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THE HINDU NEWSPAPER

03 APRIL 2026

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

1. The Abiemnom massacre took place in Abiemnom on March 1. Abiemnom is a part of which country? **Ans: South Sudan**

2. Identify this country: This is an island in the Eastern Basin of the Mediterranean Sea. **Ans: Cyprus**

3. The Rashtriya Swatantra Party wins 124 direct seats and leads in one more from 164 of 165 constituencies reported so far in Nepal, in results announced on March 8. Who eventually took oath as the PM? **Ans: Balendra Shah**

4. India, on March 8, won the 2026 Men's T20 World Cup, beating New Zealand by 96 runs in the final. Apart from becoming the first team to win back-to-back T20 World Cups, and the first team to win the tournament three times, which other milestone did the team cross? **Ans: The team is the first to win the title at home as hosts**

5. Which country experienced frequent blackouts in March? **Ans: Cuba**

6. Who on March 29 became the youngest driver to lead the World Championship? **Ans: Kimi Antonelli**

Visual: Identify this musician who won the Academy Award for Best Original Score. **Ans: Ludwig Göransson**

Early Birds: Tamal Biswas | Suchit Narottam | Dodo Jayaditya | Pulkit Sathe | Arun Kumar Singh

03A. 'QUIZ

Abiemnom Massacre

- The Abiemnom massacre occurred on March 1, 2026, in Abiemnom County of the Ruweng Administrative Area in South Sudan.
- Armed groups attacked civilians, killing over 160 people and injuring many others.
- The incident reflects ongoing ethnic tensions, weak governance, and instability despite the 2018 peace agreement. South Sudan, formed in 2011, continues to face inter-communal violence, making regions like Abiemnom highly vulnerable to such tragic conflicts.

Cyprus

- Cyprus is an island country located in the eastern basin of the Mediterranean Sea, near Turkey, Syria, and Lebanon. It is the third-largest Mediterranean island and holds strategic geopolitical importance.
- The capital is Nicosia. Since 1974, Cyprus remains divided between the Republic of Cyprus and Northern Cyprus.
- It is a member of the European Union and known for tourism, trade routes, and historical civilizations influencing the region.

Nepal PM (Balendra Shah)

- The Rashtriya Swatantra Party's strong performance in Nepal's parliamentary elections reflected rising public demand for alternative leadership and governance reforms.
- Following political negotiations and majority support in Parliament, Balendra Shah eventually took oath as the Prime Minister. His leadership symbolizes a shift toward new political forces beyond traditional parties.

India – 2026 Men's T20 World Cup Milestone

- India achieved a historic milestone by becoming the first team to win the ICC Men's T20 World Cup on home soil as hosts in 2026.

Cuba Blackouts (March 2026)

- Cuba experienced frequent blackouts in March 2026 due to severe energy shortages and aging power infrastructure. The country relies heavily on outdated thermal power plants and imported fuel, leading to supply disruptions. Economic constraints and reduced oil imports worsened the crisis.
- These outages affected daily life, industries, and public services.
- The government has been attempting reforms, including renewable energy expansion, to stabilize electricity supply and reduce dependency on fossil fuels.

Kimi Antonelli – Youngest Championship Leader

- Kimi Antonelli became the youngest driver to lead the Formula One World Championship on March 29, 2026, marking a historic milestone in motorsport.



Bharti, world's second-largest mobile service provider

PCS
Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Bharti Airtel has become world's second largest telecom operator with 650 million subscribers, the company said on Thursday citing GSMA data.

As per GSMA Intelligence, Bharti Airtel is ranked second globally by mobile customer base, with operations spread across India and Africa, the company said.

"We will strive to raise the bar on innovation, reliability and experience so that every customer interaction is an opportunity to earn trust," Gopal Vittal, executive vice chairman, Bharti Airtel, said.

03A. 'Bharti, world's second-largest mobile service provider भारतीय, दुनिया की दूसरी सबसे बड़ी मोबाइल सेवा प्रदाता

Bharti Airtel has become world's second largest telecom operator with 650 million subscribers, the company said on Thursday citing GSMA data. भारतीय एयरटेल 650 मिलियन ग्राहकों के साथ दुनिया की दूसरी सबसे बड़ी दूरसंचार कंपनी बन गई है, कंपनी ने गुरुवार को GSMA डेटा का हवाला देते हुए कहा।

As per GSMA Intelligence, Bharti Airtel is ranked second globally by mobile customer base, with operations spread across India and Africa, the company said.

GSMA इंटेलिजेंस के अनुसार, भारतीय एयरटेल मोबाइल ग्राहक आधार के आधार पर वैश्विक स्तर पर दूसरे स्थान पर है, जिसके संचालन भारत और अफ्रीका में फैले हुए हैं, कंपनी ने कहा।

'Muted' international response as Senegal enacts same-sex ties law

APCS
DAKAR

While recent restrictions by a number of African nations on LGBTQ rights have elicited fierce criticism, international reaction has been more tepid as Senegal doubled its penalty for same-sex relations this week.

Senegal's President signed the law, which appeared in the country's official gazette out Tuesday, amid a crackdown on the gay community that has seen dozens of arrests and an increase in heated anti-LGBTQ rhetoric.

After the Bill was passed in Parliament mid-March, a regional Belgian Minister made headlines by questioning the French-speaking Wallonia region's fund-



Majority deputies celebrate after adoption of law doubling penalties for homosexuality at National Assembly in Senegal on March 11. AFP

ing for climate cooperation in the west African nation, infuriating Senegal's leadership.

But further calls to action by international actors have been few and far between.

While the UN human rights chief and UNAIDS urged the President not to sign the Bill, "government-

level reaction has been notably muted", Arlana Shikongo, communications officer with Pan Africa ILGA, the regional chapter of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, told AFP.

Experts said that a variety of factors could be at play, from the U.S. exit as a

major humanitarian actor to reluctance from the West, including former colonial power France, to lecture what is seen as a relatively stable democracy and critical partner.

Senegal's law was signed by President Bassirou Diomaye Faye after passing by an overwhelming majority in the National Assembly on March 11, where debate centred on whether the Bill went far enough.

The new law punishes "acts against nature", a term used to signify same-sex relations, by five to 10 years' imprisonment, compared with one to five years previously.

It also provides for three to seven years in prison for those found guilty of promoting or financing same-sex relationships.

03A. 'Muted' international response as Senegal enacts same-sex ties law सेनेगल द्वारा समलैंगिक संबंध कानून लागू करने पर 'मंद' अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रतिक्रिया

- While recent restrictions by a number of African nations on LGBTQ rights have elicited fierce criticism, international reaction has been more tepid as Senegal doubled its penalty for same-sex relations this week.

जहां कई अफ्रीकी देशों द्वारा LGBTQ अधिकारों पर हालिया प्रतिबंधों ने कड़ी आलोचना को जन्म दिया है, वहीं इस सप्ताह सेनेगल द्वारा समलैंगिक संबंधों पर सजा दोगुनी करने पर अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रतिक्रिया अधिक मंद रही है।

- Senegal's President signed the law, which appeared in the country's official gazette out Tuesday, amid a crackdown on the gay community that has seen dozens of arrests and an increase in heated anti-LGBTQ rhetoric.

सेनेगल के राष्ट्रपति ने इस कानून पर हस्ताक्षर किए, जो मंगलवार को देश के आधिकारिक राजपत्र में प्रकाशित हुआ, यह ऐसे समय में हुआ जब समलैंगिक समुदाय पर कार्रवाई के तहत दर्जनों गिरफ्तारियां हुईं और एंटी-LGBTQ बयानबाजी में वृद्धि हुई।



GS Paper 1: Geography

TOPICS COVERED

03 April 2026

Salt shaker



Price pinch: A man at work at a salt pan near Ongole in Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh on Thursday. While salt production has been high this season in the district, farmers say traders are quoting lower prices citing global uncertainties linked to tensions involving the U.S., Iran and Israel. KOMMURI SRINIVAS

Price pinch: A man at work at a salt pan near Ongole in Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh on Thursday. While salt production has been high this season in the district, farmers say traders are quoting lower prices citing global uncertainties linked to tensions involving the U.S., Iran and Israel. KOMMURI SRINIVAS

GS Paper II: Polity,

TOPICS COVERED

03 April 2026

03A	Gherao of judicial staff a challenge to SC: CJI न्यायिक कर्मचारियों का घेराव SC के लिए चुनौती: CJI
03A	Cabinet's advice on grant of remission to convicts is binding on Governor: HC दोषियों को दया (remission) देने पर कैबिनेट की सलाह राज्यपाल पर बाध्यकारी: हाई कोर्ट
03A	CPI(M), Cong. question validity of TTAADC poll CPI(M), कांग्रेस ने TTAADC चुनाव की वैधता पर सवाल उठाए
03A	Karnataka law providing internal quota to SCs put on hold for now SCs के लिए आंतरिक कोटा देने वाला कर्नाटक कानून फिलहाल स्थगित
03A	ECI transfer controversy, top court's clarifications ईसीआई स्थानांतरण विवाद, शीर्ष अदालत की स्पष्टताएँ



Gherao of judicial staff a challenge to SC: CJI

He says the violence was a 'calculated move' to demoralise judiciary and sway the adjudication

The court says incident exposed 'complete failure of officials and police in the State of West Bengal'

'Everyone speaks political language, I have never seen such a politically polarised State', CJI adds

SC II: Polity
Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday said a mob gherao of seven judicial officers, confining them without food or water for more than nine hours at a government office in Malda district of West Bengal, reportedly after several voters were struck off the electoral rolls in the special intensive revision (SIR) was not only a "brazen attempt" to browbeat the officers but also amounted to a challenge to the authority of the top court.

Hundreds of judicial officers have been deployed on the basis of a Supreme Court order to function as Election Registration Officers and adjudicate objections raised by voters excluded from the rolls during the SIR ahead of the Assembly election scheduled for April 23 and 29.

Noting that three of the judicial officers were women, the court said the in-

cident exposed the "complete failure of the civil and police administration in the State of West Bengal".

Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, heading a three-judge Bench, asked what the political leaders were doing during all those hours of captivity - could they not have gone to the spot and calmed down the situation.

A shocked court pointed out that the judicial officers were pelted with stones as they were finally rescued and led out by the police after being detained from 3.30 p.m. on Wednesday till well past midnight.

"This was not a routine incident. It was *ex facie* a calculated, well-planned and deliberate move to demoralise the judicial officers and impact the ongoing process of adjudication of objections. We will not allow anyone to interfere and take law into their hands by causing fear in the minds of judicial officers. This undoubtedly amounts to criminal con-



Row over roll: People lay siege to the BDO office at Kallachak Block II in Malda, where seven judicial officers were gheraoed on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

This was not a routine incident. It was *ex facie* a calculated, well-planned and deliberate move to demoralise the judicial officers and impact the ongoing process of adjudication of objections. We will not allow anyone to interfere and take law into their hands by causing fear in the minds of judicial officers. This undoubtedly amounts to criminal contempt

JUSTICE SURYA KANT
CHIEF JUSTICE OF INDIA

Commission to requisition Central forces to protect the life, liberty and families of the judicial officers.

The Bench narrated that the Registrar General of the Calcutta High Court had informed the local police and civil administration for immediate backup on learning about the gherao.

"The matter was met with conspicuous inertia until approximately 8:30 p.m.," it said. The official had then contacted the Home Secretary, the Director General of Police (DGP) and the Chief Justice of the High Court.

Finally, the High Court Chief Justice had to intervene personally, following which the Home Secretary and the DGP had turned up at his residence at midnight.

Chief Justice Kant said the High Court Chief Justice, in his letter to the apex court, had strongly deprecated the delay on the part of the police and the civil administration. The apex court said the

Chief Secretary, Home Secretary, DGP, District Collector and Superintendent of Police had acted in a "highly deplorable" manner during the hours of crisis. The Bench directed the DGP, Malda District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police to show cause why suitable action should not be taken against them. The Bench scheduled the case for hearing on April 6.

"They have to place before this court reasons for failing to take any effective measures to secure the safety of the judicial officers," the court ordered.

Senior advocates Kalyan Bandhopadhyay, Menaka Guruswamy and Gopal Sankaranarayanan, variously representing the State government and the ruling Trinamool Congress leaders, said the Chief Secretary and DGP were the poll body's own appointments in March.

MAMATA BLAMES BJP
» PAGE 4

tempt," Chief Justice Kant observed. He said he had never seen such a "politically polarised State like West Bengal".

"You are forcing us to say. Unfortunately in your State, each one of you speaks a political language... I have never seen such a politically polarised State. Even in court orders, the politics is reflected... We passed the order deprecating judicial officers because we thought we could have a neutral structure for

the adjudication of objections, and this is how people are behaving? Do you think we are not aware who are the miscreants behind this incident? I was monitoring events till 2 a.m.," Chief Justice Kant addressed the West Bengal side.

"Contempt of court" Justice Joymalva Bagchi said political leaders who form part of the executive of the State and leaders in the Opposition must con-

demn the incident in one voice. "The orders of the judicial officers are deemed to be the orders of this court. This incident sought to scuttle the entire effort, discourage judicial officers... It amounts to contempt of court," Justice Bagchi remarked.

The court directed the Election Commission (EC) to assign the Central Bureau of Investigation or National Investigation Agency with the task to probe the incident. It directed the

Cabinet's advice on grant of remission to convicts is binding on Governor: HC

SC II: Polity
CHENNAI

A Full Bench of the Madras High Court on Thursday held that the Governor, whether he/she likes it or not, is bound by the advice of the Council of Ministers while exercising powers under Article 161 of the Constitution in matters relating to remission and premature release of convicts.

The Bench comprising Justices A.D. Jagadish Chandira, G.K. Ilanthiraiyan and Sunder Mohan ruled that the Governor, under no circumstance, could exercise any discretion whatsoever to take a different view from the one taken by the Council of Ministers.

The Bench was answering a reference made to it by a Division Bench.

The Division Bench consisting of Justices M.S. Ramesh (since retired) and V. Lakshminarayanan had referred the matter to the larger Bench, for an authoritative pronouncement, in September 2025 after coming across two conflicting decisions delivered in 2024 by two other Division Benches of the High Court on the issue.

While answering the reference, the Full Bench agreed with State Public Prosecutor Hasan Mohamed Jinnah and advocate M. Radhakrishnan that the issue had been settled by a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court in as early as 1980.

The Constitution Bench in 1980 decision comprised Justices V.R. Krish-



The Governor, under no circumstance, may take a different view from that of the Council of Ministers, the Bench ruled. FILE PHOTO

Full Bench of the Madras High Court was answering a reference over two conflicting decisions in 2024 by two other Division Benches

na Iyer, Y.V. Chandrachud, P.N. Bhagwati, Syed Murtaga Fazalali and A.D. Koshal.

Mr. Jinnah also said, the 1980 judgment delivered in Maru Ramu's case was followed by the Supreme Court in 2022 too while ordering the release of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi assassination case convict A.G. Perarivalan. He also relied upon Supreme Court's 1974 verdict in Shamsheer Singh versus State of Punjab.

'Consistent stance'

After concurring with his submission, the Full Bench said, the top court had consistently held the Governor could not exercise any discretion while exercising powers under Article 161 of the Constitution and it had been reflected even in its recent decision on the Governor's power to withhold Bills passed by the

State legislature. One of the Division Benches of the High Court had rightly followed the law, while the other Bench had wrongly relied upon the Supreme Court's judgment in the 2003 M.P. Special Police Establishment case which was related to the Governor's statutory function of granting sanction to prosecute Ministers in corruption cases.

The Full Bench further pointed out the Supreme Court had delivered its verdict in A.G. Perarivalan's case only after considering the M.P. Special Police Establishment case.

"Therefore, it is clear that the ruling [by one of the Division Benches of the High Court] in Murugan alias Thirumalai Murugan is *per incuriam* (a judgment passed without taking the correct position of law into consideration) to the limited extent that it holds that the ruling in M.P. Special Police Establishment permits the Governor to act in his own discretion in exercise of powers under Article 161 of the Constitution," the Bench led by Justice Chandira concluded.

03A. Gherao of judicial staff a challenge to SC: CJI

न्यायिक कर्मचारियों का घेराव SC के लिए चुनौती: CJI

"This was not a routine incident. It was *ex facie* a calculated, well-planned and deliberate move to demoralise the judicial officers and impact the ongoing process of adjudication of objections. We will not allow anyone to interfere and take law into their hands by causing fear in the minds of judicial officers. This undoubtedly amounts to criminal contempt," Chief Justice Kant observed.

मुख्य न्यायाधीश कांत ने कहा, "यह कोई सामान्य घटना नहीं थी। यह स्पष्ट रूप से एक सुनियोजित और जानबूझकर किया गया कदम था ताकि न्यायिक अधिकारियों को हतोत्साहित किया जा सके और आपत्तियों के निर्णय की प्रक्रिया को प्रभावित किया जा सके। हम किसी को भी हस्तक्षेप करने और न्यायिक अधिकारियों के मन में भय पैदा करके कानून अपने हाथ में लेने की अनुमति नहीं देंगे। यह निस्संदेह अपराधिक अवमानना है।"

03A. Cabinet's advice on grant of remission to convicts is binding on Governor: HC

दोषियों को दया (remission) देने पर कैबिनेट की सलाह राज्यपाल पर बाध्यकारी: हाई कोर्ट

A Full Bench of the Madras High Court on Thursday held that the Governor, whether he/she likes it or not, is bound by the advice of the Council of Ministers while exercising powers under Article 161 of the Constitution in matters relating to remission and premature release of convicts.

मद्रास हाई कोर्ट की पूर्ण पीठ ने गुरुवार को कहा कि राज्यपाल, चाहे वह चाहे या नहीं, संविधान के अनुच्छेद 161 के तहत दोषियों



- की दया याचिका (remission) और समयपूर्व रिहाई के मामलों में **मंत्रिपरिषद की सलाह** से बाध्य हैं।
- The Bench comprising Justices A.D. Jagadish Chandira, G.K. Ilanthiraiyan and Sunder Mohan ruled that the Governor, under no circumstance, could exercise any discretion whatsoever to take a different view from the one taken by the Council of Ministers.
न्यायमूर्ति **A.D. जगदीश चंद्रा**, **G.K. इलथिरैयन** और **सुंदर मोहन** की पीठ ने निर्णय दिया कि राज्यपाल किसी भी परिस्थिति में मंत्रिपरिषद के निर्णय से अलग कोई **विवेकाधिकार** नहीं अपना सकते।
 - The Bench was answering a reference made to it by a Division Bench.
यह पीठ एक **डिवीजन बेंच** द्वारा किए गए संदर्भ का उत्तर दे रही थी।
 - The Division Bench consisting of Justices M.S. Ramesh (since retired) and V. Lakshminarayanan had referred the matter to the larger Bench, for an authoritative pronouncement, in September 2025 after coming across two conflicting decisions delivered in 2024 by two other Division Benches of the High Court on the issue.
न्यायमूर्ति **M.S. रमेश** (सेवानिवृत्त) और **V. लक्ष्मीनारायणन** की डिवीजन बेंच ने इस मुद्दे पर **2024** में दो अलग-अलग निर्णयों के कारण **सितंबर 2025** में इस मामले को बड़ी पीठ को भेजा था।
 - While answering the reference, the Full Bench agreed with State Public Prosecutor Hasan Mohamed Jinnah and advocate M. Radhakrishnan that the issue had been settled by a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court in as early as 1980.
संदर्भ का उत्तर देते हुए पूर्ण पीठ ने **राज्य लोक अभियोजक हसन मोहम्मद जिन्ना** और अधिवक्ता **M. राधाकृष्णन** से सहमति जताई कि यह मुद्दा **सुप्रीम कोर्ट की संविधान पीठ** द्वारा **1980** में ही तय किया जा चुका था।
 - The Constitution Bench in 1980 decision comprised Justices V.R. Krishna Iyer, Y.V. Chandrachud, P.N. Bhagwati, Syed Murtaza Fazalali and A.D. Koshal.
1980 के निर्णय में संविधान पीठ में न्यायमूर्ति **V.R. कृष्ण अय्यर**, **Y.V. चंद्रचूड़**, **P.N. भगवती**, **सैयद मुर्तजा फजल अली** और **A.D. कोशल** शामिल थे।
 - Mr. Jinnah also said, the 1980 judgment delivered in Maru Ramu's case was followed by the Supreme Court in 2022 too while ordering the release of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi assassination case convict A.G. Perarivalan.
श्री जिन्ना ने यह भी कहा कि **Maru Ramu केस (1980)** के फैसले का पालन सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने **2022** में भी किया था, जब पूर्व प्रधानमंत्री **राजीव गांधी हत्या मामले** के दोषी **A.G. पेरारिवलन** को रिहा करने का आदेश दिया गया।
 - He also relied upon the Supreme Court's 1974 verdict in Shamsheer Singh versus State of Punjab.
उन्होंने सुप्रीम कोर्ट के **1974** के फैसले **Shamsheer Singh बनाम पंजाब राज्य** पर भी भरोसा किया।

'Consistent stance' 'सुसंगत रुख'

- After concurring with his submission, the Full Bench said, the top court had consistently held the Governor could not exercise any discretion while exercising powers under Article 161 of the Constitution and it had been reflected even in its recent decision on the Governor's power to withhold Bills passed by the State legislature.
उनकी दलील से सहमत होते हुए पूर्ण पीठ ने कहा कि सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने लगातार माना है कि **अनुच्छेद 161** के तहत राज्यपाल कोई **विवेकाधिकार** नहीं अपना सकते और यह हाल के निर्णयों में भी दिखा है, जैसे कि राज्यपाल द्वारा विधायिका के पारित विधेयकों को रोकने की शक्ति पर।
- One of the Division Benches of the High Court had rightly followed the law, while the other Bench had wrongly relied upon the Supreme Court's judgment in the 2003 M.P. Special Police Establishment case which was related to the Governor's statutory function of granting sanction to prosecute Ministers in corruption cases.
हाई कोर्ट की एक डिवीजन बेंच ने कानून का सही पालन किया था, जबकि दूसरी बेंच ने **2003 के M.P. Special Police Establishment केस** पर गलत तरीके से भरोसा किया, जो मंत्रियों के खिलाफ भ्रष्टाचार मामलों में अभियोजन की अनुमति देने से संबंधित था।
- The Full Bench further pointed out the Supreme Court had delivered its verdict in A.G. Perarivalan's case only after considering the M.P. Special Police Establishment case.
पूर्ण पीठ ने आगे बताया कि सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने **A.G. पेरारिवलन केस** में निर्णय देते समय **M.P. Special Police Establishment केस** को भी ध्यान में रखा था।



- “Therefore, it is clear that the ruling [by one of the Division Benches of the High Court] in Murugan alias Thirumalai Murugan is per incuriam (a judgement passed without taking the correct position of law into consideration) to the limited extent that it holds that the ruling in M.P. Special Police Establishment permits the Governor to act in his own discretion in exercise of powers under Article 161 of the Constitution,” the Bench led by Justice Chandira concluded.

न्यायमूर्ति चंद्रा की अध्यक्षता वाली पीठ ने निष्कर्ष निकाला, “इसलिए यह स्पष्ट है कि **Murugan alias Thirumalai Murugan** का निर्णय उस सीमा तक **per incuriam** (कानून की सही स्थिति को ध्यान में रखे बिना दिया गया निर्णय) है, जहां यह कहा गया कि **M.P. Special Police Establishment** का निर्णय राज्यपाल

Karnataka law providing internal quota to SCs put on hold for now

GS II: Polity

Sharath S. Srivatsa
BENGALURU

Over a month after Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot gave his assent to The Karnataka Scheduled Castes (Sub-classification) Bill, 2025, that provides for internal reservation among the 101 Scheduled Castes within the 17% SC reservation quota, the State government is yet to gazette the same.

The government is learnt to have put the legislation on hold in view of potential legal challenges and also under pressure from those against the current internal reservation matrix.

“It is unlikely that the government would gazette the Act before an agree-

ment is arrived at on the internal reservation among the Dalit Left and the Dalit Right factions,” sources told *The Hindu*.

Incidentally, a special Cabinet meeting to arrive at a consensus on internal reservation scheduled on March 27 had to be postponed owing to the Model Code of Conduct for byelections in Bagalkot and Davangere South Assembly constituencies.

Law Department sources acknowledged that legislations are normally published in the gazette immediately after it receives the Governor’s assent, following which rules are framed to implement the Act.

The Act can be implemented only after it is pu-

blished in the gazette.

The legislation provides for internal reservation among the Scheduled Castes with the Dalit Left (Madiga) and the Dalit Right (Holeyas) receiving 6% and “touchable” castes of Lambanis, Bhoavis, Koramas, and Korachas along 59 nomadic communities receiving 5% within the 17% reservation quota for SCs.

It is learnt that after the Governor’s assent, the Act is yet to reach the Social Welfare Department, which has to gazette it. The Department of Law and Parliamentary Affairs is yet to send the legislation after considering various legal aspects involved in the reservation issue, sources said.

03A. Karnataka law providing internal quota to SCs put on hold for now SCs के लिए आंतरिक कोटा देने वाला कर्नाटक कानून फिलहाल स्थगित

- Over a month after Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot gave his assent to **The Karnataka Scheduled Castes (Sub-classification) Bill, 2025, that provides for internal reservation among the 101 Scheduled Castes within the 17% SC reservation quota**, the State government is yet to gazette the same.

राज्यपाल थावरचंद गहलोत द्वारा **Karnataka Scheduled Castes (Sub-classification) Bill, 2025** को मंजूरी दिए एक महीने से अधिक समय बाद भी, जो **101 अनुसूचित जातियों** के बीच **17% SC आरक्षण** में आंतरिक आरक्षण का प्रावधान करता है, राज्य सरकार ने अभी तक इसे **गजट में प्रकाशित** नहीं किया है।

- Incidentally, a special Cabinet meeting to arrive at a consensus on internal reservation scheduled on March 27 had to be postponed owing to the **Model Code of Conduct for byelections in Bagalkot and Davangere South Assembly constituencies**.



संयोग से, 27 मार्च को निर्धारित आंतरिक आरक्षण पर सहमति के लिए विशेष कैबिनेट बैठक को आचार संहिता के कारण स्थगित करना पड़ा, जो बागलकोट और दावणगेरे दक्षिण विधानसभा क्षेत्रों के उपचुनावों के लिए लागू थी।

- The legislation provides for internal reservation among the Scheduled Castes with the Dalit Left (Madiga) and the Dalit Right (Holeyas) receiving 6% and “touchable” castes of Lambanis, Bhovis, Koramas, and Korachas along 59 nomadic communities receiving 5% within the 17% reservation quota for SCs.

यह कानून अनुसूचित जातियों के बीच आंतरिक आरक्षण प्रदान करता है, जिसमें दलित लेफ्ट (मडिगा) और दलित राइट (होलेया) को 6%, तथा लंबानी, भोवी, कोरामा, कोराचा और 59 घुमंतू समुदायों को 5% आरक्षण मिलता है, जो कुल 17% SC आरक्षण के भीतर है।

ECI transfer controversy, top court's clarifications

ISS II: Polity

Recently, the Election Commission of India (ECI) transferred a number of senior officers in some of the election-bound States as soon as their election schedules were announced. In the election schedule for 2026, polls are to be held in four States, namely, Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, and the Union Territory of Puducherry.

In the State of West Bengal, the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police – the head of State administration and the head of the police force – were among several officials transferred overnight without the consent or prior knowledge of the State government. The ECI claimed that such a step had been taken to ensure free and fair elections in those States. The States concerned, particularly West Bengal, were virtually stunned by the ferocity of these transfer orders, which have almost paralysed the administration. The crucial question here is whether it is within the powers of the ECI to transfer, in this manner, the heads of State administration in the name of ensuring free and fair elections. Are we then to conclude that, without transferring a handful of top officers, the ECI cannot conduct free and fair elections? There are many such disturbing questions that arise from these transfers.

It is difficult to find any statute under which such transfers can be made by the ECI. Of course, it always points to Article 324 of the Constitution (Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission) to justify such actions. It is true that the Article confers unspecified powers on the ECI to conduct free and fair elections.

Article 324 and scope of powers

The Supreme Court of India had, in *Mohinder Singh Gill and Anr. vs The Chief Election Commissioner, New Delhi and Ors.* (1978), and in a host of other cases, held that Article 324 is a plenary provision which is in fact a reservoir of powers that can be used by the ECI whenever the need arises to ensure free and fair elections. But in all such cases the Court has added a rider that such powers can be used only where the field is unoccupied by a statute. In other words, the ECI cannot draw any such power from Article 324 where a law made by Parliament or a State legislature holds the field in which case it has to obey that law.

In *Mohinder Singh Gill*, the Court made the following significant observations which have clearly laid out the scope of the powers under this Article as well as its limitations. It said, “The

MOB



P.D.T. Achary
Former Secretary
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Constitution, contemplates a free and fair election and vests comprehensive responsibilities of superintendence, direction and control of the conduct of elections in the Election Commission. This responsibility may cover powers, duties and functions of many sorts, administrative or other, depending on the circumstances”.

However, there is a caveat. The Court added, “Two limitations at least are laid on its plenary character in the exercise thereof. Firstly, when Parliament or any State Legislature has made valid law, relating to or in connection with elections, the Commission shall act in conformity with, not in violation of such provisions but where such law is silent Art. 324 is a reservoir of power to, act for the avowed purpose of, not divorced from pushing forward a free and fair election with expedition. Secondly, the Commission shall be responsible to the rule of law, act bona fide and be amenable to the norms of natural justice in so far as conformance to such canons can reasonably and realistically be required of it as fairplay-in-action in a most important area of the constitutional order, viz., elections.”

The issue of statutory backing

The officers belonging to the all India services are governed by the All India Services Act and the rules made thereunder. The transfer of an officer is the exclusive prerogative of the government. The all India service officers who are serving a State government are under the administrative control of the State government which has exclusive authority to transfer them at any time.

Under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, the State Public Services are under the exclusive control of the State governments. It is the exclusive function of the governments – the State and the Union – to deal with all aspects of the services of the officers serving under these governments.

The crucial question that has arisen in the context of the transfer of senior officials of the State governments under the orders of the ECI is whether this action has any statutory backing. The duty of the ECI is to conduct elections in a free and fair manner. Of course, it has all the powers to perform this task in accordance with the mandate of the Constitution and statute.

Article 324(6) requires the State government or the Union government to make available to the ECI on demand the staff required by it to conduct elections. The Representation of the People Act of 1950 as well as the Representation of the People Act, 1951 contain elaborate provisions that deal with the duties and powers of the ECI. Nowhere

do any of these Acts contain any provision that empowers the ECI to transfer the head of a state administration or the head of the state police force, while keeping the State government in the dark, on the ground that their continuance in their posts will hamper the conduct of free and fair elections.

It is true that the Court has held that Article 324 has plenary powers to ensure free and fair election. But the Court has never dealt with the transfer of the seniormost officers in States by the ECI, taking the State governments by surprise and resulting in a paralysis of the administration, in the exercise of its plenary powers under Article 324. Apart from that, the Court has itself clarified that if the field is occupied by the law, the ECI needs to obey that law. It may be argued that the law mentioned by the Court must be related to, or in connection with, the election. It may also be argued that the All India Services Act or its rules are not laws relating to elections, but that is a very narrow, technical view.

The crucial point is that the ECI is not empowered to bypass a law made by Parliament dealing with the transfers and postings of all India Service officers, and cannot transfer such officers at will over the heads of the State government. The underlying assumption in such transfers is that those officers will not allow the ECI to conduct elections in a free and fair manner.

On ‘unchecked power’

The ECI has a proud history of conducting elections in the country since 1951-52. It has always depended on State government officials to accomplish this task as the ECI does not have any machinery of its own to undertake such a gigantic exercise. The ECI, by branding them as men lacking integrity and removing them from their posts on the eve of an election is a new trend that will most certainly demoralise civil servants in the country. It is also not clear under what procedure the ECI has reached the conclusion that these officers are biased and unsuitable for conducting free and fair elections. Article 324 does not give unfettered powers to the ECI. The Court, which granted plenary powers to the ECI, had also said this in *Mohinder Singh Gill* – “No one is an imperium in imperio in our constitutional order. It is reasonable to hold that the Commissioner cannot defy the law armed by Article 324. Likewise, his functions are subject to the norms of fairness and he cannot act arbitrarily. Unchecked power is alien to our system.”

These words from the highest court of the land are loud and clear enough.

Article 324 does not give unfettered powers to the Election Commission of India

03A. ECI transfer controversy, top court's clarifications ईसीआई स्थानांतरण विवाद, शीर्ष अदालत की स्पष्टताएँ

- Recently, the Election Commission of India (ECI) transferred a number of senior officers in some of the election-bound States as soon as their election schedules were announced. हाल ही में, भारत निर्वाचन आयोग ने चुनाव वाले राज्यों में चुनाव कार्यक्रम घोषित होते ही कई वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों का स्थानांतरण कर दिया।
- In the election schedule for 2026, polls are to be held in four States, namely, Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, and the Union Territory of Puducherry. 2026 के चुनाव कार्यक्रम के अनुसार, असम, केरल, तमिलनाडु और पश्चिम बंगाल तथा केंद्रशासित प्रदेश पुडुचेरी में चुनाव होने हैं।



- In the State of **West Bengal**, the **Chief Secretary** and **Director General of Police** — the head of State administration and the head of the police force — were among several officials transferred overnight without the consent or prior knowledge of the State government.
पश्चिम बंगाल में मुख्य सचिव और पुलिस महानिदेशक सहित कई अधिकारियों का रातोंरात स्थानांतरण राज्य सरकार की जानकारी या सहमति के बिना कर दिया गया।
- The **ECI** claimed that such a step had been taken to ensure **free and fair elections** in those States.
निर्वाचन आयोग ने कहा कि यह कदम **स्वतंत्र और निष्पक्ष चुनाव** सुनिश्चित करने के लिए उठाया गया है।
- The States concerned, particularly **West Bengal**, were virtually stunned by the **ferocity of these transfer orders**, which have almost paralysed the administration.
संबंधित राज्य, विशेष रूप से **पश्चिम बंगाल**, इन **कठोर स्थानांतरण आदेशों** से स्तब्ध रह गए, जिससे प्रशासन लगभग ठप हो गया।
- The crucial question here is whether it is within the powers of the **ECI** to transfer, in this manner, the heads of State administration in the name of ensuring **free and fair elections**.
यहाँ मुख्य प्रश्न यह है कि क्या **निर्वाचन आयोग** को इस प्रकार राज्य प्रशासन के प्रमुखों का स्थानांतरण करने का अधिकार है, **स्वतंत्र और निष्पक्ष चुनाव** के नाम पर।
- Are we then to conclude that, without transferring a handful of top officers, the **ECI** cannot conduct **free and fair elections**?
क्या इसका अर्थ यह है कि कुछ शीर्ष अधिकारियों का स्थानांतरण किए बिना **निर्वाचन आयोग निष्पक्ष चुनाव** नहीं करा सकता?
- There are many such disturbing questions that arise from these transfers.
इन स्थानांतरणों से कई ऐसे चिंताजनक प्रश्न उत्पन्न होते हैं।
- It is difficult to find any statute under which such transfers can be made by the **ECI**.
ऐसा कोई स्पष्ट कानून खोजना कठिन है जिसके तहत **निर्वाचन आयोग** ऐसे स्थानांतरण कर सके।
- Of course, it always points to **Article 324 of the Constitution** (Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission) to justify such actions.
हालांकि, वह हमेशा **संविधान के अनुच्छेद 324** का हवाला देता है, जिसमें चुनावों का नियंत्रण और संचालन आयोग को सौंपा गया है।
- It is true that the Article confers **unspecified powers** on the **ECI** to conduct **free and fair elections**.
यह सही है कि यह अनुच्छेद **निर्वाचन आयोग** को **अस्पष्ट शक्तियाँ** प्रदान करता है ताकि वह **निष्पक्ष चुनाव** करा सके।

Article 324 and scope of powers अनुच्छेद 324 और शक्तियों का दायरा

- The **Supreme Court of India** had, in **Mohinder Singh Gill vs Chief Election Commissioner (1978)**, and in several other cases, held that **Article 324** is a **plenary provision** which is in fact a **reservoir of powers** that can be used by the **ECI** whenever the need arises to ensure **free and fair elections**.
भारत के सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने **मोहनंदर सिंह गिल बनाम मुख्य निर्वाचन आयुक्त (1978)** सहित कई मामलों में कहा कि **अनुच्छेद 324** एक **पूर्ण प्रावधान** है और यह **शक्तियों का भंडार** है जिसका उपयोग **निर्वाचन आयोग** आवश्यकता पड़ने पर कर सकता है।
- But in all such cases the Court has added a rider that such powers can be used only where the field is **unoccupied by a statute**.
लेकिन इन सभी मामलों में न्यायालय ने यह शर्त जोड़ी कि इन शक्तियों का उपयोग केवल तब किया जा सकता है जब उस क्षेत्र में कोई **कानून लागू न हो**।
- In other words, the **ECI** cannot draw any such power from **Article 324** where a law made by **Parliament or a State legislature** holds the field in which case it has to obey that law.
दूसरे शब्दों में, जहाँ **संसद या राज्य विधानमंडल** का कानून लागू है, वहाँ **निर्वाचन आयोग अनुच्छेद 324** से शक्ति नहीं ले सकता और उसे उस कानून का पालन करना होगा।
- In **Mohinder Singh Gill**, the Court made significant observations which clearly laid out the scope of the powers under this Article as well as its limitations.
मोहनंदर सिंह गिल मामले में न्यायालय ने महत्वपूर्ण टिप्पणियाँ कीं, जिन्होंने इस अनुच्छेद के तहत शक्तियों और उनकी सीमाओं को स्पष्ट किया।



- It said, “The **Constitution** contemplates a **free and fair election** and vests comprehensive responsibilities of **superintendence, direction and control** of the conduct of elections in the **Election Commission**.
इसमें कहा गया कि **संविधान स्वतंत्र और निष्पक्ष चुनाव** की परिकल्पना करता है और चुनावों के संचालन की **निगरानी, दिशा और नियंत्रण** की व्यापक जिम्मेदारी **निर्वाचन आयोग** को देता है।
- This responsibility may cover **powers, duties and functions** of many sorts, **administrative or other**, depending on the circumstances”.
यह जिम्मेदारी परिस्थितियों के अनुसार विभिन्न प्रकार की **शक्तियों, कर्तव्यों और कार्यों** को शामिल कर सकती है, चाहे वे **प्रशासनिक हों या अन्य**।
- However, there is a **caveat**. The Court added, “Two limitations at least are laid on its **plenary character** in the exercise thereof.
हालांकि, इसमें एक **महत्वपूर्ण शर्त** है। न्यायालय ने कहा कि इसकी **पूर्ण शक्तियों** के प्रयोग पर कम से कम दो सीमाएँ हैं।
- Firstly, when **Parliament or any State Legislature** has made valid law, relating to or in connection with **elections**, the Commission shall act in conformity with, not in violation of such provisions but where such law is silent **Art. 324** is a reservoir of power to act for the purpose of ensuring **free and fair elections**.
पहली बात, जब **संसद या राज्य विधानमंडल** ने **चुनावों** से संबंधित कोई वैध कानून बनाया हो, तो आयोग को उसी के अनुसार कार्य करना होगा; लेकिन जहाँ ऐसा कानून नहीं है, वहाँ **अनुच्छेद 324 निष्पक्ष चुनाव** सुनिश्चित करने के लिए शक्ति का स्रोत है।
- Secondly, the Commission shall be responsible to the **rule of law**, act **bona fide** and be amenable to the norms of **natural justice** in so far as conformance can reasonably be required in elections.
दूसरी बात, आयोग को **कानून के शासन** का पालन करना होगा, **सद्भावना से कार्य करना** होगा और **प्राकृतिक न्याय के सिद्धांतों** का पालन करना होगा।

The issue of statutory backing वैधानिक आधार का प्रश्न

- The officers belonging to the **All India Services** are governed by the **All India Services Act** and the rules made thereunder.
अखिल भारतीय सेवाओं के अधिकारी **अखिल भारतीय सेवा अधिनियम** और उसके नियमों के तहत नियंत्रित होते हैं।
- The transfer of an officer is the **exclusive prerogative of the government**.
किसी अधिकारी का स्थानांतरण करना **सरकार का विशेष अधिकार** है।
- The all India service officers serving a **State government** are under the **administrative control of the State government**, which has exclusive authority to transfer them at any time.
राज्य में कार्यरत अखिल भारतीय सेवा अधिकारी **राज्य सरकार के प्रशासनिक नियंत्रण** में होते हैं और उनका स्थानांतरण केवल वही कर सकती है।
- Under the **Seventh Schedule of the Constitution**, the **State Public Services** are under the exclusive control of the **State governments**.
संविधान की सातवीं अनुसूची के अनुसार, **राज्य लोक सेवाएँ** पूरी तरह **राज्य सरकारों** के नियंत्रण में होती हैं।
- It is the exclusive function of the governments — the **State and the Union** — to deal with all aspects of the services of the officers serving under these governments.
अधिकारियों की सेवा से जुड़े सभी मामलों का प्रबंधन **राज्य और केंद्र सरकारों** का विशेष कार्य है।
- The crucial question that has arisen is whether the transfer of **senior officers** of the State governments under the orders of the **ECI** has any **statutory backing**.
मुख्य प्रश्न यह है कि **निर्वाचन आयोग** द्वारा **वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों** के स्थानांतरण का कोई **वैधानिक आधार** है या नहीं।
- The duty of the **ECI** is to conduct elections in a **free and fair manner** and it has powers to perform this task in accordance with the **Constitution and statute**.
निर्वाचन आयोग का कर्तव्य **स्वतंत्र और निष्पक्ष चुनाव** कराना है और इसके लिए उसे **संविधान और कानून** के अनुसार शक्तियाँ प्राप्त हैं।
- **Article 324(6)** requires the **State or Union government** to make available to the **ECI** the staff required to conduct elections.



अनुच्छेद 324(6) के अनुसार, राज्य या केंद्र सरकार को चुनाव के लिए आवश्यक कर्मचारी निर्वाचन आयोग को उपलब्ध कराने होते हैं।

- The **Representation of the People Act, 1950** and the **Representation of the People Act, 1951** contain elaborate provisions dealing with the duties and powers of the **ECI**.
जन प्रतिनिधित्व अधिनियम 1950 और **1951** में निर्वाचन आयोग की शक्तियों और कर्तव्यों का विस्तृत वर्णन है।
- Nowhere do these Acts contain any provision that empowers the **ECI** to transfer the **head of a State administration or the head of the police force** without informing the **State government**, on the ground that their continuance may hamper **free and fair elections**.
इन अधिनियमों में कहीं भी ऐसा प्रावधान नहीं है जो निर्वाचन आयोग को राज्य प्रशासन या पुलिस प्रमुख का स्थानांतरण करने का अधिकार देता हो, वह भी राज्य सरकार को बताए बिना, यह कहते हुए कि उनकी उपस्थिति चुनाव को प्रभावित करेगी।
- It is true that the Court has held that **Article 324** has **plenary powers** to ensure **free and fair election**.
यह सही है कि न्यायालय ने माना है कि अनुच्छेद 324 में पूर्ण शक्तियाँ हैं ताकि स्वतंत्र और निष्पक्ष चुनाव सुनिश्चित किए जा सकें।
- But the Court has never dealt with the transfer of the **seniormost officers in States** by the **ECI**, taking the State governments by surprise and resulting in a **paralysis of the administration**, in the exercise of its plenary powers under **Article 324**.
लेकिन न्यायालय ने कभी भी निर्वाचन आयोग द्वारा राज्यों के वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों के स्थानांतरण के मामले पर विचार नहीं किया, जिससे राज्य सरकारें चौक गईं और प्रशासन ठप हो गया, जबकि यह अनुच्छेद 324 की शक्तियों के तहत किया गया।
- Apart from that, the Court has itself clarified that if the **law**, the **ECI** needs to obey that law.
इसके अलावा, न्यायालय ने स्पष्ट किया है कि यदि किसी क्षेत्र में कानून मौजूद है, तो निर्वाचन आयोग को उसका पालन करना होगा।
- It may be argued that the law mentioned by the Court must be related to, or in connection with, the **election**.
यह तर्क दिया जा सकता है कि न्यायालय द्वारा उल्लिखित कानून चुनाव से संबंधित होना चाहिए।
- It may also be argued that the **All India Services Act** or its rules are not laws relating to elections, but that is a very **narrow, technical view**.
यह भी कहा जा सकता है कि अखिल भारतीय सेवा अधिनियम चुनाव से संबंधित कानून नहीं है, लेकिन यह एक बहुत संकीर्ण और तकनीकी दृष्टिकोण है।
- The crucial point is that the **ECI** is not empowered to bypass a law made by **Parliament** dealing with the transfers and postings of **All India Service officers**, and cannot transfer such officers over the heads of the **State government**.
मुख्य बात यह है कि निर्वाचन आयोग संसद द्वारा बनाए गए कानून को दरकिनार नहीं कर सकता, जो अखिल भारतीय सेवा अधिकारियों के स्थानांतरण से संबंधित है, और राज्य सरकार को नजरअंदाज करके मनमाने ढंग से उनका स्थानांतरण नहीं कर सकता।
- The underlying assumption in such transfers is that those officers will not allow the **ECI** to conduct elections in a **free and fair manner**.
ऐसे स्थानांतरणों के पीछे यह धारणा है कि ये अधिकारी निर्वाचन आयोग को निष्पक्ष चुनाव कराने में बाधा डालेंगे।

On 'unchecked power'

'असीमित शक्ति' पर

- The **ECI** has a proud history of conducting elections in the country since **1951-52**.
निर्वाचन आयोग का देश में **1951-52** से चुनाव कराने का गौरवशाली इतिहास रहा है।
- It has always depended on **State government officials** as it does not have any machinery of its own to undertake such a gigantic exercise.
यह हमेशा राज्य सरकार के अधिकारियों पर निर्भर रहा है क्योंकि इसके पास स्वयं की कोई व्यवस्था नहीं है।
- The **ECI**, by branding them as men lacking **integrity** and removing them from their posts on the eve of an election is a **new trend** that will most certainly demoralise **civil servants** in the country.



निर्वाचन आयोग द्वारा अधिकारियों को ईमानदारीहीन बताकर चुनाव से पहले हटाना एक नई प्रवृत्ति है जो निश्चित रूप से नागरिक सेवकों का मनोबल गिराएगी।

- It is also not clear under what procedure the ECI has reached the conclusion that these officers are **biased and unsuitable** for conducting **free and fair elections**. यह भी स्पष्ट नहीं है कि निर्वाचन आयोग ने किस प्रक्रिया के तहत इन अधिकारियों को पक्षपाती और अनुपयुक्त माना।
- **Article 324** does not give **unfettered powers** to the ECI. **अनुच्छेद 324** निर्वाचन आयोग को **असीमित शक्तियाँ** नहीं देता।
- The Court in **Mohinder Singh Gill** said, "No one is an **imperium in imperio** in our constitutional order. न्यायालय ने **मोहनंदर सिंह गिल** मामले में कहा कि हमारे संवैधानिक ढांचे में कोई भी **पूर्णतः स्वतंत्र सत्ता** नहीं है।
- It is reasonable to hold that the Commissioner cannot **defy the law** armed by **Article 324**. यह उचित है कि आयुक्त **अनुच्छेद 324** के आधार पर **कानून की अवहेलना नहीं कर सकता**।
- Likewise, his functions are subject to the norms of **fairness** and he cannot act **arbitrarily**. इसी प्रकार, उसके कार्य **निष्पक्षता के सिद्धांतों** के अधीन हैं और वह **मनमाना कार्य** नहीं कर सकता।
- **Unchecked power is alien to our system**. **असीमित शक्ति हमारे तंत्र के अनुकूल नहीं है**।
- These words from the **highest court of the land** are loud and clear enough.

देश की **सर्वोच्च न्यायालय** के ये शब्द स्पष्ट और महत्वपूर्ण हैं।

Education Ministry notifies NCERT as deemed university

The Ministry's notification enables the NCERT to offer courses and grant degrees; it directs the education body to begin doctoral programmes

GS II: Governance
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Education Ministry has issued a notification declaring the National Council for Educational Research and Training, or NCERT, an institution **deemed to be a university, enabling it to offer courses or programmes and grant degrees**.

In the notification dated March 30, the Ministry said that the University Grants Commission (UGC) had approved the expert panel's recommendations to grant deemed university status to the NCERT – a nodal school curriculum body – in January, following which the Ministry notified the grant of status to the council.

The notification confers the status on the NCERT, along with its six regional institutes, provided that a list of conditions is met.

These conditions prevent the NCERT from indulging in any activities that are "commercial" and "profit-making" in nature, and mandate that all aca-

NCERT upgrade

The new status empowers the council to design academic programmes and expand its role from a curriculum body to a higher education and research institution



- It must comply with UGC norms, avoid commercial/profit-driven activities, and follow strict guidelines for new or offshore campuses
- It must expand into research and innovative academic areas while securing accreditation from NAAC and programme ratings from the National Board of Accreditation

ademic courses or programmes must conform to the norms and standards prescribed by the UGC and the concerned statutory bodies or councils. The notification mandates the NCERT to start programmes and off-campus or on offshore campuses "only in accordance with the norms and guidelines issued by the UGC, from time to time, on the subject."

The Ministry has said the NCERT "shall take appropriate steps" to begin research and doctoral programmes, and "innovative

academic programmes" and the institute must not confine itself to the new emerging areas, but also "endeavour" to expand into other domains that are in accordance with UGC regulations and the National Education Policy of 2020. The Ministry said the NCERT must take all the measures required to get its academic programmes and courses rated for accreditation by the National Board of Accreditation, and for the institute itself by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council.

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TOPICS COVERED	03 April 2026
03A	Education Ministry notifies NCERT as deemed university शिक्षा मंत्रालय ने NCERT को डीम्ड विश्वविद्यालय घोषित किया

03A. Education Ministry notifies NCERT as deemed university शिक्षा मंत्रालय ने NCERT को डीम्ड विश्वविद्यालय घोषित किया

• The Ministry's notification enables the NCERT to offer courses and grant degrees; it directs the education body to begin **doctoral programmes**.

मंत्रालय की अधिसूचना NCERT को पाठ्यक्रम संचालित करने और डिग्री प्रदान करने में सक्षम बनाती है; यह शिक्षा निकाय को **डॉक्टरेट कार्यक्रम** शुरू करने का निर्देश देती है।

• The **Education Ministry** has issued a notification declaring the **National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT)** an institution deemed to be a university, enabling it to offer courses or programmes and grant degrees.



शिक्षा मंत्रालय ने एक अधिसूचना जारी कर राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद (NCERT) को डीम्ड विश्वविद्यालय घोषित किया है, जिससे इसे पाठ्यक्रम या कार्यक्रम संचालित करने और डिग्री प्रदान करने की अनुमति मिलती है।

- In the notification dated **March 30**, the Ministry said that the **University Grants Commission (UGC)** had approved the expert panel's recommendations to grant deemed university status to the NCERT — a nodal school curriculum body — in **January**, following which the Ministry notified the grant of status to the council.

30 मार्च की अधिसूचना में मंत्रालय ने कहा कि **विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग (UGC)** ने **जनवरी** में विशेषज्ञ समिति की सिफारिशों को मंजूरी दी थी, जिसमें NCERT — एक प्रमुख स्कूल पाठ्यक्रम निकाय — को डीम्ड विश्वविद्यालय का दर्जा देने की अनुशंसा की गई थी, जिसके बाद मंत्रालय ने यह दर्जा प्रदान किया।

- The notification confers the status on the **NCERT**, along with its **six regional institutes**, provided that a list of conditions is met.
यह अधिसूचना **NCERT** और इसके **छह क्षेत्रीय संस्थानों** को यह दर्जा प्रदान करती है, बशर्ते कुछ शर्तों का पालन किया जाए।
- These conditions prevent the NCERT from indulging in any activities that are **“commercial” and “profit-making”** in nature, and mandate that all academic courses or programmes must conform to the norms and standards prescribed by the **UGC** and the concerned statutory bodies or councils.
इन शर्तों के तहत NCERT को **“व्यावसायिक” और “लाभ कमाने वाली”** गतिविधियों में शामिल होने से रोका गया है, और सभी शैक्षणिक पाठ्यक्रमों को **UGC** तथा संबंधित वैधानिक निकायों के मानकों का पालन करना होगा।
- The notification mandates the NCERT to start programmes and off-campus or on offshore campuses “only in accordance with the norms and guidelines issued by the UGC, from time to time, on the subject.”
अधिसूचना के अनुसार NCERT केवल **UGC** द्वारा **समय-समय पर जारी दिशानिर्देशों** के अनुसार ही कार्यक्रम और ऑफ-कैंपस या विदेशी परिसरों की शुरुआत कर सकता है।
- The Ministry has said the NCERT “shall take appropriate steps” to begin **research and doctoral programmes**, and “innovative academic programmes” and the institute must not confine itself to the new emerging areas, but also “endeavour” to expand into other domains that are in accordance with **UGC regulations** and the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**.
मंत्रालय ने कहा कि NCERT को **अनुसंधान और डॉक्टरेट कार्यक्रम** तथा **नवाचार शैक्षणिक कार्यक्रम** शुरू करने के लिए “उचित कदम उठाने चाहिए” और इसे केवल उभरते क्षेत्रों तक सीमित नहीं रहना चाहिए, बल्कि **UGC नियमों** और **राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति (NEP) 2020** के अनुरूप अन्य क्षेत्रों में भी विस्तार करना चाहिए।
- The Ministry said the NCERT must take all the measures required to get its academic programmes and courses rated for accreditation by the **National Board of Accreditation (NBA)**, and for the institute itself by the **National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)**.
मंत्रालय ने कहा कि NCERT को अपने शैक्षणिक कार्यक्रमों और पाठ्यक्रमों को **National Board of Accreditation (NBA)** से मान्यता दिलाने और संस्थान के लिए **National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)** से मूल्यांकन प्राप्त करने के लिए सभी आवश्यक कदम उठाने होंगे।

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TOPICS COVERED

03 April 2026

03A A betrayal foretold

एक पूर्वानुमानित विश्वासघात

03A A path to peace in West Asia beyond Pakistan talks

पश्चिम एशिया में शांति का मार्ग, पाकिस्तान वार्ता से आगे



GS II: IR

A betrayal foretold

After Trump's taunts, threats, Europe has to reimagine its security paradigm

The U.S. appears poised to break with 77 years of partnership with Western European nations under the security umbrella of NATO, especially after its President Donald Trump has said that he is “absolutely” considering withdrawing from the alliance, which in his view is a “paper tiger”. This and similar remarks by Mr. Trump have followed White House's apparent frustration that European and other allies did not expediently send military assets into West Asia to assist the U.S. and Israel in their war campaign against Iran, particularly to secure safe passage for oil tankers through the Strait of Hormuz, currently under Tehran's control. Mr. Trump has frequently complained about getting less from NATO than Washington was putting into it, saying recently to the media, “... it's a one-way street”. He has further hinted that NATO may have become an ineffectual global force when he recently observed that Russian President Vladimir Putin also “knows” that NATO lacks teeth to defend its members – a comment that gains additional salience in the context of Moscow's military aggression against Ukraine and its likely further military adventurism in the Baltic states region.

At the heart of the heightened tension in the U.S.-NATO relationship is Washington's constant refrain that defence spending by its European partners has fallen short of expectations – even if the immediate trigger for talk of withdrawing from NATO is the Iran war context. A prior question of legality remains unanswered too: under section 1250A of the 2024 National Defense Authorization Act, signed into force by former President Joe Biden, no U.S. President may unilaterally withdraw from NATO; rather they would require either a two-thirds Senate supermajority or an act of Congress towards this end. In the longer arc of history spanning the two Trump terms, a split with NATO, a security alliance, might not be of the same order as the eviscerating institutions of global governance and cooperation, which include the WTO and UN system organisations. But it is part of Mr. Trump's simultaneous pursuit of American global dominance and splendid isolation. On the one hand it may come as a relief to some that Mr. Trump's inward turn, pulling the U.S. back from global collaborative engagements could leave a security vacuum that could be opportunistically exploited by middle powers. However, for the world at large, and from a growth and economic stability perspective, the shock of a partner-nation abandoning its commitments worldwide will likely lead to a recalibration of trust and strategic calculus, ultimately remaking the rules-based international order and the global balance of cooperation across emerging powers. In this new post-Pax Americana world, Europe, more than most, will have to reimagine its security paradigm from first principles.

03A. A betrayal foretold एक पूर्वानुमानित विश्वासघात

• The U.S. appears poised to break with 77 years of partnership with Western European nations under the security umbrella of NATO, especially after its President Donald Trump has said that he is “absolutely” considering withdrawing from the alliance, which in his view is a “paper tiger”.

अमेरिका 77 वर्षों की साझेदारी को पश्चिमी यूरोपीय देशों के साथ नाटो के सुरक्षा ढांचे के तहत तोड़ने की स्थिति में दिख रहा है, खासकर जब राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप ने कहा है कि वे इस गठबंधन से हटने पर “पूरी तरह” विचार कर रहे हैं, जिसे वे “कमजोर संगठन” मानते हैं।

• He has further hinted that NATO may have become an ineffectual global force when he recently observed that Russian President Vladimir Putin also “knows” that NATO lacks teeth to defend its members — a comment that gains additional salience in the context of Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its possible future actions in the Baltic states region.

उन्होंने यह भी संकेत दिया कि नाटो एक अप्रभावी वैश्विक शक्ति बन गया है, जब उन्होंने कहा कि रूसी राष्ट्रपति व्लादिमीर पुतिन भी जानते हैं कि नाटो में अपने सदस्यों की रक्षा करने की क्षमता की कमी है, जो यूक्रेन पर रूस के आक्रमण और बाल्टिक क्षेत्र में संभावित गतिविधियों के संदर्भ में महत्वपूर्ण है।

• At the heart of the heightened tension in the U.S.-NATO relationship is Washington's constant refrain that defence spending by its European partners has fallen short of expectations — even if the immediate trigger for talk of withdrawing from NATO is the Iran war context.

अमेरिका-नाटो संबंधों में बढ़ते तनाव का मुख्य कारण यह है कि अमेरिका का मानना है कि उसके यूरोपीय साझेदारों द्वारा रक्षा खर्च अपेक्षाओं से कम है — भले ही तत्काल कारण ईरान युद्ध की स्थिति हो।

• A prior question of legality remains unanswered too: under section 1250A of the 2024 National Defense Authorization Act, signed into force by former President Joe Biden, no U.S. President may unilaterally withdraw from NATO; rather they would require either a two-thirds Senate supermajority or an act of Congress towards this end.

एक कानूनी प्रश्न भी अनुत्तरित है: 2024 के राष्ट्रीय रक्षा प्राधिकरण अधिनियम की धारा 1250ए के तहत, जिसे पूर्व राष्ट्रपति जो बाइडेन ने लागू किया, कोई भी अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति अकेले नाटो से नहीं निकल सकता; इसके लिए सीनेट में दो-तिहाई बहुमत या कांग्रेस का अधिनियम आवश्यक होगा।



A path to peace in West Asia beyond Pakistan talks

GS II: IR

A much-talked-about meeting finally took place in Pakistan. The Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Egypt sat together with Pakistan, in Islamabad on March 29, to explore ways out of the war in West Asia. Just before this, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had a long conversation with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. Then, Pakistan Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar was in China to hold talks on restoring peace and stability in West Asia. All this sounds grand but is only a tiny step in a long process, where the devil lies in the details.

Ceasefire requirement

The very first step is to hammer out a ceasefire. That will happen only when both sides – the United States/Israel and Iran – either concede victory or have exhausted themselves to a standstill. In the first regard, it is unclear what the U.S. sees as a 'win,' with U.S. President Donald Trump shifting goals rapidly – from denuclearisation to regime change, and, after a whole rung of leaders in Iran were killed, to an undefined 'surrender'. As of now, it seems that the U.S.'s ultimate objective is to control the Strait of Hormuz, similar to its 'securing' of the Panama Canal.

Similarly, Israel's early call for a people's uprising in Iran after the assassination of their Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei does not stand scrutiny. Any intelligence agency worth its salt would know that any 'uprising' requires a carefully selected group to lead it, either within or outside the country. Moreover, such a move must happen in the first few weeks of war.

Beyond that, any leadership would be hard-pressed to negotiate an end to war in the face of a furious public. It seems, then, that Israel's objective was to decimate, once and for all, Iran's entire capability to strike. That point has not yet been reached, as is clearly apparent.



Tara Kartha

Former Director,
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Council Secretariat

India could lead a Global South initiative at the United Nations to mediate the West Asia war

Therefore, Tel Aviv will remain lukewarm toward an end to the war.

In terms of the subject of 'exhaustion', the U.S., of all sides, witnessed one of the largest non-violent marches in American history. True, the 'No Kings' protest was not specifically against the war, but it still counts politically. Meanwhile, at least two aircraft carriers of the United States have moved out of range, amid reports of munitions shortages. Israel is being hit, regardless of the famed 'Iron Dome' – its air defence system – though the extent is debatable. Iran is bleeding, and badly. Each side has summarily rejected the demands of the other – at least in public.

Second, mediation is a process. The first step is a ceasefire, which is no easy task when there is zero trust. The U.S., after all, attacked Iran even as negotiations were on. Washington, in turn, accused Israel of unilaterally attacking the Pars gas field, causing a serious escalation. In this case, a ceasefire will need a force capable of enforcing it; primarily, only a physical presence can provide security guarantees. That needs a United Nations mandate to be legal in what is an entirely illegal war.

In sum, a UN Security Council (UNSC) member will have to vote for a peacekeeping force that can act in case of transgressions. That is farcical, even assuming that the U.S. would heed a despised UN.

Revisiting history

There is, however, a way out. In the 1956 Suez Crisis, when Egypt nationalised the Suez Canal, France and the United Kingdom blocked UNSC action. The General Assembly passed the 'Uniting for Peace' resolution which authorised peacekeepers in a rare move that bypassed the UNSC. It brought peace, but only because a U.S. President, in this case Dwight D. Eisenhower, twisted allies' arms. In sum, the UN only works when a strong country decides it should

Third is the question of troop contributors.

Presumably, that will include Egypt, Türkiye and Pakistan, all with large standing armies. Egypt recognises Israel, and Türkiye is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Pakistan may consider a token presence rather than having to honour its Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement with Saudi Arabia, which was signed in 2025. Mr. Dar's visit to China yielded only a five-point peace plan, which also called for the delivery of humanitarian aid. This will require some presence of aid agencies, presumably under UN cover.

Primarily, China is expected to persuade Iran to accept a ceasefire, though 'persuasion' will require something more concrete than a plan. A direct security commitment is out of the question. No one wants a third world war. Other countries, such as Indonesia and Malaysia – both of whom support the Pakistani initiative – may weigh in, with the whole effort funded by the Gulf countries.

So far, so good. But Iran does not entirely trust the mediators. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are allegedly pushing the Americans to attack Iran and 'finish the job. In 2024, the Pakistanis bombed Iran, and Türkiye's Kurdish problem has Iranian tentacles.

A role for New Delhi

India had best keep out of such dubious ventures, though it should talk to all sides to prevent escalation. While China is an unlikely partner in this, there is also Australia, the Southeast Asian countries and India's neighbours, all of whom have been hit hard by the energy crisis.

This might be the time for Indian diplomacy to fire up and rally the 'Global South' at the UN, fostering a united opposition to the war and pushing for a lasting ceasefire. A global voice must be heard, not just through a single channel, no matter how busy. That might just be the impetus that the UN needs.

03A. A path to peace in West Asia beyond Pakistan talks

पश्चिम एशिया में शांति का मार्ग, पाकिस्तान वार्ता से आगे

- **Israel** is being hit despite the **Iron Dome** defence system, though the extent is debated. **इज़राइल** पर **आयरन डोम** के बावजूद हमले हो रहे हैं, हालांकि उनकी तीव्रता पर मतभेद है।
- **Iran** is bleeding badly, and all sides have rejected each other's demands publicly. **ईरान** गंभीर रूप से प्रभावित हो रहा है और सभी पक्षों ने सार्वजनिक रूप से एक-दूसरे की मांगों को ठुकराया है।
- Second, mediation is a **process**, and cease• re is only the **first step**. दूसरा, मध्यस्थता एक **प्रक्रिया** है और युद्धविराम केवल **पहला चरण** है।
- It is di• cult when there is **zero trust** between the sides. जब पक्षों के बीच **विश्वास नहीं** होता, तो यह कठिन हो जाता है।
- The **U.S.** attacked **Iran** even during negotiations, while Washington accused **Israel** of attacking the **Pars gas field**. **अमेरिका** ने बातचीत के दौरान भी **ईरान** पर हमला किया, जबकि उसने **इज़राइल** पर **पार्स गैस क्षेत्र** पर हमले का आरोप लगाया।



- A cease• re will require a **force capable of enforcing it**, with a **physical presence** for security guarantees.
युद्धविराम लागू करने के लिए **बल की आवश्यकता** होगी, जो **भौतिक उपस्थिति** से सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करे।
- That requires a **United Nations mandate** to be legal in an otherwise **illegal war**.
इसके लिए **संयुक्त राष्ट्र का जनादेश** आवश्यक होगा, क्योंकि यह युद्ध अन्यथा **अवैध** है।
- In sum, a **UN Security Council (UNSC)** member must support a **peacekeeping force** to enforce compliance.
अंततः, **संयुक्त राष्ट्र सुरक्षा परिषद** के सदस्य को **शांति सेना** के समर्थन में मतदान करना होगा।
- However, this seems unrealistic, especially if the **U.S.** ignores the **United Nations**.
हालांकि, यह अवास्तविक लगता है, खासकर यदि **अमेरिका संयुक्त राष्ट्र** की अनदेखी करता है।

Revisiting history इतिहास की पुनर्समीक्षा

- There is, however, a way out. In the **1956 Suez Crisis**, when **Egypt nationalised the Suez Canal**, **France and the United Kingdom** blocked **UNSC action**.
हालांकि, एक रास्ता मौजूद है। **1956 के स्वेज संकट** में, जब **मिस्र ने स्वेज नहर का राष्ट्रीयकरण** किया, तब **फ्रांस और यूनाइटेड किंगडम** ने **संयुक्त राष्ट्र सुरक्षा परिषद की कार्रवाई** को रोक दिया।
- The **General Assembly** passed the **'Uniting for Peace' resolution** which authorised **peacekeepers** in a rare move that **bypassed the UNSC**.
इसके बाद **संयुक्त राष्ट्र महासभा** ने **'यूनाइटींग फॉर पीस'** प्रस्ताव पारित किया, जिसने **शांति सेना** को अधिकृत किया और **सुरक्षा परिषद को दरकिनार** किया।
- It brought peace, but only because a **U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower** pressured allies.
इससे शांति आई, लेकिन केवल इसलिए क्योंकि **अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति ड्वाइट डी. आइजनहावर** ने अपने सहयोगियों पर दबाव डाला।
- In sum, the **UN only works when a strong country decides it should**.
संक्षेप में, **संयुक्त राष्ट्र** तभी प्रभावी होता है जब कोई **शक्तिशाली देश** इसे कार्य करने देता है।
- Third is the question of **troop contributors**.
तीसरा प्रश्न **सैनिक योगदानकर्ताओं** का है।
- Presumably, that will include **Egypt, Türkiye and Pakistan**, all with large standing armies.
संभवतः इसमें **मिस्र, तुर्किये और पाकिस्तान** शामिल होंगे, जिनके पास बड़ी सेनाएँ हैं।
- **Egypt** recognises **Israel**, and **Türkiye** is a member of the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization**.
मिस्र इज़राइल को मान्यता देता है, और **तुर्किये नाटो का सदस्य है**।
- **Pakistan** may consider a **token presence** rather than honouring its **Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement with Saudi Arabia (2025)**.
पाकिस्तान संभवतः प्रतीकात्मक उपस्थिति देगा, बजाय **2025 के सऊदी अरब रक्षा समझौते** को पूरी तरह निभाने के।
- **Mr. Ishaq Dar's visit to China** yielded only a **five-point peace plan**, including **humanitarian aid delivery**.
इशाक डार की चीन यात्रा से केवल **पाँच बिंदुओं की शांति योजना** सामने आई, जिसमें **मानवीय सहायता** शामिल थी।
- This will require some presence of **aid agencies**, presumably under **UN cover**.
इसके लिए **सहायता एजेंसियों की उपस्थिति** आवश्यक होगी, संभवतः **संयुक्त राष्ट्र के तहत**।
- Primarily, **China** is expected to persuade **Iran** to accept a **cease• re**, though persuasion will require something more concrete.
मुख्य रूप से **चीन** से अपेक्षा है कि वह **ईरान को युद्धविराम** के लिए मनाए, हालांकि इसके लिए ठोस उपाय आवश्यक होंगे।
- A **direct security commitment** is out of the question as no one wants a **third world war**.
कोई भी **प्रत्यक्ष सुरक्षा प्रतिबद्धता** संभव नहीं है, क्योंकि कोई भी **तीसरा विश्व युद्ध** नहीं चाहता।
- Other countries like **Indonesia and Malaysia**, supporting the **Pakistani initiative**, may contribute, funded by the **Gulf countries**.
इंडोनेशिया और मलेशिया जैसे देश, जो **पाकिस्तान की पहल** का समर्थन करते हैं, योगदान दे सकते हैं, जिसका वित्तपोषण **खाड़ी देश** करेंगे।



- So far, so good. But **Iran** does not entirely trust the mediators.
अभी तक सब ठीक लगता है, लेकिन **ईरान** मध्यस्थों पर पूरी तरह भरोसा नहीं करता।
- **Saudi Arabia and UAE** are allegedly pushing the **U.S.** to attack **Iran** and “finish the job”.
कथित तौर पर **सऊदी अरब और यूएई अमेरिका** को **ईरान पर हमला करने** के लिए प्रेरित कर रहे हैं।
- In **2024, Pakistan bombed Iran**, and **Türkiye’s Kurdish problem** has links with Iran.
2024 में पाकिस्तान ने ईरान पर हमला किया, और **तुर्किये का कुर्द मुद्दा** भी ईरान से जुड़ा है।

A role for New Delhi नई दिल्ली की भूमिका

- **India** had best keep out of such dubious ventures, though it should talk to all sides to prevent escalation.
भारत को ऐसे संदिग्ध प्रयासों से दूर रहना चाहिए, लेकिन सभी पक्षों से संवाद बनाए रखना चाहिए।
- While **China** is an unlikely partner, there are **Australia, Southeast Asian countries and India’s neighbours** affected by the **energy crisis**.
जबकि **चीन** संभावित साझेदार नहीं है, लेकिन **ऑस्ट्रेलिया, दक्षिण-पूर्व एशियाई देश और भारत के पड़ोसी ऊर्जा संकट** से प्रभावित हैं।
- This might be the time for **Indian diplomacy** to rally the **Global South** at the **UN**.
यह समय **भारतीय कूटनीति** के लिए **संयुक्त राष्ट्र में वैश्विक दक्षिण** को एकजुट करने का हो सकता है।
- It can foster a **united opposition to the war** and push for a **lasting cease• re**.
यह **युद्ध के खिलाफ एकजुट विरोध** और **स्थायी युद्धविराम** को बढ़ावा दे सकता है।
- A **global voice** must be heard, not just through a single channel.
एक **वैश्विक आवाज** सुनी जानी चाहिए, न कि केवल एक माध्यम से।
- That might just be the **impetus** that the **UN** needs.
यही वह **प्रेरणा** हो सकती है जिसकी **संयुक्त राष्ट्र** को आवश्यकता है।

GS Paper III: Economy,

TOPICS COVERED

03 April 2026

03A

Hit by West Asia crisis, manufacturing activity slows to 45-month low in March
पश्चिम एशिया संकट से प्रभावित, मार्च में विनिर्माण गतिविधि 45 महीने के निचले स्तर पर

Hit by West Asia crisis, manufacturing activity slows to 45-month low in March

GS III: Economy

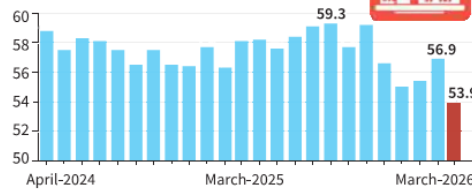
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Manufacturing sector activity slowed to its lowest level in nearly four years in March 2026, dragged down by the impact of the war in West Asia on costs, demand, and new order levels, according to a survey of private sector companies.

The HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) – a measure of overall conditions based on new orders, output, employment, supplier delivery times and stocks of purchases – fell sharply from 56.9 in February to 53.9 in March, marking the lowest reading since June 2022. A reading above 50 denotes expansion, while a reading below that level indicates contraction.

War impact

The manufacturing PMI for March 2026 slipped to a 45-month low



Source: HSBC India Manufacturing PMI

“Growth in India’s manufacturing industry took a step back in March as cost pressures, fierce competition, heightened market uncertainty, and the war in the Middle East all contributed to softer increases in new orders and output,” the report stated. “Firms also faced an intensification of cost pressures, the steepest since August

2022.”

The report went on to say that the two largest sub-components of the PMI – new orders and output – rose at their slowest rates since mid-2022.

“Anecdotal evidence showed that growth was curbed by challenging market conditions, cost pressures, and the war in the Middle East,” it added.

“March data saw input prices increase to the greatest extent in over three and a half years. Aluminium, chemicals, fuel, jute, leather, fabric, oil, rubber, and steel were some of the items reported to have increased in price.”

According to Pranjul Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBC, firms seem to currently be absorbing a large part of the increase in input costs, keeping output prices “relatively contained”.

On a positive note, the report said that Indian manufacturers in March 2026 saw the strongest expansion in external sales since last September, with gains seen from customers in Australia, Brazil, Canada, mainland China, Europe, Japan, West Asia, Türkiye and Vietnam.



03A. Hit by West Asia crisis, manufacturing activity slows to 45-month low in March

पश्चिम एशिया संकट से प्रभावित, मार्च में विनिर्माण गतिविधि 45 महीने के निचले स्तर पर

- Manufacturing sector activity slowed to its lowest level in nearly four years in **March 2026**, dragged down by the impact of the **war in West Asia** on costs, demand, and new order levels, according to a survey of private sector companies.
निजी क्षेत्र की कंपनियों के सर्वेक्षण के अनुसार, **मार्च 2026** में विनिर्माण क्षेत्र की गतिविधि लगभग चार वर्षों के सबसे निचले स्तर पर आ गई, जिसका कारण **पश्चिम एशिया युद्ध** का लागत, मांग और नए ऑर्डर स्तर पर प्रभाव रहा।
- The **HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)** — a measure of overall conditions based on new orders, output, employment, supplier delivery times and stocks of purchases — fell sharply from **56.9 in February to 53.9 in March**, marking the lowest reading since **June 2022**.
HSBC इंडिया मैनुफैक्चरिंग परचेजिंग मैनेजर्स इंडेक्स (PMI) — जो नए ऑर्डर, उत्पादन, रोजगार, आपूर्ति समय और स्टॉक पर आधारित समग्र स्थिति का माप है — **फरवरी के 56.9 से घटकर मार्च में 53.9** हो गया, जो **जून 2022** के बाद सबसे कम स्तर है।
- A reading above **50** denotes expansion, while a reading below that level indicates contraction. **50 से ऊपर** का स्तर विस्तार को दर्शाता है, जबकि इससे नीचे का स्तर संकुचन को दर्शाता है।
- “Growth in India's manufacturing industry took a step back in March as **cost pressures, fierce competition, heightened market uncertainty**, and the **war in the Middle East** all contributed to softer increases in new orders and output,” the report stated.
रिपोर्ट में कहा गया कि मार्च में भारत के विनिर्माण उद्योग की वृद्धि में गिरावट आई क्योंकि **लागत दबाव, कड़ी प्रतिस्पर्धा, बढ़ती बाजार अनिश्चितता**, और **मध्य पूर्व युद्ध** ने नए ऑर्डर और उत्पादन में धीमी वृद्धि में योगदान दिया।
- “Firms also faced an intensification of **cost pressures**, the steepest since **August 2022**.”
“कंपनियों को **लागत दबाव** में वृद्धि का सामना करना पड़ा, जो **अगस्त 2022** के बाद सबसे अधिक थी।”
- The report went on to say that the two largest sub-components of the PMI — **new orders and output** — rose at their slowest rates since **mid-2022**.
रिपोर्ट में आगे कहा गया कि PMI के दो प्रमुख घटक — **नए ऑर्डर और उत्पादन** — **मध्य 2022** के बाद सबसे धीमी दर से बढ़े।
- “**Anecdotal evidence** showed that growth was curbed by challenging market conditions, cost pressures, and the war in the Middle East,” it added.
इसमें कहा गया कि **अनौपचारिक प्रमाण (Anecdotal evidence)** से पता चलता है कि कठिन बाजार परिस्थितियों, लागत दबाव और मध्य पूर्व युद्ध के कारण वृद्धि बाधित हुई।
- “March data saw **input prices increase** to the greatest extent in over **three and a half years**. Aluminium, chemicals, fuel, jute, leather, fabric, oil, rubber, and steel were some of the items reported to have increased in price.”
“मार्च के आंकड़ों में **इनपुट कीमतों में वृद्धि** पिछले **साढ़े तीन वर्षों** में सबसे अधिक रही। एल्युमिनियम, रसायन, ईंधन, जूट, चमड़ा, कपड़ा, तेल, रबर और इस्पात जैसे वस्तुओं की कीमतों में वृद्धि दर्ज की गई।”
- According to **Pranjul Bhandari**, Chief India Economist at HSBC, firms seem to currently be absorbing a large part of the increase in input costs, keeping output prices “relatively contained”.
प्रांजुल भंडारी, HSBC की मुख्य भारत अर्थशास्त्री के अनुसार, कंपनियां वर्तमान में इनपुट लागत में वृद्धि का बड़ा हिस्सा खुद वहन कर रही हैं, जिससे आउटपुट कीमतें “काफी हद तक नियंत्रित” बनी हुई हैं।
- On a positive note, the report said that Indian manufacturers in **March 2026** saw the strongest expansion in **external sales** since last September, with gains seen from customers in **Australia, Brazil, Canada, mainland China, Europe, Japan, West Asia, Türkiye and Vietnam**.
सकारात्मक रूप से, रिपोर्ट में कहा गया कि **मार्च 2026** में भारतीय निर्माताओं ने पिछले सितंबर के बाद से **बाहरी बिक्री** में सबसे मजबूत वृद्धि देखी, जिसमें **ऑस्ट्रेलिया, ब्राजील, कनाडा, मुख्यभूमि चीन, यूरोप, जापान, पश्चिम एशिया, तुर्किये और वियतनाम** से मांग में वृद्धि हुई।



GS Paper III: S&T,	
TOPICS COVERED	03 April 2026
03A	ISRO invites proposals for observation time on Aditya-L1 इसरो ने आदित्य-L1 पर अवलोकन समय के लिए प्रस्ताव आमंत्रित किए
03A	In the running दौड़ में आगे
03A	Artemis II: what is at stake for the U.S.? आर्टेमिस II: अमेरिका के लिए क्या दांव पर है?
03A	West Asia crisis hits Helium supplies पश्चिम एशिया संकट ने हीलियम आपूर्ति को प्रभावित किया
03A	NASA launches 4 astronauts on a crewed lunar mission नासा ने मानवयुक्त चंद्र मिशन पर 4 अंतरिक्ष यात्रियों को लॉन्च किया

ISRO invites proposals for observation time on Aditya-L1

GS III: S&T

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has released the second **Announcement of Opportunity (AO)** inviting proposals from the Indian solar physics community for observation time on the Aditya-L1 mission.

The Aditya-L1 is India's first dedicated space-based solar mission and has been making continuous and comprehensive observations of the sun from the **sun-earth L1 point**.

"The Aditya-L1 mission marks a major milestone in India's space science programme. Scientific data from the mission are regularly released in the public domain for global scientific



A file photo of ISRO's launch vehicle PSLV-C57 rocket carrying Aditya-L1. PTI

utilisation," ISRO said.

At present, there are more than 27 TB of data in the public domain, and several important scientific results have been pu-

blished in international peer-reviewed journals.

ISRO has invited proposals for the **second Aditya-L1 AO** to utilise observation time from the **Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC)** and the **Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT)**.

The proposals must be submitted electronically through the Aditya-L1 Proposal Processing System (ALPPS) hosted at the **Indian Space Science Data Centre (ISSDC)**. ALPPS can be accessed via the ISSDC website. Approved observations for this second AO cycle will be conducted between July 2026 and September 2026.

The deadline for submission of proposals is April 30, 2026.

03A. ISRO invites proposals for observation time on Aditya-L1 इसरो ने आदित्य-L1 पर अवलोकन समय के लिए प्रस्ताव आमंत्रित किए

- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has released the second **Announcement of Opportunity (AO)** inviting proposals from the Indian solar physics community for observation time on the **Aditya-L1 mission**.

भारतीय अंतरिक्ष अनुसंधान संगठन (ISRO) ने दूसरा अवसर घोषणा (AO) जारी किया है, जिसमें भारतीय सौर भौतिकी समुदाय से आदित्य-L1 मिशन पर अवलोकन समय के लिए प्रस्ताव आमंत्रित किए गए हैं।



- The **Aditya-L1** is India's **first dedicated space-based solar mission** and has been making continuous and comprehensive observations of the sun from the **sun-earth L1 point**.
आदित्य-L1 भारत का **पहला समर्पित अंतरिक्ष आधारित सौर मिशन** है और यह **सूर्य-पृथ्वी L1 बिंदु** से सूर्य का लगातार और व्यापक अवलोकन कर रहा है।
- "The **Aditya-L1 mission** marks a major milestone in India's **space science programme**. Scientific data from the mission are regularly released in the public domain for global scientific utilisation," ISRO said.
"आदित्य-L1 मिशन भारत के **अंतरिक्ष विज्ञान कार्यक्रम** में एक महत्वपूर्ण मील का पत्थर है। मिशन से प्राप्त वैज्ञानिक डेटा नियमित रूप से वैश्विक उपयोग के लिए सार्वजनिक डोमेन में जारी किया जाता है," इसरो ने कहा।
- At present, there are more than **27 TB of data** in the public domain, and several important scientific results have been published in **international peer-reviewed journals**.
वर्तमान में सार्वजनिक डोमेन में **27 TB से अधिक डेटा** उपलब्ध है, और कई महत्वपूर्ण वैज्ञानिक परिणाम **अंतरराष्ट्रीय समीक्षित पत्रिकाओं** में प्रकाशित हुए हैं।
- ISRO has invited proposals for the second **Aditya-L1 AO** to utilise observation time from the **Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC)** and the **Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT)**.
इसरो ने दूसरे **आदित्य-L1 AO** के लिए **Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC)** और **Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT)** से अवलोकन समय के उपयोग हेतु प्रस्ताव आमंत्रित किए हैं।
- The proposals must be submitted electronically through the **Aditya-L1 Proposal Processing System (ALPPS)** hosted at the **Indian Space Science Data Centre (ISSDC)**.
प्रस्तावों को **Indian Space Science Data Centre (ISSDC)** पर होस्ट किए गए **Aditya-L1 Proposal Processing System (ALPPS)** के माध्यम से इलेक्ट्रॉनिक रूप से जमा करना होगा।
- **ALPPS** can be accessed via the **ISSDC website**.
ALPPS को **ISSDC वेबसाइट** के माध्यम से एक्सेस किया जा सकता है।
- Approved observations for this second AO cycle will be conducted between **July 2026 and September 2026**.
इस दूसरे AO चक्र के लिए स्वीकृत अवलोकन **जुलाई 2026 से सितंबर 2026** के बीच किए जाएंगे।
- The deadline for submission of proposals is **April 30, 2026**.
प्रस्ताव जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि **30 अप्रैल 2026** है।



GS III: S&T

In the running

The Artemis II launch assures the U.S.'s partners that NASA is on track

The sight of the giant rocket bearing the NASA Artemis II mission and its crew of four ascending into the sky in the early hours of April 2 (IST) brought cheers among onlookers on the ground and around the world. The mission has taken many years and several billion dollars to develop and brings the prospect of returning humans to the moon an equally giant step closer. The U.S. and China are currently leading the two poles of an international moonward race. A race implies winners and losers because they are keen to corner precious water deposits and landscapes on the moon and set up functional lunar bases, which could bias future missions in the winner's favour. NASA's Artemis programme and China's International Lunar Research Station are designed to include research outposts, refuelling depots, communication relays, and resource extraction sites, which would give their operators a head-start on any mission that depends on venturing further into cis-lunar space or towards Mars. While the idea of winning and losing is objectionable *vis-à-vis* the celestial commons, which should present equal opportunities to all participants in the global space programme, it is also naive to believe that the race is motivated by the urge to explore the universe. Extending geopolitical borders into space and projecting national prestige have been considerable driving forces of the new Space Age.

China's efforts have been more sheltered and powered predominantly by its own impetus, although they are no less impressive. The U.S., however, has included commercial operators and dozens of other countries via the Artemis Accords. The latter arrangement has made for apparently slower progress but in exchange for greater predictability in future, if and when the Artemis programme succeeds in full and assuming that the U.S. leadership will honour its commitment. India signed the Accords in 2023, thus agreeing to use outer space peacefully, transparently, and interoperably and to share data and resources according to their norms. While India is not an active participant in the Artemis missions in the way that Europe and Japan are, its human spaceflight programme, 'Gaganyaan', is in the works and it also plans to build a space station and take Indians to the moon by 2040. India could thus provide payloads and experiments for future launches, explore joint Artemis-Gaganyaan missions, and co-develop lunar activities under the Accords rather than start from scratch. These are useful benefits. In addition to reassuring the U.S. government that NASA remains in the race to the moon, the Artemis II launch allows the country's partners to look to the next steps.

it is also naive to believe that the race is motivated by the urge to **explore the universe**.

जबकि **अंतरिक्ष को साझा संपत्ति** मानते हुए जीत-हार की अवधारणा आपत्तिजनक है, यह मानना भी सरलता होगी कि यह दौड़ केवल **ब्रह्मांड की खोज** के लिए है।

- Extending **geopolitical borders into space** and projecting **national prestige** have been considerable driving forces of the new Space Age.
भू-राजनीतिक सीमाओं का अंतरिक्ष तक विस्तार और राष्ट्रीय प्रतिष्ठा का प्रदर्शन नए अंतरिक्ष युग की प्रमुख प्रेरक शक्तियाँ हैं।
- **China's efforts** have been more sheltered and powered predominantly by its own impetus, although they are no less impressive.
चीन के प्रयास अधिक स्वायत्त और मुख्यतः अपने संसाधनों से संचालित रहे हैं, हालांकि वे कम प्रभावशाली नहीं हैं।
- The **U.S.**, however, has included **commercial operators and dozens of other countries via the Artemis Accords**.
वहीं **अमेरिका** ने **आर्टेमिस समझौते** के माध्यम से **निजी कंपनियों और कई देशों** को शामिल किया है।
- The latter arrangement has made for apparently slower progress but in exchange for greater **predictability in future**, if and when the **Artemis programme** succeeds in full and assuming that the **U.S. leadership** will honour its commitment.

03A. In the running दौड़ में आगे

- The sight of the giant rocket bearing the **NASA Artemis II mission** and its crew of four ascending into the sky in the early hours of **April 2 (IST)** brought cheers among onlookers on the ground and around the world.

नासा आर्टेमिस II मिशन और उसके चार सदस्यीय दल को लेकर विशाल रॉकेट का **2 अप्रैल (आईएसटी)** की सुबह आकाश में उठना, जमीन पर और दुनिया भर में लोगों के बीच उत्साह का कारण बना।

- The mission has taken many years and several **billion dollars** to develop and brings the prospect of returning humans to the moon an equally giant step closer.

इस मिशन को विकसित करने में कई वर्ष और कई **अरब डॉलर** लगे हैं और यह मनुष्यों को फिर से चंद्रमा पर भेजने की संभावना को एक बड़ा कदम आगे ले गया है।

- The **U.S. and China** are currently leading the two poles of an international **moonward race**.

वर्तमान में **अमेरिका और चीन** अंतरराष्ट्रीय **चंद्रमा दौड़** के दो प्रमुख केंद्र हैं।

- A race implies winners and losers because they are keen to corner precious **water deposits and landscapes on the moon** and set up functional **lunar bases**, which could bias future missions in the winner's favour.

यह दौड़ विजेता और पराजित का संकेत देती है क्योंकि दोनों **चंद्रमा पर जल भंडार और भू-भाग** पर नियंत्रण स्थापित करना चाहते हैं और **चंद्र आधार** बनाना चाहते हैं, जिससे भविष्य के मिशनों में लाभ मिल सके।

- **NASA's Artemis programme and China's International Lunar Research Station** are designed to include **research outposts, refuelling depots, communication relays, and resource extraction sites**, which would give their operators a head-start on any mission that depends on venturing further into **cis-lunar space or towards Mars**.

नासा का आर्टेमिस कार्यक्रम और चीन का अंतरराष्ट्रीय चंद्र अनुसंधान स्टेशन अनुसंधान केंद्र, ईंधन भंडार, संचार प्रणाली और संसाधन निष्कर्षण स्थल शामिल करने के लिए बनाए गए हैं, जो **चंद्र क्षेत्र या मंगल** की ओर जाने वाले मिशनों में बढ़त देंगे।

- While the idea of winning and losing is objectionable *vis-à-vis* the **celestial commons**, which should present equal opportunities to all participants in the global space programme,



इस व्यवस्था के कारण प्रगति धीमी दिखती है, लेकिन इससे भविष्य में अधिक स्थिरता और पूर्वानुमान संभव होगा, यदि आर्टेमिस कार्यक्रम सफल होता है और अमेरिका नेतृत्व अपनी प्रतिबद्धता निभाता है।

- **India signed the Accords in 2023, thus agreeing to use outer space peacefully, transparently, and interoperably and to share data and resources according to their norms.**

भारत ने 2023 में समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर किए, जिससे उसने अंतरिक्ष का उपयोग शांतिपूर्ण, पारदर्शी और सहयोगात्मक तरीके से करने और डेटा व संसाधन साझा करने पर सहमति दी।

- While India is not an active participant in the Artemis missions in the way that Europe and Japan are, its human space flight programme, 'Gaganyaan', is in the works and it also plans to build a space station and take Indians to the moon by 2040.

हालांकि भारत आर्टेमिस मिशनों में यूरोप और जापान की तरह सक्रिय नहीं है, लेकिन उसका मानव अंतरिक्ष कार्यक्रम 'गगनयान' चल रहा है और वह 2040 तक अंतरिक्ष स्टेशन बनाने और भारतीयों को चंद्रमा पर भेजने की योजना बना रहा है।

- India could thus provide payloads and experiments for future launches, explore joint Artemis-Gaganyaan missions, and co-develop lunar activities under the Accords rather than start from scratch.

इस प्रकार भारत भविष्य के प्रक्षेपणों के लिए पेलोड और प्रयोग प्रदान कर सकता है, संयुक्त मिशनों की संभावना तलाश सकता है और चंद्र गतिविधियों का सह-विकास कर सकता है।

- These are useful benefits.
- ये उपयोगी लाभ हैं।
- In addition to reassuring the U.S. government that NASA remains in the race to the moon, the Artemis II launch allows the country's partners to look to the next steps.
- आर्टेमिस II का प्रक्षेपण न केवल अमेरिकी सरकार को आश्वस्त करता है कि नासा अभी भी चंद्र दौड़ में है, बल्कि यह उसके साझेदार देशों को आगे की दिशा देखने का अवसर भी देता है।



Artemis II: what is at stake for U.S.?

The Artemis II mission sent a crew of four astronauts beyond low-earth orbit for the first time since 1972; it aims to prove the whole system works as designed and accelerate plans to land U.S. astronauts on the moon amid increasing competition from China

GS III: S&T

MOB

EXPLAINER

Vasudevan Mukunth

The NASA Artemis II mission launched in the early hours of April 2 (IST). The giant rocket ascended en route to sending a crew of four astronauts to near the moon for the first time in more than half a century. In so doing, it marked a milestone for the U.S. space programme. Its crew – commander Reid Wiseman, pilot Victor Glover, mission specialist Christina Koch, and Canadian Space Agency astronaut Jeremy Hansen – are also the first humans to travel beyond low-earth orbit since Apollo 17 in 1972. Glover also became the first person of colour, Koch the first woman, and Hansen the first non-U.S. citizen to embark on a lunar trajectory.

The Artemis II mission uses the Space Launch System (SLS) rocket and the crew capsule is called Orion. The SLS will propel Orion into a free-return trajectory around the far side of the moon, reaching around 7,500 km from the moon's surface before the earth's gravity pulls them back to splash down in the Pacific Ocean in a little over a week.

The mission does not plan to land on the moon. Instead, NASA is flying it to prove that the whole system – from the ground teams to the rocket and its crew – works as designed and the processes to land humans on the moon are ready.

Mission profile

After the SLS core stage is separated, the crew will spend 24 hours in a high orbit around the earth as it checks the capsule's life-support and environment systems. If they're all in order, they will fire Orion's trans-lunar injection burn. The crew will also test manual piloting and proximity operations, communications and navigation systems, and a high-speed data relay and collect data about physiological and biological responses of the human body to deep-space travel.

Once Orion has finished going around the moon, it will be pulled towards the earth by gravity. NASA engineers expect the capsule will enter the earth's atmosphere at a speed of around 40,000 km/hr. Its 5-metre-wide heat shield will endure temperatures as high as 5,000° C.

NASA will be collecting important data at this time because during the Artemis I mission in 2022, engineers found that Orion's heat shield was eroded during re-entry as gases trapped in the shield's material cracked it. In response, NASA used the same material but this time modified the re-entry trajectory so that Orion spends less time in the atmosphere as it descends.

Artemis overhaul

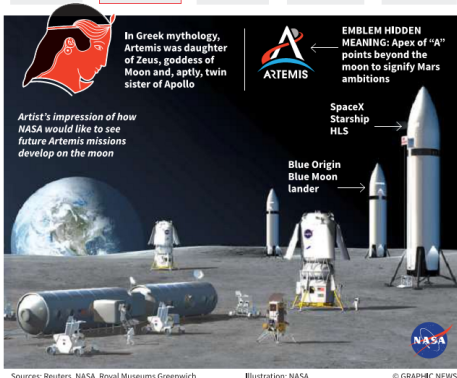
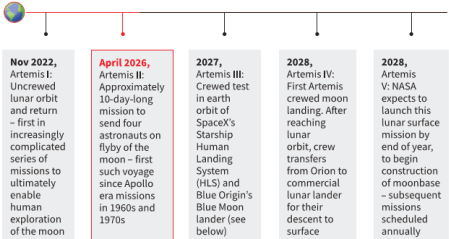
Artemis II will be the first test flight in the programme since NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman overhauled the programme's milestones earlier this year. In the older plan, the Artemis III mission was to land humans on the moon for the first time in the 21st century. In the new plan, however, Artemis III will launch a crewed Orion capsule in earth orbit to dock with prototype lunar landers designed by SpaceX and Blue Origin to ensure the technology works. Mr. Isaacman has said this mission is currently planned for 2027. NASA will actually land American astronauts on the moon in the Artemis IV mission, currently planned for 2028.

This is why SpaceX and Blue Origin

Artemis space programme

NASA's ambitious Artemis programme sees the U.S. endeavour to return humans to the moon's surface, as well as construct the first moonbase on our nearest celestial neighbour

WHERE WE ARE IN ARTEMIS MISSION TIMELINE



recently announced that they would focus on their plans to help U.S. astronauts reach the moon in the near future.

The restructure also addressed a deeper operational problem. NASA flew the Artemis I test flight in late 2022 and Artemis II has now flown in 2026. This three-year gap included workforce attrition that could have resulted in loss of institutional memory, forcing parts of the mission to start afresh. So instead, NASA abandoned a plan to upgrade SLS for the Artemis II mission; instead, it flew with the same configuration that flew on Artemis I. NASA also said it will increase the launch frequency, with the additional mission in 2027, followed by at least one mission landing on the moon's surface from 2028 onwards.

NASA also cancelled the Lunar Gateway project to build a space station orbiting the moon, and reallocated its components to infrastructure that will eventually be installed on the moon's south pole.

The Chinese pressure

Mr. Isaacman wasn't only responding to technical challenges. A big reason for NASA to change its plans to return to the moon so drastically is China. As he put it: "...with credible competition from our greatest geopolitical adversary increasing by the day, we need to move faster, eliminate delays, and achieve our objectives."

China is set to conduct a test flight of its



new Mengzhou crewed spacecraft this year. Its new and powerful Long March-10 rocket made its first low-altitude flight on February 11. The Lanyue lunar lander, which will carry astronauts from orbit to the surface, is expected to make its maiden flight between 2028 and 2029. As for robotic missions: the Chang'e 7 moon mission is also expected this year. It will explore the moon's south pole region for resources like water. The Chang'e 8 mission is expected around 2029: it will have technologies to use resources on the moon itself, like a 3D printer that will try to build structures using lunar soil.

Importantly, China also plans to land humans on the moon by 2030 and subsequently unfurl its 'International Lunar Research Station' in the 2030s.

As the U.S.-China rivalry continues to dig in on the earth, with the entrenched hegemon reluctant to cede dominance and the rising power determined to reshape the international order, the space

race they're leading wouldn't be what it is if it weren't for a particular limited resource: water on the moon.

There are craters in the moon's south pole region that have been permanently shadowed. These areas have escaped the drastic temperature swings on the parts of the moon that are exposed to the sun (from 127° C during the day to 173° C at night). As a result, they are expected to contain water ice. The thinking goes: whichever country establishes infrastructure first in this area could corner these water ice deposits and shape the scientific and geopolitical rules for everything that follows.

But in 2025, former NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine told a Senate Commerce Committee hearing that without significant changes, it is highly unlikely the U.S. will beat China's projected timeline to land people on the moon.

If Artemis II and III go as planned and Artemis IV is able to lift off on time, U.S. astronauts could reach the moon's surface at least two years before China's mission. However, that depends on many things happening right on schedule – perhaps too many. Artemis I was delayed four times before it launched; Artemis II was delayed at least thrice. More broadly, whereas China has followed an incremental approach driven by the state, the U.S. has been following a commercial model with a large coalition: more than 50 countries (through the Artemis Accords) plus private companies like SpaceX and Blue Origin.

Success versus failure

The Artemis II mission will last 10 days. Assuming it succeeds on all counts (since it is a test flight), it will prove the SLS rocket and the Orion crew capsule work, encourage NASA's partners to focus on Artemis III, potentially galvanise political commitment to land U.S. astronauts on the moon before China does.

Delaying launches, especially those including a human crew, is par for the course in spaceflight because safety comes first. But that doesn't mean these decisions exist in a vacuum. If Artemis II had been delayed again, for example, public as well as institutional confidence in SLS and Orion could have eroded further. There could have been cascading complications for NASA's partners, including the European and Japanese space agencies.

A delay could also have prompted the U.S. government to revisit the question of whether the programme is too expensive. It has so far cost at least \$39 billion and each new launch costs at least \$2 billion. SpaceX also still has to demonstrate the in-orbit refuelling technology that lunar missions require.

If, however, Artemis II had failed (or fails in the latter part of the mission), the time-wise consequences range from a small but important delay if the failure is non-catastrophic to a delay of several years as the programme is halted altogether if the failure is catastrophic. It will also give reason for NASA's partners to consider whether they should suspend or possibly exit their involvement and for the U.S. government to consider a more panicked programme just to beat China to the moon.

So as Artemis II launched, it did more than just send four people farther from the earth than any mission has in 54 years. It signalled that the U.S. is still in the race, against a China that has kept the U.S. anxious by almost always sticking to its schedule even as it thunders towards a crewed landing on the moon by 2030.

THE GIST

The mission will spend 24 hours in high earth orbit to check the capsule's life-support and environment systems, followed by a trans-lunar injection burn and tests of manual piloting, communications and navigation systems.

The capsule is expected to enter earth's atmosphere at around 40,000 km/hr, with its heat shield enduring temperatures as high as 5,000°C, as NASA collects important data after erosion issues in Artemis I.

The Artemis programme was overhauled recently to reduce complexity, revise timelines, and increase the launch frequency to respond to competition from China.

03A. Artemis II: what is at stake for the U.S.?

आर्टेमिस II: अमेरिका के लिए क्या दांव पर है?

Artemis II: what is at stake for the U.S.?

आर्टेमिस II: अमेरिका के लिए क्या दांव पर है?

- The **NASA Artemis II mission** launched in the early hours of **April 2 (IST)**. **नासा आर्टेमिस II मिशन का प्रक्षेपण 2 अप्रैल (आईएसटी) की सुबह के शुरुआती घंटों में हुआ।**
- The giant rocket ascended en route to sending a crew of four astronauts to near the moon for the first time in more than half a century. **विशाल रॉकेट चार अंतरिक्ष यात्रियों के दल को चंद्रमा के पास भेजने के लिए उड़ा, जो आधी सदी से अधिक समय में पहली बार हो रहा है।**



- In so doing, it marked a milestone for the **U.S. space programme**.
ऐसा करते हुए, इसने **अमेरिकी अंतरिक्ष कार्यक्रम** के लिए एक मील का पत्थर स्थापित किया।
- Its crew — commander **Reid Wiseman**, pilot **Victor Glover**, mission specialist **Christina Koch**, and **Canadian Space Agency astronaut Jeremy Hansen** — are also the • rst humans to travel beyond **low-earth orbit** since **Apollo 17 in 1972**.
इसका दल — कमांडर **रीड वाइजमैन**, पायलट **विक्टर ग्लोवर**, मिशन विशेषज्ञ **क्रिस्टिना कोच**, और **कनाडाई अंतरिक्ष एजेंसी के अंतरिक्ष यात्री जेरेमी हैसेन** — 1972 में अपोलो 17 के बाद पहली बार **निर्भ्र पृथ्वी कक्षा** से बाहर जाने वाले मानव हैं।
- **Glover** also became the • rst person of colour, **Koch** the • rst woman, and **Hansen** the • rst non-U.S. citizen to embark on a **lunar trajectory**.
ग्लोवर पहले रंगभेद से जुड़े व्यक्ति, **कोच** पहली महिला, और **हैसेन** पहले गैर-अमेरिकी नागरिक बने जिन्होंने **चंद्र पथ** पर यात्रा शुरू की।
- The **Artemis II mission** uses the **Space Launch System (SLS)** rocket and the crew capsule is called **Orion**.
आर्टेमिस II मिशन में अंतरिक्ष प्रक्षेपण प्रणाली रॉकेट का उपयोग किया गया है और कू कैप्सूल को **ओरायन** कहा जाता है।
- The **SLS** will propel **Orion** into a **free-return trajectory** around the far side of the moon, reaching around **7,500 km** from the moon's surface before the earth's gravity pulls them back to splash down in the **Pacific Ocean** in a little over a week.
अंतरिक्ष प्रक्षेपण प्रणाली ओरायन को चंद्रमा के दूर वाले हिस्से के चारों ओर **मुक्त-वापसी पथ** में भेजेगा, जो चंद्र सतह से लगभग **7,500 किमी** तक पहुंचेगा, इसके बाद पृथ्वी का गुरुत्वाकर्षण उन्हें लगभग एक सप्ताह में **प्रशांत महासागर** में वापस ले आएगा।
- The mission does not plan to land on the moon.
यह मिशन चंद्रमा पर उतरने की योजना नहीं बनाता है।
- Instead, **NASA** is • ying it to prove that the whole system — from the ground teams to the rocket and its crew — works as designed and the processes to land humans on the moon are ready.
इसके बजाय, **नासा** इसे यह साबित करने के लिए उड़ा रहा है कि पूरा तंत्र — ज़मीनी टीम से लेकर रॉकेट और उसके दल तक — योजना के अनुसार कार्य करता है और चंद्रमा पर मानव को उतारने की प्रक्रियाएँ तैयार हैं।

Mission profile मिशन प्रोफाइल

- After the **SLS core stage** is separated, the crew will spend **24 hours** in a high orbit around the earth as it checks the capsule's **life-support and environment systems**.
कोर चरण के अलग होने के बाद, दल **24 घंटे** पृथ्वी की उच्च कक्षा में बिताएगा और कैप्सूल की **जीवन-समर्थन और पर्यावरण प्रणालियों** की जांच करेगा।
- If they're all in order, they will • re **Orion's trans-lunar injection burn**.
यदि सब कुछ सही रहा, तो वे **ओरायन का चंद्र-पथ प्रवेश प्रज्वलन** शुरू करेंगे।
- The crew will also test **manual piloting and proximity operations, communications and navigation systems**, and a **high-speed data relay** and collect data about **physiological and biological responses** of the human body to **deep-space travel**.
दल **हाथ से संचालन और निकटता क्रियाएँ, संचार और दिशा-निर्देशन प्रणालियाँ**, तथा **उच्च गति डेटा प्रसारण** का परीक्षण करेगा और **गहरे अंतरिक्ष यात्रा** के दौरान मानव शरीर की **शारीरिक और जैविक प्रतिक्रियाओं** का डेटा एकत्र करेगा।
- Once **Orion** has • nished going around the moon, it will be pulled towards the earth by gravity.
जब **ओरायन** चंद्रमा का चक्कर पूरा कर लेगा, तब उसे गुरुत्वाकर्षण द्वारा पृथ्वी की ओर खींचा जाएगा।
- **NASA engineers** expect the capsule will enter the earth's atmosphere at a speed of around **40,000 km/hr**.
नासा इंजीनियरों के अनुसार, कैप्सूल लगभग **40,000 किमी/घंटा** की गति से पृथ्वी के वायुमंडल में प्रवेश करेगा।
- Its **5-metre-wide heat shield** will endure temperatures as high as **5,000°C**.
इसका **5 मीटर चौड़ा ऊष्मा कवच** लगभग **5,000°C** तक के तापमान को सहन करेगा।



- **NASA will be collecting important data at this time because during the Artemis I mission in 2022**, engineers found that **Orion's heat shield** was eroded during re-entry as gases trapped in the shield's material cracked it.
इस समय नासा महत्वपूर्ण डेटा एकत्र करेगा क्योंकि 2022 के आर्टेमिस I मिशन के दौरान इंजीनियरों ने पाया कि ओरायन का ऊष्मा कवच पुनः प्रवेश के समय क्षतिग्रस्त हो गया था।
- In response, **NASA** used the same material but this time modified the **re-entry trajectory** so that **Orion** spends less time in the atmosphere as it descends.
इसके जवाब में, नासा ने उसी सामग्री का उपयोग किया लेकिन इस बार पुनः प्रवेश पथ को संशोधित किया ताकि ओरायन वायुमंडल में कम समय बिताए।

Artemis overhaul आर्टेमिस ओवरहॉल

- **Artemis II** will be the **first test flight** in the programme since **NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman** overhauled the programme's milestones earlier this year.
आर्टेमिस II इस कार्यक्रम की पहली परीक्षण उड़ान होगी, जब से नासा प्रशासक जेरेड आइज़ैकमैन ने इस वर्ष की शुरुआत में कार्यक्रम के लक्ष्यों में बदलाव किया है।
- In the older plan, the **Artemis III mission** was to land humans on the moon for the **first time** in the **21st century**.
पुराने योजना में, आर्टेमिस III मिशन को 21वीं सदी में पहली बार मानव को चंद्रमा पर उतारना था।
- In the new plan, however, **Artemis III** will launch a crewed **Orion capsule** to earth orbit to dock with prototype lunar landers designed by **SpaceX and Blue Origin** to ensure the technology works.
नई योजना में, आर्टेमिस III एक मानवयुक्त ओरायन कैप्सूल को पृथ्वी की कक्षा में भेजेगा, जहाँ यह स्पेसएक्स और ब्लू ओरिजिन द्वारा बनाए गए प्रोटोटाइप चंद्र लैंडरों से जुड़ेगा।
- **Mr. Isaacman** has said this mission is currently planned for **2027**.
श्री आइज़ैकमैन ने कहा है कि यह मिशन वर्तमान में 2027 के लिए निर्धारित है।
- **NASA** will actually land American astronauts on the moon in the **Artemis IV mission**, currently planned for **2028**.
नासा वास्तव में अमेरिकी अंतरिक्ष यात्रियों को चंद्रमा पर आर्टेमिस IV मिशन में उतारेगा, जो वर्तमान में 2028 के लिए निर्धारित है।
- This is why **SpaceX and Blue Origin** recently announced that they would focus on their plans to help **U.S. astronauts** reach the moon in the near future.
यही कारण है कि स्पेसएक्स और ब्लू ओरिजिन ने हाल ही में घोषणा की कि वे अमेरिकी अंतरिक्ष यात्रियों को निकट भविष्य में चंद्रमा तक पहुंचाने की अपनी योजनाओं पर ध्यान केंद्रित करेंगे।
- The restructure also addressed a deeper operational problem.
इस पुनर्गठन ने एक गहरे संचालन संबंधी समस्या को भी संबोधित किया।
- **NASA** **rewrote the Artemis I test flight in late 2022** and **Artemis II** has now **launched in 2026**.
नासा ने 2022 के अंत में आर्टेमिस I परीक्षण उड़ान संचालित की थी और अब आर्टेमिस II ने 2026 में उड़ान भरी है।
- This **three-year gap** included workforce attrition that could have resulted in loss of **institutional memory**, forcing parts of the mission to start afresh.
इस तीन वर्ष के अंतराल में कार्यबल में कमी शामिल थी, जिससे संस्थागत स्मृति के नुकसान की संभावना थी और मिशन के कुछ हिस्सों को फिर से शुरू करना पड़ सकता था।
- So instead, **NASA** abandoned a plan to upgrade **SLS** for the **Artemis II mission**; instead, it **launched with the same configuration that flew on Artemis I**.
इसलिए, नासा ने आर्टेमिस II मिशन के लिए अंतरिक्ष प्रक्षेपण प्रणाली को उन्नत करने की योजना को छोड़ दिया और उसी विन्यास के साथ उड़ान भरी जो आर्टेमिस I में था।
- **NASA** also said it will increase the launch frequency, with the additional mission in **2027**, followed by at least one mission landing on the moon's surface from **2028 onwards**.
नासा ने यह भी कहा कि वह प्रक्षेपण की आवृत्ति बढ़ाएगा, 2027 में एक अतिरिक्त मिशन के साथ और 2028 के बाद चंद्र सतह पर कम से कम एक मिशन उतारेगा।
- **NASA** also cancelled the **Lunar Gateway project** to build a space station orbiting the moon, and reallocated its components to infrastructure that will eventually be installed on the moon's south pole.



नासा ने चंद्रमा की कक्षा में अंतरिक्ष स्टेशन बनाने की लूनर गेटवे परियोजना को भी रद्द कर दिया और इसके घटकों को उस बुनियादी ढांचे में पुनः आवंटित किया जो अंततः चंद्रमा के दक्षिणी ध्रुव पर स्थापित होगा।

The Chinese pressure चीनी दबाव

- Mr. **Isaacman** wasn't only responding to technical challenges.
श्री **आइजैकमैन** केवल तकनीकी चुनौतियों का ही जवाब नहीं दे रहे थे।
- A big reason for **NASA** to change its plans to return to the moon so drastically is **China**.
नासा द्वारा चंद्रमा पर लौटने की योजना में बड़े बदलाव का एक प्रमुख कारण **चीन** है।
- As he put it: "... with credible competition from our greatest geopolitical adversary increasing by the day, we need to move faster, eliminate delays, and achieve our objectives."
जैसा उन्होंने कहा: "... हमारे सबसे बड़े भू-राजनीतिक प्रतिद्वंद्वी से बढ़ती प्रतिस्पर्धा के साथ, हमें तेजी से आगे बढ़ना, देरी को समाप्त करना और अपने उद्देश्यों को प्राप्त करना होगा।"
- **China** is set to conduct a test flight of its new **Mengzhou crewed spacecraft** this year.
चीन इस वर्ष अपने नए **मेंगझोउ मानवयुक्त अंतरिक्ष यान** का परीक्षण उड़ान करने वाला है।
- Its new and powerful **Long March-10 rocket** made its first low-altitude flight on **February 11**.
इसका नया और शक्तिशाली **लॉन्ग मार्च-10 रॉकेट** ने **11 फरवरी** को अपनी पहली निम्न ऊंचाई उड़ान भरी।
- The **Lanyue lunar lander**, which will carry astronauts from orbit to the surface, is expected to make its maiden flight between **2028 and 2029**.
लान्यू चंद्र लैंडर, जो अंतरिक्ष यात्रियों को कक्षा से सतह तक ले जाएगा, की पहली उड़ान **2028 और 2029** के बीच अपेक्षित है।
- As for robotic missions: the **Chang'e 7 moon mission** is also expected this year.
रोबोटिक मिशनों के रूप में: **चांग'ई 7 चंद्र मिशन** भी इस वर्ष अपेक्षित है।
- It will explore the moon's **south pole region** for resources like **water**.
यह चंद्रमा के **दक्षिणी ध्रुव क्षेत्र** में **जल** जैसे संसाधनों की खोज करेगा।
- The **Chang'e 8 mission** is expected around **2029**: it will have technologies to use resources on the moon itself, like a **3D printer** that will try to build structures using **lunar soil**.
चांग'ई 8 मिशन लगभग **2029** में अपेक्षित है: इसमें ऐसी तकनीकें होंगी जो चंद्रमा पर ही संसाधनों का उपयोग करेगी, जैसे **त्रि-आयामी प्रिंटर** जो **चंद्र मिट्टी** से संरचनाएँ बनाने का प्रयास करेगा।
- Importantly, **China** also plans to land humans on the moon by **2030** and subsequently unfurl its '**International Lunar Research Station**' in the **2030s**.
महत्वपूर्ण रूप से, **चीन 2030** तक मानव को चंद्रमा पर उतारने और उसके बाद **2030 के दशक** में अपना **अंतरराष्ट्रीय चंद्र अनुसंधान स्टेशन** स्थापित करने की योजना बना रहा है।
- As the **U.S.-China rivalry** continues to dig in on the earth, with the entrenched hegemon reluctant to cede dominance and the rising power determined to reshape the international order, the space race they're leading wouldn't be what it is if it weren't for a particular limited resource: **water on the moon**.
जैसे-जैसे **अमेरिका-चीन प्रतिद्वंद्विता** पृथ्वी पर गहराती जा रही है, और एक स्थापित शक्ति प्रभुत्व छोड़ने को तैयार नहीं है तथा उभरती शक्ति अंतरराष्ट्रीय व्यवस्था को बदलने के लिए दृढ़ है, उनके द्वारा संचालित अंतरिक्ष दौड़ वैसी नहीं होती यदि एक सीमित संसाधन **चंद्रमा पर जल** न होता।
- There are craters in the moon's **south pole region** that have been permanently shadowed.
चंद्रमा के **दक्षिणी ध्रुव क्षेत्र** में ऐसे क्रेटर हैं जो स्थायी रूप से छाया में रहते हैं।
- These areas have escaped the drastic temperature swings on the parts of the moon that are exposed to the sun (from **127°C** during the day to **-173°C** at night).
ये क्षेत्र उन हिस्सों की तीव्र तापमान परिवर्तन से बचे हुए हैं जो सूर्य के संपर्क में आते हैं (दिन में **127°C** से रात में **-173°C** तक)।
- As a result, they are expected to contain **water ice**.
परिणामस्वरूप, इनमें **जल बर्फ** होने की संभावना है।
- The thinking goes: whichever country establishes infrastructure first in this area could corner these **water ice deposits** and shape the scientific and geopolitical rules for everything that follows.
विचार यह है कि जो देश इस क्षेत्र में पहले बुनियादी ढांचा स्थापित करेगा, वह इन **जल बर्फ भंडारों** पर नियंत्रण पा सकता है और आगे के वैज्ञानिक तथा भू-राजनीतिक नियम निर्धारित कर सकता है।



- But in **2025**, former **NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine** told a Senate Commerce Committee hearing that without significant changes, it is highly unlikely the U.S. will beat China's projected timeline to land people on the moon.
लेकिन **2025** में, पूर्व नासा प्रशासक **जिम ब्राइडेनस्टाइन** ने सीनेट वाणिज्य समिति की सुनवाई में कहा कि महत्वपूर्ण बदलावों के बिना अमेरिका का चीन की समयसीमा से पहले चंद्रमा पर मानव उतारना अत्यंत असंभव है।
- If **Artemis II and III** go as planned and **Artemis IV** is able to lift off on time, **U.S. astronauts** could reach the moon's surface at least **two years** before China's mission.
यदि **आर्टेमिस II और III** योजना के अनुसार चलते हैं और **आर्टेमिस IV** समय पर प्रक्षेपित होता है, तो **अमेरिकी अंतरिक्ष यात्री** चीन के मिशन से कम से कम **दो वर्ष पहले** चंद्र सतह पर पहुंच सकते हैं।
- However, that depends on many things happening right on schedule — perhaps too many. हालांकि, यह कई चीजों के सही समय पर होने पर निर्भर करता है — शायद बहुत अधिक।
- **Artemis I** was delayed **four times** before it launched; **Artemis II** was delayed at least **thrice**. **आर्टेमिस I** को प्रक्षेपण से पहले **चार बार** विलंबित किया गया; **आर्टेमिस II** को कम से कम **तीन बार** विलंबित किया गया।
- More broadly, whereas **China** has followed an **incremental approach driven by the state**, the **U.S.** has been following a **commercial model with a large coalition**: more than **50 countries (through the Artemis Accords)** plus private companies like **SpaceX and Blue Origin**.
व्यापक रूप से, जहाँ **चीन** ने **राज्य-प्रेरित क्रमिक दृष्टिकोण** अपनाया है, वहीं **अमेरिका** ने **बड़े गठबंधन के साथ वाणिज्यिक मॉडल** अपनाया है: **50 से अधिक देश (आर्टेमिस समझौते के माध्यम से)** तथा निजी कंपनियाँ जैसे **स्पेसएक्स और ब्लू ओरिजिन**।

Success versus failure सफलता बनाम विफलता

- The **Artemis II mission** will last **10 days**.
आर्टेमिस II मिशन 10 दिन तक चलेगा।
- Assuming it succeeds on all counts (since it is a test flight), it will prove the **SLS rocket** and the **Orion crew capsule** work, encourage **NASA's partners** to focus on **Artemis III**, potentially galvanise political commitment to land **U.S. astronauts** on the moon before **China** does.
यदि यह सभी पहलुओं में सफल होता है (क्योंकि यह एक परीक्षण उड़ान है), तो यह **अंतरिक्ष प्रक्षेपण प्रणाली रॉकेट** और **ओरायन क्रू कैप्सूल** के काम करने को साबित करेगा, **नासा के साझेदारों** को **आर्टेमिस III** पर ध्यान केंद्रित करने के लिए प्रेरित करेगा, और **चीन** से पहले **अमेरिकी अंतरिक्ष यात्रियों** को चंद्रमा पर उतारने के लिए राजनीतिक प्रतिबद्धता को मजबूत करेगा।
- Delaying launches, especially those including a human crew, is par for the course in space flight because safety comes first.
प्रक्षेपण में देरी, विशेष रूप से जिनमें मानव दल शामिल होता है, अंतरिक्ष उड़ान में सामान्य बात है क्योंकि सुरक्षा सबसे पहले आती है।
- But that doesn't mean these decisions exist in a vacuum.
लेकिन इसका यह मतलब नहीं है कि ये निर्णय अलग-थलग लिए जाते हैं।
- If **Artemis II** had been delayed again, for example, public as well as institutional confidence in **SLS and Orion** could have eroded further.
उदाहरण के लिए, यदि **आर्टेमिस II** फिर से विलंबित होता, तो **अंतरिक्ष प्रक्षेपण प्रणाली और ओरायन** पर सार्वजनिक और संस्थागत विश्वास और कम हो सकता था।
- There could have been cascading complications for **NASA's partners**, including the **European and Japanese space agencies**.
इससे **नासा के साझेदारों**, जिनमें **यूरोपीय और जापानी अंतरिक्ष एजेंसियाँ** शामिल हैं, के लिए लगातार समस्याएँ उत्पन्न हो सकती थीं।
- A delay could also have prompted the **U.S. government** to revisit the question of whether the programme is too expensive.
देरी से **अमेरिकी सरकार** को यह पुनर्विचार करने के लिए प्रेरित किया जा सकता था कि क्या यह कार्यक्रम बहुत महंगा है।



- It has so far cost at least **\$93 billion** and each new launch costs at least **\$2 billion**. अब तक इसकी लागत कम से कम **93 अरब डॉलर** हो चुकी है और प्रत्येक नए प्रक्षेपण की लागत कम से कम **2 अरब डॉलर** है।
- **SpaceX** also still has to demonstrate the **in-orbit refuelling technology** that lunar missions require. स्पेसएक्स को अभी भी **कक्षा में ईंधन भरने की तकनीक** का प्रदर्शन करना है, जिसकी चंद्र मिशनों को आवश्यकता होती है।
- If, however, **Artemis II** had failed (or fails in the latter part of the mission), the time-wise consequences range from a small but important delay if the failure is non-catastrophic to a delay of several years as the programme is halted altogether if the failure is catastrophic. यदि, हालांकि, **आर्टेमिस II** विफल हो जाता (या मिशन के अंतिम भाग में विफल होता है), तो समय के अनुसार परिणाम एक छोटे लेकिन महत्वपूर्ण विलंब से लेकर कई वर्षों की देरी तक हो सकते हैं, यदि विफलता विनाशकारी हो और कार्यक्रम पूरी तरह रोक दिया जाए।
- It will also give reason for **NASA's partners** to consider whether they should suspend or possibly exit their involvement and for the **U.S. government** to consider a more panicked programme just to beat **China** to the moon. यह **नासा के साझेदारों** को यह सोचने का कारण भी देगा कि क्या उन्हें अपनी भागीदारी को रोकना या समाप्त करना चाहिए और **अमेरिकी सरकार** को केवल **चीन** को हराने के लिए अधिक जल्दबाजी वाला कार्यक्रम अपनाने पर विचार करना पड़ सकता है।
- So as **Artemis II** launched, it did more than just send four people farther from the earth than any mission has in **54 years**. इसलिए जब **आर्टेमिस II** का प्रक्षेपण हुआ, तो इसने केवल चार लोगों को **54 वर्षों** में किसी भी मिशन से अधिक दूर भेजने से अधिक काम किया।
- It signalled that the **U.S.** is still in the race, against a **China** that has kept the U.S. anxious by almost always sticking to its schedule even as it thunders towards a crewed landing on the moon by **2030**. इसने संकेत दिया कि **अमेरिका** अभी भी दौड़ में है, ऐसे **चीन** के खिलाफ जो लगभग हमेशा अपनी समयसीमा का पालन करता रहा है और **2030** तक चंद्रमा पर मानवयुक्त लैंडिंग की ओर तेजी से बढ़ रहा है।

PATRIOTIC IAS



'West Asia crisis hits Helium supplies'

GS III: S&T
BENGALURU

The supply of Helium, a critical gas used to save lives and power technology seems suddenly at risk on account of geopolitics, observed industry experts.

Helium, a colourless, odourless, non-toxic, and inert gas and primarily used to cool superconducting magnets, MRI scanners, spectrometers and semiconductor fabs, has no or a few substitutes.

Over 50% of India's Helium imports traditionally come from Qatar, which accounts for some 34% of global helium exports. Missile strikes and force majeure at Qatar's Ras Laffan complex in March significantly reduced Qatar's Helium export capacity.

According to Ralf Gubler, research director for industrial gases and fertilizers at S&P Global Energy, India is 100% import-dependent for helium, making many industries, such as healthcare (MRI), semiconductors & electronics, fibre optics & display manufacturing etc. in the country acutely vulnerable to global disruptions.

Mr Gubler said liquid Helium was indispensable for cooling superconducting magnets (MRI scanners). If Helium levels fell below critical thresholds, superconductivity would be lost, the Helium rapidly quenches (vaporises) which even lead to damaging superconducting magnets resulting in long and costly repairs.

Most MRI scanners in India India rely on periodic refilling and failure risks magnet quench and multi-week downtime. Supply disruptions force hospitals to ration refills, delay installations and prioritise



Helium is used to cool superconducting magnets, MRI scanners and chip fabs.

emergency scans.

On India's helium demand and supply scenario, Mr. Gubler, said, the country's helium demand in 2025 was estimated at 3.4 million cubic tonne with zero domestic production.

'Eye other suppliers'

Mr. Gubler said India should benefit from multi-origin contracts, including Russia, the U.S. and emerging suppliers like South Africa and Tanzania.

In India, traces of Helium exist in natural gas fields in West Bengal and Jharkhand but concentrations are below the 0.2% economic threshold. Commercial viability is at least 5-10 years away, as per S&P Global Energy data.

Ashok Chandak, President, India Electronics & Semiconductor Association said, critical materials such as helium must be treated as strategic inputs as India scales its semiconductor ecosystem.

Sharp price increase

Typical inventories in India are for 7-10 days.

"Helium prices have seen a sharp surge of about 35-50% in recent weeks, with spot prices in some cases rising even higher. The impact is more in the form of cost pressures than production disruptions," Mr. Chandak said.

cooling superconducting magnets (MRI scanners).

श्री गुब्लर ने कहा कि तरल हीलियम सुपरकंडक्टिंग मैग्नेट (MRI स्कैनर) को ठंडा करने के लिए अनिवार्य है।

- If Helium levels fell below critical thresholds, superconductivity would be lost, the Helium rapidly quenches (vaporises) which even lead to damaging superconducting magnets resulting in long and costly repairs.

यदि हीलियम का स्तर महत्वपूर्ण सीमा से नीचे गिर जाता है, तो सुपरकंडक्टिविटी समाप्त हो जाती है, हीलियम तेजी से केंच (वाष्पीकृत) हो जाता है, जिससे सुपरकंडक्टिंग मैग्नेट को नुकसान हो सकता है और लंबी व महंगी मरम्मत की आवश्यकता पड़ती है।

- Most **MRI scanners in India** rely on periodic refilling and failure risks magnet quench and multiweek downtime.

भारत में अधिकांश **MRI स्कैनर** समय-समय पर रीफिलिंग पर निर्भर करते हैं और विफलता की स्थिति में मैग्नेट केंच और कई सप्ताह का डाउनटाइम हो सकता है।

- Supply disruptions force hospitals to ration refills, delay installations and prioritise emergency scans.

03A. West Asia crisis hits Helium supplies पश्चिम एशिया संकट ने हीलियम आपूर्ति को प्रभावित किया

- The supply of **Helium**, a critical gas used to save lives and power technology seems suddenly at risk on account of **geopolitics**, observed industry experts.

हीलियम की आपूर्ति, जो जीवन बचाने और तकनीक को संचालित करने वाली एक महत्वपूर्ण गैस है, **भू-राजनीति** के कारण अचानक जोखिम में दिखाई देती है, उद्योग विशेषज्ञों ने कहा।

- **Helium**, a colourless, odourless, non-toxic, and inert gas and primarily used to cool superconducting magnets, MRI scanners, spectrometers and semiconductor fabs, has no or a few substitutes.

हीलियम, एक रंगहीन, गंधहीन, गैर-विषाक्त और निष्क्रिय गैस है और मुख्य रूप से सुपरकंडक्टिंग मैग्नेट, MRI स्कैनर, स्पेक्ट्रोमीटर और सेमीकंडक्टर फैब्स को ठंडा करने के लिए उपयोग होती है, इसके बहुत कम या कोई विकल्प नहीं हैं।

- Over **50% of India's Helium imports** traditionally come from **Qatar**, which accounts for some **34% of global helium exports**.

भारत के **हीलियम आयात का 50% से अधिक** परंपरागत रूप से कतर से आता है, जो वैश्विक हीलियम निर्यात का लगभग **34%** हिस्सा है।

- Missile strikes and **force majeure** at Qatar's **Ras Laffan complex** in March significantly reduced Qatar's Helium export capacity.

मार्च में कतर के **रास लाफान कॉम्प्लेक्स** में मिसाइल हमलों और **फोर्स मैज्योर** के कारण कतर की हीलियम निर्यात क्षमता में काफी कमी आई।

- According to **Ralf Gubler**, research director for industrial gases and fertilizers at **S&P Global Energy**, India is **100% import-dependent** for helium, making many industries, such as healthcare (MRI), semiconductors & electronics, fibre optics & display manufacturing etc. in the country acutely vulnerable to global disruptions.

S&P Global Energy में औद्योगिक गैस और उर्वरक के अनुसंधान निदेशक **राल्फ गुब्लर** के अनुसार, भारत हीलियम के लिए **100% आयात-निर्भर** है, जिससे स्वास्थ्य (MRI), सेमीकंडक्टर व इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स, फाइबर ऑप्टिक्स और डिस्प्ले निर्माण जैसी कई उद्योग वैश्विक व्यवधानों के प्रति अत्यधिक संवेदनशील हैं।

- Mr Gubler said liquid **Helium** was indispensable for



आपूर्ति में व्यवधान अस्पतालों को रीफिल सीमित करने, इंस्टॉलेशन में देरी करने और आपातकालीन स्कैन को प्राथमिकता देने के लिए मजबूर करता है।

- On India's helium demand and supply scenario, Mr. Gubler, said, the country's helium demand in **2025** was estimated at **3.4 million cubic tonnes** with **zero domestic production**. भारत की हीलियम मांग और आपूर्ति स्थिति पर, श्री गुब्लर ने कहा कि **2025** में देश की हीलियम मांग लगभग **3.4 मिलियन क्यूबिक टन** आंकी गई थी, जबकि **घरेलू उत्पादन शून्य** है।

'Eye other suppliers'

'अन्य आपूर्तिकर्ताओं पर नजर'

- Mr. Gubler said India should benefit from **multi-origin contracts**, including **Russia**, the **U.S.** and emerging suppliers like **South Africa** and **Tanzania**. श्री गुब्लर ने कहा कि भारत को **बहु-स्रोत अनुबंधों** से लाभ उठाना चाहिए, जिसमें **रूस**, **अमेरिका** और उभरते आपूर्तिकर्ता जैसे **दक्षिण अफ्रीका** और **तंजानिया** शामिल हैं।
- In India, traces of **Helium** exist in natural gas fields in **West Bengal** and **Jharkhand** but concentrations are below the **0.2% economic threshold**. भारत में **पश्चिम बंगाल** और **झारखंड** के प्राकृतिक गैस क्षेत्रों में **हीलियम** के अंश पाए जाते हैं, लेकिन इसकी मात्रा **0.2% आर्थिक सीमा** से कम है।
- Commercial viability is at least **5–10 years away**, as per **S&P Global Energy** data. **S&P Global Energy** के अनुसार, व्यावसायिक व्यवहार्यता अभी कम से कम **5–10 वर्ष दूर** है।
- **Ashok Chandak**, President, **India Electronics & Semiconductor Association** said, critical materials such as helium must be treated as strategic inputs as India scales its semiconductor ecosystem. **इंडिया इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स एंड सेमीकंडक्टर एसोसिएशन** के अध्यक्ष **अशोक चंदक** ने कहा कि हीलियम जैसे महत्वपूर्ण पदार्थों को रणनीतिक इनपुट के रूप में माना जाना चाहिए क्योंकि भारत अपने सेमीकंडक्टर इकोसिस्टम का विस्तार कर रहा है।

Sharp price increase

तेज मूल्य वृद्धि

- Typical inventories in India are for **7–10 days**. भारत में सामान्य भंडार **7–10 दिनों** के लिए होता है।
- "**Helium prices** have seen a sharp surge of about **35–50%** in recent weeks, with spot prices in some cases rising even higher. हाल के हफ्तों में **हीलियम की कीमतों** में लगभग **35–50%** की तेज वृद्धि देखी गई है, कुछ मामलों में स्पॉट कीमतें और भी अधिक बढ़ी हैं।
- The impact is more in the form of **cost pressures** than production disruptions," Mr. Chandak said. इसका प्रभाव उत्पादन में बाधा से अधिक **लागत दबाव** के रूप में है," श्री चंदक ने कहा।



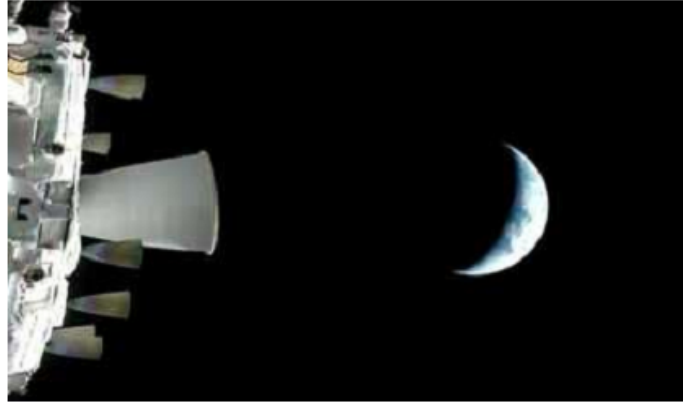
NASA launches 4 astronauts on a crewed lunar mission

GS III: S&T

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER

Four astronauts blasted off aboard a massive NASA rocket on Wednesday on a long-anticipated journey around the Moon, the first crewed lunar flyby in more than 50 years.

NASA teams and spectators alike were ecstatic as the spacecraft ascended into a radiant sky atop a cascade of flames. The team, who donned bright orange suits with blue trim as the mission began, includes Americans Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover and Christina Koch along with Canadian Jeremy Hansen. "We have a beautiful moonrise. We're headed right at it,"



In this photo provided by NASA, a view of the Earth from Orion spacecraft as it orbits above planet during the Artemis II flight. AP

said Mr. Wiseman, the mission commander.

U.S. President Donald Trump praised "our brave astronauts," calling the successful launch "quite something" at the top of his televised address on

the war against Iran.

The astronauts are now in orbit around the Earth. They successfully completed "proximity operations" demonstrations, which tested how their Orion capsule can move.

03A. NASA launches 4 astronauts on a crewed lunar mission नासा ने मानवयुक्त चंद्र मिशन पर 4 अंतरिक्ष यात्रियों को लॉन्च किया

- Four astronauts blasted off aboard a massive **NASA rocket** on Wednesday on a long-anticipated journey around the **Moon**, the first crewed lunar flyby in more than **50 years**.
चार अंतरिक्ष यात्री बुधवार को एक विशाल **नासा रॉकेट** पर सवार होकर **चंद्रमा** के चारों ओर लंबे समय से प्रतीक्षित यात्रा पर रवाना हुए, जो **50 वर्षों** से अधिक समय में पहला मानवयुक्त चंद्र फ्लाईबाई है।
- NASA teams and spectators alike were ecstatic as the spacecraft ascended into a radiant sky atop a cascade of flames.
जैसे ही अंतरिक्ष यान आग की लपटों के बीच चमकते आकाश में ऊपर उठा, **नासा टीमों** और दर्शकों में उत्साह छा गया।
- The team, who donned bright orange suits with blue trim as the mission began, includes Americans **Reid Wiseman**, **Victor Glover** and **Christina Koch** along with Canadian **Jeremy Hansen**.
मिशन की शुरुआत में चमकीले नारंगी सूट और नीले किनारों वाले परिधान पहनने वाली टीम में अमेरिकी **रीड वाइजमैन**, **विक्टर ग्लोवर**, **क्रिस्टीना कोच** और कनाडाई **जेरेमी हैनसेन** शामिल हैं।
- "We have a beautiful **moonrise**."
"हमारे पास एक सुंदर **चंद्र उदय** है।"
- We're headed right at it," said Mr. Wiseman, the mission commander.
हम सीधे उसी की ओर बढ़ रहे हैं," मिशन कमांडर श्री वाइजमैन ने कहा।
- U.S. President Donald Trump** praised "our brave astronauts," calling the successful launch "quite something" at the top of his televised address on the war against **Iran**.
अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप ने "हमारे बहादुर अंतरिक्ष यात्रियों" की प्रशंसा की और **ईरान** के खिलाफ युद्ध पर अपने टीवी संबोधन की शुरुआत में इस सफल लॉन्च को "काफी खास" बताया।



- The astronauts are now in orbit around the **Earth**.
अंतरिक्ष यात्री अब **पृथ्वी** की कक्षा में हैं।
- They successfully completed “**promixity operations**” demonstrations, which tested how their **Orion capsule** can move.
उन्होंने सफलतापूर्वक “**प्रॉक्सिमिटी ऑपरेशन्स**” प्रदर्शन पूरा किया, जिसमें यह परीक्षण किया गया कि उनका **ओरियन कैप्सूल** कैसे संचालित हो सकता है।

GS Paper III: Environment,

TOPICS COVERED

03 April 2026

03A	Failure of U.P. govt.: Oppn. after tigress found dead on railway track in Dudhwa buffer zone दुधवा बफर ज़ोन में रेलवे ट्रैक पर बाघिन मृत मिलने के बाद विपक्ष का यूपी सरकार पर हमला
03A	SC calls sand mining mafia the ‘modern dacoits of Chambal’ सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने रेत खनन माफिया को ‘चंबल के आधुनिक डाकू’ बताया

Failure of U.P. govt.: Oppn. after tigress found dead on railway track in Dudhwa buffer zone

GS III: Environment
LUCKNOW

The Opposition targeted the Uttar Pradesh government on Thursday over the **death of a tigress in the Dudhwa buffer zone in Lakhimpur Kheri district.**

The tigress, estimated to be about five to six years old, was hit by a train and found dead near the Bankeyganj-Mailani railway track in Mailani range of the buffer zone on Wednesday, forest officials said.

The officials added that an investigation has been ordered into the death.

State Congress president Ajay Rai said the incident highlighted the government’s “failure to adopt effective management and tracking policies for wild animals”.



Investigation is in progress to identify the train that caused the accident and ascertain if it was following the speed limit prescribed by the National Tiger Conservation Authority

KIRTI CHAUDHARY
Deputy director,
Dudhwa buffer zone

“This is an unfortunate incident. There are established norms in buffer zones of forests that seem to have been violated in this case. We expect the authorities to take effective measures and make sure such incidents are not repeated,” Mr. Rai said.

Field director of the

Dudhwa Tiger Reserve H. Rajamohan and deputy director of the Dudhwa buffer zone Kirti Chaudhary inspected the accident spot.

“Investigation is in progress to identify the train that caused the accident and ascertain if it was following the **speed limit prescribed by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) for trains passing through reserved forests with presence of wild animals.**” Ms. Chaudhary said.

‘Internal bleeding’

Officials said a panel of **veterinary doctors** carried out a **post-mortem examination as per the NTCA guidelines.** Daya Shankar, a member of the panel, said severe head injuries and internal bleeding led to the death of the tigress.

03A. Failure of U.P. govt.: Oppn. after tigress found dead on railway track in Dudhwa buffer zone
दुधवा बफर ज़ोन में रेलवे ट्रैक पर बाघिन मृत मिलने के बाद विपक्ष का यूपी सरकार पर हमला

• The Opposition targeted the Uttar Pradesh government on Thursday over the death of a tigress in the Dudhwa buffer zone in Lakhimpur Kheri district.
विपक्ष ने गुरुवार को उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार को लखीमपुर खीरी जिले के दुधवा बफर ज़ोन में एक बाघिन की मौत को लेकर घेरा।

• The tigress, estimated to be about five to six years old, was hit by a train and found dead near the Bankeyganj-Mailani railway track in Mailani range of the buffer zone on Wednesday, forest officials said.

वन अधिकारियों के अनुसार, लगभग **5 से 6 वर्ष** की बाघिन को बुधवार को **बांकेगंज-मैलानी रेलवे ट्रैक** के पास, **मैलानी रेंज** (बफर ज़ोन) में ट्रेन ने टक्कर मार दी, जिससे उसकी मौत हो गई।

- The officials added that an investigation has been ordered into the death.
अधिकारियों ने बताया कि इस मौत की **जांच के आदेश** दे दिए गए हैं।
- State Congress president Ajay Rai said the incident highlighted the government’s “failure to adopt effective management and tracking policies for wild animals”.



प्रदेश कांग्रेस अध्यक्ष अजय राय ने कहा कि यह घटना सरकार की वन्यजीव प्रबंधन और ट्रेकिंग नीतियों की विफलता को दर्शाती है।

- “This is an unfortunate incident. There are established norms in buffer zones of forests that seem to have been violated in this case. We expect the authorities to take effective measures and make sure such incidents are not repeated,” Mr. Rai said.
अजय राय ने कहा, “यह एक दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण घटना है। जंगलों के बफर ज़ोन में स्थापित नियम हैं, जो इस मामले में उल्लंघन किए गए प्रतीत होते हैं। हम उम्मीद करते हैं कि अधिकारी प्रभावी कदम उठाएं और ऐसी घटनाएं दोबारा न हों।”
- Field director of the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve H. Rajamohan and deputy director of the Dudhwa buffer zone Kirti Chaudhary inspected the accident spot.
दुधवा टाइगर रिजर्व के फ़िल्ड डायरेक्टर H. राजामोहन और बफर ज़ोन की डिप्टी डायरेक्टर कीर्ति चौधरी ने दुर्घटना स्थल का निरीक्षण किया।
- “Investigation is in progress to identify the train that caused the accident and ascertain if it was following the speed limit prescribed by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) for trains passing through reserved forests with presence of wild animals,” Ms. Chaudhary said.
कीर्ति चौधरी ने कहा, “जांच जारी है ताकि यह पता लगाया जा सके कि किस ट्रेन ने दुर्घटना की और क्या वह National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) द्वारा निर्धारित गति सीमा का पालन कर रही थी, जो वन्यजीवों वाले आरक्षित जंगलों से गुजरने वाली ट्रेनों के लिए लागू होती है।”

‘Internal bleeding’ ‘आंतरिक रक्तस्राव’

- Officials said a panel of veterinary doctors carried out a post-mortem examination as per the NTCA guidelines.
अधिकारियों ने बताया कि पशु चिकित्सकों के पैनल ने NTCA दिशानिर्देशों के अनुसार पोस्टमार्टम किया।
- Daya Shankar, a member of the panel, said severe head injuries and internal bleeding led to the death of the tigress.
पैनल के सदस्य दया शंकर ने कहा कि बाघिन की मौत गंभीर सिर की चोट और आंतरिक रक्तस्राव के कारण हुई।



SC calls sand mining mafia the 'modern dacoits of Chambal'

GS III: Environment

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday said the sand mining mafia, who carry "better weapons than the police" and kill those who come in their way with impunity, were the "modern dacoits" of Chambal.

The oral observation from a Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta was in response to an oft-repeated submission from the Madhya Pradesh government that sand miners plumbing the depths of the Chambal river and devastating the fragile lotic ecosystem of the National Chambal Gharial Sanctuary were no lightweights and had superior firepower.

Officers killed by mafia

"So, the State government has thrown in the towel. It is an extremely sad state of affairs if the State government says we cannot defend our natural resources. Dacoity, as we knew it traditionally, is of the past. Now these are the modern dacoits, these mining mafias," Justice Mehta remarked.

The *amicus curiae*, senior advocate Nikhil Goel, said at least 1,000 trucks of sand were mined in a day



from the region. The trucks pass by police stations, and sand miners carry better arms.

"Look at the number of Sub-Divisional Magistrates, police and forest officers killed by the mining mafia... But the State has forgotten that there is a law called preventive detention," Justice Mehta said.

The Bench stayed a Rajasthan notification of March 9 issued under the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 which altered the boundaries of the National Chambal Gharial Sanctuary, freeing from restrictions 732 hectares of land on both sides of the Chambal river. Justice Mehta said the notification was issued without following the parameters of law. Mr. Goel said that some of the villages in the area are dependent on sand mining.

03A. SC calls sand mining mafia the 'modern dacoits of Chambal'

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने रेत खनन माफिया को 'चंबल के आधुनिक डाकू' बताया

The Supreme Court on Thursday said the sand mining mafia, who carry "better weapons than the police" and kill those who come in their way with impunity, were the "modern dacoits" of Chambal.

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने गुरुवार को कहा कि रेत खनन माफिया, जो "पुलिस से बेहतर हथियार रखते हैं" और रास्ते में आने वालों को बेखौफ मार देते हैं, वे चंबल के "आधुनिक डाकू" हैं।

The oral observation from a Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta was in response to an oft-repeated submission from the Madhya Pradesh government that sand miners plumbing the depths of the Chambal river and devastating the fragile lotic ecosystem of the National Chambal Gharial Sanctuary were no lightweights and had superior firepower.

न्यायमूर्ति विक्रम नाथ और संदीप मेहता की पीठ की यह मौखिक टिप्पणी मध्य प्रदेश सरकार के बार-बार दिए गए इस तर्क के जवाब में थी कि चंबल नदी में गहराई तक खनन करने वाले और नेशनल चंबल घड़ियाल अभयारण्य के नाजुक लोटिक पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र को नुकसान पहुंचाने वाले खनिक कमजोर नहीं हैं और उनके पास बेहतर हथियार हैं।

Officers killed by mafia माफिया द्वारा अधिकारियों की हत्या

"So, the State government has thrown in the towel. It is an extremely sad state of affairs if the State government says we cannot defend our natural resources. Dacoity, as we knew it traditionally, is of the past. Now these are the modern dacoits, these mining mafias," Justice Mehta remarked.

"तो, राज्य सरकार ने हार मान ली है। यह बेहद दुखद स्थिति है अगर राज्य सरकार कहती है कि हम अपने प्राकृतिक संसाधनों की रक्षा नहीं कर सकते। पारंपरिक रूप से जिसे हम डकैती जानते थे, वह अब अतीत की बात हो गई है। अब ये खनन माफिया ही आधुनिक डाकू हैं," न्यायमूर्ति मेहता ने कहा।

The *amicus curiae*, senior advocate Nikhil Goel, said at least 1,000 trucks of sand were mined in a day from the region.

अमिकस क्यूरी, वरिष्ठ अधिवक्ता निखिल गोयल ने कहा कि इस क्षेत्र से प्रतिदिन कम से कम 1,000 ट्रक रेत का खनन

किया जाता है।

- The trucks pass by police stations, and sand miners carry better arms. ये ट्रक पुलिस स्टेशनों के पास से गुजरते हैं, और रेत खनिक बेहतर हथियार रखते हैं।
- "Look at the number of Sub-Divisional Magistrates, police and forest officers killed by the mining mafia... But the State has forgotten that there is a law called preventive detention," Justice Mehta said. "देखिए कितने उप मंडल मजिस्ट्रेट, पुलिस और वन अधिकारी खनन माफिया द्वारा मारे गए हैं... लेकिन



राज्य यह भूल गया है कि **निवारक निरोध (preventive detention)** नाम का भी एक कानून है," न्यायमूर्ति **मेहता** ने कहा।

- The Bench stayed a **Rajasthan notification of March 9** issued under the **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972** which altered the boundaries of the **National Chambal Gharial Sanctuary**, freeing from restrictions **732 hectares of land** on both sides of the Chambal river.
पीठ ने **9 मार्च** को जारी **राजस्थान अधिसूचना** पर रोक लगा दी, जो **वन्यजीव संरक्षण अधिनियम, 1972** के तहत जारी की गई थी और जिसने **नेशनल चंबल घड़ियाल अभयारण्य** की सीमाओं में बदलाव करते हुए चंबल नदी के दोनों किनारों पर **732 हेक्टेयर भूमि** को प्रतिबंधों से मुक्त कर दिया था।
- Justice **Mehta** said the notification was issued without following the parameters of law.
न्यायमूर्ति **मेहता** ने कहा कि यह अधिसूचना कानून के निर्धारित मानकों का पालन किए बिना जारी की गई थी।
- Mr. **Goel** said that some of the villages in the area are dependent on sand mining.
श्री **गोयल** ने कहा कि इस क्षेत्र के कुछ गांव रेत खनन पर निर्भर हैं।

GS Paper III: IS

TOPICS COVERED

03 April 2026

03A GE delivers sixth engine for Tejas LCA-Mk1A fighter jets
जीई ने तेजस एलसीए-एमके1ए लड़ाकू विमानों के लिए छठा इंजन दिया

GS III: Internal Security

GE delivers sixth engine for Tejas LCA-Mk1A fighter jets

Engine manufacturer General Electric (GE) Aerospace on April 2 announced delivery of the **sixth of the F404-IN20 engine to Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) for the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mk1A**. GE Aerospace is to deliver 99 F404-IN20 engines to HAL. "GE Aerospace has handed over the sixth F404-IN20 engine against the order from 2021," said a GE Aerospace spokesperson. A HAL spokesperson told *The Hindu*, "The sixth F404-IN20 engine was handed over in the U.S., and it will be brought here through freight." The spokesperson did not specify when the engine would arrive in India considering the ongoing crises in West Asia.

- "GE Aerospace has handed over the sixth **F404-IN20 engine** against the order from 2021," said a GE Aerospace spokesperson.
"GE एयरोस्पेस ने 2021 के ऑर्डर के तहत छठा **F404-IN20 इंजन** सौंप दिया है," GE एयरोस्पेस के एक प्रवक्ता ने कहा।
- A HAL spokesperson told *The Hindu*, "The sixth **F404-IN20 engine** was handed over in the U.S., and it will be brought here through freight."
HAL के एक प्रवक्ता ने द हिंदू को बताया, "छठा **F404-IN20 इंजन** अमेरिका में सौंपा गया था, और इसे यहां मालवाहक के जरिए लाया जाएगा।"
- The spokesperson did not specify when the engine would arrive in India considering the ongoing crises in **West Asia**.
प्रवक्ता ने यह स्पष्ट नहीं किया कि **पश्चिम एशिया** में चल रहे संकट को देखते हुए इंजन भारत कब पहुंचेगा।

03A. GE delivers sixth engine for Tejas LCA-Mk1A fighter jets

जीई ने तेजस एलसीए-एमके1ए लड़ाकू विमानों के लिए छठा इंजन दिया

- Engine manufacturer General Electric (GE) Aerospace** on April 2 announced delivery of the sixth of the **F404-IN20 engine to Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) for the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mk1A**.
इंजन निर्माता जनरल इलेक्ट्रिक (GE) एयरोस्पेस ने 2 अप्रैल को तेजस लाइट कॉम्बैट एयरक्राफ्ट (LCA) Mk1A के लिए हिंदुस्तान एयरोनॉटिक्स लिमिटेड (HAL) को F404-IN20 इंजन के छठे यूनिट की डिलीवरी की घोषणा की।
- GE Aerospace is to deliver **99 F404-IN20 engines** to HAL.
GE एयरोस्पेस को HAL को **99 F404-IN20 इंजन** देने हैं।