shown a

## PM unveils ₹6,957-cr. elevated corridor project in Kaziranga

पीएम ने काज़ीरंगा में ₹6,957 करोड़ की एलिवेटेड कॉरिडोर परियोजना का अनावरण किया

- PM Modi flags off two Amrit Bharat trains from poll-bound Assam; cites recent election results
- The **86-km Kaziranga Elevated Corridor** is a four-lane **National Highway** project, which includes **35 km** of an elevated road passing through the **Kaziranga National Park**.
- **86 किलोमीटर लंबा काज़ीरंगा एलिवेटेड कॉरिडोर** एक चार-लेन **राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग** परियोजना है, जिसमें **35 किलोमीटर** लंबी एलिवेटेड सड़क **काज़ीरंगा राष्ट्रीय उद्यान** से होकर गुजरती है।
- "The elevated wildlife corridor will ensure uninterrupted movement of animals and reduce human-wildlife conflict. It will also enhance road safety, reduce travel time and accident rates," an official statement said.

"यह एलिवेटेड वन्यजीव कॉरिडोर जानवरों की निर्बाध आवाजाही सुनिश्चित करेगा और मानव-वन्यजीव संघर्ष को कम करेगा। यह सड़क सुरक्षा को बढ़ाएगा, यात्रा समय और दुर्घटना दर को कम करेगा," एक आधिकारिक बयान में कहा गया।



# Microscopic crustacean from Kavaratti established as a new genus and species

GS III: Environment

The Hindu Bureau

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A tiny crustacean discovered from the Kavaratti lagoon on the Lakshadweep islands has now been established as a new genus and a new species. The organism, which belongs to the family Laophontidae within the Copepoda class, is so minuscule that it can be properly studied only with a microscope.

The crustacean has been named *Indiaphonte bijoyi*, with the generic name *Indiaphonte* honouring India and the species name *bijoyi* named after S. Bijoy Nandan, dean, Faculty of Marine Sciences, Co-



*Indiaphonte bijoyi* play a key role in maintaining health of aquatic ecosystems.

chin University of Science and Technology (Cusat) and a former Vice-Chancellor of Kannur University.

The new organism has been scientifically de-

scribed by Neelima Vasu K., a researcher in the Department of Marine Biology at Cusat, in collaboration with Samuel E. Gómez-Noguera, a copepod taxonomist and Professor at UNAM University, Mexico. The discovery has been highlighted in a paper in the journal *Zootaxa*.

The newly described species has a semi-cylindrical, depressed body that is wider in the middle and tapering towards the posterior. It also has antennae-like appendages at the front. Females are slightly larger than males with a body length ranging from 518 to 772 micrometres.

Organisms such as *In-*

*diaphonte bijoyi* are essentially Meiofauna, tiny invertebrate animals less than 1 millimetre in size living in sediments in aquatic environments. With 350 species across 77 genera, the family *Laophontidae* is among the most diverse within the order *Harpacticoida*. Though microscopic in size, they play a vital role in maintaining the health of marine and freshwater ecosystems.

The genus *Indiaphonte* is considered new because it exhibits a unique combination of morphological traits that do not match any previously recorded genus within the *Laophontidae* family.

## Microscopic crustacean from Kavaratti established as a new genus and species

कवरत्ती से प्राप्त सूक्ष्म क्रस्टेशियन को नया वंश और प्रजाति के रूप में स्थापित किया गया

- A tiny crustacean discovered from the Kavaratti lagoon on the Lakshadweep islands has now been established as a new genus and a new species.  
लक्षद्वीप द्वीपसमूह की कवरत्ती लैगून से खोजा गया एक बेहद छोटा क्रस्टेशियन अब एक नए वंश और नई प्रजाति के रूप में स्थापित किया गया है।
- The organism, which belongs to the family Laophontidae within the Copepoda class, is so minuscule that it can be properly studied only with a microscope.  
यह जीव कोपेपोडा वर्ग के अंतर्गत लाओफॉन्टिडी परिवार से संबंधित है और इतना सूक्ष्म है कि इसका सही अध्ययन केवल माइक्रोस्कोप से ही संभव है।
- The crustacean has been named *Indiaphonte bijoyi*, with the generic name *Indiaphonte* honouring India and the species name *bijoyi* named after S. Bijoy Nandan, dean, Faculty of Marine Sciences, Cochin University of Science and Technology (Cusat) and a former Vice-Chancellor of Kannur University.  
इस क्रस्टेशियन का नाम *Indiaphonte bijoyi* रखा गया है, जिसमें वंश नाम *Indiaphonte* भारत के सम्मान में और प्रजाति नाम *bijoyi*, एस. बिजॉय नंदन, डीन, फैकल्टी ऑफ मरीन साइंसेज़, कोचीन यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ साइंस एंड टेक्नोलॉजी (कुसैट) तथा कन्नूर विश्वविद्यालय के पूर्व कुलपति के नाम पर रखा गया है।
- The new organism has been scientifically described by Neelima Vasu K., a researcher in the Department of Marine Biology at Cusat, in collaboration with Samuel E. Gómez-Noguera, a copepod taxonomist and Professor at UNAM University, Mexico.  
इस नए जीव का वैज्ञानिक वर्णन नीलिमा वासु के., कुसैट के समुद्री जीवविज्ञान विभाग की शोधकर्ता, ने सैमुअल ई. गोमेज़-नोगुएरा, कोपेपोड टैक्सोनॉमिस्ट और यूएनएएम विश्वविद्यालय, मेक्सिको के प्रोफेसर के सहयोग से किया है।
- The discovery has been highlighted in a paper in the journal *Zootaxa*.  
इस खोज को पत्रिका *जूटैक्सा* में प्रकाशित एक शोध पत्र में उजागर किया गया है।
- The newly described species has a semi-cylindrical, depressed body that is wider in the middle and tapering towards the posterior.



नववर्णित प्रजाति का शरीर **अर्ध-बेलनाकार और चपटा** है, जो मध्य में चौड़ा और पीछे की ओर पतला होता जाता है।

- It also has **antenna-like appendages** at the front.  
इसके अग्र भाग में **एंटीना जैसे उपांग** भी होते हैं।
- Females are slightly larger than males with a body length ranging from **518 to 772 micrometres**.  
मादाएं नर की तुलना में थोड़ी बड़ी होती हैं और उनके शरीर की लंबाई **518 से 772 माइक्रोमीटर** के बीच होती है।
- Organisms such as **Indiaphonte bijoyi** are essentially **Meiofauna**, tiny invertebrate animals less than **1 millimetre** in size living in sediments in aquatic environments.  
**Indiaphonte bijoyi** जैसे जीव मूल रूप से **मियोफॉना** हैं, जो **1 मिलीमीटर** से छोटे सूक्ष्म अकशेरुकी जीव होते हैं और जलीय पर्यावरण में तलछट में रहते हैं।
- With **350 species across 77 genera**, the family **Laophontidae** is among the most diverse within the order **Harpacticoida**.  
**77 वंशों** में फैली **350 प्रजातियों** के साथ **लाओफॉन्टिडी** परिवार **हार्पैक्टिकोइडा** गण के सबसे विविध समूहों में से एक है।
- Though microscopic in size, they play a **vital role** in maintaining the health of **marine and freshwater ecosystems**.  
आकार में सूक्ष्म होने के बावजूद, ये **समुद्री और मीठे पानी के पारिस्थितिक तंत्र** के स्वास्थ्य को बनाए रखने में **महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका** निभाते हैं।
- The genus **Indiaphonte** is considered new because it exhibits a **unique combination of morphological traits** that do not match any previously recorded genus within the **Laophontidae** family.  
**Indiaphonte** वंश को नया माना गया है क्योंकि इसमें **आकृतिक लक्षणों का एक अनूठा संयोजन** पाया जाता है, जो **लाओफॉन्टिडी** परिवार के किसी भी पहले से दर्ज वंश से मेल नहीं खाता।

## Crustacean

- **Crustaceans** are a large and diverse group of **arthropods** belonging to the subphylum **Crustacea**
- They are mostly **aquatic**, found in **marine, freshwater, and brackish environments**, with a few terrestrial forms
- Common examples include **crabs, shrimps, prawns, lobsters, barnacles, and copepods**

## GS Paper III: IS

### TOPICS COVERED

19 January 2026

1. **Kalash theft to Red Fort blast, how Delhi Police is leveraging NATGRID for investigations**  
कलश चोरी से रेड फोर्ट ब्लास्ट तक, दिल्ली पुलिस जांच में NATGRID का कैसे उपयोग कर रही है



# Kalash theft to Red Fort blast, how Delhi Police is leveraging NATGRID for investigations

GS III: Internal Security

Alisha Dutta  
NEW DELHI

Amid a push by the Ministry of Home Affairs to all police departments in the country to actively use the **National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID)**, primarily intended as a counterterrorism tool, a senior Delhi Police officer said the intelligence-sharing platform has proved instrumental in dismantling organised crime networks.

“Earlier, getting information about a suspect involved seeking permissions and sending requests to several agencies. Now, with NATGRID, information gathering has become much easier as all data are available on one platform,” the officer told *The Hindu*.

The master database of NATGRID, conceived after the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, contains information from at least 21 organisations. It stores information on tax records, bank accounts, financial transactions, immigration, vehicle ownership, toll payments, and train and flight bookings, among others. It also



NATGRID has aided the police not just in investigating high-profile cases but also in their routine probes, an officer said. FILE PHOTO

provides single-window access to FIRs registered at police stations across the country.

The officer said not all law enforcement agencies have fully adopted the information-sharing principle underpinning the platform, citing the November 10, 2025 Red Fort terror incident, which claimed the lives of 15 people. Details about Umar-un-Nabi, who was killed while driving the explosives-laden vehicle, were not uploaded to the platform by the police departments of two States, he said.

“There were no data on Nabi or his vehicle on the portal despite the push for inter-State intelligence sharing,” he noted. Howev-

er, the officer added that Delhi Police, which was probing the case before it was handed over to the National Investigation Agency, was able to learn a lot about the other accused through NATGRID, which helped identify the suspects’ hideouts and movements.

## Checks and balances

NATGRID has aided the Delhi police not just in investigating high-profile cases but also in their routine investigations, the officer said. “When a gold *kalash* (urn) was stolen during a Jain ceremony near Red Fort, we matched the CCTV image of the suspect with the photo on his passport available on NATGRID,” the officer explained.

## Kalash theft to Red Fort blast, how Delhi Police is leveraging NATGRID for investigations

कलश चोरी से रेड फोर्ट ब्लास्ट तक, दिल्ली पुलिस जांच में NATGRID का कैसे उपयोग कर रही है

- Amid a push by the **Ministry of Home Affairs** to all police departments in the country to actively use the **National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID)**, primarily intended as a counterterrorism tool, a senior **Delhi Police** officer said the intelligence-sharing platform has proved instrumental in dismantling organised crime networks.



देश भर के सभी पुलिस विभागों को गृह मंत्रालय द्वारा मुख्य रूप से आतंकवाद-रोधी उपकरण के रूप में विकसित नेशनल इंटेलिजेंस ग्रिड (NATGRID) के सक्रिय उपयोग के लिए दिए गए जोर के बीच, दिल्ली पुलिस के एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी ने कहा कि यह खुफिया-साझाकरण मंच संगठित अपराध नेटवर्क को तोड़ने में अत्यंत सहायक साबित हुआ है।

- “Earlier, getting information about a suspect involved seeking permissions and sending requests to several agencies. Now, with **NATGRID**, information gathering has become much easier as all data are available on one platform,” the officer told **The Hindu**.  
अधिकारी ने द हिंदू से कहा, “पहले किसी संदिग्ध के बारे में जानकारी पाने के लिए अनुमति लेनी पड़ती थी और कई एजेंसियों को अनुरोध भेजने पड़ते थे। अब **NATGRID** के साथ जानकारी जुटाना काफी आसान हो गया है क्योंकि सभी डेटा एक ही मंच पर उपलब्ध हैं।”
- The master database of **NATGRID**, conceived after the **2008 Mumbai terror attacks**, contains information from at least **21 organisations**.  
**2008 के मुंबई आतंकी हमलों** के बाद परिकल्पित **NATGRID** के मास्टर डेटाबेस में कम से कम **21 संगठनों** की जानकारी शामिल है।
- It stores information on **tax records, bank accounts, financial transactions, immigration, vehicle ownership, toll payments, and train and flight bookings**, among others.  
इसमें कर रिकॉर्ड, बैंक खाते, वित्तीय लेनदेन, आव्रजन, वाहन स्वामित्व, टोल भुगतान, तथा ट्रेन और उड़ान बुकिंग सहित अन्य जानकारियां संग्रहीत हैं।
- It also provides single-window access to **FIRs** registered at police stations across the country.  
यह देश भर के पुलिस थानों में दर्ज **एफआईआर** तक एकल-विंडो पहुंच भी प्रदान करता है।

## Checks and balances जांच और संतुलन

- **NATGRID** has aided the **Delhi Police** not just in investigating high-profile cases but also in their routine investigations, the officer said.  
अधिकारी ने कहा कि **NATGRID** ने **दिल्ली पुलिस** को न केवल हाई-प्रोफाइल मामलों की जांच में बल्कि उनकी नियमित जांचों में भी मदद की है।
- “When a **gold kalash (urn)** was stolen during a **Jain ceremony** near **Red Fort**, we matched the **CCTV image** of the suspect with the photo on his **passport** available on **NATGRID**,” the officer explained.  
अधिकारी ने बताया, “जब **रेड फोर्ट** के पास एक **जैन समारोह** के दौरान **सोने का कलश (अर्न)** चोरी हुआ, तो हमने संदिग्ध की **सीसीटीवी तस्वीर** को **NATGRID** पर उपलब्ध उसके **पासपोर्ट** की फोटो से मिलाया।”