



TELEGRAM CHANNEL: <https://t.me/patrioticIAS>
YOUTUBE CHANNEL: <https://www.youtube.com/@PatrioticIAS>
CONTACT: 9971932488



PATRIOTIC IAS

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

THE HINDU NEWSPAPER

18 MARCH 2026

YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/@PatrioticIAS>

Telegram Channel: <https://t.me/patrioticIAS>

PCS Special:	18 March
18Mar	FIFA signs 'game-changing partnership' with YouTube फीफा ने YouTube के साथ 'गेम-चेंजिंग साझेदारी' की

Address : 3rd Floor, KV Tower, Padleyganj Road, Gorakhpur
Email Id : info@patrioticias.in
Contact Number : 9971932488
Website : patrioticias.in



FIFA signs 'game-changing partnership' with YouTube

YouTube made a World Cup deal with FIFA on Tuesday that lets rights-holding broadcasters stream game action live on the video platform that offers global access to young viewers. FIFA announced a "game-changing partnership" that encourages World Cup rights holders to broadcast the first 10 minutes of games during the June 11-July 19 tournament – in effect an appetiser encouraging young fans then to watch on traditional channels such as network TV. Broadcasters "will be able to stream a select number of matches in full on their YouTube channel, engaging global audiences and promoting where to watch more of the competition," FIFA said. FIFA also pledged to share some of its World Cup archive on YouTube "including full length past matches and many more iconic moments in the sport's history".

18Mar. FIFA signs 'game-changing partnership' with YouTube फीफा ने YouTube के साथ 'गेम-चेंजिंग साझेदारी' की

- FIFA signs 'game-changing partnership' with YouTube. फीफा ने YouTube के साथ 'गेम-चेंजिंग साझेदारी' की।
- YouTube made a World Cup deal with FIFA on Tuesday that lets rights-holding broadcasters stream game action live on the video platform that offers global access to young viewers.

YouTube ने मंगलवार को फीफा के साथ एक वर्ल्ड कप समझौता किया जो अधिकार रखने वाले प्रसारकों को वीडियो प्लेटफॉर्म पर लाइव मैच प्रसारित करने की अनुमति देता है, जो युवा दर्शकों को वैश्विक पहुंच प्रदान करता है।

- FIFA announced a "game-changing partnership" that encourages World Cup rights holders to broadcast the first 10 minutes of games during the June 11-July 19 tournament — in effect an appetiser encouraging young fans then to watch on traditional channels such as network TV.

फीफा ने एक "गेम-चेंजिंग साझेदारी" की घोषणा की जो वर्ल्ड कप अधिकार धारकों को 11 जून से 19 जुलाई तक के टूर्नामेंट के दौरान मैचों के पहले 10 मिनट प्रसारित करने के लिए प्रोत्साहित करती है — यह प्रभावी रूप से एक

झलक है जो युवा प्रशंसकों को बाद में नेटवर्क टीवी जैसे पारंपरिक चैनलों पर देखने के लिए प्रेरित करती है।

- Broadcasters "will be able to stream a select number of matches in full on their YouTube channel, engaging global audiences and promoting where to watch more of the competition," FIFA said.

फीफा ने कहा कि प्रसारक "अपने YouTube चैनल पर कुछ चयनित मैचों को पूर्ण रूप से स्ट्रीम कर सकेंगे, जिससे वैश्विक दर्शकों को जोड़ा जा सकेगा और प्रतियोगिता को और कहीं देखना है यह भी बताया जा सकेगा।"

- FIFA also pledged to share some of its World Cup archive on YouTube "including full length past matches and many more iconic moments in the sport's history".

फीफा ने यह भी वादा किया कि वह अपने वर्ल्ड कप आर्काइव का कुछ हिस्सा YouTube पर साझा करेगा "जिसमें पूरे पुराने मैच और खेल के इतिहास के कई और प्रतिष्ठित क्षण शामिल होंगे।"

GS Paper 1: History,		18 March 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
18Mar	Sage Vyasa's contribution महर्षि व्यास का योगदान	
18Mar	QUIZ	



Sage Vyasa's contribution

GS I: History: A&C

As Sage Veda Vyasa was born on an island in the deep waters of the Yamuna river, he is called **Dvaipayana**, derived from the root **Dweepa**. The river Yamuna is associated with Krishna, so he is also known as "Krishna Dvaipayana." The Vedas are considered the divine rules and codes of God (Lord's **Sankalpa**) for the world. They describe what God has planned for the universe and human beings.

Water is essential to the survival of humans and all living beings. Yajnas (sacrificial rituals) are performed for the welfare of the world. It is believed that the offerings in yajnas reach the Sun and return to the earth in the form of rain. Because of sufficient rain, water becomes available, and with water we obtain food (**annam**), which is essential for the survival of all creatures. These important ideals are mentioned in the Vedas. Sage Vyasa classified the Vedas into different groups. Sri Damodara Dikshitar said in a discourse that the Rig Veda hymns are used to invite the devas (deities). Yajur Veda mantras are used while performing homa or yajna rituals to the devas. In Sama Veda, hymns or chants are sung in praise of the deities. These yajnas are generally performed by learned priests called Dikshitar. Because he divided and organised the Vedas, he came to be known as Veda Vyasa.

The Atharva Veda contains knowledge of warfare, methods for defeating enemies, preparation of weapons, and information on medicines. Vyasa's disciples included Jaimini, Sumantu, Paila and Vaisampayana. His important works include the Mahabharata (the fifth Veda), Brahma Sutras and Srimad Bhagavata. The Puranas were compiled by Veda Vyasa.

and all living beings.

पानी का अस्तित्व सभी मानवों और सभी जीवों के जीवित रहने के लिए आवश्यक है।

- **Yajnas (sacrificial rituals)** are performed for the welfare of the world. दुनिया की भलाई के लिए यज्ञ (बलिदानी अनुष्ठान) किए जाते हैं।
- It is believed that the offerings in yajnas reach the Sun and return to the earth in the form of rain. माना जाता है कि यज्ञ में दिए गए भेंट सूर्य तक पहुँचते हैं और वर्षा के रूप में पृथ्वी पर लौटते हैं।
- Because of sufficient rain, water becomes available, and with water we obtain food (**annam**), which is essential for the survival of all creatures. पर्याप्त वर्षा होने के कारण पानी उपलब्ध होता है, और पानी के साथ हमें भोजन (अन्न) प्राप्त होता है, जो सभी जीवों के अस्तित्व के लिए आवश्यक है।
- These important ideals are mentioned in the Vedas. ये महत्वपूर्ण आदर्श वेदों में उल्लिखित हैं।
- Sage Vyasa classified the Vedas into different groups. महर्षि व्यास ने वेदों को विभिन्न समूहों में वर्गीकृत किया।
- Sri Damodara Dikshitar said in a discourse that the Rig Veda hymns are used to invite the devas (deities). श्री दामोदर दीक्षित ने एक प्रवचन में कहा कि ऋग्वेद के मंत्र का उपयोग देवताओं को आमंत्रित करने के लिए किया जाता है।
- Yajur Veda mantras are used while performing homa or yajna rituals to the devas. यजुर वेद मंत्रों का उपयोग होम या यज्ञ अनुष्ठान करते समय देवताओं के लिए किया जाता है।
- In Sama Veda, hymns or chants are sung in praise of the deities. साम वेद में, मंत्र या भजन देवताओं की स्तुति में गाए जाते हैं।
- These yajnas are generally performed by learned priests called Dikshitar. ये यज्ञ सामान्यतः विद्वान पुरोहितों द्वारा किए जाते हैं, जिन्हें दीक्षित कहा जाता है।
- Because he divided and organised the Vedas, he came to be known as Veda Vyasa. क्योंकि उन्होंने वेदों को विभाजित और व्यवस्थित किया, उन्हें वेद व्यास के नाम से जाना गया।
- The Atharva Veda contains knowledge of warfare, methods for defeating enemies, preparation of weapons, and information on medicines. अथर्ववेद में युद्ध, शत्रुओं को परास्त करने के तरीके, हथियारों की तैयारी और औषधियों की जानकारी शामिल है।
- Vyasa's disciples included Jaimini, Sumantu, Paila and Vaisampayana. व्यास के शिष्यों में जैमिनी, सुमंतु, पाईला और वैसंपायन शामिल थे।

18Mar. Sage Vyasa's contribution

महर्षि व्यास का योगदान

• As Sage Veda Vyasa was born on an island in the deep waters of the Yamuna river, he is called **Dvaipayana**, derived from the root **Dweepa**.

जैसा कि महर्षि वेद व्यास यमुना नदी के गहरे पानी में एक द्वीप पर जन्मे थे, उन्हें द्वैपायन कहा जाता है, जो द्वीप शब्द से लिया गया है।

• The river Yamuna is associated with Krishna, so he is also known as "Krishna Dvaipayana."

यमुना नदी का संबंध कृष्ण से है, इसलिए उन्हें "कृष्ण द्वैपायन" भी कहा जाता है।

• The Vedas are considered the divine rules and codes of God (Lord's **Sankalpa**) for the world.

वेदों को दुनिया के लिए ईश्वर (भगवान की संकल्प) के दिव्य नियम और संहिता माना जाता है।

• They describe what God has planned for the universe and human beings.

वे यह वर्णन करते हैं कि ईश्वर ने ब्रह्मांड और मानव जाति के लिए क्या योजना बनाई है।

• Water is essential to the survival of humans



- His important works include the **Mahabharata (the fifth Veda), Brahma Sutras and Srimad Bhagavata**.
उनके महत्वपूर्ण कार्यों में **महाभारत (पाँचवाँ वेद), ब्रह्म सूत्र और श्रीमद्भागवत** शामिल हैं।
- The **Puranas were compiled by Veda Vyasa**.
पुराणों को वेद व्यास ने संकलित किया।

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1.

U.S. President Harry S. Truman referred to his country's involvement in the Korean War as: **Ans: Sponsor of United Nations police action**

2. After the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident, the U.S. Congress authorised this President to use military force in Vietnam through a joint resolution. **Ans: Lyndon B. Johnson**

3. The NATO bombed this country during the Kosovo War. The air campaign left over 500 dead. Also, does the NATO commit to UN Charter? **Ans: Yugoslavia; Yes**

4. The ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war began in 2014. In which year did Vladimir Putin launch a full-scale invasion, and what term did he use to describe the escalation? **Ans: 2022; Special military operation**

5. The post-9/11 Authorisation for Use of Military Force (AUMF) resolution enabled the War on _____. The law has been used by successive U.S. leaders to initiate 'counter-terror' activities leading to more than 4.5 million deaths. **Ans: terror**

Visual: President Barack Obama took the U.S. into war against X (country) as part of a NATO-led coalition. Identify X, as well as the de facto military leader pictured in the mosaic who was overthrown and later killed. **Ans: Libya; Muammar Gaddafi**

Early birds: K.N. Viswanathan | Lalchand Bhutani | Pulkit Sathe | Tito Shiladitya | Sukdev Shet

18Mar. QUIZ

- **U.S. President Harry S. Truman described America's role in the Korean War (1950–53).**
 - Truman deliberately avoided calling the conflict a "war" and instead termed it a "**United Nations police action**". This framing emphasized that the intervention was conducted under the **authority of the United Nations**, not as a unilateral U.S. war.
 - It helped project legitimacy and collective global responsibility.
 - Although multiple countries contributed forces, the **United States led and sponsored** the military effort in terms of troops, funding, and command.
 - Thus, Truman's description highlights that the U.S. acted as the **primary driving force behind the UN mission**, making it effectively a sponsor of the action.
- Labeling it a **UN police action** allowed Truman to bypass a formal declaration of war by the U.S. Congress. It also aligned with the **UN Security Council resolutions (1950)**, which called for collective action against North Korea's invasion of South Korea, thereby giving legal backing under international law.
- The Korean War occurred during the early **Cold War**, where the U.S. aimed to contain the spread of communism. By presenting the intervention as a **UN-backed effort**, Truman sought to frame it as a defense of global peace rather than a direct ideological conflict with communist powers.
- The phrase "**sponsor of United Nations police action**" reflects both the **multilateral character** of the operation and the **dominant leadership role of the U.S.**
- It also set a precedent for future international interventions under UN mandates, though with varying degrees of global participation and legitimacy.
- **1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident** and the subsequent authorization of U.S. military action in Vietnam
- **Gulf of Tonkin Incident (1964)**
In **August 1964**, U.S. naval vessels reported attacks by North Vietnamese forces in the **Gulf of Tonkin**. Though the second attack remains disputed, the incident was used by the U.S. administration to justify escalation.
 - It became a turning point, transforming limited U.S. involvement into a large-scale military commitment in Vietnam.
- **Role of President Lyndon B. Johnson**
President **Lyndon B. Johnson** used the incident to seek congressional approval for stronger military action. He portrayed the attacks as unprovoked aggression, thereby gaining political support.
 - Johnson's leadership marked a significant escalation phase of the Vietnam War, shifting from advisory roles to active combat operations
- **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution**
The U.S. Congress passed the **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (August 1964)**, granting Johnson broad powers to use military force without a formal declaration of war.
 - It allowed him to take "all necessary measures" to repel attacks and prevent further aggression, effectively giving the President war-making authority in Vietnam
- **Impact on Vietnam War**
Following the resolution, the U.S. significantly increased troop deployment and initiated sustained bombing campaigns like **Operation Rolling Thunder (1965)**.



- This marked the beginning of full-scale U.S. involvement, leading to a prolonged and costly conflict lasting until **1975**, with major political and social consequences.
- **Later Criticism and Reassessment**
- Over time, the resolution faced criticism as evidence emerged that the second attack may not have occurred. In **1971**, the **Pentagon Papers** revealed misleading information used to justify escalation.
- This led to greater scrutiny of executive powers and eventually contributed to the **War Powers Act (1973)** to limit presidential authority.
- **Kosovo War (1998–99)** and NATO's military intervention, along with its legal commitments
- **NATO Bombing of Yugoslavia (1999)**
During the **Kosovo War**, NATO launched an air campaign called **Operation Allied Force (March–June 1999)** against the **Federal Republic of Yugoslavia** (Serbia and Montenegro).
- The intervention aimed to stop human rights violations against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.
- The bombing lasted **78 days** and targeted military as well as strategic infrastructure across Yugoslavia
- **Casualties and Impact**
- The NATO airstrikes resulted in significant destruction and civilian casualties, with estimates indicating **over 500 civilian deaths**.
- Infrastructure such as bridges, factories, and communication networks was heavily damaged.
- The campaign forced Yugoslav forces to withdraw from Kosovo, leading to the establishment of a UN-administered interim government in the region.
- **NATO's Commitment to UN Charter**
NATO, as an international alliance, states that it acts in accordance with the **principles of the United Nations Charter**, including maintaining international peace and security.
- Its founding treaty (1949) emphasizes collective defense and cooperation consistent with UN objectives
- **Debate over Kosovo Intervention**
- However, the Kosovo intervention remains controversial because NATO acted **without explicit authorization from the UN Security Council**
- While NATO justified the action on **humanitarian grounds**, critics argue it challenged the UN Charter's provisions on sovereignty and use of force, raising important debates about legality and legitimacy in international relations.
- **Russo-Ukrainian conflict**, which began in **2014** and intensified later
- **Full-scale Invasion in 2022**
In **February 2022**, Russian President **Vladimir Putin** launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, significantly escalating the conflict that began with the **annexation of Crimea (2014)** and fighting in eastern Ukraine. Russian forces advanced from multiple directions, including Belarus and eastern regions.
- This marked the largest military conflict in Europe since World War II, causing widespread destruction and a major humanitarian crisis
- **Use of the Term "Special Military Operation"**
- The Russian government officially described the invasion as a **"special military operation"** rather than a war. This terminology was used to frame the action as limited and targeted, aimed at **"demilitarisation" and "denazification"** of Ukraine.
- The term also had domestic legal implications, as Russian laws restrict the use of the word "war," controlling public discourse and information dissemination.

Post-9/11 U.S. policy framework and its global military implications.

- **Authorisation for Use of Military Force (AUMF), 2001**
After the **September 11, 2001 attacks**, the U.S. Congress passed the **AUMF (September 2001)**, granting the President authority to use force against those responsible for the attacks.
- This legal framework enabled military operations without formal war declarations and became the foundation of the global **"War on Terror."**
- **Scope of the War on Terror**
- The **War on Terror** involved military interventions in countries such as **Afghanistan (2001)** and **Iraq (2003)**, along with counter-terror operations across multiple regions.



- It included drone strikes, special operations, and intelligence activities aimed at dismantling terrorist networks like **Al-Qaeda** and later **ISIS**
- **Human and Global Impact**
- Studies by international research institutions estimate that these conflicts and related violence have contributed to **over 4.5 million deaths**, including direct and indirect causes such as displacement and infrastructure collapse.
- The prolonged conflicts also triggered major refugee crises and regional instability, especially in West Asia and South Asia.
- **Continuity and Criticism**
Successive U.S. administrations have continued to use the **AUMF** to justify counter-terrorism actions globally.
- Critics argue that the law provides **broad and unchecked executive powers**, leading to prolonged military engagements without clear limits, raising concerns about legality, accountability, and long-term geopolitical consequences.

GS Paper 1: Society

TOPICS COVERED

18 March 2026

18Mar	SC allows 12 weeks' paid leave to all new adoptive mothers सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने सभी नई गोद लेने वाली माताओं को 12 सप्ताह का भुगतान अवकाश देने की अनुमति दी
-------	--

SC allows 12 weeks' paid leave to all new adoptive mothers

GS I: Society
Krishnadhas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court, in a judgment on Tuesday, declared the protection of maternity leave for working women as a basic human right while urging the Union government to legally recognise paternity leave as a social security benefit, noting that parenthood is not a solitary function performed by one parent alone.

The judgment came in a challenge to provisions in the Maternity Benefit Act, which was replaced by the Code of Social Security in November 2025, which dictated that only mothers who legally adopt a child below the age of three months were entitled to seek maternity benefit of 12 weeks.

'Lengthy process'

The petition filed by Hamsaanandini Nanduri, represented by advocate Bani Dikshit, argued that the provision under challenge, Section 60(4) of the 2020 Code, unjustly deprived a mother adopting a child of three months or above of



their physical and emotional well-being. Besides, the petitioner successfully argued that the process of legal adoption usually took over three months to complete, rendering the provision completely otiose.

Justice Pardiwala, authoring the judgment for a Bench comprising Justice R. Mahadevan, observed that an adoptive mother had the same rights and obligations towards the child as the natural mother. In fact, in a case of adoption, the emotional bond with the child has to be consciously nurtured through time, presence and sustained caregiving.

The court held adoption as an "expression of reproductive autonomy".

"The concept of maternity benefit acknowledges

the ability of a woman to exercise her reproductive choices without fear of losing her employment, more particularly, the economic security. Thus, it ensures that motherhood does not become a factor for exclusion at the workplace," Justice Pardiwala observed in the judgment, concluding that the provision was unconstitutional and discriminatory.

The court pointed out that a mother, without maternity benefit, would be driven back to work, leaving the child with, probably an older sibling. "And if the older sibling happens to be a girl child, it would result in her being withdrawn from school, which reinforces the vicious cycle of gender inequality," Justice Pardiwala pointed out.

On father's presence

Pressing the Union government to make specific legal provisions for paternity leave, the Supreme Court said a child should not be deprived of her father's presence and a new mother her partner's companionship in the early phase of caregiving.

18Mar. SC allows 12 weeks' paid leave to all new adoptive mothers

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने सभी नई गोद लेने वाली माताओं को 12 सप्ताह का भुगतान अवकाश देने की अनुमति दी

• The Supreme Court, in a judgment on Tuesday, declared the protection of maternity leave for working women as a basic human right while urging the Union government to legally recognise paternity leave as a social security benefit, noting that parenthood is not a solitary function performed by one parent alone.

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने मंगलवार के एक निर्णय में कामकाजी महिलाओं के लिए मातृत्व अवकाश की सुरक्षा को एक मूल मानव अधिकार घोषित किया और केंद्र सरकार से पितृत्व अवकाश को सामाजिक सुरक्षा लाभ के रूप में कानूनी मान्यता देने का आग्रह किया, यह कहते हुए कि पालन-पोषण केवल एक माता-पिता का कार्य नहीं है।

• The judgment came in a challenge to provisions in the **Maternity Benefit Act, which was replaced by the Code of Social Security in November 2025**, which dictated that only mothers who legally adopt a child below the age of three months were entitled to seek maternity benefit of 12 weeks.

यह निर्णय मातृत्व लाभ अधिनियम के प्रावधानों को

चुनौती देने के मामले में आया, जिसे नवंबर 2025 में सामाजिक सुरक्षा संहिता द्वारा प्रतिस्थापित किया गया था, जिसमें यह निर्धारित किया गया था कि केवल वे माताएं जो तीन महीने से कम आयु के बच्चे को कानूनी रूप से गोद लेती हैं, 12 सप्ताह के मातृत्व लाभ की हकदार होंगी।



'Lengthy process' 'लंबी प्रक्रिया'

- The petition filed by **Hamsaanandini Nanduri, represented by advocate Bani Dikshit**, argued that the provision under challenge, **Section 60(4) of the 2020 Code**, unjustly deprived a mother adopting a child of three months or above of their physical and emotional well-being. हंसांदिनी नंदूरी द्वारा दायर याचिका, जिनका प्रतिनिधित्व अधिवक्ता **बानी दीक्षित** ने किया, में तर्क दिया गया कि चुनौती दिए गए प्रावधान, 2020 संहिता की **धारा 60(4)**, तीन महीने या उससे अधिक आयु के बच्चे को गोद लेने वाली मां को उनके शारीरिक और भावनात्मक कल्याण से अनुचित रूप से वंचित करता है।
- Besides, the petitioner successfully argued that the process of legal adoption usually took over three months to complete, rendering the provision completely otiose. इसके अलावा, याचिकाकर्ता ने सफलतापूर्वक तर्क दिया कि **कानूनी गोद लेने की प्रक्रिया** आमतौर पर तीन महीने से अधिक समय लेती है, जिससे यह प्रावधान पूरी तरह निरर्थक हो जाता है।
- Justice Pardiwala, authoring the judgment for a Bench comprising Justice R. Mahadevan, observed that an adoptive mother had the same rights and obligations towards the child as the natural mother. **न्यायमूर्ति पारदीवाला**, जिन्होंने न्यायमूर्ति **आर. महादेवन** की पीठ के लिए निर्णय लिखा, ने कहा कि गोद लेने वाली मां के पास बच्चे के प्रति वही अधिकार और कर्तव्य होते हैं जो एक प्राकृतिक मां के होते हैं।
- In fact, in a case of adoption, the emotional bond with the child has to be consciously nurtured through time, presence and sustained caregiving. वास्तव में, गोद लेने के मामले में बच्चे के साथ **भावनात्मक संबंध** को समय, उपस्थिति और निरंतर देखभाल के माध्यम से विकसित करना पड़ता है।
- The court held adoption as an "expression of reproductive autonomy". अदालत ने गोद लेने को **"प्रजनन स्वायत्तता की अभिव्यक्ति"** माना।
- "The concept of maternity benefit acknowledges the ability of a woman to exercise her reproductive choices without fear of losing her employment, more particularly, the economic security. **"मातृत्व लाभ** की अवधारणा एक महिला की इस क्षमता को स्वीकार करती है कि वह अपनी **प्रजनन संबंधी पसंद** को रोजगार खोने के डर के बिना, विशेष रूप से आर्थिक सुरक्षा के संदर्भ में, प्रयोग कर सके।
- Thus, it ensures that motherhood does not become a factor for exclusion at the workplace," Justice Pardiwala observed in the judgment, concluding that the provision was unconstitutional and discriminatory. इस प्रकार, यह सुनिश्चित करता है कि **मातृत्व** कार्यस्थल पर बहिष्कार का कारण न बने," न्यायमूर्ति पारदीवाला ने निर्णय में कहा, यह निष्कर्ष निकालते हुए कि यह प्रावधान **असंवैधानिक और भेदभावपूर्ण** है।
- The court pointed out that a mother, without maternity benefit, would be driven back to work, leaving the child with, probably an older sibling. अदालत ने बताया कि मातृत्व लाभ के बिना एक मां को काम पर लौटने के लिए मजबूर होना पड़ेगा, जिससे बच्चा संभवतः किसी बड़े भाई-बहन के साथ रह जाएगा।
- "And if the older sibling happens to be a girl child, it would result in her being withdrawn from school, which reinforces the vicious cycle of gender inequality," Justice Pardiwala pointed out. "और यदि बड़ा भाई-बहन एक **लड़की** हो, तो उसे स्कूल से निकालना पड़ेगा, जिससे **लैंगिक असमानता** का दुष्क्र और मजबूत होगा," न्यायमूर्ति पारदीवाला ने कहा।

On father's presence पिता की उपस्थिति पर

- Pressing the Union government to make specific legal provisions for paternity leave, the Supreme Court said a child should not be deprived of her father's presence and a new mother her partner's companionship in the early phase of caregiving. केंद्र सरकार पर **पितृत्व अवकाश** के लिए विशेष कानूनी प्रावधान बनाने का दबाव डालते हुए, सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने कहा कि बच्चे को उसके पिता की उपस्थिति से और नई मां को देखभाल के शुरुआती चरण में अपने साथी के साथ से वंचित नहीं किया जाना चाहिए।

GS Paper 1: Geography



TOPICS COVERED

18 March 2026

18Mar Migrants vanishing in Mediterranean, but authorities withholding details
भूमध्यसागर में प्रवासी गायब हो रहे हैं, लेकिन अधिकारी जानकारी छिपा रहे हैं



GS I: Geography
Brazilian scientists have identified a new species of giant dinosaur, whose bones are seen here, with ties to a similar animal found in Spain, reinforcing knowledge that land routes once connected parts of South America, Africa and Europe about 120 million years ago. Named Dasosaurus tocontinensis, the species is one of the biggest found in the South American country. IAS

Brazilian scientists have identified a new species of giant dinosaur, whose bones are seen here, with ties to a similar animal found in Spain, reinforcing knowledge that land routes once connected parts of South America, Africa and Europe about 120 million years ago. Named Dasosaurus tocontinensis, the species is one of the biggest found in the South American country

Migrants vanishing in Mediterranean, but authorities withholding details

GS I: Geography

Associated Press
ROME

Bodies washing ashore day after day. Phone calls from relatives going unanswered. Migrants' tents abandoned overnight.

Migrants trying to reach Europe are vanishing in droves in what are known as "invisible shipwrecks" but governments responsible for search and rescue are withholding information about what they know.

The beginning of 2026 ranks as the deadliest start to any year for people trying to cross the Mediterranean – an unprecedented 682 confirmed missing as of March 16 – according to the United Nations' International Organization for Migration (IOM). But the real death toll is almost certainly much higher.



Treacherous waters: Rights groups have reported more than 1,000 people missing after Cyclone Harry hit the region in January. AP

Human rights groups are increasingly struggling to verify tolls as Italy, Tunisia and Malta have quietly restricted information on migrant rescues and shipwrecks along the deadliest migration route in the world. The news barely makes headlines, in part because the lack of transparency prevents journalists from confirming reports.

"It's a strategy of silence," said Matteo Villa, a researcher focusing on migration at the Italian Institute for International Political Studies think tank.

The organisation Refugees in Libya and other human rights groups have been sounding the alarm since late January, reporting more than 1,000 people missing after Cyclone Harry hit the region. But authorities have not confirmed, denied or corrected those reports.

Even the U.N.'s migration agency is increasingly unable to verify cases of migrants who die in what are known as "invisible shipwrecks" because of the growing lack of information.

Last year, at least 1,500 people were reported missing whose fates IOM could not confirm, said Julia Black, who leads the organisation's Missing Migrants Project. The issue persists in 2026. For this year, they already have more than 400 missing they could not verify.

The organisation Refugees in Libya and other human rights groups have been sounding the alarm since late January, reporting more than 1,000 people missing after Cyclone Harry hit the region. But authorities have not confirmed, denied or corrected those reports.

18Mar. Migrants vanishing in Mediterranean, but authorities withholding details

भूमध्यसागर में प्रवासी गायब हो रहे हैं, लेकिन अधिकारी जानकारी छिपा रहे हैं

- Bodies washing ashore day after day. लाशें दिन-ब-दिन किनारों पर बहकर आ रही हैं।
- Phone calls from relatives going unanswered. रिश्तेदारों के फोन कॉल का कोई जवाब नहीं मिल रहा है।



- Migrants' tents abandoned overnight.
प्रवासियों के टेंट रातोंरात छोड़ दिए गए हैं।
- Migrants trying to reach Europe are vanishing in droves in what are known as “invisible shipwrecks” but governments responsible for **search and rescue** are withholding information about what they know.
यूरोप पहुंचने की कोशिश कर रहे प्रवासी बड़ी संख्या में गायब हो रहे हैं, जिन्हें “अदृश्य जहाज़ दुर्घटनाएं” कहा जाता है, लेकिन **खोज और बचाव** के लिए जिम्मेदार सरकारें अपनी जानकारी छिपा रही हैं।
- The beginning of 2026 ranks as the **deadliest start** to any year for people trying to cross the Mediterranean — an unprecedented **682 confirmed missing** as of March 16 — according to the **United Nations’ International Organization for Migration (IOM)**.
2026 की शुरुआत भूमध्यसागर पार करने की कोशिश करने वालों के लिए अब तक की **सबसे घातक शुरुआत** है — 16 मार्च तक **682 लोगों के लापता होने की पुष्टि** हुई है — यह जानकारी **संयुक्त राष्ट्र के अंतर्राष्ट्रीय प्रवासन संगठन (IOM)** के अनुसार है।
- But the real **death toll** is almost certainly much higher.
लेकिन वास्तविक **मृतकों की संख्या** लगभग निश्चित रूप से कहीं अधिक है।
- Human rights groups are increasingly struggling to **verify tolls** as Italy, Tunisia and Malta have quietly **restricted information** on migrant rescues and shipwrecks along the **deadliest migration route** in the world.
मानवाधिकार समूहों को **मृतकों की संख्या सत्यापित करने** में बढ़ती कठिनाई हो रही है क्योंकि इटली, ट्यूनीशिया और माल्टा ने दुनिया के **सबसे घातक प्रवासन मार्ग** पर प्रवासी बचाव और जहाज़ दुर्घटनाओं की **जानकारी सीमित** कर दी है।
- The news barely makes **headlines**, in part because the lack of **transparency** prevents journalists from confirming reports.
यह खबर मुश्किल से **सुर्खियां** बनती है, क्योंकि **पारदर्शिता की कमी** पत्रकारों को रिपोर्ट की पुष्टि करने से रोकती है।
- “It’s a **strategy of silence**,” said **Matteo Villa**, a researcher focusing on migration at the **Italian Institute for International Political Studies** think tank.
“यह **चुप्पी की रणनीति** है,” प्रवासन पर शोध करने वाले **मैटेओ विला** ने कहा, जो **इटालियन इंस्टीट्यूट फॉर इंटरनेशनल पॉलिटिकल स्टडीज** थिंक टैंक से जुड़े हैं।
- The organisation **Refugees in Libya** and other human rights groups have been sounding the alarm since late January, reporting more than **1,000 people missing** after **Cyclone Harry** hit the region.
रिफ्यूजीज़ इन लीबिया संगठन और अन्य मानवाधिकार समूह जनवरी के अंत से चेतावनी दे रहे हैं, जब **चक्रवात हैरी** के बाद इस क्षेत्र में **1,000 से अधिक लोगों के लापता** होने की रिपोर्ट आई।
- But authorities have not **confirmed, denied or corrected** those reports.
लेकिन अधिकारियों ने इन रिपोर्टों की न तो **पुष्टि**, न **खंडन**, और न ही **सुधार** किया है।
- Even the **U.N.’s migration agency** is increasingly unable to verify cases of migrants who die in what are known as “invisible shipwrecks” because of the growing **lack of information**.
यहां तक कि **संयुक्त राष्ट्र की प्रवासन एजेंसी** भी “अदृश्य जहाज़ दुर्घटनाओं” में मरने वाले प्रवासियों के मामलों की पुष्टि करने में असमर्थ होती जा रही है, क्योंकि **जानकारी की कमी** बढ़ती जा रही है।
- Last year, at least **1,500 people were reported missing** whose fates IOM could not confirm, said **Julia Black**, who leads the organisation’s **Missing Migrants Project**.
पिछले वर्ष कम से कम **1,500 लोगों के लापता होने की रिपोर्ट** थी, जिनका हाल IOM पुष्टि नहीं कर सका, ऐसा **जूलिया ब्लैक** ने कहा, जो संगठन के **मिसिंग माइग्रेंट्स प्रोजेक्ट** का नेतृत्व करती हैं।
- The issue persists in **2026**.
यह समस्या **2026** में भी जारी है।
- For this year, they already have more than **400 missing that they** could not verify.
इस वर्ष के लिए, उनके पास पहले ही **400 से अधिक लापता** लोगों के मामले हैं जिनकी वे पुष्टि नहीं कर पाए हैं।



18Mar Muslim groups back SC observations on inheritance rights
मुस्लिम समूह उत्तराधिकार अधिकारों पर सुप्रीम कोर्ट के टिप्पणियों का समर्थन करते हैं

Muslim groups back SC observations on inheritance rights

GS II: Polity

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Several Muslim organisations in Mumbai on Tuesday welcomed the Supreme Court's recent observations on the **inheritance rights of Muslim women**, calling it an important step towards removing gender bias.

Social activist Feroze Mithiborwala said a three-judge Bench, led by Chief Justice Surya Kant and comprising Justices Joymalya Bagchi and R. Mahadevan, recently observed that a **Uniform Civil Code (UCC)** may be the "most effective answer" to removing gender bias in laws governing marriage, succession, and property rights. "This observation came while the Bench was examining a plea challenging the **Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937**, which the petitioners argue results in unequal inheritance outcomes for women compared to their male counterparts."

The Indian Muslims for

Secular Democracy (IMSD) also issued a statement welcoming the top court's observations. "The IMSD wholeheartedly welcomes the recent observations made by the Supreme Court of India during the hearing of a petition filed by Poulomi P. Shukla. The case seeks to rectify the long-standing disparity in inheritance rights for Muslim women – a move IMSD views as a vital step towards fulfilling the democratic promise of the Indian Constitution," the statement read.

Mr. Mithiborwala said it was heartening to note the court's observation that gender bias was a problem "beyond one particular community".

"The Bench noted that gender discrimination in inheritance is not confined to Muslim personal law alone. The court observed that inequalities persist within the structure of **Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs)** and in various customary or tribal practices," he added.

18Mar. Muslim groups back SC observations on inheritance rights
मुस्लिम समूह उत्तराधिकार अधिकारों पर सुप्रीम कोर्ट के टिप्पणियों का समर्थन करते हैं

- Several Muslim organisations in Mumbai on Tuesday welcomed the **Supreme Court's** recent observations on the **inheritance rights of Muslim women**, calling it an important step towards removing **gender bias**.

मंगलवार को मुंबई में कई मुस्लिम संगठन ने सुप्रीम कोर्ट की हाल की टिप्पणियों का स्वागत किया जो मुस्लिम महिलाओं के उत्तराधिकार अधिकारों पर थीं, और इसे लिंग भेदभाव को समाप्त करने की दिशा में एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम बताया।

- Social activist **Feroze Mithiborwala** said a **three-judge Bench**, led by **Chief Justice Surya Kant** and comprising **Justices Joymalya Bagchi and R. Mahadevan**, recently observed that a **Uniform Civil Code (UCC)** may be the "most effective answer" to removing **gender bias** in laws governing **marriage, succession, and property rights**.

सामाजिक कार्यकर्ता **फ़िरोज़ मिथीबोरवाला** ने कहा कि एक **तीन-न्यायाधीशीय पीठ**, जिसकी अध्यक्षता **मुख्य न्यायाधीश सूर्य कांत** ने की और जिसमें **न्यायमूर्ति जॉयमाल्या बागची और आर. महादेवन** शामिल हैं, ने हाल ही में यह देखा कि **यूनिफॉर्म सिविल कोड (UCC) विवाह, उत्तराधिकार और संपत्ति अधिकारों** से संबंधित कानूनों में **लिंग भेदभाव** को समाप्त करने का "सबसे प्रभावी उत्तर" हो सकता है।

- "This observation came while the Bench was examining a plea challenging the **Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937**, which the petitioners argue results in **unequal inheritance outcomes** for women compared to their **male counterparts**."

"यह टिप्पणी उस समय आई जब पीठ **मुस्लिम पर्सनल लॉ (शरीयत) एप्लिकेशन एक्ट, 1937** को चुनौती देने

वाली याचिका की सुनवाई कर रही थी, जिसे याचिकाकर्ता तर्क देते हैं कि यह **महिलाओं** के लिए उनके **पुरुष समकक्षों** की तुलना में **असमान उत्तराधिकार परिणाम** देती है।"

- The **Indian Muslims for Secular Democracy (IMSD)** also issued a statement welcoming the **top court's observations**.
इंडियन मुसलमान फॉर सेक्युलर डेमोक्रेसी (IMSD) ने भी सर्वोच्च न्यायालय की टिप्पणियों का स्वागत करते हुए एक बयान जारी किया।
- "The **IMSD** wholeheartedly welcomes the recent observations made by the **Supreme Court of India** during the hearing of a petition filed by **Poulomi P. Shukla**."



“IMSD पूरे दिल से स्वागत करता है कि भारतीय सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने पुलोमी पी. शुक्ला द्वारा दायर याचिका की सुनवाई के दौरान हाल ही में जो टिप्पणियां कीं, उन्हें सराहा।

- The case seeks to rectify the long-standing **disparity in inheritance rights** for **Muslim women** — a move IMSD views as a vital step towards fulfilling the **democratic promise of the Indian Constitution**,” the statement read.
इस मामला **मुस्लिम महिलाओं** के लिए लंबे समय से मौजूद **उत्तराधिकार अधिकारों में असमानता** को सुधारने का प्रयास करता है — एक कदम जिसे **IMSD भारतीय संविधान के लोकतांत्रिक वादे** को पूरा करने की दिशा में एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम मानता है,” बयान में कहा गया।
- Mr. Mithiborwala said it was heartening to note the **court’s observation** that **gender bias** was a problem “beyond one particular community”.
श्री मिथीबोरवाला ने कहा कि यह देखकर खुशी हुई कि **कोर्ट की टिप्पणी** थी कि **लिंग भेदभाव** “किसी एक विशेष समुदाय से परे” एक समस्या है।
- “The Bench noted that **gender discrimination in inheritance** is not confined to **Muslim personal law** alone.
“पीठ ने नोट किया कि **उत्तराधिकार में लिंग भेदभाव** केवल **मुस्लिम व्यक्तिगत कानून** तक सीमित नहीं है।
- The court observed that **inequalities persist** within the structure of **Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs)** and in various **customary or tribal practices**,” he added.
कोर्ट ने देखा कि **असमानताएँ बनी रहती हैं हिंदू अविभाजित परिवारों (HUFs)** की संरचना में और विभिन्न **रिवायती या आदिवासी प्रथाओं** में,” उन्होंने जोड़ा।

GS Paper II: Governance,

TOPICS COVERED

18 March 2026

18Mar	‘UGC-like funding powers to fall under Shiksha Adhishtan’ ‘यूजीसी जैसे वित्त पोषण अधिकार शिक्षा अधिष्ठान के तहत आएंगे’
18Mar	Centre to brief MPs on crop insurance scheme केंद्र सांसदों को फसल बीमा योजना पर जानकारी देगा



'UGC-like funding powers to fall under Shiksha Adhishthan'

GS II: Governance

Abhinav Lakshman
Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Months after introducing the **Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025**, with a primary objective to separate grants-disbursal powers from the higher education regulatory framework to minimise conflict of interest, the Education Ministry seems to have changed its mind. On Tuesday, it told the Joint Committee of Parliament examining the Bill that a **UGC-like grants-disbursal mechanism will now be "devised and adopted under" the proposed Shiksha Adhishthan**, without offering any specific details.

Ministry officials told the panel, led by BJP MP D. Purandeshwari, that the UGC currently disburses monthly grants to Central Universities from funds released to it by the Department of Higher Education. It also releases funds under its own schemes, based on quality standards, accreditation status, and NIRF ranking.

"Similar qualitative processes/systems shall be devised and adopted under Shiksha Adhishthan," the government told the panel.

The Bill, introduced in December 2025, seeks to replace the University Grants Commission (UGC), the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), and the All India Council for Technical Education (NCTE), in an overhaul of India's higher education regulatory structure driven by the National Education Policy, 2020.

Fourth sitting

The Joint Committee, which held its fourth sitting on Tuesday, has 12 members from the BJP and 10 members from Opposition parties, including the Congress, the DMK, the Trinamool Congress, the Samajwadi Party, and the Shiv Sena (UBT).

During this sitting, MPs from the Congress, DMK,



The parliamentary panel examining the Bill is led by BJP MP D. Purandeshwari.

and Trinamool Congress raised concerns about centralised control under the proposed structure, arguing that even though there is representation from States, it is the Centre that selects the State representatives. This would allow the Centre to set up a "super-regulator", they said, warning that this was against the principles of federalism.

'Skeletal' Bill

Opposition members also argued that the proposed legislation is "skeletal" in nature, requiring most of the details to be figured out by the government during the drafting of the Rules. Some members argued this was akin to asking that the Bill be approved without presenting the whole scope of what the government plans to do.

They also expressed concerns about funding to public universities becoming dependent on loans and borrowing, citing the ongoing implementation of the Higher Education Funding Agency structure. This will eventually pass the financial burden to students, they warned, making higher education accessible only to the affluent.

In its submissions to the Joint Committee, the Education Ministry maintained that it is bringing this proposed regulatory framework under Entry 66 of the Union list in the Constitution, the same provision that allowed it to introduce the UGC Act, 1956.

National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), in an overhaul of India's higher education regulatory structure driven by the **National Education Policy, 2020**.

यह बिल, जिसे दिसंबर 2025 में पेश किया गया, का उद्देश्य यूनिवर्सिटी ग्रांट्स कमीशन (यूजीसी), ऑल इंडिया काउंसिल फॉर टेक्निकल एजुकेशन (AICTE), और नेशनल काउंसिल फॉर टीचर एजुकेशन (NCTE) को बदलना है, यह भारत की उच्च शिक्षा नियामक संरचना का व्यापक सुधार है जो राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति, 2020 द्वारा संचालित है।

18Mar. 'UGC-like funding powers to fall under Shiksha Adhishthan'

'यूजीसी जैसे वित्त पोषण अधिकार शिक्षा अधिष्ठान के तहत आएं'

• Months after introducing the **Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025**, with a primary objective to separate grants-disbursal powers from the higher education regulatory framework to minimise conflict of interest, the **Education Ministry** seems to have changed its mind.

2025 में विकसित भारत शिक्षा अधिष्ठान बिल पेश करने के कुछ महीनों बाद, जिसका मुख्य उद्देश्य अनुदान वितरण अधिकारों को उच्च शिक्षा नियामक ढांचे से अलग करना था ताकि हित संघर्ष कम हो, ऐसा लगता है कि शिक्षा मंत्रालय ने अपना विचार बदल लिया है।

• On Tuesday, it told the **Joint Committee of Parliament** examining the Bill that a **UGC-like grants-disbursal mechanism** will now be "devised and adopted under" the proposed **Shiksha Adhishthan**, without offering any specific details.

मंगलवार को, इसने बिल की जांच कर रही संसद की संयुक्त समिति को बताया कि अब एक यूजीसी जैसे अनुदान वितरण तंत्र प्रस्तावित शिक्षा अधिष्ठान के तहत "निर्मित और अपनाया जाएगा", बिना किसी विशिष्ट विवरण के।

• Ministry officials told the panel, led by **BJP MP D. Purandeshwari**, that the **UGC** currently disburses monthly grants to **Central Universities** from funds released to it by the **Department of Higher Education**.

मंत्रालय के अधिकारियों ने बीजेपी सांसद डी. पुरंदेश्वरी के नेतृत्व वाले पैनल को बताया कि वर्तमान में यूजीसी केंद्रीय विश्वविद्यालयों को मासिक अनुदान वितरित करता है जो उच्च शिक्षा विभाग द्वारा जारी किए गए फंड से आते हैं।

• It also releases funds under its own schemes, based on **quality standards, accreditation status, and NIRF ranking**.

यह अपने स्वयं के योजनाओं के तहत भी फंड जारी करता है, जो गुणवत्ता मानक, मान्यता स्थिति और NIRF रैंकिंग पर आधारित हैं।

• "Similar qualitative processes/systems shall be devised and adopted under **Shiksha Adhishthan**," the government told the panel.

सरकार ने पैनल को बताया, "शिक्षा अधिष्ठान के तहत समान गुणात्मक प्रक्रियाएं/प्रणालियाँ बनाई और अपनाई जाएंगी।"

• The Bill, introduced in **December 2025**, seeks to replace the **University Grants Commission (UGC)**, the **All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)**, and the

Fourth sitting
चौथा बैठक



- The **Joint Committee**, which held its fourth sitting on Tuesday, has 12 members from the **BJP** and 10 members from **Opposition parties**, including the **Congress, DMK, Trinamool Congress, Samajwadi Party, and Shiv Sena (UBT)**.
संयुक्त समिति, जिसने मंगलवार को चौथा बैठक आयोजित किया, में बीजेपी के 12 सदस्य और विपक्षी दलों के 10 सदस्य शामिल हैं, जिनमें कांग्रेस, DMK, तृणमूल कांग्रेस, समाजवादी पार्टी, और शिव सेना (UBT) शामिल हैं।
- During this sitting, MPs from the **Congress, DMK, and Trinamool Congress** raised concerns about **centralised control** under the proposed structure, arguing that even though there is representation from **States**, it is the **Centre** that selects the **State representatives**.
इस बैठक के दौरान, कांग्रेस, DMK, और तृणमूल कांग्रेस के सांसदों ने प्रस्तावित ढांचे के तहत केंद्रीकृत नियंत्रण के बारे में चिंता व्यक्त की, यह तर्क देते हुए कि भले ही राज्यों का प्रतिनिधित्व है, लेकिन केंद्र ही राज्य प्रतिनिधियों का चयन करता है।
- This would allow the **Centre** to set up a “**super-regulator**”, they said, warning that this was against the principles of **federalism**.
उन्होंने कहा कि इससे केंद्र एक “सुपर-रेगुलेटर” स्थापित कर सकता है, और चेतावनी दी कि यह संघवाद के सिद्धांतों के खिलाफ है।

‘Skeletal’ Bill ‘अस्थायी’ बिल

- Opposition members also argued that the proposed legislation is “**skeletal**” in nature, requiring most of the details to be figured out by the **government** during the drafting of the **Rules**.
विपक्षी सदस्यों ने यह भी तर्क दिया कि प्रस्तावित कानून प्रकृति में “अस्थायी” है, जिसके लिए अधिकांश विवरण सरकार द्वारा नियमों का मसौदा तैयार करते समय तय किए जाने होंगे।
- Some members argued this was akin to asking that the Bill be approved without presenting the whole scope of what the **government** plans to do.
कुछ सदस्यों ने तर्क दिया कि यह ऐसा ही है जैसे बिना यह बताए कि सरकार क्या करने की योजना बना रही है, बिल को मंजूरी देने के लिए कहा जाए।
- They also expressed concerns about **funding to public universities** becoming dependent on **loans and borrowing**, citing the ongoing implementation of the **Higher Education Funding Agency** structure.
उन्होंने यह भी चिंता व्यक्त की कि सार्वजनिक विश्वविद्यालयों के लिए वित्तपोषण ऋण और उधारी पर निर्भर हो जाएगा, वर्तमान में लागू हो रही हायर एजुकेशन फंडिंग एजेंसी संरचना का हवाला देते हुए।
- This will eventually pass the financial burden to **students**, they warned, making **higher education accessible only to the affluent**.
उन्होंने चेतावनी दी कि यह अंततः वित्तीय बोझ छात्रों पर डाल देगा, जिससे उच्च शिक्षा केवल संपन्न लोगों के लिए सुलभ होगी।
- In its submissions to the **Joint Committee**, the **Education Ministry** maintained that it is bringing this proposed regulatory framework under **Entry 66 of the Union list** in the **Constitution**, the same provision that allowed it to introduce the **UGC Act, 1956**.
संयुक्त समिति को अपनी प्रस्तुतियों में, शिक्षा मंत्रालय ने कहा कि यह प्रस्तावित नियामक ढांचे को संविधान की संघ सूची के प्रवेश 66 के तहत ला रहा है, वही प्रावधान जिसने इसे यूजीसी एक्ट, 1956 पेश करने की अनुमति दी।



Centre to brief MPs on crop insurance scheme

GS II: Governance

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Tuesday asked the government to organise small groups of Members of Parliament (MPs) to brief them on the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Yojana so that lawmakers gain a better understanding of the crop insurance programme.

The suggestion came during Question Hour when Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was responding to supplementary questions. Mr. Birla proposed that the government form groups of MPs and explain the provisions and functioning of the scheme in detail. The Minister agreed to comply with the direction.

The scheme provides farmers with affordable insurance coverage against losses caused by natural calamities and other risks affecting crops.

18Mar. Centre to brief MPs on crop insurance scheme केंद्र सांसदों को फसल बीमा योजना पर जानकारी देगा

- Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Tuesday asked the government to organise small groups of Members of Parliament (MPs) to brief them on the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Yojana so that lawmakers gain a better understanding of the crop insurance programme.

लोकसभा अध्यक्ष ओम बिरला ने मंगलवार को सरकार से कहा कि वे छोटे समूहों में सांसदों (MPs) को प्रधान मंत्री फसल योजना पर जानकारी दें ताकि विधायकों को फसल बीमा कार्यक्रम की बेहतर समझ हो।

- The suggestion came during Question Hour when Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was responding to supplementary questions.

यह सुझाव प्रश्नकाल के दौरान आया जब कृषि मंत्री शिवराज सिंह चौहान पूरक प्रश्नों का उत्तर दे रहे थे।

- Mr. Birla proposed that the government form groups of MPs and explain the provisions and functioning of the scheme in detail.

श्री बिरला ने प्रस्ताव रखा कि सरकार सांसदों के समूह बनाकर योजना के प्रावधानों और कार्यप्रणाली को विस्तार से समझाए।

- The Minister agreed to comply with the direction.

मंत्री ने इस दिशा-निर्देश का पालन करने के लिए सहमति व्यक्त की।

- The scheme provides farmers with affordable insurance coverage against losses caused by natural calamities and other risks affecting crops.

यह योजना किसानों को प्राकृतिक आपदाओं और फसलों को प्रभावित करने वाले अन्य जोखिमों से होने वाले नुकसान के खिलाफ किफायती बीमा सुरक्षा प्रदान करती है।

GS Paper II: International Relations

TOPICS COVERED

18 March 2026

18Mar India's West Asia reset, more sinned against than sinning
भारत का पश्चिम एशिया पुनर्संतुलन, दोषी से अधिक पीड़ित

18Mar On scientific collaborations in BRICS
BRICS में वैज्ञानिक सहयोग पर

18Mar 'We do not act according to any other power'
'हम किसी अन्य शक्ति के अनुसार कार्य नहीं करते'



India's West Asia reset, more sinned against than sinning

CS II: IR **MOB**

During the past month, Indian policy towards West Asia has stirred domestic controversy. As substantive Indian interests are at stake, a professional assessment, based on two trends, is offered without wading into the domestic political blame game.

A link to two trends

First, over the past decade, India has raised its diplomatic engagement with West Asia. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made 15 visits to the six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) – some after a multi-decade hiatus. He also visited Israel twice, and the Palestinian Authority and Iran each once. Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements (CEPA) have been signed with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman, and similar negotiations are underway with the GCC and Israel.

With over \$160 billion in bilateral trade and 10 million diaspora, the GCC ranks as India's largest socio-economic partner. Last decade's engagements spurred synergy, although the promised investments have lagged. India's political gains include a de-hyphenation with Pakistan, greater strategic convergence with stronger defence and security tie-ups and growing acceptance of India as a responsible and friendly status quo power.

Second, the Gulf monarchies' ardour for a foreign power is normally rooted in the foreign power's potential contribution to the security and stability of their royal family, state and region – in that order. Exceptional turmoil in West Asia since October 2023, and a three-week-old war with the GCC countries under direct Iranian drone and missile attacks and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, have accentuated their search for a better security paradigm than the eight-decade-old regional Pax Americana.

The recent reset in India's diplomacy in West Asia largely acknowledges the aforementioned two trends and attempts to harness them to serve India's national interest. To their credit, India's policymakers have finally realised which side of the bread is buttered, and have launched a qualitative upscaling of a symbiosis with key West Asian countries. Recent initiatives, such as Mr. Modi's visit to Israel and his individual phone calls to all his GCC counterparts during the early days of the hostilities, have not only assured them of India's categorical support to their security and stability but also conveyed that India shares and prioritises their concerns at this critical juncture. Later, he also spoke with his Iranian counterpart.

The new doctrine is clearer-sighted and emphasises hard diplomacy. This reset is bereft of two traditional aspects that often dampen the bilateral amity: First, India did not chant the traditional please-all mantras that left all



Mahesh Sachdev

is a former Indian Ambassador with an interest in West Asia and oil matters

India needs balance, sensitivity and agility to leverage emerging opportunities in West Asia

stakeholders partially satisfied and India at the margins of the arena. There was no attempt to "balance" its public policy on controversial issues such as the "two-state solution" and Iran's quest for nuclear technology. Second, India's statements reflected its views without needless third-party citations. This demonstrates India's growing confidence as a credible and autonomous power.

Some domestic detractors have criticised the policy reset on multiple grounds. First, Mr. Modi's Israel visit (February 25-26) that concluded two days before Tel Aviv unleashed a military campaign against Iran is seen as untimely. Second, the perceived abandonment of India's traditional support for Palestinians and Iran is seen as immoral. Third, South Block is accused of surrendering India's sovereign autonomy to western dictates. Fourth, this activist reset may lead to strategic overreach with concomitant challenges such as exposure to security threats and costly defence tie-ups abroad.

The dates of the Prime Minister's visit to Israel were likely to have been set weeks in advance without any premonition of the February 28 offensive. The West Asian situation being perennially on the front burner makes any such visit risky, giving the ex-post facto criticism of the timing an unfair advantage of 50:50 hindsight. At the same time, the focus of the visit being bilateral renders it in a different domain.

Where other international actors stand

The perceived "immorality" of India's reset is largely misdirected and should be aimed at more worthy targets, such as China, Russia and Pakistan. Beijing siphoned off nearly 90% of the sanctioned Iranian oil exports, rendering only lip service to Tehran; Russia, which signed a 20-year Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty with Iran last year, has also underdelivered. And last year, Pakistani generals promised to nuke Israel if it attacked Iran; they are now U.S. President Donald Trump's favourites. Similarly, even the Arabs and Muslim states were conspicuously silent during the Gaza conflict.

While the Indian reset is a long-overdue recognition of the tectonic geopolitical shifts in West Asia, the pendulum swung to the other extreme and is being gradually realigned with national interests. The regional dynamic being notoriously mercurial, India should strive to keep its options more open. The Palestine Cause cannot be wished away forever. At the end of the day, Iran would remain an important player for India as an oil supplier and as a large market for Indian products, reconstruction projects and services. Iran, which borders Pakistan and Afghanistan, could be a strategic ally. Further, if subterranean trends such as growing Arab unease with the American and Israeli Armageddon, the

Saudi-UAE rift, the Iraq-Iran estrangement, and aggressive positioning by Pakistan and Türkiye are taken on board, a more nuanced reset would have suitably underscored continuity and inclusion. In retrospect, India could have reacted faster to the developments, such as the assassination of Iran's Supreme Leader and the appointment of his successor. Political correctness should not make India taciturn, as the diplomatic doublespeak offers many ways to skin the proverbial cat. India's relations with the U.S. and Israel are not so fragile as to be upended by our agreeing to disagree. Finally, India could have rendered more humanitarian relief to millions affected by the hostilities.

An opportunity for India

The ongoing reset should accommodate two incipient, but profound, regional movements with long-term positives for India. First, the long-standing "Oil-for-Security" compact between the Washington-led West and the moderate Arab regimes has become a collateral casualty of the ongoing U.S.-Israel war against Iran. The U.S. joined Israel in attacking Iran without prior notification to the GCC, ignoring the latter's cautionary advice. The West not only failed to protect them from Iranian retaliation, but its military bases on their soil became lightning rods for the Iranian attacks. Now, they fear that the U.S. may abruptly conclude the campaign, leaving them to face Iran's wrath. Once the dust settles, the GCC states may reduce their reliance on the U.S. and diversify their security partnership options to countries such as India, which are less likely to act as a Praetorian Guard. India's response to any such proposal ought to be based on a careful SWOT analysis with clear rules of engagement.

Second, the Iranian retaliations against the GCC have disrupted business activity and supply chains, and an early return to 'business as usual' appears unlikely. The GCC's appeal as an oasis of eco-political stability in the turbulent region has taken a serious long-term knock, leading to some stakeholders' clamour for a "GCC+1" strategy. India's eco-diplomacy must strive to position India as a viable and attractive alternative hub to the GCC's ritzy but fragile hotspots, which thrived by weaning away capital and talent from India. The current commotion is a historic opportunity to seize what is rightfully ours.

To remain relevant and effective, a country needs a dynamic foreign policy grounded in realism and national interest. Its execution requires the right mix of consistency, agility and modulation. As India's West Asia policy matures, it is relevant to recall British Prime Minister Lord Palmerston's maxim, "We have no eternal allies, and we have no perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual..."

18Mar. India's West Asia reset, more sinned against than sinning भारत का पश्चिम एशिया पुनर्संतुलन, दोषी से अधिक पीड़ित

- During the past month, Indian policy towards West Asia has stirred domestic controversy. पिछले एक महीने में पश्चिम एशिया के प्रति भारत की नीति ने घरेलू विवाद को जन्म दिया है।
- As substantive Indian interests are at stake, a professional assessment, based on two trends, is offered without wading into the domestic political blame game. चूंकि भारत के महत्वपूर्ण हित दांव पर हैं, इसलिए दो रुझानों पर आधारित एक पेशेवर विश्लेषण प्रस्तुत किया गया है, बिना घरेलू राजनीतिक आरोप-प्रत्यारोप में पड़े।

A link to two trends दो रुझानों से संबंध

- First, over the past decade, India has raised its diplomatic engagement with West Asia. पहला, पिछले एक दशक में भारत ने पश्चिम एशिया के साथ अपने कूटनीतिक संबंधों को बढ़ाया है।
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made 15 visits to the six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — some after a multi-decade hiatus. प्रधानमंत्री Narendra Modi ने Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) के छह देशों की 15 यात्राएं की हैं — जिनमें से कुछ कई दशकों बाद हुईं।



- He also visited Israel twice, and the Palestinian Authority and Iran each once.
उन्होंने इज़राइल की दो बार तथा फिलिस्तीनी प्राधिकरण और ईरान की एक-एक बार यात्रा की।
- **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements (CEPA)** have been signed with the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** and Oman, and similar negotiations are underway with the GCC and Israel.
Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements (CEPA) United Arab Emirates (UAE) और ओमान के साथ हस्ताक्षरित किए गए हैं, और इसी तरह की वार्ता GCC और इज़राइल के साथ जारी है।
- With over **\$160 billion** in bilateral trade and **10 million diaspora**, the GCC ranks as India's largest socio-economic partner.
\$160 billion से अधिक द्विपक्षीय व्यापार और **10 million diaspora** के साथ, GCC भारत का सबसे बड़ा सामाजिक-आर्थिक साझेदार है।
- Last decade's engagements spurred synergy, although the promised investments have lagged.
पिछले दशक के संबंधों ने सहयोग को बढ़ाया, हालांकि वादा किए गए निवेश पीछे रह गए।
- India's political gains include a de-hyphenation with Pakistan, greater strategic convergence with stronger defence and security tie-ups and growing acceptance of India as a responsible and friendly status quo power.
भारत की राजनीतिक उपलब्धियों में पाकिस्तान से अलग पहचान, मजबूत रक्षा और सुरक्षा सहयोग के साथ रणनीतिक सामंजस्य, और एक जिम्मेदार व स्थिर शक्ति के रूप में बढ़ती स्वीकृति शामिल है।
- Second, the Gulf monarchies' ardour for a foreign power is normally rooted in the foreign power's potential contribution to the security and stability of their royal family, state and region — in that order.
दूसरा, खाड़ी राजशाहियों का किसी विदेशी शक्ति के प्रति झुकाव आमतौर पर उस शक्ति की उनके शाही परिवार, राज्य और क्षेत्र की सुरक्षा व स्थिरता में योगदान देने की क्षमता पर आधारित होता है।
- Exceptional turmoil in West Asia since **October 2023**, and a three-week-old war with the GCC countries under direct Iranian drone and missile attacks and the closure of the **Strait of Hormuz**, have accentuated their search for a better security paradigm than the eight-decade-old regional Pax Americana.
October 2023 से पश्चिम एशिया में असाधारण अस्थिरता और ईरानी ड्रोन व मिसाइल हमलों के साथ GCC देशों के युद्ध तथा **Strait of Hormuz** के बंद होने ने उन्हें आठ दशक पुराने Pax Americana से बेहतर सुरक्षा व्यवस्था की खोज के लिए प्रेरित किया है।
- The recent reset in India's diplomacy in West Asia largely acknowledges the aforementioned two trends and attempts to harness them to serve India's national interest.
पश्चिम एशिया में भारत की हालिया कूटनीतिक पुनर्संरचना इन दोनों रुझानों को स्वीकार करती है और उन्हें भारत के राष्ट्रीय हित में उपयोग करने का प्रयास करती है।
- To their credit, India's policymakers have finally realised which side of the bread is buttered, and have launched a qualitative upscaling of a symbiosis with key West Asian countries.
भारत के नीति-निर्माताओं ने अंततः यह समझ लिया है कि किस दिशा में लाभ है और प्रमुख पश्चिम एशियाई देशों के साथ सहयोग को गुणात्मक रूप से बढ़ाया है।
- Recent initiatives, such as Mr. Modi's visit to Israel and his individual phone calls to all his GCC counterparts during the early days of the hostilities, have not only assured them of India's categorical support to their security and stability but also conveyed that India shares and prioritises their concerns at this critical juncture.
हाल की पहलों, जैसे मोदी की इज़राइल यात्रा और संघर्ष के शुरुआती दिनों में GCC नेताओं से उनकी फोन बातचीत, ने न केवल उनकी सुरक्षा और स्थिरता के लिए भारत के समर्थन को सुनिश्चित किया बल्कि यह भी दिखाया कि भारत उनकी चिंताओं को प्राथमिकता देता है।
- Later, he also spoke with his Iranian counterpart.
बाद में उन्होंने अपने ईरानी समकक्ष से भी बातचीत की।
- The new doctrine is clearer-sighted and emphasises hard diplomacy.
नई नीति अधिक स्पष्ट है और सख्त कूटनीति पर जोर देती है।
- This reset is bereft of two traditional aspects that often dampen the bilateral amity:
यह पुनर्संरचना दो पारंपरिक पहलुओं से मुक्त है जो अक्सर द्विपक्षीय संबंधों को कमजोर करते थे:
- First, India did not chant the traditional please-all mantras that left all stakeholders partially satisfied and India at the margins of the arena.



पहला, भारत ने सभी को संतुष्ट करने वाली पारंपरिक नीति नहीं अपनाई जिससे सभी आंशिक रूप से संतुष्ट रहते थे और भारत हाशिये पर रहता था।

- There was no attempt to “balance” its public policy on controversial issues such as the “two-state solution” and Iran’s quest for nuclear technology.
“two-state solution” और ईरान के परमाणु कार्यक्रम जैसे विवादास्पद मुद्दों पर संतुलन बनाने का प्रयास नहीं किया गया।
- Second, India’s statements reflected its views without needless third-party citations.
दूसरा, भारत के बयान बिना अनावश्यक तीसरे पक्ष के संदर्भ के उसके अपने विचारों को दर्शाते हैं।
- This demonstrates India’s growing confidence as a credible and autonomous power.
यह एक विश्वसनीय और स्वायत्त शक्ति के रूप में भारत के बढ़ते आत्मविश्वास को दर्शाता है।
- Some domestic detractors have criticised the policy reset on multiple grounds.
कुछ घरेलू आलोचकों ने इस नीति बदलाव की कई आधारों पर आलोचना की है।
- First, Mr. Modi’s Israel visit (**February 25-26**) that concluded two days before Tel Aviv unleashed a military campaign against Iran is seen as untimely.
पहला, श्री मोदी की इज़राइल यात्रा (**February 25-26**) जो ईरान के खिलाफ सैन्य अभियान शुरू होने से दो दिन पहले समाप्त हुई, को अनुचित समय पर माना गया है।
- Second, the perceived abandonment of India’s traditional support for Palestinians and Iran is seen as immoral.
दूसरा, फिलिस्तीन और ईरान के प्रति भारत के पारंपरिक समर्थन को छोड़ना अनैतिक माना जा रहा है।
- Third, South Block is accused of surrendering India’s sovereign autonomy to western dictates.
तीसरा, साउथ ब्लॉक पर आरोप है कि उसने भारत की संप्रभु स्वायत्तता को पश्चिमी दबाव के आगे समर्पित कर दिया है।
- Fourth, this activist reset may lead to strategic overreach with concomitant challenges such as exposure to security threats and costly defence tie-ups abroad.
चौथा, यह सक्रिय नीति बदलाव रणनीतिक अति-विस्तार का कारण बन सकता है, जिससे सुरक्षा खतरे और महंगे रक्षा समझौते जैसी चुनौतियाँ उत्पन्न हो सकती हैं।
- The dates of the Prime Minister’s visit to Israel were likely to have been set weeks in advance without any premonition of the **February 28** offensive.
प्रधानमंत्री की इज़राइल यात्रा की तिथियाँ संभवतः कई सप्ताह पहले तय की गई थीं, बिना **February 28** के हमले की किसी पूर्व जानकारी के।
- The West Asian situation being perennially on the front burner makes any such visit risky, giving the ex-post facto criticism of the timing an unfair advantage of **50:50 hindsight**.
पश्चिम एशिया की स्थिति हमेशा संवेदनशील रहने के कारण ऐसी यात्राएँ जोखिम भरी होती हैं, जिससे बाद में की गई आलोचना को **50:50 hindsight** का अनुचित लाभ मिलता है।
- At the same time, the focus of the visit being bilateral renders it in a different domain.
साथ ही, यात्रा का फोकस द्विपक्षीय होने के कारण इसे अलग संदर्भ में देखा जाना चाहिए।

Where other international actors stand

अन्य अंतरराष्ट्रीय शक्तियों की स्थिति

- The perceived “immorality” of India’s reset is largely misdirected and should be aimed at more worthy targets, such as **China, Russia and Pakistan**.
भारत के नीति बदलाव की कथित “अनैतिकता” गलत दिशा में है और इसे **China, Russia और Pakistan** जैसे देशों की ओर निर्देशित किया जाना चाहिए।
- Beijing siphoned off nearly **90%** of the sanctioned Iranian oil exports, rendering only lip service to Tehran; Russia, which signed a **20-year Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty** with Iran last year, has also underdelivered.
बीजिंग ने प्रतिबंधित ईरानी तेल निर्यात का लगभग **90%** अपने पास कर लिया, जबकि रूस, जिसने पिछले वर्ष **20-year Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty** पर हस्ताक्षर किए, ने भी अपेक्षित सहयोग नहीं दिया।
- And last year, Pakistani generals promised to nuke Israel if it attacked Iran; they are now **U.S. President Donald Trump’s** favourites.
और पिछले वर्ष पाकिस्तानी जनरलों ने ईरान पर हमला होने पर इज़राइल पर परमाणु हमला करने की धमकी दी थी; अब वे **U.S. President Donald Trump** के पसंदीदा बन गए हैं।



- Similarly, even the Arabs and Muslim states were conspicuously silent during the Gaza conflict.
इसी तरह, गाज़ा संघर्ष के दौरान अरब और मुस्लिम देश भी चुप रहे।
- While the Indian reset is a long-overdue recognition of the tectonic geopolitical shifts in West Asia, the pendulum swung to the other extreme and is being gradually realigned with national interests.
हालांकि भारत का यह नीति बदलाव पश्चिम एशिया में भू-राजनीतिक बदलावों की देर से हुई पहचान है, लेकिन यह अब दूसरे छोर तक झुक गया है और धीरे-धीरे राष्ट्रीय हितों के अनुसार संतुलित किया जा रहा है।
- The regional dynamic being notoriously mercurial, India should strive to keep its options more open.
क्षेत्रीय स्थिति अत्यधिक अस्थिर होने के कारण भारत को अपने विकल्प खुले रखने चाहिए।
- The Palestine Cause cannot be wished away forever.
फिलिस्तीन का मुद्दा हमेशा के लिए नजरअंदाज नहीं किया जा सकता।
- At the end of the day, Iran would remain an important player for India as an oil supplier and as a large market for Indian products, reconstruction projects and services.
अंततः ईरान भारत के लिए एक महत्वपूर्ण भागीदार बना रहेगा, चाहे वह तेल आपूर्ति हो या भारतीय उत्पादों और सेवाओं के लिए बाजार।
- Iran, which borders Pakistan and Afghanistan, could be a strategic ally.
ईरान, जो पाकिस्तान और अफगानिस्तान से सटा है, एक रणनीतिक सहयोगी बन सकता है।
- Further, if subterranean trends such as growing Arab unease with the American and Israeli Armageddon, the Saudi-UAE rift, the Iraq-Iran estrangement, and aggressive positioning by Pakistan and Türkiye are taken on board, a more nuanced reset would have suitably underscored continuity and inclusion.
यदि अरब देशों की बढ़ती असहजता, सऊदी-यूएई विवाद, इराक-ईरान दूरी, और पाकिस्तान व तुर्किये की आक्रामक स्थिति जैसे कारकों को ध्यान में रखा जाए, तो अधिक संतुलित नीति बदलाव में निरंतरता और समावेशन बेहतर तरीके से दिखता।
- In retrospect, India could have reacted faster to the developments, such as the assassination of Iran's Supreme Leader and the appointment of his successor.
पिछले दृष्टिकोण से देखें तो भारत को ईरान के सर्वोच्च नेता की हत्या और उत्तराधिकारी की नियुक्ति जैसी घटनाओं पर तेजी से प्रतिक्रिया देनी चाहिए थी।
- Political correctness should not make India taciturn, as the diplomatic doublespeak offers many ways to skin the proverbial cat.
राजनीतिक शुद्धता के कारण भारत को चुप नहीं रहना चाहिए, क्योंकि कूटनीतिक भाषा में कई तरीके होते हैं अपनी बात रखने के।
- India's relations with the U.S. and Israel are not so fragile as to be upended by our agreeing to disagree.
अमेरिका और इज़राइल के साथ भारत के संबंध इतने कमजोर नहीं हैं कि असहमति से टूट जाएं।
- Finally, India could have rendered more humanitarian relief to millions affected by the hostilities.
अंततः भारत को संघर्ष से प्रभावित लाखों लोगों को अधिक मानवीय सहायता प्रदान करनी चाहिए थी।

An opportunity for India भारत के लिए एक अवसर

- The ongoing reset should accommodate two incipient, but profound, regional movements with long-term positives for India.
वर्तमान नीति बदलाव को दो उभरते लेकिन गहरे क्षेत्रीय परिवर्तनों को समाहित करना चाहिए, जो भारत के लिए दीर्घकालिक लाभकारी हो सकते हैं।
- First, the long-standing “Oil-for-Security” compact between the Washington-led West and the moderate Arab regimes has become a collateral casualty of the ongoing **U.S.-Israel war against Iran**.
पहला, वाशिंगटन-नेतृत्व वाले पश्चिम और मध्यम अरब देशों के बीच लंबे समय से चला आ रहा “Oil-for-Security” समझौता **U.S.-Israel war against Iran** का अप्रत्यक्ष शिकार बन गया है।
- The U.S. joined Israel in attacking Iran without prior notification to the **GCC**, ignoring the latter's cautionary advice.



अमेरिका ने **GCC** को पूर्व सूचना दिए बिना इज़राइल के साथ मिलकर ईरान पर हमला किया और उनकी चेतावनियों को नजरअंदाज किया।

- The West not only failed to protect them from Iranian retaliation, but its military bases on their soil became lightning rods for the Iranian attacks.

पश्चिम न केवल उन्हें ईरानी जवाबी हमलों से बचाने में विफल रहा, बल्कि उनकी जमीन पर स्थित उसके सैन्य ठिकाने ही हमलों का निशाना बन गए।

- Now, they fear that the U.S. may abruptly conclude the campaign, leaving them to face Iran's wrath.

अब उन्हें डर है कि अमेरिका अचानक अभियान समाप्त कर सकता है और उन्हें ईरान के प्रतिशोध का सामना करना पड़ सकता है।

- Once the dust settles, the **GCC states** may reduce their reliance on the U.S. and diversify their security partnership options to countries such as India, which are less likely to act as a **Praetorian Guard**.

स्थिति शांत होने के बाद **GCC states** अमेरिका पर अपनी निर्भरता कम कर सकते हैं और भारत जैसे देशों के साथ सुरक्षा साझेदारी बढ़ा सकते हैं, जो **Praetorian Guard** की तरह व्यवहार करने की संभावना कम रखते हैं।

- India's response to any such proposal ought to be based on a careful **SWOT analysis** with clear rules of engagement.

भारत को ऐसे किसी प्रस्ताव पर प्रतिक्रिया देते समय सावधानीपूर्वक **SWOT analysis** और स्पष्ट नियमों के आधार पर निर्णय लेना चाहिए।

- Second, the Iranian retaliations against the GCC have disrupted business activity and supply chains, and an early return to 'business as usual' appears unlikely.

दूसरा, GCC के खिलाफ ईरान की जवाबी कार्रवाई ने व्यापार और आपूर्ति श्रृंखलाओं को बाधित कर दिया है और जल्द सामान्य स्थिति लौटना मुश्किल लगता है।

- The GCC's appeal as an oasis of eco-political stability in the turbulent region has taken a serious long-term knock, leading to some stakeholders' clamour for a "**GCC+1**" strategy. अस्थिर क्षेत्र में आर्थिक-राजनीतिक स्थिरता के केंद्र के रूप में GCC की छवि को दीर्घकालिक नुकसान हुआ है, जिससे कुछ हितधारक "**GCC+1**" रणनीति की मांग कर रहे हैं।

- India's eco-diplomacy must strive to position India as a viable and attractive alternative hub to the GCC's ritzy but fragile hotspots, which thrived by weaning away capital and talent from India.

भारत की आर्थिक कूटनीति को भारत को GCC के चमकदार लेकिन कमजोर केंद्रों के विकल्प के रूप में स्थापित करने का प्रयास करना चाहिए, जिन्होंने भारत से पूंजी और प्रतिभा को आकर्षित किया था।

- The current commotion is a historic opportunity to seize what is rightfully ours. वर्तमान स्थिति एक ऐतिहासिक अवसर है जिससे भारत अपने अधिकार को प्राप्त कर सकता है।

- To remain relevant and effective, a country needs a dynamic foreign policy grounded in realism and national interest.

प्रासंगिक और प्रभावी बने रहने के लिए किसी देश को यथार्थवाद और राष्ट्रीय हित पर आधारित गतिशील विदेश नीति की आवश्यकता होती है।

- Its execution requires the right mix of consistency, agility and modulation.

इसके क्रियान्वयन के लिए निरंतरता, लचीलापन और संतुलन का सही मिश्रण आवश्यक है।

- As India's West Asia policy matures, it is relevant to recall British Prime Minister **Lord Palmerston's** maxim, "We have no eternal allies, and we have no perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual...."

जैसे-जैसे भारत की पश्चिम एशिया नीति परिपक्व हो रही है, ब्रिटिश प्रधानमंत्री **Lord Palmerston** का कथन याद रखना उचित है: "हमारे कोई स्थायी मित्र या शत्रु नहीं हैं, हमारे हित ही स्थायी हैं।"



On scientific collaborations in BRICS

BRICS functions as a collaborative force aimed at establishing a multipolar world system. Cooperation in science, technology and innovation has been a key agenda for the grouping and has expanded over the years to include socially relevant areas such as energy, water, health and the environment

GS III IR

MGB

FULL CONTEXT

Krishna Ravi Srinivas
Sneha Sinha

The BRICS grouping, comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, is a globally significant collective defined by its substantial contributions to global GDP, scientific and technological capacity, natural resources, and total population. Since its formation, the group has evolved into a prominent international voice, representing countries that seek to challenge and provide an alternative to Western hegemony. BRICS functions as a collaborative force aimed at establishing a multipolar world system. While the group's positions on global finance and macro-economic issues are widely recognised, the depth of cooperation among member states regarding science, technology, and innovation (STI) remains less publicised.

At a time in which global scientific collaboration is increasingly dictated by geopolitical tensions, techno-nationalism, and strategic competition, often manifesting as sanctions and export controls, BRICS assumes a critical role in the global STI landscape. Through this platform, member nations coordinate their strategies, amplify their collective voice in global economic governance, and influence development finance through institutions like the New Development Bank.

These members are also vital contributors to global trade, energy production, and the supply of essential natural resources. The 2022 launch of BRICS+ signaled a move towards a more inclusive forum, fostering development and political cooperation across the Global South to reduce technological dependencies. This collaboration is now a concrete effort to build shared capacities through various framework programmes. The group's current membership has expanded to include Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the UAE, Ethiopia, Indonesia, and Iran.

Cooperation in STI

Cooperation in STI has been a part of the BRICS agenda since its early years. It was formally recognised in 2011 and later consolidated in meetings between senior officials and the BRICS Ministers of Science, Technology, and Innovation. A pivotal 2015 memorandum of understanding established STI as a core strategic pillar, providing the necessary institutional framework and operational signals for collaborative research and capacity-building. This framework has since expanded the scope of cooperation, allowing members to leverage their complementary strengths to address shared development challenges and advance frontier sciences.

The first BRICS Action Plan for Innovation Cooperation (2017-2020) tasked the Science, Technology, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship Partnership (STIEP) Working Group with implementing various programmes. These initiatives focused on entrepreneurship networks, the role of youth and women in STI, and collaborations regarding technology transfer and business incubators. Over time, BRICS has moved from early joint research calls focused on fundamental science toward prioritising innovation and technology transfer.

These priorities are formally identified in annual ministerial declarations. The BRICS Ministers of Science, Technology,



Summit dialogue: World leaders partake in the 17th annual BRICS summit in Rio de Janeiro on July 6, 2025. AP

and Innovation meet once a year to approve and sign strategic documents. Within each member country, one or two lead agencies coordinate these activities, issue calls for proposals, and prepare project lists for approval during the respective country's presidency. For example, during India's chairmanship, the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) serve as the lead agencies.

A clear emphasis on innovation-driven and technology-enabled ecosystems is evident in recent summit themes and initiatives such as BRICS and the BRICS Technology Transfer Centre (TTC). The TTC has made notable progress in creating policy frameworks and institutional links for cross-border technology commercialisation. However, despite this progress, large-scale commercialisation of these technologies remains limited.

The focus of BRICS joint research calls has transitioned from basic science and enabling technologies to include more socially relevant areas such as energy, water, health, and the environment. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this shift, placing a premium on public health, vaccine research, biosecurity, and digital health. Recent calls have integrated high-performance computing (HPC), advanced materials, information and communication technology (ICT), and space-related applications. Scientific collaboration has strengthened over time, with a growing focus on artificial intelligence and data-intensive science.

While working groups reflect these shared development priorities, their progress varies across different fields. Significant progress is visible in ICT and HPC, highlighted by the establishment of the BRICS Institute of Future Networks, as well as in space cooperation following a 2021 intergovernmental agreement.

Conversely, areas that require heavy infrastructure or are more exploratory, such as mega-science projects and ocean or polar research, have developed slower. The expansion of BRICS has positioned it as a more inclusive platform for knowledge exchange and collaborative research. The 2025 Declaration on AI, elevated artificial intelligence from a sub-theme, to a central pillar of multilateral governance. This declaration outlines a vision for AI governance that is

equitable, inclusive, and development-oriented, moving the partnership towards a strategic collaboration with direct economic and societal relevance. While the 2021-24 Action Plan focused on networking and thematic frameworks, subsequent plans aim to scale projects for greater impact, focusing on biotechnology, climate tech, industrial innovation, and AI.

Under India's 2026 Presidency, with the theme 'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability', the group is positioned to deepen its scientific partnerships. The goal is to leverage expanded membership to strengthen capacities and address challenges like digital divides, public health crises, and climate resilience. However, participation from new members remains uneven; among the most recent additions, only Egypt and Iran joined the call for proposals issued last December. Additionally, the China-BRICS Research Centre on New Quality Productive Forces was recently inaugurated in Beijing. This center serves as an international platform for academic exchange and technological research.

Consequences and concerns

When compared to nations like South Korea, the National Innovation Systems (NIS) of BRICS countries exhibit various strengths and weaknesses. Specifically, gross domestic expenditure on research and development (GERD) is relatively lower across the group, with the exception of China. Research suggests that the gap between BRICS nations and South Korea is wide, and member countries excluding China have significant catching up to do according to various innovation indicators. With the expansion into BRICS+, the innovation systems of new members also require assessment and strengthening. This strengthening could be a priority for BRICS over the next decade, with the potential to eventually replicate these improvements across the broader Global South.

As noted by Stanford University visiting scholar Irina Dezhina, the heterogeneity of new members in terms of both economic development and scientific capacity makes it difficult to reconcile differing interests. Consequently, BRICS+ may need to focus on catalysing new "paired links" between specific members. Comparisons to the European Union (EU)

suggest that BRICS could learn from the EU's wide variety of STI programs, as BRICS currently offers more limited options. Further, although competition for funding is intense, the total funding available remains modest.

Experts suggest that these programmes must reach a new qualitative level to effectively respond to major global challenges. Currently, however, research into STI cooperation among BRICS nations is limited, and the existing mechanism lacks a framework for regular study to provide data-driven inputs to member countries.

A way forward

While BRICS countries have achieved significant collaboration, there are questions regarding whether the current framework is sufficient for future needs. A primary concern is the lack of a permanent mechanism to manage STI cooperation. The current system, where the lead role rotates annually with the presidency, is not ideally suited for long-term requirements. BRICS could potentially model a central mechanism after the EU's Horizon Program, establishing a Secretariat to manage funds, issue calls for proposals, monitor progress, and review outcomes.

Developing a few long-term Mega-science Projects could also foster deeper cooperation. The framework for STI cooperation should eventually expand beyond just funding science and technology projects; it should promote research into the governance of STI and the impact of emerging technologies on BRICS+ nations. This would facilitate greater coherence in international treaty negotiations and help build capacity for STI governance.

In conclusion, while STI cooperation within BRICS has progressed significantly since 2015 despite various constraints, there is substantial room for improvement. Making the framework more effective, agile, and credible will enhance the group's legitimacy in the global arena. As the chair of BRICS+ in 2026, India has the opportunity to lead this transition.

(Krishna Ravi Srinivas is Adjunct Professor of Law, Director CoE in AI & Law, WALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad. Sneha Sinha is Consultant, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi.)

THE GIST

BRICS has emerged as a key international voice on global finance and macro-economic issues. However, the cooperation among member states on science, technology, and innovation remains less publicised.

Scientific collaboration among BRICS nations has strengthened over time. Yet, areas that require heavy infrastructure or are more exploratory, such as mega-science projects and ocean or polar research, have developed slower.

While working groups reflect these shared development priorities, their progress varies across different fields. There are questions regarding whether the current framework is sufficient for future needs.

18Mar. On scientific collaborations in BRICS

BRICS में वैज्ञानिक सहयोग पर

- The **BRICS grouping**, comprising **Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa**, is a globally significant collective defined by its contributions to **global GDP, scientific and technological capacity, natural resources, and population**. **BRICS समूह**, जिसमें **ब्राज़ील, रूस, भारत, चीन और दक्षिण अफ्रीका** शामिल हैं, वैश्विक GDP, वैज्ञानिक क्षमता, प्राकृतिक संसाधन और जनसंख्या में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान देता है।
- Since its formation, the group has evolved into a prominent international voice, representing countries that seek to challenge **Western hegemony**. स्थापना के बाद यह समूह **पश्चिमी वर्चस्व** को चुनौती देने वाले देशों की प्रमुख आवाज बन गया है।
- **BRICS functions as a collaborative force aimed at establishing a multipolar world system**. BRICS का उद्देश्य **बहुध्रुवीय विश्व व्यवस्था** स्थापित करना है।



- While the group's positions on **global finance and macro-economic issues** are recognised, cooperation in **science, technology, and innovation (STI)** remains less publicised.
वैश्विक वित्त और आर्थिक मुद्दों में इसकी भूमिका स्पष्ट है, लेकिन **विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी सहयोग** कम चर्चा में है।
- At a time when global scientific collaboration is shaped by **geopolitical tensions, technological nationalism, sanctions, and export controls**, BRICS plays a critical role.
आज के **भूराजनीतिक तनाव, तकनीकी राष्ट्रवाद और प्रतिबंधों** के दौर में BRICS महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाता है।
- Through this platform, member nations **coordinate strategies, strengthen their voice in global governance, and influence development finance via the New Development Bank**.
इस मंच के माध्यम से देश रणनीति बनाते हैं और **New Development Bank** के जरिए विकास वित्त को प्रभावित करते हैं।
- These members are also key contributors to **global trade, energy production, and natural resources supply**.
ये देश वैश्विक व्यापार, ऊर्जा उत्पादन और संसाधन आपूर्ति में महत्वपूर्ण हैं।
- The **2022 launch of BRICS+** marked expansion towards a more inclusive platform and strengthened cooperation across the **Global South**.
2022 में BRICS+ की शुरुआत ने इसे अधिक समावेशी बनाया और **वैश्विक दक्षिण** के सहयोग को बढ़ाया।
- This initiative aims to reduce **technological dependencies** and build shared capacities through structured programmes.
इसका उद्देश्य **तकनीकी निर्भरता कम करना** और साझा क्षमता विकसित करना है।
- The group's membership has expanded to include **Saudi Arabia, Egypt, UAE, Ethiopia, Indonesia, and Iran**.
अब समूह में **सऊदी अरब, मिस्र, यूएई, इथियोपिया, इंडोनेशिया और ईरान** भी शामिल हैं।

Cooperation in STI विज्ञान प्रौद्योगिकी सहयोग

- Cooperation in **STI** has been a part of the BRICS agenda since its early years.
STI सहयोग शुरुआत से ही BRICS के एजेंडा का हिस्सा रहा है।
- It was formally recognised in **2011** and later consolidated in meetings between senior officials and BRICS Ministers of Science, Technology, and Innovation.
इसे **2011** में औपचारिक मान्यता मिली और बाद में मंत्रिस्तरीय बैठकों में मजबूत किया गया।
- A pivotal **2015 memorandum** established STI as a core strategic pillar, providing the institutional framework for collaborative research and capacity-building.
2015 समझौते ने STI को मुख्य रणनीतिक स्तंभ बनाया और सहयोग के लिए ढांचा प्रदान किया।
- This framework expanded cooperation, allowing members to leverage their strengths to address shared challenges and advance frontier sciences.
इस ढांचे ने देशों को अपनी ताकत का उपयोग कर साझा चुनौतियों का समाधान करने में मदद की।
- The first **BRICS Action Plan (2017-2020)** tasked the **STIEP Working Group** with implementing programmes.
पहली **2017-2020 कार्य योजना** में **STIEP समूह** को कार्यक्रम लागू करने की जिम्मेदारी दी गई।
- These initiatives focused on **entrepreneurship networks, youth and women participation, technology transfer, and incubators**.
इन कार्यक्रमों में **उद्यमिता, युवा और महिला भागीदारी तथा तकनीक हस्तांतरण** शामिल थे।
- Over time, BRICS shifted from **fundamental science** to prioritising **innovation and technology transfer**.
समय के साथ BRICS ने **मूल विज्ञान** से हटकर **नवाचार और तकनीक हस्तांतरण** पर ध्यान दिया।
- These priorities are defined in **annual ministerial declarations**.
ये प्राथमिकताएं हर वर्ष मंत्रिस्तरीय घोषणाओं में तय होती हैं।
- **BRICS Ministers of STI meet annually to approve and sign strategic documents**.
STI मंत्री हर वर्ष रणनीतिक दस्तावेजों को स्वीकृति देते हैं।
- Each member country has **lead agencies** that coordinate activities, issue proposals, and prepare project lists.
हर देश में **प्रमुख एजेंसियां** परियोजनाओं का समन्वय करती हैं।



- During India's chairmanship, **CSIR and DBT** act as lead agencies.
भारत की अध्यक्षता में **CSIR और DBT** प्रमुख एजेंसियां होती हैं।

Recent Trends in BRICS STI Cooperation ब्रिक्स विज्ञान प्रौद्योगिकी सहयोग के हाल के रुझान

- A clear emphasis on **innovation-driven and technology-enabled ecosystems** is evident in recent summit themes and initiatives such as **iBRICS and the Technology Transfer Centre (TTC)**.
हाल के सम्मेलनों में **नवाचार आधारित और प्रौद्योगिकी संचालित पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र** पर जोर दिखता है, जैसे **iBRICS और Technology Transfer Centre**।
- The **TTC** has made notable progress in creating **policy frameworks** and institutional links for cross-border technology commercialisation.
TTC ने **नीतिगत ढांचे** और अंतरराष्ट्रीय तकनीकी हस्तांतरण में प्रगति की है।
- However, despite this progress, large-scale commercialisation remains limited.
इसके बावजूद बड़े स्तर पर व्यावसायीकरण अभी सीमित है।
- The focus of BRICS joint research calls has shifted from **basic science** to **socially relevant areas** such as energy, water, health, and environment.
संयुक्त शोध का फोकस अब **मूल विज्ञान** से हटकर ऊर्जा, जल, स्वास्थ्य और पर्यावरण पर है।
- The **COVID-19 pandemic** accelerated this shift, emphasising public health, vaccine research, biosecurity, and digital health.
COVID-19 महामारी ने इस बदलाव को तेज किया और स्वास्थ्य व टीका अनुसंधान को प्राथमिकता दी।
- Recent calls include **high-performance computing, advanced materials, ICT, and space applications**.
हाल के कार्यक्रमों में **उच्च प्रदर्शन कंप्यूटिंग, उन्नत सामग्री, सूचना तकनीक और अंतरिक्ष अनुप्रयोग** शामिल हैं।
- Scientific collaboration now focuses more on **artificial intelligence and data-intensive science**.
अब सहयोग **कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता और डेटा आधारित विज्ञान** पर केंद्रित है।
- Progress varies across sectors; strong growth is seen in **ICT and HPC**, including the **Institute of Future Networks**.
विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में प्रगति अलग-अलग है; **ICT और HPC** में तेजी आई है।
- There is also progress in **space cooperation**, especially after the **2021 agreement**.
2021 समझौते के बाद अंतरिक्ष सहयोग में भी प्रगति हुई है।
- However, areas like **mega-science projects, ocean and polar research** have developed slowly.
लेकिन **मेगा विज्ञान परियोजनाएं और ध्रुवीय अनुसंधान** धीमी गति से बढ़े हैं।

Expansion and Future Direction विस्तार और भविष्य की दिशा

- The expansion of BRICS has made it a more inclusive platform for **knowledge exchange and research collaboration**.
BRICS का विस्तार इसे **ज्ञान साझा करने और शोध सहयोग** का व्यापक मंच बनाता है।
- The **2025 Declaration on AI** elevated artificial intelligence to a central governance pillar.
2025 की AI घोषणा ने कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता को मुख्य स्थान दिया।
- It promotes an approach that is **equitable, inclusive, and development-oriented**.
यह दृष्टिकोण **समान, समावेशी और विकास उन्मुख** है।
- The earlier **2021-24 Action Plan** focused on networking, while later plans aim to scale projects in **biotechnology, climate tech, industrial innovation, and AI**.
2021-24 योजना नेटवर्किंग पर थी, जबकि नई योजनाएं **जैव प्रौद्योगिकी और AI** पर केंद्रित हैं।
- Under **India's 2026 Presidency**, with the theme **Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability**, BRICS aims to deepen scientific ties.
2026 में भारत की अध्यक्षता में सहयोग को और मजबूत करने का लक्ष्य है।



- The goal is to address challenges like **digital divide, public health crises, and climate resilience**.
लक्ष्य डिजिटल अंतर, स्वास्थ्य संकट और जलवायु चुनौतियों का समाधान है।
- However, participation from new members remains uneven, with only **Egypt and Iran** joining recent proposals.
नए सदस्यों की भागीदारी असमान है, केवल **मिस्र और ईरान** शामिल हुए।
- The **China-BRICS Research Centre on New Quality Productive Forces** was recently inaugurated in **Beijing**.
हाल ही में **बीजिंग** में नया BRICS शोध केंद्र शुरू किया गया।
- This centre serves as a platform for **academic exchange and technological research**.
यह केंद्र **शैक्षणिक आदान-प्रदान और तकनीकी शोध** का मंच है।

Consequences and concerns परिणाम और चिंताएँ

- When compared to nations like **South Korea**, the **National Innovation Systems (NIS)** of BRICS countries show strengths and weaknesses.
दक्षिण कोरिया की तुलना में BRICS देशों की **राष्ट्रीय नवाचार प्रणाली** में कई ताकत और कमजोरियाँ हैं।
- The **gross domestic expenditure on research and development (GERD)** is relatively lower across BRICS, except **China**.
BRICS देशों में **अनुसंधान व्यय** कम है, केवल **चीन** अपवाद है।
- The gap between BRICS and **South Korea** is wide, and most members need to catch up on innovation indicators.
BRICS और **दक्षिण कोरिया** के बीच बड़ा अंतर है और अन्य देशों को प्रगति करनी है।
- With the expansion to **BRICS+**, innovation systems of new members also need strengthening.
BRICS+ **विस्तार** के बाद नए देशों की नवाचार प्रणाली को भी मजबूत करना आवश्यक है।
- This strengthening could be a priority over the next decade for broader **Global South** benefits.
अगले दशक में यह **वैश्विक दक्षिण** के लिए प्राथमिकता हो सकता है।
- The diversity of new members in **economic development and scientific capacity** creates difficulty in aligning interests.
नए सदस्यों की **आर्थिक और वैज्ञानिक विविधता** समन्वय में कठिनाई पैदा करती है।
- BRICS+ may need to develop **paired links** between specific members.
BRICS+ को देशों के बीच **द्विपक्षीय सहयोग** बढ़ाना होगा।
- Comparisons with the **European Union** suggest BRICS has fewer STI programme options.
यूरोपीय संघ की तुलना में BRICS के कार्यक्रम कम हैं।
- Funding competition is high but total funding remains modest.
वित्त के लिए प्रतिस्पर्धा अधिक है लेकिन कुल राशि कम है।
- Experts suggest programmes must reach a **new qualitative level** to address global challenges.
विशेषज्ञों के अनुसार कार्यक्रमों को **गुणात्मक स्तर बढ़ाना** होगा।
- Research on BRICS STI cooperation is limited and lacks a **data-driven framework**.
BRICS सहयोग पर शोध सीमित है और **डेटा आधारित ढांचा** नहीं है।

A way forward आगे की राह

- While BRICS has achieved collaboration, questions remain about the adequacy of its current framework.
BRICS ने सहयोग बढ़ाया है, लेकिन मौजूदा ढांचा पर्याप्त नहीं है।
- A major concern is the absence of a **permanent institutional mechanism** for STI cooperation.
सबसे बड़ी समस्या **स्थायी तंत्र की कमी** है।
- The rotating presidency model is not ideal for **long-term planning**.
घूमती अध्यक्षता **दीर्घकालिक योजना** के लिए उपयुक्त नहीं है।



- **BRICS could adopt a central mechanism similar to the EU Horizon Programme with a dedicated Secretariat.**
BRICS EU Horizon Programme जैसा ढांचा अपना सकता है।
- This Secretariat could manage **funding, proposals, monitoring, and evaluation.**
यह सचिवालय फंड, प्रस्ताव और निगरानी संभाल सकता है।
- Developing **Mega-science Projects** can enhance deeper cooperation.
मेगा विज्ञान परियोजनाएं सहयोग को बढ़ा सकती हैं।
- STI cooperation should expand beyond funding to include **governance and impact of emerging technologies.**
सहयोग को तकनीकी शासन और प्रभाव तक बढ़ाना चाहिए।
- This would help in **international negotiations** and capacity building.
यह अंतरराष्ट्रीय वार्ताओं और क्षमता निर्माण में मदद करेगा।
- Despite progress since **2015**, there is still significant scope for improvement.
2015 के बाद प्रगति हुई है लेकिन सुधार की गुंजाइश है।
- Making the framework more **effective, agile, and credible** will strengthen BRICS globally.
ढांचे को **प्रभावी और लचीला** बनाना आवश्यक है।
- As chair of **BRICS+ in 2026**, India has the opportunity to lead this transformation.
2026 में भारत को इस परिवर्तन का नेतृत्व करने का अवसर है।

‘We do not act according to any other power’

Iranian Kurdistan party PJAK makes its own decisions, says its co-chair over reports that Trump wanted the armed group to open an insurgency against Tehran; Peyman Viyan says the regime must change and if not it's heading towards collapse; she asserts that a democratic republic will guarantee the rights of all people; 'we must not allow some to take advantage of the war and try to divide us'

OS II IR

INTERVIEW

Peyman Viyan

Stanly Johny

The Kurdistan Free Life Party (PJAK), an armed Kurdish militant group in Iran, came under spotlight recently after U.S. President Donald Trump said he would welcome their involvement in the ongoing war against Iran. The PJAK, which is aligned with the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) of Turkey, has sought greater autonomy for the Kurdish region in Iran (Eastern Kurdistan). Mr. Trump later ruled out Kurdish involvement in the war, but reports suggested that Kurdish militias were getting support from the U.S. and Israel. In a written interview with *The Hindu*, Peyman Viyan, co-chair of the PJAK, says Kurds in Iran are not fighting for others. "We ourselves will do what is necessary and we will make the necessary decisions accordingly," says Ms. Viyan. Edited excerpts:

How does PJAK assess the ongoing U.S.-Israeli war on Iran? Do you see it as a turning point for Iran and the wider region?

The time has come for the Iranian nation-state to change. If it does not try to change itself and insist on its policies, it will be changed in some way. Iran wants to expand its hegemony in the region. It has been working for this for years. Within the framework of the Abraham Accords, West Asia is being redesigned. Israel wants to be the hegemon and dominate the region. The current war in Iran has its roots in the Gulf War of 1991. Since the current regime has not been able to change itself and has not responded to the demands of the Iranian people, it is now heading towards collapse. The Iranian regime will try to expand the war in the region in order to extend its life. In the current situation, one cannot say when exactly, but this regime can no longer stand on its own feet. It needs to change somehow.

From your perspective

On the ground, how has the conflict changed the security situation in Kurdish areas of Iran?

First of all, as the Kurdish people, we have a clear perspective of building a democratic and free society for the whole of Iran without war. We want Iran to become democratic. A democratic Iran will also guarantee the rights of the Kurds.

The Kurds are not a people apart from Iran and have never had any desire other than the unity of all the peoples of Iran. The organisation of the Kurds will cause all Iranian peoples to organise themselves properly and institutionalise themselves. Just as the Kurds are today an important actor in West Asia and everyone takes them into account, there are also expectations in Iran from the Kurds and their movement. Yes, we are an organisational, political and military force. We have a lot of experience in the military field. We will do whatever we can to protect our people. Instead of waging meaningless wars, our strategy is based on self-defence.



What is PJAK's current strategy in light of the war?

It would be wrong and incorrect to define PJAK solely as force of war. Some foreign powers and those who want to portray the Kurds in a bad light always argue in a way as if our only option was military. Yes, we currently find ourselves in a period of war, but this does not mean that our own choice to achieve the freedom of Iran is war. As I mentioned above, we have a defence force and are always ready to protect the people. We will take action if necessary. But we know that four years ago, the Women, Life, Freedom Revolution began in Iran with a women-led uprising. Wo-

men are the force for change in society. This regime has reached this point today because of the women's struggle. Kurdish women have played a leading role here and will always do. We believe that through the power of *jin, jyan, Azadi*, a democratic republic and a free society will be established in Iran. This is not a slogan. We will insist on this.

There have been reports suggesting that U.S. President Donald Trump wants Kurdish groups to open an insurgency against Iran. Has PJAK received any such signals or requests? And what would be your

response?

We do not act according to any other power. We ourselves will do what is necessary and we will make the necessary decisions accordingly. Of course, we have relations with all powers. But as the parties of East Kurdistan, we will definitely make our own decisions. We will do what serves the interests of our people.

Some reports have suggested that the CIA and Israel may be providing support, including weapons, to Kurdish groups fighting Iran. What is your response to these claims?

No one has helped us. We have been leading a struggle against the Iranian regime for years with our inherent strength.

Reports indicate that Iran carried out a severe crackdown in Kurdish areas in January. How would you describe what happened during that period?

That is true. But not only in Kurdistan. Thousands of people were killed by the

murderous regime throughout Iran in January. The blood of those martyrs will not be left in vain. The statistics released to the public show that many innocent people were murdered by the regime. Thousands have also been arrested and many have been executed. But the Iranian people are very resilient. Despite all this oppression, they have not left their homeland. Even now, while the war in Iran continues, a very small number of people have actually left the country.

What are PJAK's core political demands today – autonomy, federalism, or broader democratic reforms within Iran?

As I mentioned before, we want a Democratic Republic of Iran. A democratic republic will guarantee the rights of all peoples. We all own Iran. Iran is home for all of us. Not just for some.

Do you believe the current war could lead to internal instability or fragmentation in Iran?

This depends on the attitude of the peoples. The peoples of Iran have a his-

torical past of living together. Regimes may have always wanted to divide and separate the peoples. But we have an ancient history of living together. No one can divide us. War brings destruction and divisions. For this reason, we must act more cautiously than ever. We must not allow some people to take advantage of the war and try to divide and separate us. We must also establish our own joint social, political and military committees. The pain of a Kurd in Sine, Urmia or Kermanshah is the same as the pain of an Azeri in Tabriz. It is the same as the pain of a Mazandaran, a Tehrani or a Shirazian. Kurdistan has always felt the pain of Balochistan and has kept it in its heart. An Arab or a Turkmen in Iran has always seen the Kurds as close to them and felt love for them. That is why we are one soul within the great body of ancient Iran. Democracy is our unifying strength. At the same time, we must also prepare ourselves for all eventualities and, most importantly, defend ourselves under all circumstances.

18Mar. 'We do not act according to any other power'

‘हम किसी अन्य शक्ति के अनुसार कार्य नहीं करते’

- Iranian Kurdistan party PJAK makes its own decisions, says its co-chair over reports that Trump wanted the armed group to open an insurgency against Tehran; Peyman Viyan says the regime must change and if not it's heading towards collapse; she asserts that a democratic republic will guarantee the rights of all people; 'we must not allow some to take advantage of the war and try to divide us'
ईरानी कुर्दिस्तान पार्टी PJAK अपने निर्णय स्वयं लेती है, इसकी सह-अध्यक्ष कहती हैं, उन रिपोर्टों के बीच कि ट्रम्प चाहते थे कि यह सशस्त्र समूह तेहरान के खिलाफ विद्रोह शुरू करे; पेयमान वियान कहती हैं कि शासन को बदलना होगा और यदि नहीं तो यह पतन की ओर बढ़ रहा है; वह कहती हैं कि एक



लोकतांत्रिक गणराज्य सभी लोगों के अधिकारों की गारंटी देगा; 'हमें कुछ लोगों को युद्ध का फायदा उठाकर हमें विभाजित करने की अनुमति नहीं देनी चाहिए'

- The Kurdistan Free Life Party (PJAK), an armed Kurdish militant group in Iran, came under spotlight recently after U.S. President Donald Trump said he would welcome their involvement in the ongoing war against Iran.
कुर्दिस्तान फ्री लाइफ पार्टी (PJAK), ईरान में एक सशस्त्र कुर्द उग्रवादी समूह, हाल ही में चर्चा में आया जब अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रम्प ने कहा कि वे ईरान के खिलाफ चल रहे युद्ध में उनकी भागीदारी का स्वागत करेंगे।
- The PJAK, which is aligned with the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) of Turkey, has sought greater autonomy for the Kurdish region in Iran ('Eastern Kurdistan').
PJAK, जो तुर्की की कुर्दिस्तान वर्कर्स पार्टी (PKK) के साथ जुड़ा हुआ है, ईरान के कुर्द क्षेत्र ('पूर्वी कुर्दिस्तान') के लिए अधिक स्वायत्तता की मांग करता रहा है।
- Mr. Trump later ruled out Kurdish involvement in the war, but reports suggested that Kurdish militias were getting support from the U.S. and Israel.
श्री ट्रम्प ने बाद में युद्ध में कुर्दों की भागीदारी से इनकार कर दिया, लेकिन रिपोर्टों में कहा गया कि कुर्द मिलिशिया को अमेरिका और इज़राइल से समर्थन मिल रहा था।
- In a written interview with The Hindu, Peyman Viyan, co-chair of the PJAK, says Kurds in Iran are not fighting for others.
द हिंदू को दिए एक लिखित साक्षात्कार में, PJAK की सह-अध्यक्ष पेयमान वियान कहती हैं कि ईरान के कुर्द दूसरों के लिए नहीं लड़ रहे हैं।
- "We ourselves will do what is necessary and we will make the necessary decisions accordingly," says Ms. Viyan.
"हम स्वयं आवश्यक कार्य करेंगे और उसी अनुसार आवश्यक निर्णय लेंगे," सुश्री वियान कहती हैं।

How does PJAK assess the ongoing U.S.–Israeli war on Iran? Do you see it as a turning point for Iran and the wider region?

PJAK ईरान पर चल रहे अमेरिका–इज़राइल युद्ध का कैसे आकलन करता है? क्या आप इसे ईरान और व्यापक क्षेत्र के लिए एक निर्णायक मोड़ मानते हैं?

- The time has come for the Iranian nation-state to change.
ईरानी राष्ट्र-राज्य के बदलने का समय आ गया है।
- If it does not try to change itself and insist on its policies, it will be changed in some way.
यदि यह स्वयं को बदलने का प्रयास नहीं करता और अपनी नीतियों पर अड़ा रहता है, तो इसे किसी न किसी तरह बदला जाएगा।
- Iran wants to expand its hegemony in the region.
ईरान क्षेत्र में अपना वर्चस्व बढ़ाना चाहता है।
- It has been working for this for years.
वह इसके लिए वर्षों से काम कर रहा है।
- Within the framework of the Abraham Accords, West Asia is being redesigned.
अब्राहम समझौते के ढांचे के भीतर पश्चिम एशिया को पुनः डिज़ाइन किया जा रहा है।
- Israel wants to be the hegemon and dominate the region.
इज़राइल क्षेत्र में वर्चस्व स्थापित करना चाहता है।
- The current war in Iran has its roots in the Gulf War of 1991.
ईरान में वर्तमान युद्ध की जड़ें 1991 के खाड़ी युद्ध में हैं।
- Since the current regime has not been able to change itself and has not responded to the demands of the Iranian people, it is now heading towards collapse.
चूंकि वर्तमान शासन स्वयं को बदलने में सक्षम नहीं रहा और उसने ईरानी जनता की मांगों का जवाब नहीं दिया, इसलिए यह अब पतन की ओर बढ़ रहा है।
- The Iranian regime will try to expand the war in the region in order to extend its life.
ईरानी शासन अपने अस्तित्व को बढ़ाने के लिए क्षेत्र में युद्ध का विस्तार करने की कोशिश करेगा।
- In the current situation, one cannot say when exactly, but this regime can no longer stand on its own feet.
वर्तमान स्थिति में यह कहना मुश्किल है कि कब, लेकिन यह शासन अब अपने पैरों पर खड़ा नहीं रह सकता।
- It needs to change somehow.
इसे किसी न किसी तरह बदलना होगा।



From your perspective on the ground, how has the conflict changed the security situation in Kurdish areas of Iran?

आपके दृष्टिकोण से, इस संघर्ष ने ईरान के कुर्द क्षेत्रों में सुरक्षा स्थिति को कैसे बदला है?

- First of all, as the Kurdish people, we have a clear perspective of building a democratic and free society for the whole of Iran without war.
सबसे पहले, कुर्द लोगों के रूप में, हमारे पास पूरे ईरान के लिए बिना युद्ध के एक लोकतांत्रिक और स्वतंत्र समाज बनाने का स्पष्ट दृष्टिकोण है।
- We want Iran to become democratic.
हम चाहते हैं कि ईरान लोकतांत्रिक बने।
- A democratic Iran will also guarantee the rights of the Kurds.
एक लोकतांत्रिक ईरान कुर्दों के अधिकारों की भी गारंटी देगा।
- The Kurds are not a people apart from Iran and have never had any desire other than the unity of all the peoples of Iran.
कुर्द ईरान से अलग कोई लोग नहीं हैं और उन्होंने कभी भी ईरान के सभी लोगों की एकता के अलावा कोई इच्छा नहीं रखी।
- The organisation of the Kurds will cause all Iranian peoples to organise themselves properly and institutionalise themselves.
कुर्दों का संगठन सभी ईरानी लोगों को सही ढंग से संगठित और संस्थागत बनने के लिए प्रेरित करेगा।
- Yes, we are an organisational, political and military force.
हाँ, हम एक संगठनात्मक, राजनीतिक और सैन्य शक्ति हैं।
- We have a lot of experience in the military field.
हमें सैन्य क्षेत्र में काफी अनुभव है।
- We will do whatever we can to protect our people.
हम अपने लोगों की रक्षा के लिए जो भी संभव होगा, करेंगे।
- Instead of waging meaningless wars, our strategy is based on self-defence.
निरर्थक युद्ध छेड़ने के बजाय, हमारी रणनीति आत्मरक्षा पर आधारित है।

GS Paper III: Economy,

TOPICS COVERED

18 March 2026

18Mar 9-judge Bench starts hearing on definition of 'industry'
'उद्योग' की परिभाषा पर 9-सदस्यीय पीठ सुनवाई शुरू करती है



9-judge Bench starts hearing on definition of 'industry'

GS III: Economy
Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

A nine-judge Bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant on Tuesday asked the government whether a canteen run in a defence research organisation would be considered an 'industry' or a 'sovereign function'.

The court's query came on the first day of the hearing of a reference regarding the definition of 'industry' under Section 2(j) of the now-repealed Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

The nine-judge Bench is examining whether "social welfare activities and schemes or other enterprises" undertaken by government departments or its instrumentalities could be construed as industrial activity. Another question framed by the Supreme Court for consideration by the proposed nine-judge Bench is a clarification on what 'state/sovereign activities' would fall within the definition of industry under Section 2(j).

18Mar. 9-judge Bench starts hearing on definition of 'industry' 'उद्योग' की परिभाषा पर 9-सदस्यीय पीठ सुनवाई शुरू करती है

- A nine-judge Bench of the **Supreme Court** headed by **Chief Justice of India Surya Kant** on Tuesday asked the **government** whether a **canteen** run in a **defence research organisation** would be considered an **'industry'** or a **'sovereign function'**.

भारत के मुख्य न्यायाधीश सूर्य कांत की अध्यक्षता वाली **सुप्रीम कोर्ट** की 9-सदस्यीय पीठ ने मंगलवार को **सरकार** से पूछा कि क्या एक **रक्षा अनुसंधान संगठन** में चलायी जाने वाली **कैंटीन** को **'उद्योग'** माना जाएगा या **'संप्रभु कार्य'**।

- The court's query came on the **first day of the hearing** of a **reference** regarding the definition of **'industry'** under **Section 2(j)** of the now-repealed **Industrial Disputes Act, 1947**.

कोर्ट का यह प्रश्न उस **सुनवाई के पहले दिन** आया जब **संदर्भ** के तहत **'उद्योग'** की परिभाषा पर विचार किया जा रहा था, जो अब रद्द किए गए **इंडस्ट्रियल डिस्प्यूट्स एक्ट, 1947** की धारा 2(j) में है।

- The nine-judge Bench is examining whether **"social welfare activities and schemes or other enterprises"** undertaken by **government departments or its instrumentalities** could be construed as **industrial activity**.

9-सदस्यीय पीठ यह जांच रही है कि क्या **"सामाजिक कल्याण गतिविधियाँ और योजनाएँ या अन्य उद्यम"** जो **सरकारी विभागों या उनके साधनों** द्वारा संचालित होती हैं, उन्हें **औद्योगिक गतिविधि** माना जा सकता है।

- Another question framed by the **Supreme Court** for consideration by the proposed nine-judge Bench is a clarification on what **'state/sovereign activities'** would fall within the definition of **industry** under **Section 2(j)**.

एक और प्रश्न जिसे **सुप्रीम कोर्ट** ने प्रस्तावित 9-सदस्यीय पीठ के विचार के लिए तैयार किया है, वह यह स्पष्ट करना है कि कौन सी **'राज्य/संप्रभु गतिविधियाँ'** धारा 2(j) के तहत **उद्योग** की परिभाषा में शामिल होंगी।

GS Paper III: S&T,

TOPICS COVERED

18 March 2026

18Mar	Cholesterol makes cells' nuclei squishy, helping melanoma spread कोलेस्ट्रॉल कोशिकाओं के नाभिक को लचीला बनाता है, जिससे मेलानोमा फैलने में मदद मिलती है
18Mar	Sex bias: key to a DNA puzzle लैंगिक पक्षपात: डीएनए पहेली की कुंजी
18Mar	Prison outbreak जेल में प्रकोप



Cholesterol makes cells' nuclei squishy, helping melanoma spread

When cholesterol levels in the nuclear envelope were high, the nucleus became easier to deform; this is important because cancer cells often have to squeeze through tight gaps between other cells to spread and a squishier nucleus makes that squeezing easier, so the cancer can invade new tissues more successfully

ISSUE 581
D.P. Kasbekar

Melanoma is one of the most dangerous common skin cancers. It starts in melanocytes, the skin cells that make melanin, the pigment that gives skin its colour.

Cancer doesn't appear overnight. A normal cell becomes cancerous in steps, as its DNA and its gene-control systems pick up changes over time. These changes push the cell to do three things: divide too much, avoid being destroyed by the immune system, and spread into other parts of the body. This spread is called metastasis, and it is what makes many cancers deadly.

Researchers want to know which changes matter most because those changes can become targets for treatment.

Becoming squishy

A recent study led by scientists at the U.S. National Institutes of Health reported an unexpected driver of cancer spread: cholesterol in the membrane around the cell nucleus. The nucleus is the cell's control room, where most of the DNA is stored. It's wrapped in a thin nuclear envelope, like a flexible shell.

The team found this pattern in melanoma and also in breast and prostate cancers. When cholesterol levels in the nuclear envelope were high, the nucleus became easier to deform. In other words, it became more squishy. This is important because cancer cells often have to squeeze through tight gaps between other cells to spread. A squishier nucleus makes that squeezing easier, so the cancer can invade new tissues more successfully.

High cholesterol did something else, too: it made the nuclear envelope more fragile. Fragile envelopes were more likely to tear in small, local spots. When a tear happens, the DNA inside can be exposed to forces that damage it. Damaged DNA can lead to new mutations, and some of those new mutations can make the cancer even more aggressive.

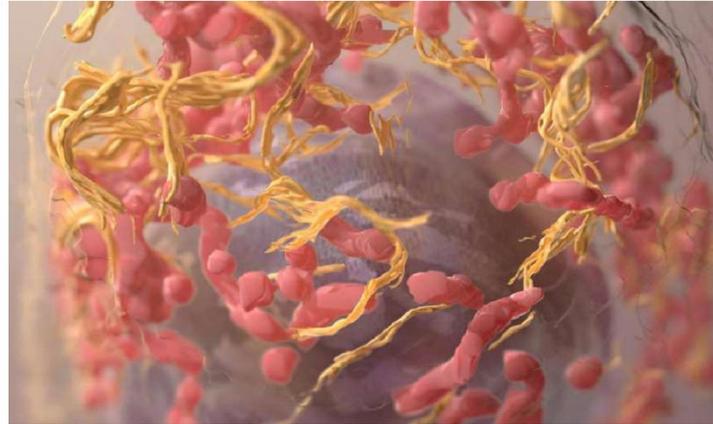
When the researchers lowered cholesterol levels in cancer cells, the cells became less invasive and less aggressive.

These findings also help explain an earlier observation: people with melanoma who were taking statins – drugs that lower cholesterol in the blood – seemed to show slower progression, on average, than people who were not.

Too much LBR

A big question arose: how did the cancer cells raise cholesterol in the nuclear envelope?

The study pointed to a protein called the lamin B receptor (LBR). Think of LBR as a tool with two parts sitting in the inner nuclear membrane. One part helps attach DNA (packed with proteins) to the inner surface of the nucleus. The other part



3D structure of a melanoma cell derived by ion abrasion scanning electron microscopy. NCI/UNSPSLASH

helps the cell make cholesterol.

In many melanoma samples, the researchers found that cells produced too much LBR. When LBR levels were high, the cellular cholesterol levels rose as well, and the nucleus became both more deformable and more fragile. When the team reduced the LBR levels, the nuclear envelope became tougher and less easily deformed.

Curiously, if the researchers used a version of LBR that couldn't do its cholesterol-making job, then boosting the LBR didn't produce the same fragile, squishy nucleus. This suggested the cholesterol-making function was central to the effect.

The team also tested what happened when they removed cholesterol directly from cell membranes: the nuclear membranes became much less fragile than in untreated cells. This fit the idea that cholesterol was changing the physical properties of the nuclear envelope.

A treatment target

The researchers then asked a bigger question: could this process start early in cancer development? If high LBR and high cholesterol appear early, then repeated small tears in the nuclear envelope could increase DNA damage over time. More DNA damage could then raise the chances of new mutations, leading to the cancer becoming more malignant.

The team engineered melanoma cells in two versions: one set with normal LBR levels and the other where LBR had been silenced (i.e. which lacked LBR). They

These findings also help explain an earlier observation: people with melanoma who were taking statins – drugs that lower cholesterol in the blood – seemed to show slower progression, on average, than people who were not

injected these cells into mice. Tumours from the control cells showed more ruptured nuclear envelopes than tumours made from LBR-silenced cells. This supported the idea that LBR could help melanoma invade and spread in a living organism.

Finally, the researchers checked patient data in the real world. In one large melanoma dataset, called TCGA-SKCM, patients whose tumours showed higher LBR expression early tended to have worse outcomes. Put together, the evidence suggested that LBR could be a useful therapeutic target for slowing cancer metastasis. "The finding that LBR-mediated cholesterol production causes nuclear envelope fragility is intriguing in the context of cancer, as high cholesterol has been associated with tumour development and immune cell invasion in melanoma," the researchers wrote in their paper.

"Furthermore, epidemiological studies have shown that long-term statin use to decrease serum cholesterol is associated with decreased cancer progression and severity in many cancer subtypes, including melanoma."

"Increased cholesterol synthesis driven by upregulated LBR could serve as a metabolic enhancer," the authors continued. "Increasing tumour cells' ability to proliferate and cope with nutrient-deprived conditions. Together, our findings suggest that LBR could be a prognostic indicator in early melanoma disease progression, and could serve as a drug target to prevent metastatic dissemination of melanoma, thereby improving prognosis for patient survival."

Curiosity-driven

Scientists first discovered LBR's cholesterol-related role more than 25 years ago in research that had nothing to do with cancer. In the 1970s and 1980s, researchers studying fungi identified genes involved in making sterols – which are cholesterol-like molecules in fungi. In the 1990s, when scientists compared DNA sequences, they noticed that a human gene, LBR, resembled a sterol-making gene in fungi.

That raised a curious question: could the human gene replace the broken fungal gene? It could. That experiment was early evidence that LBR is an enzyme that processes sterol.

Years later, that basic biology link helped researchers connect LBR to nuclear cholesterol and the spread of cancer. It's a clean example of how "why does this work this way?" research can eventually matter to medicine, even when no one can predict the connection in advance.

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

THE GIST

A recent study led by scientists at the U.S. National Institutes of Health reported an unexpected driver of cancer spread: cholesterol in the membrane around the cell nucleus

The team found this pattern in melanoma and also in breast and prostate cancers. When the researchers lowered cholesterol levels in cancer cells, the cells became less invasive and less aggressive

The study pointed to a protein called the lamin B receptor (LBR). In many melanoma samples, the researchers found that cells produced too much LBR

18Mar. Cholesterol makes cells' nuclei squishy, helping melanoma spread
कोलेस्ट्रॉल कोशिकाओं के नाभिक को लचीला बनाता है, जिससे मेलानोमा फैलने में मदद मिलती है

- **Melanoma is one of the most dangerous common skin cancers.**
मेलानोमा सबसे खतरनाक सामान्य त्वचा कैंसरों में से एक है।
- **It starts in melanocytes, the skin cells that make melanin, the pigment that gives skin its colour.**
यह त्वचा की उन कोशिकाओं में शुरू होता है जो **melanin** बनाती हैं, जो त्वचा को रंग देता है।
- **Cancer doesn't appear overnight.**
कैंसर एक रात में नहीं होता है।
- **A normal cell becomes cancerous in steps, as its DNA and its gene-control systems pick up changes over time.**
एक सामान्य कोशिका समय के साथ अपने **DNA** और जीन-नियंत्रण प्रणाली में बदलाव के कारण धीरे-धीरे कैंसर कोशिका बन जाती है।



- These changes push the cell to do three things: divide too much, avoid being destroyed by the immune system, and spread into other parts of the body.
ये बदलाव कोशिका को तीन काम करने के लिए प्रेरित करते हैं: बहुत अधिक विभाजन करना, प्रतिरक्षा प्रणाली से बचना, और शरीर के अन्य भागों में फैलना।
- This spread is called **metastasis**, and it is what makes many cancers deadly.
इस फैलाव को मेटास्टेसिस कहा जाता है, और यही कई कैंसरों को घातक बनाता है।
- Researchers want to know **which changes matter most** because those changes can become targets for treatment.
शोधकर्ता यह जानना चाहते हैं कि कौन से बदलाव सबसे महत्वपूर्ण हैं क्योंकि वही उपचार के लक्ष्य बन सकते हैं।

Becoming squishy लचीला बनना

- A recent study led by scientists at the **U.S. National Institutes of Health** reported an unexpected **driver of cancer spread: cholesterol in the membrane around the cell nucleus**.
संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका के राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य संस्थान के वैज्ञानिकों द्वारा किए गए एक हालिया अध्ययन ने कैंसर फैलने का एक अप्रत्याशित कारण बताया: कोशिका नाभिक के चारों ओर की झिल्ली में **cholesterol**।
- The **nucleus is the cell's control room, where most of the DNA is stored**.
नाभिक कोशिका का नियंत्रण कक्ष होता है, जहाँ अधिकांश **DNA** संग्रहित होता है।
- **It's wrapped in a thin nuclear envelope, like a flexible shell**.
यह एक पतली न्यूक्लियर झिल्ली से घिरा होता है, जो एक लचीले खोल की तरह होती है।
- The team found this pattern in melanoma and also in breast and prostate cancers.
टीम ने यह पैटर्न मेलानोमा तथा स्तन और प्रोस्टेट कैंसर में भी पाया।
- When cholesterol levels in the nuclear envelope were high, the nucleus became easier to deform.
जब न्यूक्लियर झिल्ली में **cholesterol** का स्तर अधिक था, तो नाभिक को विकृत करना आसान हो गया।
- In other words, it became more squishy.
दूसरे शब्दों में, यह अधिक लचीला हो गया।
- This is important because cancer cells often have to squeeze through tight gaps between other cells to spread.
यह महत्वपूर्ण है क्योंकि कैंसर कोशिकाओं को फैलने के लिए अक्सर अन्य कोशिकाओं के बीच तंग जगहों से गुजरना पड़ता है।
- A squishier nucleus makes that squeezing easier, so the cancer can invade new tissues more successfully.
अधिक लचीला नाभिक इस प्रक्रिया को आसान बनाता है, जिससे कैंसर नए ऊतकों में अधिक सफलतापूर्वक प्रवेश कर सकता है।
- High cholesterol did something else, too: it made the nuclear envelope more fragile.
उच्च **cholesterol** ने एक और काम किया: इसने न्यूक्लियर झिल्ली को अधिक नाजुक बना दिया।
- Fragile envelopes were more likely to tear in small, local spots.
नाजुक झिल्लियाँ छोटे-छोटे स्थानों पर फटने की अधिक संभावना रखती थीं।
- When a tear happens, the DNA inside can be exposed to forces that damage it.
जब फटना होता है, तो अंदर का **DNA** उन बलों के संपर्क में आ सकता है जो उसे नुकसान पहुंचाते हैं।
- Damaged DNA can lead to new mutations, and some of those new mutations can make the cancer even more aggressive.
क्षतिग्रस्त **DNA** नए उत्परिवर्तन पैदा कर सकता है, और इनमें से कुछ कैंसर को और अधिक आक्रामक बना सकते हैं।
- When the researchers lowered cholesterol levels in cancer cells, the cells became less invasive and less aggressive.
जब शोधकर्ताओं ने कैंसर कोशिकाओं में **cholesterol** का स्तर कम किया, तो कोशिकाएँ कम आक्रामक और कम फैलने वाली बन गईं।
- These findings also help explain an earlier observation: people with melanoma who were taking statins — drugs that lower cholesterol in the blood — seemed to show slower progression, on average, than people who were not.



ये निष्कर्ष एक पहले के अवलोकन को भी समझाने में मदद करते हैं: मेलानोमा से ग्रस्त वे लोग जो **statins** ले रहे थे — जो रक्त में **cholesterol** को कम करते हैं — उनमें औसतन रोग की प्रगति धीमी देखी गई।

Too much LBR अधिक LBR

- A big question arose: how did the cancer cells raise cholesterol in the nuclear envelope?
एक बड़ा प्रश्न उठा: कैंसर कोशिकाओं ने न्यूक्लियर झिल्ली में **cholesterol** कैसे बढ़ाया?
- The study pointed to a protein called the lamin B receptor (LBR).
अध्ययन ने एक प्रोटीन की ओर संकेत किया जिसे लैमिन बी रिसेप्टर कहा जाता है।
- Think of LBR as a tool with two parts sitting in the inner nuclear membrane.
इसे एक ऐसे उपकरण की तरह समझें जिसके दो भाग न्यूक्लियर झिल्ली के अंदर स्थित होते हैं।
- One part helps attach DNA (packed with proteins) to the inner surface of the nucleus.
एक भाग **DNA** को नाभिक की आंतरिक सतह से जोड़ने में मदद करता है।
- The other part helps the cell make cholesterol.
दूसरा भाग कोशिका को **cholesterol** बनाने में मदद करता है।
- In many melanoma samples, the researchers found that cells produced too much LBR.
कई मेलानोमा नमूनों में शोधकर्ताओं ने पाया कि कोशिकाएँ बहुत अधिक **LBR** बना रही थीं।
- When LBR levels were high, the cellular cholesterol levels rose as well, and the nucleus became both more deformable and more fragile.
जब **LBR** का स्तर अधिक था, तो कोशिका में **cholesterol** भी बढ़ गया और नाभिक अधिक विकृत होने योग्य और अधिक नाजुक हो गया।
- When the team reduced the LBR levels, the nuclear envelope became tougher and less easily deformed.
जब टीम ने **LBR** का स्तर कम किया, तो न्यूक्लियर झिल्ली अधिक मजबूत हो गई और आसानी से विकृत नहीं हुई।
- Curiously, if the researchers used a version of LBR that couldn't do its cholesterol-making job, then boosting the LBR didn't produce the same fragile, squishy nucleus.
रोचक रूप से, यदि शोधकर्ताओं ने **LBR** का ऐसा रूप उपयोग किया जो **cholesterol** बनाने का काम नहीं कर सकता था, तो **LBR** बढ़ाने पर भी वही नाजुक और लचीला नाभिक नहीं बना।
- This suggested the cholesterol-making function was central to the effect.
इससे संकेत मिला कि **cholesterol** बनाने की प्रक्रिया ही इस प्रभाव का मुख्य कारण थी।
- The team also tested what happened when they removed **cholesterol** directly from cell membranes: the nuclear membranes became much less fragile than in untreated cells.
टीम ने यह भी परीक्षण किया कि जब उन्होंने कोशिका झिल्लियों से सीधे **cholesterol** हटा दिया तो क्या हुआ: न्यूक्लियर झिल्लियाँ बिना उपचार वाली कोशिकाओं की तुलना में बहुत कम नाजुक हो गईं।
- This • t the idea that cholesterol was changing the physical properties of the nuclear envelope.
यह इस विचार के अनुरूप था कि **cholesterol** न्यूक्लियर झिल्ली के भौतिक गुणों को बदल रहा था।

A treatment target उपचार का लक्ष्य

- The researchers then asked a bigger question: could this process start early in cancer development?
इसके बाद शोधकर्ताओं ने एक बड़ा प्रश्न पूछा: क्या यह प्रक्रिया कैंसर के विकास के शुरुआती चरण में शुरू हो सकती है?
- If high **LBR** and high **cholesterol** appear early, then repeated small tears in the nuclear envelope could increase **DNA damage** over time.
यदि उच्च **LBR** और उच्च **cholesterol** प्रारंभ में ही दिखाई देते हैं, तो न्यूक्लियर झिल्ली में बार-बार छोटे-छोटे फटने समय के साथ **DNA damage** बढ़ा सकते हैं।
- More DNA damage could then raise the chances of new mutations, leading to the cancer becoming more malignant.
अधिक **DNA damage** नए उत्परिवर्तन की संभावना बढ़ा सकता है, जिससे कैंसर अधिक घातक हो सकता है।



- The team engineered melanoma cells in two versions: one set with normal **LBR** levels and the other where **LBR** had been silenced (i.e. which lacked **LBR**).
टीम ने मेलानोमा कोशिकाओं को दो रूपों में तैयार किया: एक जिसमें सामान्य **LBR** स्तर था और दूसरा जिसमें **LBR** को निष्क्रिय कर दिया गया था।
- They injected these cells into mice.
उन्होंने इन कोशिकाओं को चूहों में इंजेक्ट किया।
- Tumours from the control cells showed more ruptured nuclear envelopes than tumours made from **LBR**-silenced cells.
नियंत्रण कोशिकाओं से बने ट्यूमर में **LBR**-निष्क्रिय कोशिकाओं से बने ट्यूमर की तुलना में अधिक फटी हुई न्यूक्लियर झिल्लियाँ देखी गईं।
- This supported the idea that **LBR** could help melanoma invade and spread in a living organism.
इससे यह विचार समर्थित हुआ कि **LBR** जीवित शरीर में मेलानोमा के फैलने और आक्रमण में मदद कर सकता है।
- Finally, the researchers checked patient data in the real world.
अंत में, शोधकर्ताओं ने वास्तविक दुनिया में रोगियों के डेटा की जांच की।
- In one large melanoma dataset, called **TCGA-SKCM**, patients whose tumours showed higher **LBR expression** early tended to have worse outcomes.
एक बड़े मेलानोमा डेटासेट, जिसे **TCGA-SKCM** कहा जाता है, में जिन रोगियों के ट्यूमर में प्रारंभ में अधिक **LBR expression** था, उनमें परिणाम खराब पाए गए।
- Put together, the evidence suggested that **LBR** could be a useful therapeutic target for slowing cancer **metastasis**.
सभी प्रमाणों को मिलाकर यह संकेत मिला कि **LBR** कैंसर के **metastasis** को धीमा करने के लिए एक उपयोगी उपचार लक्ष्य हो सकता है।
- “The finding that **LBR**-mediated cholesterol production causes nuclear envelope fragility is intriguing in the context of cancer, as high **cholesterol** has been associated with tumour development and immune cell invasion in melanoma,” the researchers wrote in their paper.
शोधकर्ताओं ने अपने शोधपत्र में लिखा कि **LBR** द्वारा संचालित **cholesterol** उत्पादन न्यूक्लियर झिल्ली की नाजुकता का कारण बनता है, जो कैंसर के संदर्भ में महत्वपूर्ण है क्योंकि उच्च **cholesterol** का संबंध ट्यूमर विकास और प्रतिरक्षा कोशिकाओं के आक्रमण से है।
- “Furthermore, epidemiological studies have shown that long-term **statin** use to decrease serum cholesterol is associated with decreased cancer progression and severity in many cancer subtypes, including melanoma.”
इसके अलावा, महामारी विज्ञान अध्ययनों से पता चला है कि लंबे समय तक **statin** का उपयोग रक्त में कोलेस्ट्रॉल कम करने के लिए किया जाए तो कई प्रकार के कैंसर, जिनमें मेलानोमा भी शामिल है, की प्रगति और गंभीरता कम हो जाती है।
- “Increased cholesterol synthesis driven by upregulated **LBR** could serve as a metabolic enhancer,” the authors continued, “increasing tumour cells’ ability to proliferate and cope with nutrient-deprived conditions.”
लेखकों ने आगे कहा कि बढ़े हुए **LBR** द्वारा प्रेरित कोलेस्ट्रॉल संश्लेषण एक चयापचय बढ़ाने वाले के रूप में कार्य कर सकता है, जिससे ट्यूमर कोशिकाओं की वृद्धि और पोषक तत्वों की कमी वाली स्थितियों से निपटने की क्षमता बढ़ती है।
- Together, our findings suggest that **LBR** could be a prognostic indicator in early melanoma disease progression, and could serve as a drug target to prevent metastatic dissemination of melanoma, thereby improving prognosis for patient survival.”
साथ मिलाकर, हमारे निष्कर्ष बताते हैं कि **LBR** प्रारंभिक मेलानोमा रोग की प्रगति में एक पूर्वानुमान संकेतक हो सकता है और इसे दवा लक्ष्य के रूप में उपयोग करके मेलानोमा के फैलाव को रोका जा सकता है, जिससे रोगियों के जीवित रहने की संभावना बेहतर हो सकती है।

Curiosity-driven जिज्ञासा-प्रेरित

- Scientists first discovered **LBR**'s cholesterol-related role more than **25 years** ago in research that had nothing to do with cancer.



वैज्ञानिकों ने **LBR** की कोलेस्ट्रॉल से संबंधित भूमिका को **25 वर्ष** से अधिक पहले ऐसे शोध में खोजा था जिसका कैंसर से कोई संबंध नहीं था।

- In the **1970s and 1980s**, researchers studying fungi identified genes involved in making sterols — which are cholesterol-like molecules in fungi.
1970s और 1980s में, कवक का अध्ययन करने वाले शोधकर्ताओं ने ऐसे जीन पहचाने जो स्टेरॉल बनाने में शामिल थे — जो कवक में कोलेस्ट्रॉल जैसे अणु होते हैं।
- In the **1990s**, when scientists compared DNA sequences, they noticed that a human gene, **LBR**, resembled a sterol-making gene in fungi.
1990s में, जब वैज्ञानिकों ने डीएनए अनुक्रमों की तुलना की, तो उन्होंने देखा कि मानव जीन **LBR**, कवक के स्टेरॉल बनाने वाले जीन जैसा है।
- That raised a curious question: could the human gene replace the broken fungal gene? It could.
इससे एक रोचक प्रश्न उठा: क्या मानव जीन कवक के खराब जीन की जगह ले सकता है? यह संभव था।
- That experiment was early evidence that **LBR** is an enzyme that processes sterol.
यह प्रयोग प्रारंभिक प्रमाण था कि **LBR** एक एंजाइम है जो स्टेरॉल को संसाधित करता है।
- Years later, that basic biology link helped researchers connect **LBR** to nuclear cholesterol and the spread of cancer.
वर्षों बाद, इसी बुनियादी जीवविज्ञान संबंध ने शोधकर्ताओं को **LBR** को न्यूक्लियर कोलेस्ट्रॉल और कैंसर के फैलाव से जोड़ने में मदद की।
- It's a clean example of how “why does this work this way?” research can eventually matter to medicine, even when no one can predict the connection in advance
यह इस बात का स्पष्ट उदाहरण है कि “यह इस तरह क्यों काम करता है?” जैसे शोध अंततः चिकित्सा के लिए महत्वपूर्ण हो सकते हैं, भले ही पहले से कोई इस संबंध की भविष्यवाणी न कर सके।

Sex bias: key to a DNA puzzle

GS III: S&T

For years, scientists noticed that modern humans carry very little Neanderthal DNA on their X chromosomes. To understand why, researchers from the University of Pennsylvania reversed the perspective and looked for early modern human DNA within ancient Neanderthal genomes.

In a study published in *Science* on February 26, they reported that interbreeding between Neanderthals and early modern humans was heavily sex-biased.

To find this, the team analysed the Altai Neanderthal genome — a female individual found in the Altai Mountains whose 1,22,000-year-old remains provide the oldest high-quality Neanderthal genome — and found a 62% excess of modern human ancestry on its X chromosome compared to its other chromosomes.

The finding allowed the team to rule out natural selection as the main cause for the missing DNA. Why? Because if biological incompatibility were the main problem, the Neanderthal X chromosome would have rejected modern human DNA. But instead it contained a surplus.

The researchers then tested whether migration patterns, such as females moving between groups, could explain the data. They found that even extreme migration models could not account for such a high 62% surplus. Instead, the



Reconstructions of a Neanderthal man named “N” (left) and woman called “Wilma” at the Neanderthal museum in Germany. AP

most likely explanation was ancestry-specific mate preference, i.e. it was concluded that interbreeding primarily involved male Neanderthals and female modern humans.

Remarkably, this bias remained consistent across different encounters separated by 200,000 years, suggesting that the social dynamics between these two groups were stable over very long periods.

For feedback and suggestions for ‘Science’, please write to science@thehindu.co.in with the subject ‘Daily page’

18Mar. Sex bias: key to a DNA puzzle

लैंगिक पक्षपात: डीएनए पहेली की कुंजी

Neanderthal DNA Study निएंडरथल डीएनए अध्ययन

For years, scientists noticed that modern humans carry very little Neanderthal DNA on their X chromosomes.

कई वर्षों से वैज्ञानिकों ने देखा कि आधुनिक मनुष्यों में उनके X chromosomes पर बहुत कम Neanderthal DNA पाया जाता है।

To understand why, researchers from the University of Pennsylvania reversed the perspective and looked for early modern human DNA within ancient Neanderthal genomes.

इसे समझने के लिए University of Pennsylvania के शोधकर्ताओं ने दृष्टिकोण बदला और प्राचीन निएंडरथल जीनोम में प्रारंभिक आधुनिक मानव डीएनए की खोज

की।

- In a study published in *Science* on February 26, they reported that interbreeding between Neanderthals and early modern humans was heavily sex-biased.



February 26 को **Science** में प्रकाशित एक अध्ययन में उन्होंने बताया कि निएंडरथल और प्रारंभिक आधुनिक मनुष्यों के बीच अंतःप्रजनन अत्यधिक लैंगिक पक्षपाती था।

- To find this, the team analysed the Altai Neanderthal genome — a female individual found in the **Altai Mountains** whose **1,22,000-year-old** remains provide the oldest high-quality Neanderthal genome — and found a **62% excess** of modern human ancestry on its **X chromosome** compared to its other chromosomes.
इसे जानने के लिए टीम ने Altai Neanderthal जीनोम का विश्लेषण किया — जो **Altai Mountains** में मिली एक महिला का था, जिसके **1,22,000-year-old** अवशेष सबसे पुराना उच्च गुणवत्ता वाला निएंडरथल जीनोम प्रदान करते हैं — और पाया कि इसके **X chromosome** पर अन्य क्रोमोसोम की तुलना में आधुनिक मानव वंश का **62% excess** था।
- The finding allowed the team to rule out natural selection as the main cause for the missing DNA.
इस खोज ने टीम को यह निष्कर्ष निकालने की अनुमति दी कि गायब डीएनए का मुख्य कारण प्राकृतिक चयन नहीं है।
- Why? Because if biological incompatibility were the main problem, the Neanderthal X chromosome would have rejected modern human DNA.
क्यों? क्योंकि यदि जैविक असंगति मुख्य समस्या होती, तो निएंडरथल का X क्रोमोसोम आधुनिक मानव डीएनए को अस्वीकार कर देता।
- But instead it contained a surplus.
लेकिन इसके बजाय इसमें अधिक मात्रा पाई गई।
- The researchers then tested whether migration patterns, such as females moving between groups, could explain the data.
इसके बाद शोधकर्ताओं ने यह जांचा कि क्या प्रवासन पैटर्न, जैसे कि महिलाओं का समूहों के बीच स्थानांतरण, इस डेटा को समझा सकते हैं।
- They found that even extreme migration models could not account for such a high **62% surplus**.
उन्होंने पाया कि अत्यधिक प्रवासन मॉडल भी इतने अधिक **62% surplus** को समझा नहीं सकते।
- Instead, the most likely explanation was ancestry-specific mate preference, i.e. it was concluded that interbreeding primarily involved male Neanderthals and female modern humans.
इसके बजाय, सबसे संभावित व्याख्या वंश-विशिष्ट साथी चयन थी, अर्थात् यह निष्कर्ष निकाला गया कि अंतःप्रजनन मुख्य रूप से पुरुष निएंडरथल और महिला आधुनिक मनुष्यों के बीच हुआ।
- Remarkably, this bias remained consistent across different encounters separated by **200,000 years**, suggesting that the social dynamics between these two groups were stable over very long periods.
आश्चर्यजनक रूप से, यह पक्षपात **200,000 years** के अंतर वाले विभिन्न संपर्कों में भी समान रहा, जिससे यह संकेत मिलता है कि इन दोनों समूहों के बीच सामाजिक गतिशीलता लंबे समय तक स्थिर रही।



GS III: S&T

Prison outbreak

India's overcrowded jails pose a serious health risk to inmates

The public health crisis in India's prisons is distinguished by its poorer infrastructure and a general disregard for treating ailments until they become inconvenient. A prisoner does not lose the right to health, a point courts have repeatedly stressed; yet, between August 20, 2025, and March 9, 2026, around 92 inmates at the Jalpaiguri Central Correctional Home were infected with herpes simplex virus (HSV) and seven of them died. HSV is common in the general population but experts have said that in immunocompromised or overcrowded populations with poor care, it can lead to encephalitis, which is often fatal. The Home's 171% occupancy rate rendered good hygiene and isolation a luxury. According to the 2023 Prison Statistics of India, district prisons in West Bengal have reported occupancy rates exceeding 160% and certain facilities, such as the Kandi Sub-Jail, have historically reached staggering levels of over 400%. While the State has many foreign national inmates, overcrowding is a persistent fact of India's correctional facilities. In 2023, 30% of inmates in 10 prisons in Kerala were found to have skin diseases caused by humidity and a lack of personal space. A 2023 study in *The Lancet Public Health* found prisoners in India five times more likely to develop tuberculosis (TB) than the general population. In 2025, the Home Ministry ordered prison screening camps as unventilated environments allow TB to spread rapidly. The Nagpur and Indore central jails had major COVID-19 outbreaks.

According to the India Justice Report 2025, HIV prevalence among inmates is also significantly higher than the national average due to shared equipment and inadequate screening at entry. Mandatory, comprehensive medical screening could catch many of these infections before they become injurious, which also requires facilities to have the requisite personnel. But the report also flagged a 43% vacancy rate for medical officers, resulting in the number of inmates per doctor being 2.6 times higher than recommended by the Model Prison Manual. There are also only 25 psychologists for India's 5.7 lakh inmates. Filling this gap requires integrating prisons into the National Health Mission, ensuring a sufficient number of health workers trained to manage outbreaks, and enforcing the Manual's standards uniformly across States. As West Bengal's actions in 2020 illustrate – temporarily releasing thousands of undertrials to relieve overcrowding in the South 24 Parganas District Correctional Home and the Barupur Central Jail – the solutions are not confined to health. The judiciary must fast-track cases involving undertrials, who constitute the majority of inmates, expand the use of bail and non-custodial alternatives for minor offences and expedite the repatriation of foreign nationals.

2023 में केरल की 10 जेलों में 30% कैदियों में नमी और व्यक्तिगत स्थान की कमी के कारण त्वचा रोग पाए गए।

18Mar. Prison outbreak जेल में प्रकोप

India's overcrowded jails pose a serious health risk to inmates

भारत की अधिक भीड़भाड़ वाली जेलों कैदियों के लिए गंभीर स्वास्थ्य जोखिम पैदा करती हैं

The public health crisis in India's prisons is distinguished by its poorer infrastructure and a general disregard for treating ailments until they become inconvenient.

भारत की जेलों में सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य संकट खराब बुनियादी ढांचे और बीमारियों का इलाज तब तक न करने की प्रवृत्ति से पहचाना जाता है जब तक वे गंभीर न हो जाएं।

A prisoner does not lose the right to health, a point courts have repeatedly stressed; yet, between August 20, 2025, and March 9, 2026, around 92 inmates at the Jalpaiguri Central Correctional Home were infected with herpes simplex virus (HSV) and seven of them died.

एक कैदी अपना स्वास्थ्य का अधिकार नहीं खोता है, यह बात अदालतों ने बार-बार कही है; फिर भी August 20, 2025 से March 9, 2026 के बीच जलपाईगुड़ी सेंट्रल करेक्शनल होम में लगभग 92 कैदी herpes simplex virus (HSV) से संक्रमित हुए और उनमें से 7 की मृत्यु हो गई।

HSV is common in the general population but experts have said that in immunocompromised or overcrowded populations with poor care, it can lead to encephalitis, which is often fatal.

HSV सामान्य जनसंख्या में आम है, लेकिन विशेषज्ञों का कहना है कि कमजोर प्रतिरक्षा या भीड़भाड़ और खराब देखभाल वाली आबादी में यह encephalitis का कारण बन सकता है, जो अक्सर घातक होता है।

The Home's 171% occupancy rate rendered good hygiene and isolation a luxury.

इस जेल की 171% occupancy rate ने स्वच्छता और अलगाव को लगभग असंभव बना दिया।

According to the 2023 Prison Statistics of India, district prisons in West Bengal have reported occupancy rates exceeding 160% and certain facilities, such as the Kandi Sub-Jail, have historically reached staggering levels of over 400%.

2023 Prison Statistics of India के अनुसार, पश्चिम बंगाल की जिला जेलों में 160% से अधिक और कुछ जेलों जैसे कांडी सब-जेल में 400% से अधिक तक भीड़भाड़ देखी गई है।

While the State has many foreign national inmates, overcrowding is a persistent fact of India's correctional facilities.

हालांकि राज्य में कई विदेशी कैदी हैं, लेकिन भीड़भाड़ भारत की जेलों की एक स्थायी समस्या है।

In 2023, 30% of inmates in 10 prisons in Kerala were found to have skin diseases caused by humidity and a lack of personal space.



- A **2023 study** in The Lancet Public Health found prisoners in India **five times more likely** to develop **tuberculosis (TB)** than the general population.
The Lancet Public Health में प्रकाशित **2023 अध्ययन** में पाया गया कि भारत में कैदियों में सामान्य आबादी की तुलना में **5 गुना अधिक tuberculosis (TB)** होने की संभावना होती है।
- In **2025**, the Home Ministry ordered prison screening camps as unventilated environments allow **TB** to spread rapidly.
2025 में गृह मंत्रालय ने जेलों में स्क्रीनिंग शिविर आयोजित करने का आदेश दिया क्योंकि बिना वेंटिलेशन वाले वातावरण में **TB** तेजी से फैलता है।
- The Nagpur and Indore central jails had major **COVID-19** outbreaks.
नागपुर और इंदौर की केंद्रीय जेलों में बड़े पैमाने पर **COVID-19** के प्रकोप हुए।
- According to the **India Justice Report 2025**, **HIV prevalence** among inmates is also significantly higher than the national average due to shared equipment and inadequate screening at entry.
India Justice Report 2025 के अनुसार, कैदियों में **HIV prevalence** राष्ट्रीय औसत से काफी अधिक है, जिसका कारण साझा उपकरण और प्रवेश के समय अपर्याप्त जांच है।
- Mandatory, comprehensive medical screening could catch many of these infections before they become injurious, which also requires facilities to have the requisite personnel.
अनिवार्य और व्यापक चिकित्सा जांच इन संक्रमणों को गंभीर होने से पहले पकड़ सकती है, जिसके लिए पर्याप्त चिकित्सा कर्मियों की आवश्यकता होती है।
- But the report also flagged a **43% vacancy rate** for medical officers, resulting in the number of inmates per doctor being **2.6 times higher** than recommended by the Model Prison Manual.
लेकिन रिपोर्ट में यह भी बताया गया कि चिकित्सा अधिकारियों में **43% vacancy rate** है, जिससे प्रति डॉक्टर कैदियों की संख्या Model Prison Manual की सिफारिश से **2.6 गुना अधिक** हो गई है।
- There are also only **25 psychologists** for India's **5.7 lakh inmates**.
भारत के **5.7 लाख कैदियों** के लिए केवल **25 मनोवैज्ञानिक** हैं।
- Filling this gap requires integrating prisons into the **National Health Mission**, ensuring a sufficient number of health workers trained to manage outbreaks, and enforcing the Manual's standards uniformly across States.
इस कमी को पूरा करने के लिए जेलों को **National Health Mission** में शामिल करना, पर्याप्त प्रशिक्षित स्वास्थ्यकर्मियों की व्यवस्था करना और सभी राज्यों में नियमों का समान रूप से पालन सुनिश्चित करना आवश्यक है।
- As West Bengal's actions in **2020** illustrate — temporarily releasing thousands of undertrials to relieve overcrowding in the South 24 Parganas District Correctional Home and the Baruipur Central Jail — the solutions are not confined to health.
जैसा कि पश्चिम बंगाल के **2020** के कदमों से स्पष्ट है — दक्षिण 24 परगना जिला जेल और बरुईपुर केंद्रीय जेल में भीड़ कम करने के लिए हजारों अंडरट्रायल कैदियों को अस्थायी रूप से रिहा किया गया — समाधान केवल स्वास्थ्य तक सीमित नहीं हैं।
- The judiciary must fast-track cases involving undertrials, who constitute the majority of inmates, expand the use of bail and non-custodial alternatives for minor offences and expedite the repatriation of foreign nationals.
न्यायपालिका को अंडरट्रायल कैदियों के मामलों को तेजी से निपटाना चाहिए, जो अधिकांश कैदी हैं, जमानत और गैर-हिरासत विकल्पों का विस्तार करना चाहिए और विदेशी नागरिकों की वापसी की प्रक्रिया को तेज करना चाहिए।

GS Paper III: Environment,

TOPICS COVERED

18 March 2026

18Mar

A bit of a blur over India's new carbon credit plan

भारत की नई कार्बन क्रेडिट योजना पर कुछ अस्पष्टता



A bit of a blur over India's new carbon credit plan

GS III: Environment MOB

A significant policy announcement in the Union Budget 2026, involving a massive ₹20,000 crore outlay for a carbon credit programme, has sparked a wave of confusion and conflicting reports, pitting a clear-cut governmental road map for heavy industry against a burgeoning narrative of a new income stream for India's farmers. At the heart of the debate is a fundamental question. Is this Budget allocation designed to fund Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage (CCUS) technologies for smokestack industries? Or is it a pioneering scheme to help farmers earn carbon credits through sustainable agriculture? Evidence from official documents suggests the first, but a persistent parallel narrative, echoed in several media reports, insists on the second.

The first is the CCUS for "Hard-to-Abate" Industries. The unambiguous anchor for the Budget announcement is the "R&D Roadmap for CCUS", released by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) in December 2025. This technical document, which forms the basis of the budgetary provision, leaves little room for ambiguity regarding its scope and intent. The road map explicitly identifies its target sectors, power, steel, cement, refineries, and chemicals. These are labelled as "hard-to-abate" industries where process emissions are concentrated, measurable, and technically challenging to eliminate through renewable energy alone. The proposed ₹20,000 crore over five years is earmarked for large-scale deployment of CCUS technologies, essentially capturing carbon dioxide from factory flue gases and either using it industrially or storing it underground.

Not on the list

Crucially, agriculture is conspicuously absent from this list of CCUS sectors. The road map acknowledges agriculture as a source of greenhouse gases (primarily methane and nitrous oxide) but only in an inventory context. It



Arkalud N. Ganeshamurthy

is Fellow of the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS), the Indian Society of Soil Science (ISSS), former Emeritus Scientist, Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR), Bengaluru, and former Dean, Central Agricultural University, Imphal, Manipur

The strategy requires distinct focus on both 'smokestack' and 'soil' initiatives

explicitly excludes agriculture from CCUS strategies because agricultural emissions are diffuse, biologically mediated, and not suited to the point-source capture technology that defines CCUS. The road map draws a clear line between CCUS (preventing new industrial emissions) and Carbon Dioxide Removal or CDR (drawing down existing atmospheric CO₂), where agriculture, through soil carbon sequestration, biochar, and agroforestry, plays a starring role.

The second is the persistent counter-narrative of farmers as climate solutionists. Despite this clear industrial focus, articles and social media discourse have propagated a different story. This narrative posits that the budgetary outlay will directly enable farmers to participate in carbon markets by adopting regenerative practices, turning "farms into climate solutions".

The root of the confusion

This interpretation appears to conflate two distinct concepts. The Budget's CCUS fund (for industrial carbon capture) and the broader, evolving voluntary carbon market in India, where agriculture and forestry projects are already beginning to generate credits for global and domestic buyers. Proponents of the "farmer" narrative point to the growing global and domestic demand for nature-based carbon credits. Several private sector initiatives and State-level programmes are already piloting models where farmers are compensated for practices that enhance soil organic carbon. The confusion likely stems from the Budget's use of the term "carbon credit programme" in a broader sense, while its detailed architecture, as per the DST road map, is exclusively industrial.

Analysts say the confusion highlights a communication gap and a policy opportunity. The DST road map is a technically sound, sector-specific document, but the Budget's use of the more familiar term 'carbon credit' has blurred lines. Mention of a "programme" amid

discussion of agricultural carbon credits has led some to expect a funded scheme for farmers. This expectation is plausible, as the Agriculture Ministry has been exploring soil health and climate-resilient farming for years. A structured carbon farming programme is a logical next step, but it would need separate policy, funding, and institutional frameworks distinct from the costly, tech-heavy CCUS initiative.

The government faces the task of clarifying this distinction to manage expectations. The ₹20,000 crore CCUS programme is a critical pillar for decarbonising industry, a sector vital for growth but also responsible for a quarter of India's emissions. Its success is non-negotiable for meeting net-zero goals.

Simultaneously, the powerful narrative around farmers and carbon credits highlights a massive parallel opportunity. India's vast agricultural lands hold immense potential for carbon sequestration. A separate, well-designed policy to create a trusted domestic carbon market for agriculture could unlock enormous economic and environmental benefits, truly creating a "new income stream" for farmers.

A multi-sectoral approach is needed

The current debate underscores a pivotal moment in India's climate strategy. Budget 2026 has firmly placed its ₹20,000 crore bet on industrial decarbonisation through CCUS. The "farmer carbon credit" story, while not funded by this specific outlay, reflects a powerful and growing reality in the voluntary carbon space and a compelling demand for a parallel policy initiative. The path ahead requires the government to clearly demarcate these two crucial fronts in the climate fight – smokestack and soil – while advancing both with equal ambition. The confusion may be born of conflation today, but it points to the comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach India will need to forge a sustainable future.

18Mar. A bit of a blur over India's new carbon credit plan भारत की नई कार्बन क्रेडिट योजना पर कुछ अस्पष्टता

- A significant policy announcement in the **Union Budget 2026**, involving a massive **₹20,000 crore outlay** for a carbon credit programme, has sparked a wave of confusion and conflicting reports, pitting a clear-cut governmental road map for heavy industry against a burgeoning narrative of a new income stream for India's farmers.
Union Budget 2026 में **₹20,000 crore** के बड़े प्रावधान के साथ कार्बन क्रेडिट कार्यक्रम की घोषणा ने भ्रम और विरोधाभासी रिपोर्टों की लहर पैदा कर दी है, जिसमें भारी उद्योग के लिए स्पष्ट सरकारी योजना और किसानों के लिए नई आय के स्रोत की कथा के बीच टकराव है।
- At the heart of the debate is a fundamental question. इस बहस के केंद्र में एक मूलभूत प्रश्न है।
- Is this Budget allocation designed to fund **Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage (CCUS) technologies for smokestack industries?**
क्या यह बजट आवंटन **Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage (CCUS)** तकनीकों को वित्तपोषित करने के लिए है?
- Or is it a pioneering scheme to help farmers earn carbon credits through sustainable agriculture?
या यह किसानों को टिकाऊ कृषि के माध्यम से कार्बन क्रेडिट कमाने में मदद करने की योजना है?
- Evidence from official documents suggests the first, but a persistent parallel narrative, echoed in several media reports, insists on the second.
आधिकारिक दस्तावेज पहले विकल्प का समर्थन करते हैं, लेकिन कई मीडिया रिपोर्टों में दूसरा कथानक भी जोर पकड़ रहा है।
- The first is the **CCUS for "Hard-to-Abate" Industries**. पहला है **"Hard-to-Abate" उद्योगों के लिए CCUS**।
- The unambiguous anchor for the Budget announcement is the **"R&D Roadmap for CCUS"**, released by the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** in **December 2025**. इस बजट घोषणा का स्पष्ट आधार **"R&D Roadmap for CCUS"** है, जिसे **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** ने **December 2025** में जारी किया।



- This technical document, which forms the basis of the budgetary provision, leaves little room for ambiguity regarding its scope and intent.
यह तकनीकी दस्तावेज बजट प्रावधान का आधार है और इसके उद्देश्य को लेकर कोई अस्पष्टता नहीं छोड़ता।
- The road map explicitly identifies its **target sectors, power, steel, cement, refineries, and chemicals**.
रोडमैप में स्पष्ट रूप से लक्षित क्षेत्र बताए गए हैं: **power, steel, cement, refineries, and chemicals**।
- These are labelled as “**hard-to-abate**” industries where process emissions are concentrated, measurable, and technically challenging to eliminate through renewable energy alone.
इन्हें “**hard-to-abate**” industries कहा गया है जहाँ उत्सर्जन केंद्रित, मापने योग्य और नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा से हटाना कठिन है।
- The proposed **₹20,000 crore over five years** is earmarked for large-scale deployment of **CCUS technologies**, essentially capturing carbon dioxide from factory flue gases and either using it industrially or storing it underground.
प्रस्तावित **₹20,000 crore (5 वर्षों में) CCUS technologies** के बड़े पैमाने पर उपयोग के लिए निर्धारित है, जिसमें कारखानों की गैसों से कार्बन डाइऑक्साइड को पकड़कर उपयोग या संग्रह किया जाएगा।

Not on the list सूची में शामिल नहीं

- Crucially, agriculture is conspicuously absent from this list of **CCUS sectors**.
महत्वपूर्ण रूप से, कृषि इस **CCUS sectors** की सूची में शामिल नहीं है।
- The road map acknowledges agriculture as a source of greenhouse gases (primarily methane and nitrous oxide) but only in an inventory context.
रोडमैप कृषि को ग्रीनहाउस गैसों का स्रोत मानता है, लेकिन केवल सूचीकरण के संदर्भ में।
- It explicitly excludes agriculture from **CCUS strategies** because agricultural emissions are diffuse, biologically mediated, and not suited to the point-source capture technology that defines CCUS.
यह स्पष्ट रूप से कृषि को **CCUS strategies** से बाहर रखता है क्योंकि कृषि उत्सर्जन बिखरे हुए और जैविक होते हैं।
- The road map draws a clear line between **CCUS (preventing new industrial emissions) and Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR) (drawing down existing atmospheric CO2), where agriculture, through soil carbon sequestration, biochar, and agroforestry, plays a starring role**.
रोडमैप **CCUS** और **Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR)** के बीच स्पष्ट अंतर करता है, जिसमें कृषि की भूमिका प्रमुख है।
- The second is the persistent counter-narrative of farmers as **climate solutionists**.
दूसरा है किसानों को **climate solutionists** के रूप में प्रस्तुत करने वाला कथानक।
- Despite this clear industrial focus, articles and social media discourse have propagated a different story.
स्पष्ट औद्योगिक फोकस के बावजूद, मीडिया और सोशल मीडिया में अलग कहानी प्रस्तुत की जा रही है।
- This narrative posits that the budgetary outlay will directly enable farmers to participate in **carbon markets** by adopting regenerative practices, turning “farms into climate solutions”.
इस कथानक के अनुसार, यह बजट किसानों को **carbon markets** में भाग लेने और खेती को जलवायु समाधान में बदलने में मदद करेगा।

The root of the confusion भ्रम का मूल कारण

- This interpretation appears to conflate two distinct concepts.
यह व्याख्या दो अलग-अलग अवधारणाओं को मिलाकर देखती है।
- The Budget’s **CCUS fund** (for industrial carbon capture) and the broader, evolving **voluntary carbon market in India**, where agriculture and forestry projects are already beginning to generate credits for global and domestic buyers.
बजट का **CCUS fund** (औद्योगिक कार्बन कैप्चर के लिए) और भारत का विकसित होता स्वैच्छिक कार्बन बाजार, जहाँ कृषि और वानिकी परियोजनाएँ पहले से ही क्रेडिट उत्पन्न कर रही हैं।



- Proponents of the “farmer” narrative point to the growing global and domestic demand for **nature-based carbon credits**.
“किसान” आधारित कथानक के समर्थक प्रकृति-आधारित कार्बन क्रेडिट की बढ़ती मांग की ओर इशारा करते हैं।
- Several private sector initiatives and State-level programmes are already piloting models where farmers are compensated for practices that enhance **soil organic carbon**.
कई निजी और राज्य स्तरीय कार्यक्रम ऐसे मॉडल चला रहे हैं जहाँ किसानों को मिट्टी के कार्बनिक कार्बन को बढ़ाने के लिए भुगतान किया जाता है।
- The confusion likely stems from the Budget’s use of the term “**carbon credit programme**” in a broader sense, while its detailed architecture, as per the **DST road map**, is exclusively industrial.
यह भ्रम संभवतः बजट में “**carbon credit programme**” शब्द के व्यापक उपयोग से उत्पन्न हुआ है, जबकि डीएसटी रोडमैप के अनुसार इसकी संरचना पूरी तरह औद्योगिक है।
- Analysts say the confusion highlights a **communication gap** and a **policy opportunity**.
विश्लेषकों के अनुसार यह भ्रम एक संचार अंतर और नीति अवसर को दर्शाता है।
- The **DST road map** is a technically sound, sector-specific document, but the Budget’s use of the more familiar term ‘**carbon credit**’ has blurred lines.
डीएसटी रोडमैप तकनीकी रूप से स्पष्ट दस्तावेज है, लेकिन ‘**carbon credit**’ शब्द के उपयोग ने सीमाओं को धुंधला कर दिया है।
- Mention of a “**programme**” amid discussion of agricultural carbon credits has led some to expect a funded scheme for farmers.
कृषि कार्बन क्रेडिट के संदर्भ में “**programme**” शब्द ने किसानों के लिए वित्तपोषित योजना की उम्मीद बढ़ा दी है।
- This expectation is plausible, as the **Agriculture Ministry** has been exploring soil health and climate-resilient farming for years.
यह अपेक्षा उचित लगती है क्योंकि कृषि मंत्रालय लंबे समय से मिट्टी के स्वास्थ्य और जलवायु-लचीली खेती पर काम कर रहा है।
- A structured **carbon farming programme** is a logical next step, but it would need separate policy, funding, and institutional frameworks distinct from the costly, tech-heavy **CCUS initiative**.
एक संगठित कार्बन खेती कार्यक्रम अगला कदम हो सकता है, लेकिन इसके लिए अलग नीति, वित्त और संस्थागत ढांचा आवश्यक होगा, जो महंगी और तकनीक-आधारित पहल से अलग हो।
- The government faces the task of clarifying this distinction to manage expectations.
सरकार के सामने इस अंतर को स्पष्ट करने की चुनौती है ताकि अपेक्षाओं को नियंत्रित किया जा सके।
- The **₹20,000 crore CCUS programme** is a critical pillar for decarbonising industry, a sector vital for growth but also responsible for a quarter of India’s emissions.
₹20,000 crore CCUS programme उद्योगों को डीकार्बोनाइज करने का महत्वपूर्ण आधार है, जो भारत के उत्सर्जन का लगभग एक चौथाई हिस्सा है।
- Its success is non-negotiable for meeting **net-zero goals**.
इसकी सफलता **net-zero goals** प्राप्त करने के लिए अनिवार्य है।
- Simultaneously, the powerful narrative around farmers and carbon credits highlights a massive parallel opportunity.
साथ ही, किसानों और कार्बन क्रेडिट से जुड़ा कथानक एक बड़े अवसर को दर्शाता है।
- India’s vast agricultural lands hold immense potential for **carbon sequestration**.
भारत की विशाल कृषि भूमि में कार्बन अवशोषण की बड़ी क्षमता है।
- A separate, well-designed policy to create a trusted **domestic carbon market for agriculture** could unlock enormous economic and environmental benefits, truly creating a “new income stream” for farmers.
कृषि के लिए एक विश्वसनीय घरेलू कार्बन बाजार बनाने से बड़े आर्थिक और पर्यावरणीय लाभ मिल सकते हैं और किसानों के लिए नई आय का स्रोत बन सकता है।

A multi-sectoral approach is needed बहु-क्षेत्रीय दृष्टिकोण आवश्यक है

- The current debate underscores a pivotal moment in India’s climate strategy.
यह बहस भारत की जलवायु रणनीति में एक महत्वपूर्ण मोड़ को दर्शाती है।



- **Budget 2026** has firmly placed its **₹20,000 crore** bet on industrial decarbonisation through **CCUS**.
Budget 2026 ने **₹20,000 crore** का निवेश **CCUS** के माध्यम से औद्योगिक डीकार्बोनाइजेशन पर किया है।
- The “farmer carbon credit” story, while not funded by this specific outlay, reflects a powerful and growing reality in the **voluntary carbon space** and a compelling demand for a parallel policy initiative.
“farmer carbon credit” कथा, भले ही इस बजट से वित्तपोषित नहीं है, लेकिन स्वैच्छिक कार्बन क्षेत्र में बढ़ती वास्तविकता को दर्शाती है।
- The path ahead requires the government to clearly demarcate these two crucial fronts in the climate fight — **smokestack and soil** — while advancing both with equal ambition.
आगे का रास्ता सरकार से अपेक्षा करता है कि वह इन दो महत्वपूर्ण क्षेत्रों — **smokestack और soil** — को स्पष्ट रूप से अलग करे और दोनों को समान रूप से आगे बढ़ाए।
- The confusion may be born of conflation today, but it points to the comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach India will need to forge a sustainable future.
यह भ्रम आज भले ही मिलावट के कारण हो, लेकिन यह भविष्य के लिए एक व्यापक बहु-क्षेत्रीय दृष्टिकोण की आवश्यकता को दर्शाता है।

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS(GS Paper IV and Essay)

TOPICS COVERED

18 March 2026

18Mar Moral disengagement and the impact of power
नैतिक विमुखता और शक्ति का प्रभाव



Moral disengagement and the impact of power

A psychological concept that explains how individuals rationalise immoral and unethical actions by deflecting responsibility and minimising consequences, often enabling those in power to legitimise harmful decisions

GS IV: Ethics

100

Rebecca Rose Varghese

Even with the establishment of norms and laws to maintain morality and ethical behaviour, violence and unethical behaviour have always been part of society. Throughout history, harmful acts, especially when done by those who control the narrative, have rarely been presented as immoral. Instead, they are reframed in ways that make them appear necessary, justified, or even beneficial. There are many examples of this, both old and new. The killing of indigenous populations during colonisation was often described as "civilising" territories. War on weaker or defenceless countries for the purpose of strategic or economic interests is presented as a necessary operation, justified in the name of security or national defence. And, the consequent civilian deaths are labelled as "collateral damage." Violence or harassment against women and young girls has been and continues to be dismissed as "accidental dalliance" or "minor deviance", while the behaviour of the women themselves is always questioned, shifting the blame from perpetrators to the victims.

Some of the latest examples of this can be seen in how Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems use people's data without their consent for training purposes while presenting it as technological progress, and in how companies displace millions of workers with AI, and frame it as development. In many such situations, the perception of the act shifts, depending on who is involved, how it is described, and who holds power.

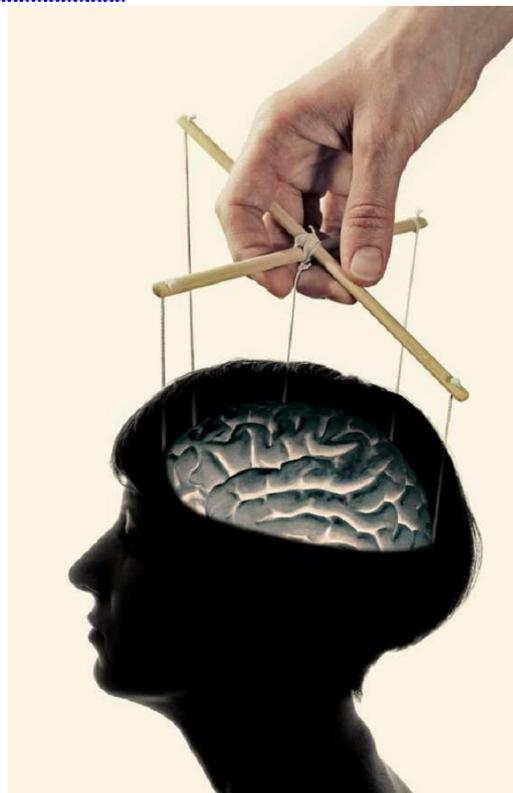
The concept of moral disengagement
Many theories attempt to explain harmful behaviour, violence and crime by focusing on individual deviance and social structures. One such concept introduced by the Canadian-American psychologist Albert Bandura was moral disengagement. The concept refers to the psychological processes through which individuals rationalise or justify harmful behaviour while continuing to see themselves as moral people.

Developed in the 1990s, the concept explains how people can commit harmful acts without experiencing strong guilt or moral conflict. This can happen in several ways, by minimising one's responsibility, ignoring the consequences of actions, blaming victims, or convincing oneself that the act serves a greater good.

However, moral disengagement does not operate only at the level of individuals. Within power-elite networks, these practices can function collectively. Shared vocabularies and institutional language are used to diffuse responsibility, limit scrutiny, and help sustain authority.

Mechanisms of moral disengagement

According to Bandura, there are several mechanisms through which individuals disengage from moral responsibility. One of these is moral justification, where harmful actions are framed as having a moral purpose, such as protecting national security or defending citizens. Another is advantageous comparison, where an action is made to appear less



GETTY IMAGES

harmful by comparing it to something worse, allowing it to be presented as the "lesser evil." Displacement of responsibility occurs when individuals or institutions believe that they are not personally accountable for the action, as they are simply following orders, a dynamic often discussed in relation to violence by soldiers.

Similar to this, is the idea of diffusion of responsibility, where accountability becomes spread across actors, such that it becomes difficult to pinpoint who is responsible for the deed. Distortion of consequences involves minimising or ignoring the harm caused by an action, especially when the consequences appear distant or abstract. Finally, dehumanisation and attribution of blame occur when victims are portrayed as less human, dangerous, or responsible for their own suffering, reducing empathy for them, making it easier to justify the immoral action committed against them. Together, these mechanisms allow individuals/institutions to maintain a positive moral self-image even while participating in harmful actions or decisions. Moral disengagement,

therefore, does not mean that people lack morality; rather, it shows how moral reasoning can be cognitively reorganised to make harmful conduct appear acceptable.

Euphemistic labelling and Media Framing Theory

One other key mechanism that enables moral disengagement through language is euphemistic labelling. Here, harmful actions are described using sanitised or technical language that makes them appear less severe. By replacing morally charged words with neutral terms, the emotional weight of an action is reduced, making it easier to justify. For instance, phrases such as "collateral damage" instead of civilian deaths or "enhanced interrogation" instead of torture transform violence into what appears to be a technical or bureaucratic procedure.

Language has the potential to become even more powerful when it is amplified through the media. Media institutions play a crucial role in shaping public perception, as they can influence how events are interpreted by choosing particular words, narratives, and frames.

As discussed in the Media Framing Theory developed by Canadian sociologist Erving Goffman, the way an issue is presented can shape how audiences understand its causes, consequences, and moral implications. In practice, media framing can sometimes support the interests of political elites and powerful institutions by softening or obscuring the reality of their harmful actions.

In discussions surrounding the cases of child rape and trafficking by influential people like Jeffrey Epstein and other political leaders, many news reports used terms such as "underage girls" or "young women". Such phrasing softens the idea of abuse and violence by framing it as sexual misconduct rather than child rape. Phrases like "sex with a minor" also imply mutual participation, obscuring the coercion and power imbalance involved.

Similarly, in this case, bureaucratic language was used that often referred to terms like a "network," "client list," or "recruitment," which made the operation sound like a corporate enterprise rather than an organised system of sexual exploitation.

Euphemistic language is also common in military contexts. In discussions of military operations in places such as Gaza, terms like "airstrikes," "collateral damage," or "security operations" can replace more direct descriptions such as bombing residential areas or killing civilians. Technical and euphemistic language reframes violence as strategic or procedural rather than highlighting human suffering, with the neutral nature of the terminologies, often reducing the emotional and ethical impact of a situation.

Moral disengagement and power

Moral disengagement becomes particularly significant in systems of power. Large institutions, including states, militaries, corporations, and bureaucracies, often operate through complex hierarchies and specialised roles. Within such systems, responsibility can easily become fragmented.

Those at the top of a hierarchy may justify harmful policies as necessary for national security, economic growth, or social order. Institutions and individuals within bureaucratic levels may diffuse responsibility by pointing to procedures or institutional rules. Media institutions may also shape public perception by softening or obscuring the reality of harmful actions. Civilians consuming such information may be limited to a neutral understanding of the situation due to the obscured nature of the information presented to them, and may therefore comply.

Key takeaways

Bandura's theory helps explain how individuals or institutions continue to propagate violence by reframing and disengaging from moral standards through cognitive and linguistic mechanisms, instead of openly rejecting morality.

Recognising these behaviours becomes crucial if there is any hope of resisting and challenging individuals and institutions that rely on moral disengagement to sustain themselves. Understanding these mechanisms enables people to question such systems by demanding accountability, insisting on transparency, and using language that accurately reflects the reality of a situation. Thus, the concept becomes especially important in the contemporary geopolitical context, as it helps people better navigate the world around them and critically question the narratives, policies, and decisions presented to them. (Rebecca Rose Varghese is a freelance journalist.)

18Mar. Moral disengagement and the impact of power नैतिक विमुखता और शक्ति का प्रभाव

Violence, Ethics and Moral Framing
हिंसा, नैतिकता और नैतिक प्रस्तुतीकरण

- Even with the establishment of norms and laws to maintain morality and ethical behaviour, violence and unethical behaviour have always been part of society. नैतिकता बनाए रखने के लिए नियम और कानून होने के बावजूद हिंसा और अनैतिक व्यवहार समाज का हिस्सा रहे हैं।



- Throughout history, harmful acts, especially by those in power, have rarely been presented as immoral.
इतिहास में सत्ता में बैठे लोगों द्वारा किए गए हानिकारक कार्यों को शायद ही कभी अनैतिक बताया गया।
- Instead, **they are reframed as necessary, justified, or beneficial.**
बल्कि उन्हें **आवश्यक, उचित या लाभकारी** बताया जाता है।
- The **killing of indigenous populations during colonisation was described as “civilising” territories.**
औपनिवेशिक काल में आदिवासियों की हत्या को **सभ्य बनाने** के रूप में प्रस्तुत किया गया।
- Wars against weaker nations are justified in the name of **security or national defence.**
कमजोर देशों पर युद्ध को **सुरक्षा या राष्ट्रीय रक्षा** के नाम पर उचित ठहराया जाता है।
- **Civilian deaths are labelled as “collateral damage”.**
नागरिकों की मौत को **सहायक नुकसान** कहा जाता है।
- **Violence against women is dismissed as minor deviance or accidental behaviour, shifting blame to victims.**
महिलाओं के खिलाफ हिंसा को **छोटी गलती** बताकर पीड़ितों को दोषी ठहराया जाता है।
- **In modern contexts, AI systems use data without consent and present it as progress.**
आधुनिक समय में **AI बिना अनुमति डेटा उपयोग** करता है और इसे प्रगति बताया जाता है।
- Companies replacing workers with AI frame it as **development.**
कंपनियां नौकरियों खत्म कर इसे **विकास** कहती हैं।
- Perception of actions depends on **power, narrative, and description.**
किसी कार्य की धारणा **सत्ता और प्रस्तुति** पर निर्भर करती है।

The concept of moral disengagement नैतिक विच्छेदन की अवधारणा

- The concept of **moral disengagement** was introduced by psychologist **Albert Bandura.**
मनोवैज्ञानिक Albert Bandura ने **नैतिक विच्छेदन** की अवधारणा दी।
- **It explains how individuals justify harmful behaviour while still seeing themselves as moral.**
यह बताता है कि लोग गलत काम को सही ठहराकर खुद को नैतिक मानते रहते हैं।
- Developed in the **1990s**, it explains **absence of guilt in harmful actions.**
यह सिद्धांत **1990s** में विकसित हुआ और अपराध के बाद अपराधबोध की कमी समझाता है।
- **People justify actions by reducing responsibility, ignoring consequences, blaming victims, or claiming greater good.**
लोग **जिम्मेदारी कम करके, परिणाम अनदेखा करके, पीड़ित को दोष देकर या बड़े हित का दावा करके** अपने कार्य सही ठहराते हैं।
- **Moral disengagement operates not only individually but also at collective and institutional levels.**
यह केवल व्यक्तिगत नहीं बल्कि **सामूहिक और संस्थागत स्तर** पर भी काम करता है।
- **Within power networks, shared language and narratives help diffuse responsibility and sustain authority.**
सत्ता समूहों में भाषा और कथानक **जिम्मेदारी को फैलाकर सत्ता बनाए रखते हैं।**

Mechanisms of moral disengagement नैतिक विच्छेदन के तंत्र

- According to **Albert Bandura**, there are several mechanisms through which individuals disengage from moral responsibility.
Albert Bandura के अनुसार, लोग कई तरीकों से नैतिक जिम्मेदारी से अलग हो जाते हैं।
- One mechanism is **moral justification**, where harmful actions are presented as serving a moral purpose such as **national security or defence.**
एक तरीका **नैतिक औचित्य** है, जिसमें हानिकारक कार्यों को **राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा या रक्षा** के नाम पर सही ठहराया जाता है।
- Another is **advantageous comparison**, where an act is compared to something worse to make it appear as a **lesser evil.**



दूसरा तरीका तुलनात्मक औचित्य है, जिसमें किसी कार्य को कम बुरा दिखाने के लिए उससे भी बुरे कार्य से तुलना की जाती है।

- **Displacement of responsibility** occurs when individuals believe they are not accountable as they are following orders.

जिम्मेदारी का स्थानांतरण तब होता है जब लोग खुद को जिम्मेदार नहीं मानते क्योंकि वे **आदेशों का पालन** कर रहे होते हैं।

- Similarly, **diffusion of responsibility** spreads accountability across multiple actors, making it difficult to identify who is responsible.

इसी तरह **जिम्मेदारी का प्रसार** में जिम्मेदारी कई लोगों में बंट जाती है जिससे दोष तय करना कठिन हो जाता है।

- **Distortion of consequences** involves ignoring or minimising harm, especially when effects seem distant or abstract.

परिणामों का विकृतिकरण में नुकसान को कम या नजरअंदाज किया जाता है।

- **Dehumanisation and attribution of blame** portray victims as less human or responsible for their suffering, reducing empathy.

अमानवीकरण और दोषारोपण में पीड़ितों को कम मानव या खुद जिम्मेदार दिखाया जाता है।

- Together, these mechanisms allow individuals and institutions to maintain a **positive moral self-image** while engaging in harmful actions.

ये सभी तंत्र मिलकर लोगों को **सकारात्मक नैतिक छवि** बनाए रखने देते हैं।

- Moral disengagement does not mean absence of morality but shows how moral reasoning is **restructured to justify harm**.

यह नैतिकता की कमी नहीं बल्कि **तर्क को बदलकर गलत कार्य को सही ठहराना** है।

Euphemistic labelling and Media Framing Theory

शब्दों का सौम्यकरण और मीडिया फ्रेमिंग सिद्धांत

- **Euphemistic labelling** is a key mechanism where harmful acts are described using **sanitised or technical language**.

सौम्य शब्दों का उपयोग में हानिकारक कार्यों को नरम शब्दों में प्रस्तुत किया जाता है।

- Replacing harsh words with neutral terms reduces the **emotional impact** and makes actions easier to justify.

कठोर शब्दों की जगह सामान्य शब्द इस्तेमाल करने से **भावनात्मक प्रभाव कम** हो जाता है।

- For example, terms like **“collateral damage”** instead of civilian deaths or **“enhanced interrogation”** instead of torture.

उदाहरण के लिए **“collateral damage”** या **“enhanced interrogation”** जैसे शब्द।

- Language becomes more powerful when amplified through the **media**.

जब मीडिया इसे फैलाता है तो भाषा और प्रभावशाली हो जाती है।

- Media institutions shape public perception by choosing **words, narratives, and frames**.

मीडिया **शब्दों और कथाओं** के जरिए जन धारणा बनाता है।

- According to **Media Framing Theory** by **Erving Goffman**, presentation of an issue shapes how people understand its causes and consequences.

Erving Goffman के **Media Framing Theory** के अनुसार प्रस्तुति से लोगों की समझ प्रभावित होती है।

- Media framing can support **political elites and powerful institutions** by softening or obscuring harmful realities.

मीडिया फ्रेमिंग **सत्ता समूहों** के हित में वास्तविकता को छुपा सकती है।

Use of language in abuse and media narratives

दुरुपयोग और मीडिया कथाओं में भाषा का उपयोग

- In discussions surrounding cases of child rape and trafficking by influential people like **Jeffrey Epstein**, terms such as **“underage girls”** or **“young women”** were used.

प्रभावशाली लोगों जैसे **Jeffrey Epstein** के मामलों में **“कम उम्र की लड़कियां”** या **“युवा महिलाएं”** जैसे शब्दों का उपयोग किया गया।

- Such phrasing softens the idea of **abuse and violence**, framing it as misconduct rather than **child rape**.

ऐसी भाषा **हिंसा और शोषण** को नरम बनाकर **बाल बलात्कार** की गंभीरता को कम करती है।



- Phrases like “sex with a minor” imply mutual participation, hiding **coercion and power imbalance**.
“नाबालिग के साथ संबंध” जैसे शब्द जबरदस्ती और शक्ति असंतुलन को छुपाते हैं।
- Bureaucratic terms like “network,” “client list,” “recruitment” make exploitation appear like a corporate activity.
“नेटवर्क”, “ग्राहक सूची”, “भर्ती” जैसे शब्द इसे व्यवसाय जैसा दिखाते हैं।
- **Euphemistic language in military context**
सैन्य संदर्भ में सौम्य भाषा का उपयोग
- In military operations like those in **Gaza**, terms such as “airstrikes,” “collateral damage,” “security operations” are used.
Gaza जैसे क्षेत्रों में “एयरस्ट्राइक”, “सहायक नुकसान”, “सुरक्षा अभियान” जैसे शब्द उपयोग होते हैं।
- These replace direct descriptions like **bombing civilians or residential areas**.
ये सीधे शब्दों जैसे **नागरिकों की हत्या या बमबारी** को छुपाते हैं।
- Such language reframes violence as **strategic or procedural**, reducing emotional impact.
यह भाषा हिंसा को **रणनीतिक प्रक्रिया** बनाकर भावनात्मक प्रभाव कम करती है।

Moral disengagement and power नैतिक विच्छेदन और सत्ता

- Moral disengagement becomes significant in systems of **power** like states, militaries, corporations, and bureaucracies.
नैतिक विच्छेदन **राज्य, सेना, कंपनियों और प्रशासन** में अधिक महत्वपूर्ण होता है।
- These systems operate through **hierarchies and specialised roles**, causing fragmented responsibility.
ये **पदानुक्रम और विशेष भूमिकाओं** के कारण जिम्मेदारी को विभाजित कर देते हैं।
- Top authorities justify harmful policies as necessary for **security, growth, or order**.
उच्च स्तर के लोग इसे **सुरक्षा, विकास या व्यवस्था** के लिए जरूरी बताते हैं।
- Lower-level actors shift responsibility to **rules and procedures**.
निचले स्तर के लोग जिम्मेदारी को **नियमों और प्रक्रियाओं** पर डालते हैं।
- Media may shape perception by **softening or hiding harmful realities**.
मीडिया **वास्तविकता को नरम या छुपाकर** धारणा बनाता है।
- Civilians may accept such narratives due to **limited or distorted information**.
नागरिक **अधूरी या विकृत जानकारी** के कारण इन्हें स्वीकार कर लेते हैं।

Key takeaways मुख्य निष्कर्ष

- **Bandura's theory** explains how individuals and institutions justify violence through **cognitive and linguistic mechanisms**.
Bandura का सिद्धांत बताता है कि लोग **मानसिक और भाषाई तरीकों** से हिंसा को सही ठहराते हैं।
- Moral disengagement allows continuation of harm without rejecting **morality explicitly**.
यह बिना **नैतिकता छोड़े** भी गलत कार्य जारी रखने देता है।
- Recognising these behaviours is crucial to **challenge and resist** such systems.
इन व्यवहारों को पहचानना **चुनौती देने और विरोध करने** के लिए जरूरी है।
- Understanding these mechanisms helps demand **accountability and transparency**.
इन्हें समझकर **जवाबदेही और पारदर्शिता** की मांग की जा सकती है।
- It enables use of language that reflects **reality accurately**.
यह **वास्तविकता को सही भाषा में व्यक्त** करने में मदद करता है।
- This concept is important in today's **geopolitical context** to critically analyse narratives and policies.
यह आज के **वैश्विक परिप्रेक्ष्य** में नीतियों और कथाओं का विश्लेषण करने में महत्वपूर्ण है।