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PATRIOTIC IAS

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

THE HINDU NEWSPAPER

14 APRIL 2026

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PCS Special:	14 April
14A QUIZ:	
14A	After a near-perfect week at Badminton Asia C'ships, Ayush hopes to take the next big step बैडमिंटन एशिया चैंपियनशिप में लगभग शानदार सप्ताह के बाद, आयुष अगला बड़ा कदम उठाने की उम्मीद करते हैं



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

1. Because of personal reasons, Asha started playback singing at the age of 10. What was her first Hindi song recorded for 'Chunariya' in 1948? **Ans: Saawan Aaya**

2. Name the music director who helped Asha build a distinct identity because of his reluctance to work with her sister Lata in the 1950s and 1960s? **Ans: O.P. Nayyar.**

3. In 2011, Asha was acknowledged by Guinness World Records as the most recorded artist in music history with how many songs in more than how many languages? **Ans: 11,000 songs in more than 20 languages.**

4. In 1997, Asha became the first Indian singer to get a Grammy nomination for 'Legacy - 16th-18th Century Music from India', a

14A. QUIZ: ASHA BHOSLE

11,000 Songs in More Than 20 Languages: In 2011, Guinness World Records recognized Asha Bhosle as the **most recorded artist in music history**, crediting her with around **11,000 songs across more than 20 languages.**

Ali Akbar Khan: In 1997, Asha Bhosle became the first Indian playback singer to receive a Grammy nomination for the album **Legacy – 16th–18th Century Music from India**, recorded with Ali Akbar Khan, a globally renowned Sarod exponent.

'Mai': In 2013, at the age of 79, Asha Bhosle made her debut as a lead actress in the Marathi film **'Mai'**. In this film, she portrayed an elderly mother dealing with emotional neglect and changing family dynamics.

'Umrao Jaan' and 2000: Asha Bhosle won her first National Film Award for Best Female Playback Singer for the film **'Umrao Jaan' (1981)**, starring Rekha.

After a near-perfect week at Badminton Asia C'ships, Ayush hopes to take the next big step

PCS
Devyanshi Bihani

Ayush Shetty capped a breakthrough week with a silver medal at the Badminton Asia Championships after going down 8-21, 10-21 to World No. 2 Shi Yuqi of China in the final in Ningbo on Sunday.

The 20-year-old thus became the first Indian men's singles player in six decades to reach this stage of the continental meet. More significantly, he did so by beating three top-10 players in a week – a level of consistency no Indian man has achieved.

Ayush combined early interceptions, steep angles while attacking and improved composure to defeat Li Shifeng, Jonatan Christie and Kunlavut Vitidsarn.

The wins were not built



Gulf in class: Shi, right, showed Ayush there is a lot to improve. AFP

on outright aggression alone. There was great control in rally construction, a willingness to wait for openings, and sharp decision-making in pressure phases. Those were most evident in the tight

quarterfinal against Christie and the comeback last-four win over Vitidsarn.

In the final, however, Shi dictated the contest from the outset. He was controlling the length, varying the pace and repeat-

edly targeting the body and central channels to deny Ayush the space to unleash his attacks. The Indian fell behind early, and a string of unforced errors meant he was chasing the match throughout.

"A bit disappointed... Shi was by far the better player today (Sunday). He really kept the pressure and never let me come back," Ayush admitted.

Ayush's coach Sagar Chopda felt that there was a drop in patience in the title decider compared to earlier rounds. "In the previous matches, Ayush was ready to grind and wait for the right opportunity. In the final, he was a bit impatient. The first few points were very straightforward. He almost gifted them away," Sagar said.

At 6'4", Ayush fits the

physical profile of the modern men's singles player. His 'cannon' smash is already a major weapon, but what stood out last week was the development around it – a tighter net play, quicker transitions from defence to attack, and improved emotional control after visible frustrations on court earlier this season.

But, the final exposed some areas of growth. "There is a lot of learning... I have to work on my endurance, strength and variations from the back," Ayush said.

For all that, the takeaway from Ningbo remains positive. "I had a tough draw... I think it was a really good week for me. I had some great wins. I am really proud of the way I played".

14A. After a near-perfect week at Badminton Asia C'ships, Ayush hopes to take the next big step

बैडमिंटन एशिया चैपियनशिप में लगभग शानदार सप्ताह के बाद, आयुष अगला बड़ा कदम उठाने की उम्मीद करते हैं

- Ayush Shetty capped a breakthrough week with a silver medal at the Badminton Asia Championships after going down 8-21, 10-21 to World No. 2 Shi Yuqi of China in the final in Ningbo on Sunday.

Ayush Shetty ने Badminton Asia Championships में शानदार सप्ताह का समापन silver medal



के साथ किया, हालांकि रविवार को Ningbo में फाइनल में World No. 2 Shi Yuqi (China) से 8-21, 10-21 से हार गए।

GS Paper 1: History,		14 April 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
14A	Baisakhi: new beginnings बैसाखी: नई शुरुआत	
14A	Subhas Chandra Bose: the paradox of a revolutionary's theory and praxis सुभाष चंद्र बोस: एक क्रांतिकारी के सिद्धांत और व्यवहार का विरोधाभास	
14A	Greece's ancient sites get climate stress check-up ग्रीस के प्राचीन स्थलों का जलवायु तनाव मूल्यांकन	

Religious art



GS I: History: A&C
A devotee gets his body painted in the likeness of Hindu religious figure Mahadev, as they celebrate the Lal Kach festival to mark the end of Bengali new year, in Munshiganj, Bangladesh, on Monday. REUTERS

A devotee gets his body painted in the likeness of Hindu religious figure Mahadev, as they celebrate the **Lal Kach festival to mark the end of Bengali new year**, in Munshiganj, Bangladesh, on Monday.

FAITH

GS I: History: A&C

Baisakhi: new beginnings

Baisakhi marks the first day of the month of Vaikash and is traditionally celebrated on the 13th or 14th of April. Baisakhi holds special significance for Sikhs, said Prof. Kumool Abbi. Historically, it marks the birth of the Khalsa order by Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, on April 13, 1699. During that time, Punjab reeled under religious persecution and tyranny of the Mughal rule. After the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur for refusing to convert to Islam, under the order of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, Guru Gobind Singh became the tenth Guru of the Sikhs. He initiated the formation of the new order of the Khalsa, (meaning, pure), at Takht Keshgarh Sahib on Vaisakhi by baptising the five *punj pyaras* (volunteers) with the sacred nectar. The inclusive and pluralistic philosophy of the Khalsa order urged them to be valiant, selfless warriors.

Traditionally, Baisakhi synchronises with the celebration of spring harvest in north India. In many parts of the country, it is also the date of the Indian solar new year. It corresponds to others celebrating the traditional solar new year, like *Pohela*, *Boisakh*, *Bihuh*, *Vishu* and *Puthandu*. It marks the Sun's entry to the Mesha rasi, indicating the transition to Aries.

Baisakhi is culturally linked to the harvesting of crops. The farmer celebrates his intimate connection with his land with which he shares a deep bond. It is a means of sustenance, and he acknowledges the reciprocal relationship. As he reaps the harvest, he offers gratitude and prays for prosperity and abundance for his family and community. The festival symbolises the robust, resilient spirit and vitality of Punjabis.

14A. Baisakhi: new beginnings

बैसाखी: नई शुरुआत

- **Baisakhi marks the first day of the month of Vaikash and is traditionally celebrated on the 13th or 14th of April.**

बैसाखी वैशाख महीने के पहले दिन को चिह्नित करती है और पारंपरिक रूप से 13 या 14 अप्रैल को मनाई जाती है।

- **Baisakhi holds special significance for Sikhs,** said Prof. **Kumool Abbi.**

बैसाखी का सिखों के लिए विशेष महत्व है, प्रोफेसर कुमूल अब्बी ने कहा।



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- Historically, it marks the birth of the **Khalsa order** by **Guru Gobind Singh**, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, on April 13, 1699.
ऐतिहासिक रूप से, यह 13 अप्रैल 1699 को सिखों के दसवें गुरु **गुरु गोबिंद सिंह** द्वारा **खालसा पंथ** की स्थापना को दर्शाता है।
- During that time, **Punjab** reeled under religious persecution and tyranny of the **Mughal rule**.
उस समय **पंजाब** धार्मिक उत्पीड़न और **मुगल शासन** के अत्याचार के अधीन था।
- After the execution of **Guru Tegh Bahadur** for refusing to convert to Islam, under the order of the Mughal emperor **Aurangzeb**, **Guru Gobind Singh** became the tenth Guru of the Sikhs.
मुगल सम्राट **औरंगज़ेब** के आदेश पर इस्लाम स्वीकार करने से इंकार करने के कारण **गुरु तेग बहादुर** को मृत्युदंड दिए जाने के बाद, **गुरु गोबिंद सिंह** सिखों के दसवें गुरु बने।
- He initiated the formation of the new order of the **Khalsa**, (meaning, pure), at **Takht Keshgarh Sahib** on **Vaisakhi** by baptising the five **Panj Pyaras** (volunteers) with the sacred nectar.
उन्होंने **वैसाखी** के दिन **तख्त केशगढ़ साहिब** में पांच **पंज प्यारे** (स्वयंसेवकों) को पवित्र अमृत से दीक्षित कर **खालसा** (अर्थात शुद्ध) पंथ की स्थापना की।
- The inclusive and pluralistic philosophy of the **Khalsa order** urged them to be valiant, selfless warriors.
खालसा पंथ की समावेशी और बहुलवादी विचारधारा ने उन्हें वीर और निःस्वार्थ योद्धा बनने के लिए प्रेरित किया।
- Traditionally, **Baisakhi** synchronises with the celebration of **spring harvest** in north India.
परंपरागत रूप से **वैसाखी** उत्तर भारत में **रबी फसल की कटाई** के उत्सव के साथ मेल खाती है।
- In many parts of the country, it is also the date of the **Indian solar new year**.
देश के कई हिस्सों में यह **भारतीय सौर नव वर्ष** का भी दिन होता है।
- It corresponds to others celebrating the traditional solar new year, like **Pohela Boishakh, Bihu, Vishu and Puthandu**.
यह अन्य पारंपरिक सौर नव वर्ष जैसे **पोइला बैसाख, बिहू, विषु और पुथंडु** के उत्सवों के साथ मेल खाता है।

Indian Regional New Year Festivals: Pohela Boishakh, Bihu, Vishu and Puthandu

- These festivals represent **regional New Year celebrations in India**, primarily observed in **mid-April**, marking the beginning of the **solar calendar year (Mesha Sankranti)**.
- They are linked to the **sun's transition into Aries (Mesha Rashi)**, a concept rooted in **ancient Indian astronomy and agrarian cycles**.
- These festivals reflect **agrarian traditions, seasonal change, and cultural identity** across eastern, northeastern, and southern India.

Pohela Boishakh (West Bengal)

- Pohela Boishakh** is the Bengali New Year, celebrated on **14 or 15 April**.
- It is based on the **Bengali calendar**, reformed during the reign of **Mughal Emperor Akbar (16th century)** for revenue collection purposes.

Bihu (Assam)

- Bihu** is the most important festival of Assam, with three variants: **Rongali Bihu (April), Kongali Bihu, and Bhogali Bihu**.
- The New Year festival is **Rongali Bihu**, celebrated in **mid-April**.
- It marks the **beginning of the agricultural cycle**, especially sowing of crops.

Vishu (Kerala)

- Vishu** is celebrated in Kerala around **14 April** as the Malayali New Year.
- It is based on the **solar calendar and astronomical event of Vishu Sankranti**.
- The most important ritual is "**Vishukkani**", an arrangement of auspicious items viewed at dawn.
- It emphasizes **prosperity, good fortune, and agricultural abundance**.
- The festival has connections with **ancient Dravidian traditions and temple rituals**.

Puthandu (Tamil Nadu)



- Puthandu marks the Tamil New Year, celebrated on **14 April**.
- It follows the **Tamil solar calendar** and coincides with **Mesha Sankranti**.
- Rituals include “**Kanni**” (auspicious viewing), temple visits, and festive meals.
- It reflects **continuity of ancient Tamil culture and Sangam-era traditions**.
- The festival symbolizes **renewal, prosperity, and social bonding**.

Subhas Chandra Bose: the paradox of a revolutionary’s theory and praxis

The leader synthesised Indian spirituality with Hegelian dialectics, evolving from an absolute idealist into a pragmatic revolutionary seeking to build a modern, socialist India – an analysis on Bose’s journey through philosophy, politics, and his plans for society and national regeneration

GS I: History
Prathmesh Kher

In August 18, 1945, a plane carrying Subhas Chandra Bose crashed over Taihoku in Taiwan. With that perished a systematic attempt to forge a “higher synthesis” between the spiritual wisdom of the East and the material dynamism of the West. Bose was neither a dreamer content with abstract philosophy nor a crude pragmatist indifferent to moral questions. As he put it himself, he refused to accept what he “could not live up to—what is not workable”.

This piece examines his intellectual journey from absolute idealism to a dialectic conception of reality and its influence on his political doctrine and his revolutionary praxis.

I. Philosophical foundation

Bose’s early years were dominated by Vedanta as interpreted by Shankaracharya. He eventually found its core – the Doctrine of Maya, the world as illusion – incompatible with the needs of a revolutionary. In his autobiography *An Indian Pilgrim* (1937), he reflects: “There was a time when I believed that Absolute Truth was within the reach of human mind and that the Doctrine of Maya represented the quintessence of knowledge. Today I would hesitate to subscribe to that position. I have ceased to be an absolutist and am much more of a pragmatist”

Discarding Maya did not push Bose toward materialism. He came instead to view the world as real and evolving: “The world is a manifestation of Spirit and just as Spirit is eternal so also is the world of creation... It reflects the eternal play of eternal forces—the Divine Play, if you

will.” The essential nature of this reality, for Bose, was moral: “For me, the essential nature of reality is LOVE.”

While Bose’s “Spirit” was Indian in origin, he found the law of its unfolding in Hegelian Dialectics: “Hegel would dogmatise that the nature of the evolutionary process, whether in the thought world or in reality outside, is dialectic. We progress through conflicts and their solutions. Every thesis provokes an antithesis. This conflict is solved by a synthesis... undoubtedly Hegel’s theory is the nearest approximation to truth.”

By synthesising Hindu philosophy with Hegelian dialectics, Bose concluded that since reality is Spirit gradually unfolding through conflict, the moral duty of the individual is to participate in that conflict – a belief that directly informed his doctrine of Samyavada.

II. Doctrine of harmonious equality

Rooted in the Sanskrit Sāmya (equality, concord, harmony) and vāda (doctrine), Samyavada was not an imported ideology but a product of India’s own philosophical evolution – a “Doctrine of Harmony” designed to resolve the contradictions of the modern age.

Bose did not view Fascism or Communism as finalities but as stages in the dialectical process. In *The Indian Struggle* (1934), he argued that India’s role was to resolve their conflict: “The conflict between Fascism on the one side and Communism on the other... I see no reason why we cannot work out a synthesis of the two systems that will embody the good points of both”

He was equally critical of those who sought to blindly transplant foreign ideologies onto Indian soil. In *Forward Bloc – Its Justification* (1941): “The

Forward Bloc is a revolutionary and dynamic organisation. As such it does not swear by copy-book maxims or by text-books of Politics or Economics. It is anxious to assimilate all the knowledge that the outside world can give... It regards progress or evolution as an eternal process to which India also has a contribution to make.”

Bose framed Samyavada as India’s specific gift to the world’s political lineage. In *The Anti-Imperialist Struggle and Samyavada* (1933), he traced a line of national contributions, from England’s constitutionalism, the French notions of liberty and fraternity, to Germany’s Marxism and the proletarian revolution of Russia, and declared: “The next remarkable contribution to the culture and civilisation of the world, India will be called upon to make.”

In practice, Samyavada was a blueprint for a “thoroughly modern and Socialist State”. His 1941 Kabul thesis listed its goals: complete national independence, scientific large-scale production, social ownership and control of production and distribution, and “application of the principles of equality and social justice in building up the New Order in Free India.”

III. Scientific Blueprint

For Bose, political freedom was merely the threshold. The real task was the total social and economic regeneration of the country. Addressing the Punjab Students’ Conference in 1929, he defined independence in sweeping terms: “For me, it signifies independence for all – for the society, as well as the individual, for man as well as woman, for the rich as well as the poor; and implies not merely political freedom, but an equal distribution of wealth, removal of caste

differences and social injustice, and abolition of all communal narrownesses and bigotry.”

As he moved into Congress leadership, he shifted from defining freedom to planning its mechanical implementation. A staunch advocate of industrialisation, he set himself apart from the Gandhian focus on agrarian self-sufficiency.

In his 1938 Haripura Presidential Address: “The first step in national reconstruction will be the eradication of poverty... This will require the scientific reorganisation of our agricultural and industrial life... I am a firm believer in the social ownership and control of both production and distribution.”

Bose also became convinced that a fractured, impoverished India could not afford slow-moving, decentralised democracy during reconstruction. In *The Indian Struggle* (1934), he wrote: “It will be a Government of a strong Adarsha Sangh... which will have a strong Central Government with full powers for the period of reconstruction... a Federal Government for India but a strong Central Government with a certain amount of authoritarianism for a period of time.”

It must be noted that Bose was living in an era when authoritarianism had caught the imagination of many nations, from Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan, Soviet Russia, Kemalists Turkey, all of whom had undergone massive economic and cultural changes under centralised rule. Political theories, however, must be evaluated in the light of their times. Modern rights-based societies should rightfully question the prudence of and resist an appeal to authoritarianism as a shortcut solution to structural problems. (First in a two-part series)

14A. Subhas Chandra Bose: the paradox of a revolutionary’s theory and praxis

सुभाष चंद्र बोस: एक क्रांतिकारी के सिद्धांत और व्यवहार का विरोधाभास

- On August 18, 1945, a plane carrying **Subhas Chandra Bose** crashed over Taihoku in Taiwan.
18 अगस्त 1945 को **सुभाष चंद्र बोस** को ले जा रहा एक विमान ताइहोकू, ताइवान में दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो गया।
- Bose was neither a dreamer content with abstract philosophy nor a crude pragmatist indifferent to moral questions.
बोस न तो केवल अमूर्त दर्शन में संतुष्ट रहने वाले स्वप्नदर्शी थे और न ही नैतिक प्रश्नों के प्रति उदासीन एक कठोर व्यवहारवादी।
- This piece examines his intellectual journey from **absolute idealism** to a **dialectic conception of reality** and its influence on his political doctrine and his revolutionary praxis.



यह लेख उनके पूर्ण आदर्शवाद से द्वंद्वत्मक वास्तविकता की अवधारणा तक के बौद्धिक विकास और उसके उनके राजनीतिक सिद्धांत एवं क्रांतिकारी कार्यों पर प्रभाव का विश्लेषण करता है।

I. Philosophical foundation

I. दार्शनिक आधार

- Bose's early years were dominated by **Vedanta** as interpreted by **Shankaracharya**.
बोस के प्रारंभिक जीवन पर वेदांत का प्रभाव था, जैसा कि शंकराचार्य ने व्याख्यायित किया।
- In his autobiography **An Indian Pilgrim (1937)**, he reflects: "There was a time when I believed that Absolute Truth was within the reach of human mind and that the Doctrine of Maya represented the quintessence of knowledge.
अपनी आत्मकथा **एन इंडियन पिलग्रिम (1937)** में वे लिखते हैं: "एक समय था जब मुझे विश्वास था कि परम सत्य मानव मन की पहुँच में है और माया का सिद्धांत ज्ञान का सार है।
- He came instead to view the world as real and evolving: "The world is a manifestation of **Spirit** and just as Spirit is eternal so also is the world of creation...
उन्होंने संसार को वास्तविक और विकसित होने वाला माना: "संसार **आत्मा (स्फिरिट)** की अभिव्यक्ति है और जैसे आत्मा शाश्वत है, वैसे ही सृष्टि भी शाश्वत है..."
- "Hegel would dogmatise that the nature of the evolutionary process, whether in the thought world or in reality outside, is dialectic.
"हेगेल का मत था कि विकास की प्रक्रिया, चाहे विचारों की दुनिया में हो या बाहरी वास्तविकता में, द्वंद्वत्मक होती है।
- We progress through conflicts and their solutions.
हम संघर्षों और उनके समाधानों के माध्यम से आगे बढ़ते हैं।
- Every thesis provokes an antithesis.
हर थीसिस एक एंटीथीसिस को जन्म देती है।
- This conflict is solved by a synthesis... undoubtedly Hegel's theory is the nearest approximation to truth."
इस संघर्ष का समाधान एक संश्लेषण से होता है... निस्संदेह हेगेल का सिद्धांत सत्य के सबसे निकट है।"
- By synthesising **Hindu philosophy** with **Hegelian dialectics**, Bose concluded that since reality is Spirit gradually unfolding through conflict, the moral duty of the individual is to participate in that conflict — a belief that directly informed his doctrine of **Samyavada**.
हिंदू दर्शन और हेगेलियन द्वंद्ववाद के संयोजन से बोस ने निष्कर्ष निकाला कि चूँकि वास्तविकता संघर्ष के माध्यम से विकसित होने वाली आत्मा है, इसलिए व्यक्ति का नैतिक कर्तव्य उस संघर्ष में भाग लेना है — यह विचार उनके **साम्यवाद (सम्यावाद)** के सिद्धांत का आधार बना।
- Bose did not view **Fascism** or **Communism** as finalities but as stages in the dialectical process.
बोस ने **फासीवाद** और **साम्यवाद** को अंतिम अवस्था नहीं बल्कि द्वंद्वत्मक प्रक्रिया के चरणों के रूप में देखा।
- In **The Indian Struggle (1934)**, he argued that India's role was to resolve their conflict: "The conflict between Fascism on the one side and Communism on the other...
द इंडियन स्ट्रगल (1934) में उन्होंने तर्क दिया कि भारत की भूमिका उनके संघर्ष को सुलझाने की है: "एक ओर फासीवाद और दूसरी ओर साम्यवाद के बीच संघर्ष..."
- In **Forward Bloc — Its Justification (1941)**: "The Forward Bloc is a revolutionary and dynamic organisation.
फॉरवर्ड ब्लॉक — इट्स जस्टिफिकेशन (1941) में उन्होंने कहा: "फॉरवर्ड ब्लॉक एक क्रांतिकारी और गतिशील संगठन है।
- In **The Anti-Imperialist Struggle and Samyavada (1933)**, he traced a line of national contributions, from England's **constitutionalism**, the French notions of **liberty and fraternity**, to Germany's **Marxism** and the proletarian revolution of Russia, and declared: "The next remarkable contribution to the culture and civilisation of the world, India will be called upon to make."
द एंटी-इम्पीरियलिस्ट स्ट्रगल एंड सम्यावाद (1933) में उन्होंने राष्ट्रीय योगदानों की एक श्रृंखला बताई—इंग्लैंड का **संवैधानिकवाद**, फ्रांस की **स्वतंत्रता और बंधुत्व** की अवधारणाएँ, जर्मनी का **मार्क्सवाद** और रूस की सर्वहारा क्रांति—और कहा: "विश्व की संस्कृति और सभ्यता में अगला महत्वपूर्ण योगदान भारत से आएगा।"
- His 1941 **Kabul thesis** listed its goals: complete national independence, scientific large-scale production, social ownership and control of production and distribution, and "application of the



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principles of equality and social justice in building up the New Order in Free India.”
उनकी 1941 की **काबुल थीसिस** में इसके लक्ष्य बताए गए: पूर्ण राष्ट्रीय स्वतंत्रता, वैज्ञानिक बड़े पैमाने पर उत्पादन, उत्पादन और वितरण पर सामाजिक स्वामित्व और नियंत्रण, तथा “स्वतंत्र भारत में नए व्यवस्था के निर्माण में समानता और सामाजिक न्याय के सिद्धांतों का प्रयोग।”

- Addressing the **Punjab Students' Conference (1929)**, he defined independence in sweeping terms: “For me, it signifies independence for all — for the society, as well as the individual, for man as well as woman, for the rich as well as the poor; and implies not merely political freedom, but an equal distribution of wealth, removal of caste differences and social injustice, and abolition of all communal narrownesses and bigotry.”

पंजाब छात्र सम्मेलन (1929) को संबोधित करते हुए उन्होंने स्वतंत्रता को व्यापक रूप में परिभाषित किया: “मेरे लिए इसका अर्थ है सभी के लिए स्वतंत्रता—समाज और व्यक्ति दोनों के लिए, पुरुष और महिला दोनों के लिए, अमीर और गरीब दोनों के लिए; और इसका अर्थ केवल राजनीतिक स्वतंत्रता नहीं बल्कि संपत्ति का समान वितरण, जातीय भेदभाव और सामाजिक अन्याय का अंत, तथा सभी सांप्रदायिक संकीर्णताओं और कट्टरता का उन्मूलन है।”

- As he moved into **Congress leadership**, he shifted from defining freedom to planning its mechanical implementation.

जब वे **कांग्रेस नेतृत्व** में आए, तो उन्होंने स्वतंत्रता की परिभाषा से हटकर उसके व्यावहारिक कार्यान्वयन की योजना बनानी शुरू की।

- A staunch advocate of **industrialisation**, he set himself apart from the Gandhian focus on agrarian self-sufficiency.

औद्योगीकरण के प्रबल समर्थक होने के कारण, वे गांधीवादी कृषि-आधारित आत्मनिर्भरता से अलग थे।

- In his **1938 Haripura Presidential Address**: “The first step in national reconstruction will be the eradication of poverty... This will require the scientific reorganisation of our agricultural and industrial life... I am a firm believer in the social ownership and control of both production and distribution.”

अपने **1938 हरिपुरा अध्यक्षीय भाषण** में उन्होंने कहा: “राष्ट्रीय पुनर्निर्माण का पहला कदम गरीबी का उन्मूलन होगा... इसके लिए हमारे कृषि और औद्योगिक जीवन का वैज्ञानिक पुनर्गठन आवश्यक होगा... मैं उत्पादन और वितरण दोनों के सामाजिक स्वामित्व और नियंत्रण में दृढ़ विश्वास रखता हूँ।”

- Bose also became convinced that a fractured, impoverished India could not afford slow-moving, decentralised **democracy** during reconstruction.

बोस को यह भी विश्वास हो गया कि विभाजित और गरीब भारत पुनर्निर्माण के दौरान धीमी और विकेन्द्रीकृत **लोकतंत्र** को वहन नहीं कर सकता।

- In **The Indian Struggle (1934)**, he wrote: “It will be a Government of a strong **Adarsha Sangh**... which will have a strong Central Government with full powers for the period of reconstruction... a Federal Government for India but a strong Central Government with a certain amount of **authoritarianism** for a period of time.”

द इंडियन स्ट्रगल (1934) में उन्होंने लिखा: “यह एक मजबूत **आदर्श संघ** की सरकार होगी... जिसमें पुनर्निर्माण के समय के लिए पूर्ण शक्तियों के साथ एक मजबूत केंद्रीय सरकार होगी... भारत के लिए संघीय सरकार होगी लेकिन कुछ समय के लिए एक मजबूत केंद्रीय सरकार जिसमें कुछ हद तक **अधिनायकवाद** होगा।”

Greece's ancient sites get climate stress check-up

GS I: History

Agence France Presse
ATHENS

Worsening wildfires, soaring heatwaves and rising water levels have prompted Greek officials to take a closer look at protecting priceless archaeological sites that draw hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.

The monuments, scattered across the country, earn Greece millions of dollars in tourism revenue. But many of the sites are in rural areas and officials believe better planning is needed in case large crowds of tourists need to be evacuated in an emergency.

After a three-year study by some of the country's leading scientific institutions, the Greek Culture Ministry has earmarked 19 monuments that most urgently need protection against natural threats, with several more to be bolstered by 2030. The Ministry says it is the first time a nationwide evaluation of this scope has been attempted.

The sites under scrutiny include Olympia, habitually threatened by forest fires, the ancient theatre of Delphi, where rockslides are a concern, and the sanctuary of Dion which is prone to flooding. Greece has already reduced visiting hours at its most popular archaeological site, the Acropolis in Athens, to shield visitors from heatwaves during the warmest hours of the day. But the increasing frequency of extreme events calls for something more extensive.

According to the Culture Ministry, new fire sensors at 21 sites are to be delivered this year, and fire protection plans drawn up for over 60 archaeological sites.

According to official statistics, Ancient Olympia in 2024 drew over 3,00,000 visitors. Knossos had over a million, and Delphi over 2,90,000.

14A. Greece's ancient sites get climate stress check-up

ग्रीस के प्राचीन स्थलों का जलवायु तनाव मूल्यांकन

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- The sites under scrutiny include **Olympia**, habitually threatened by forest fires, the ancient theatre of **Delphi**, where rockslides are a concern, and the sanctuary of **Dion** which is prone to flooding.
जांच के दायरे में आने वाले स्थलों में **ओलंपिया** शामिल है, जिसे अक्सर जंगल की आग का खतरा रहता है, **डेल्फी** का प्राचीन थिएटर, जहां भूस्खलन चिंता का विषय है, और **डियोन** का पवित्र स्थल, जो बाढ़ की चपेट में आता है।
- Greece has already reduced visiting hours at its most popular archaeological site, the **Acropolis in Athens**, to shield visitors from heatwaves during the warmest hours of the day.
ग्रीस ने पहले ही अपने सबसे लोकप्रिय पुरातात्विक स्थल **एथेंस का एक्रोपोलिस** में गर्मी के चरम समय में पर्यटकों को बचाने के लिए भ्रमण समय कम कर दिया है।

GS Paper 1: Geography		14 April 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
14A	'Below normal' rain likely for first time in 11 years 11 वर्षों में पहली बार 'सामान्य से कम' वर्षा की संभावना	



'Below normal' rain likely for first time in 11 years

GS I: Geography

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

India is staring at a "below-normal" southwest monsoon, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has warned for the first time in 11 years in its April forecast. Between the monsoon months of June-September, India is likely to receive only 92% of the long period average (LPA) of 87 cm rainfall this year, M. Ravichandran, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, said at a press briefing on Monday.

India last experienced reduced monsoon rainfall in 2023, when the IMD had warned of "near-normal" rainfall at 96% of the LPA. In 2015, the IMD's warning of "below-normal" rain – at 93% of the LPA – turned out to be an underestimate with the actual rainfall recorded at 86%, making it one of India's worst drought years.



With disruptions of fertilizer supply amid the Iran war, insufficient rain could impact farming which is significantly rainfed. FILE PHOTO

M. Mohapatra, Director-General, IMD, said the main reason for this year's below-normal monsoon warning was the likely development of an El Nino – the periodic warming of the Central Equatorial Pacific. At present, "weak" La Nina-like conditions – the converse of an El Nino – were transitioning to neutral conditions. The effects of the El Nino were only likely to come into full effect in the second half of the monsoon.

With disruptions of fertilizer supply ahead of the kharif season anticipated in the wake of the West Asia war, insufficient rain could impact farming in the country, which is significantly rainfed.

El Nino, which has emerged in 16 years since 1960, has depressed India's monsoon rainfall nine times.

Mr. Mohapatra said that despite the links between an El Nino and weak monsoon, two factors could

blunt its impact. The first is the so-called 'positive' IOD (Indian Ocean Dipole), a condition that is likely to develop towards the end of the southwest monsoon season. The second is that the extent of northern hemisphere snow cover from January to March 2026 has been slightly below normal. The dipole refers to oscillations of sea-surface temperatures between the western (near Africa) and eastern (near Indonesia) tropical Indian Ocean. A "positive" dipole and reduced snow cover generally tend to bring more rain to India and can offset El Nino's "negative" impact, Mr Mohapatra said.

2024 and 2025 have been years of surplus monsoon. Save for 2023, India has received "normal" or excess rainfall in all years since 2020.

The IMD is expected to update its monsoon forecast in May. The IMD's past

history shows that its forecasts of a weak monsoon in April generally hold true though there have been several instances of the IMD predicting a "normal" monsoon and India staring at a drought.

In 2002, the IMD predicted a normal monsoon but India experienced one of its worst droughts (81% of LPA). In 2009, the IMD's April forecast predicted a near-normal monsoon (96-98% of LPA) but actual rainfall was around 77% of the LPA, resulting in one of the worst droughts in over a century.

In 2018, IMD's April forecast predicted 97% of normal levels, and even the May update held the figure at 97%, but actual rainfall turned out to be 91% – well below normal. The IMD's official parlance doesn't use the term "drought" and refers to rain less than 90% of the LPA as "deficient".

14A. 'Below normal' rain likely for first time in 11 years

11 वर्षों में पहली बार 'सामान्य से कम' वर्षा की संभावना

- Between the monsoon months of June-September, India is likely to receive only **92% of the long period average (LPA)** of 87 cm rainfall this year, **M. Ravichandran**, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, said at a press briefing on Monday.

जून से सितंबर के मानसून महीनों के बीच, भारत को इस वर्ष 87 सेमी वर्षा के दीर्घकालिक औसत (LPA) का केवल 92% मिलने की संभावना है, यह बात पृथ्वी विज्ञान मंत्रालय के सचिव एम. रविचंद्रन ने सोमवार को प्रेस ब्रीफिंग में कही।

- At present, "**weak**" La Nina-like conditions — the converse of an El Nino — were transitioning to **neutral conditions**.

वर्तमान में "कमजोर ला नीना जैसी परिस्थितियाँ" — जो एल नीनो के विपरीत होती हैं — तटस्थ स्थिति की ओर बढ़ रही हैं।

- The first is the so-called '**positive**' IOD (Indian Ocean Dipole), a condition that is likely to develop towards the end of the southwest monsoon season.

पहला है तथाकथित 'सकारात्मक' भारतीय महासागर द्विध्रुव (IOD), जो दक्षिण-पश्चिम मानसून के अंत की ओर विकसित होने की संभावना है।

- The second is that the extent of **northern hemisphere snow cover** from January to March 2026 has been slightly below normal.

दूसरा यह है कि जनवरी से मार्च 2026 के दौरान उत्तरी गोलार्ध में हिम आवरण सामान्य से थोड़ा कम रहा है।

- The dipole refers to oscillations of **sea-surface temperatures** between the western (near Africa) and eastern (near Indonesia) tropical Indian Ocean.

यह द्विध्रुव समुद्र की सतह के तापमान में पश्चिम (अफ्रीका के पास) और पूर्व (इंडोनेशिया के पास) उष्णकटिबंधीय हिंद महासागर के बीच उतार-चढ़ाव को दर्शाता है।

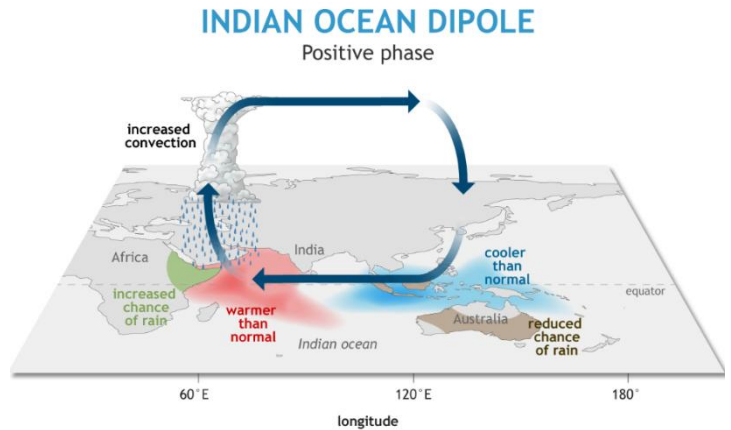
- A "**positive**" dipole and reduced snow cover generally tend to bring more rain to India and can offset El Nino's "**negative**" impact, Mr Mohapatra said.

श्री मोहापात्रा ने कहा कि "सकारात्मक" द्विध्रुव और कम हिम आवरण सामान्यतः भारत में अधिक वर्षा लाते हैं और एल नीनो के "नकारात्मक" प्रभाव को संतुलित कर सकते हैं।



Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)

- The **Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)** is a climate phenomenon characterized by the **difference in sea surface temperatures between the western and eastern parts of the Indian Ocean**.
- The concept of IOD was formally identified in **1999** by scientists Saji et al., highlighting its significant role in regional climate variability.
- Comparison with ENSO**
- While **El Niño** and **La Niña** pertain to the Pacific Ocean, the **IOD** is specific to the Indian Ocean, influencing weather patterns across surrounding regions.



PHASES OF IOD

Positive IOD

- Characterized by **warmer sea surface temperatures in the western Indian Ocean and cooler temperatures in the eastern part near Indonesia**.
- Leads to **increased rainfall in India and East Africa**, while causing droughts in **Australia and Indonesia**.

Negative IOD

- Involves **cooler sea surface temperatures in the western Indian Ocean and warmer temperatures in the eastern part**.
- Results in **reduced rainfall in India and East Africa**, with increased precipitation in **Australia and Indonesia**.

Impact on Indian Monsoon

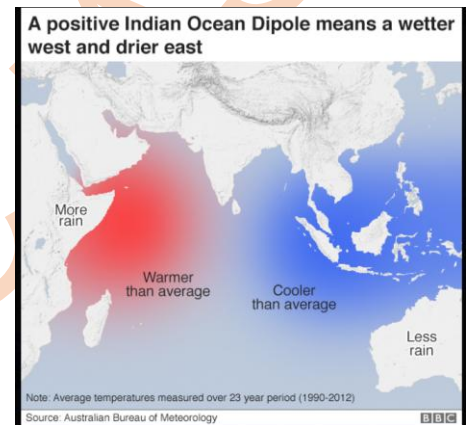
- A **positive IOD** can enhance the Indian monsoon, potentially offsetting the adverse effects of **El Niño**.
- Conversely, a **negative IOD** may exacerbate the weakening of the monsoon, especially if coinciding with **El Niño** conditions.

Geographical Poles of IOD

- The **western pole** is located near the **Arabian Sea**, while the **eastern pole** lies near **Sumatra Island** in Indonesia.
- The temperature difference between these two poles determines the phase of the IOD.

Long Period Average (LPA)

- Long Period Average (LPA)** refers to the **average rainfall received over a long period, typically 30 years**, calculated by the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**.
- It is used as a **standard benchmark** to assess whether a monsoon season is normal, deficient, or excess.



GS Paper II: Polity		14 April 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
14A	SC tells EC that voting is a sentimental right सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने चुनाव आयोग से कहा कि मतदान एक भावनात्मक अधिकार है	
14A	Delimitation will not affect southern States: Goyal सीमांकन से दक्षिणी राज्यों पर कोई प्रभाव नहीं पड़ेगा: गोयल	
14A	Congress issues three-line whip to its LS MPs; unlikely to back delimitation कांग्रेस ने अपने लोकसभा सांसदों को तीन-लाइन व्हिप जारी किया; सीमांकन का समर्थन करने	



	की संभावना कम
14A	Harivansh likely to return as Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman हरिवंश के राज्यसभा उपसभापति के रूप में लौटने की संभावना
14A	3 Nigerians booked for taking part in Bengal rally बंगाल रैली में भाग लेने पर 3 नाइजीरियाई लोगों के खिलाफ मामला दर्ज
14A	Onus on SC to protect faith in democracy लोकतंत्र में विश्वास की रक्षा की जिम्मेदारी सुप्रीम कोर्ट पर

SC tells EC that voting is a sentimental right

Poll body departed from promise to leave voters on 2002 rolls untouched during the SIR, says SC

We did not find logical discrepancy cases in Bihar; this is a question of fairness, says Justice Bagchi

Robust appellate process needed for excluded voters as EC purging names was unilateral: SC

GS II: Polity
Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday told the Election Commission of India (EC) that the right to be on the electoral roll and to vote in one's own country is not only constitutional but sentimental.

The top court was referring to lakhs of voters excluded for "logical discrepancies" and lining up for appeal hearings in West Bengal, hardly 10 days ahead of the Assembly election, following an "inquisitorial" special intensive revision (SIR).

The court said 34 lakh appeals by voters purged from the West Bengal electoral roll have already been filed for hearing before 19 appellate tribunals and there were over a lakh appeals pending before each of these tribunals.

The poll body had frozen the electoral roll for the State on April 9, days ahead of the polling on April 23 and 29.

After months of interventions to make the SIR more inclusive, the top court made cutting remarks about the impact of an exercise the poll body said was necessary to "purify the electoral roll".

"The right to remain on the electoral roll, the right to vote in the country you are born in is something which is not only constitutional but sentimental. It is the biggest expression of nationality and patriotism that you are in a participatory process to elect a democratic government," Justice Joymalya Bagchi, part of the Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, said while addressing the poll body.

Senior advocate Dama Seshadri Naidu, for the poll body, said "statistics" proved West Bengal did

Ballot proof

While the EC had frozen the West Bengal electoral rolls on April 9, the top court noted that 34 lakh appeals have been filed before 19 tribunals across the State



Ruling awaited: People gather to appeal before a tribunal over issues related to the SIR in Murshidabad, West Bengal, on Monday, PTI

It is the biggest expression of nationality and patriotism that you are in a participatory process to elect a democratic government



JUSTICE JOYMALYA BAGCHI
Supreme Court judge

not "stand out" and was "on par" with other States in the number of exclusions.

'Question of fairness'

"We are not bothered about West Bengal 'standing out'. But no other State has a category called 'logical discrepancy'. We have

examined Bihar, we did not find a single person flagged for logical discrepancy... This is not a question of inflating or shrinking the EC, but of fairness," Justice Bagchi said.

The judge noted that the court had permitted the poll body to embark on an inquisitorial exercise

mindful of the latter's concern about the electoral rolls. "The original SIR notification said voters in the 2002 electoral roll would not be touched. The 2002 roll would be the benchmark. But when you introduced 'logical discrepancy', you infringed that rule," Justice Bagchi told

the poll body.

Mr. Naidu said voters who could prove their credentials were retained. Those with disparity in their names or other background details were asked to provide details, which were verified.

"A voter in the 2002 roll was not required to give anything... When the Bihar SIR was argued, and the Bihar SIR was a facsimile of the SIR we are dealing with today, the EC was unequivocal when it submitted that a person in the 2002 voter list does not have to prove anything. No uploading of documents was required... And then you deviated from your original arguments," Justice Bagchi said.

Uncertain atmosphere
So far, the Supreme Court had avoided any direct criticism of the SIR.

Justice Bagchi referred to how the exclusion of voters

in the name of logical discrepancy came "so close" to the date of election in West Bengal that the top court had to step in and deploy judicial officers to hear out the objections. This was all the more reason why the appeal process must not be hurried, the judge said.

The Supreme Court judge said the top court wanted a robust appellate process in place for the excluded voters as the purging of names from the list by the EC was a "suo motu" and unilateral process. This was followed by a "verification" of identity documents during the objections phase of the SIR, and not exactly a hearing.

"The appellate process must be robust... somewhere we are getting blinded by the dust and fury of an impending election... We need to protect the due process rights of the voters," Justice Bagchi said.

14A. SC tells EC that voting is a sentimental right

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने चुनाव आयोग से कहा कि मतदान एक भावनात्मक अधिकार है

- The **Supreme Court** on Monday told the **Election Commission of India (EC)** that the right to be on the electoral roll and to vote in one's own country is not only constitutional but sentimental.

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने सोमवार को भारत निर्वाचन आयोग (EC) से कहा कि मतदाता सूची में बने रहने और अपने देश में मतदान करने का अधिकार केवल संवैधानिक ही नहीं बल्कि भावनात्मक भी है।

- "The right to remain on the electoral roll, the right to vote in the country you are born in is something which is not only constitutional but sentimental.

"मतदाता सूची में बने रहने और अपने जन्मस्थान देश में मतदान करने का अधिकार केवल संवैधानिक ही नहीं बल्कि भावनात्मक भी है।

- It is the biggest expression of **nationality and patriotism** that you are in a participatory process to elect a democratic government," Justice **Joymalya Bagchi** said.

यह राष्ट्रीयता और देशभक्ति की सबसे बड़ी अभिव्यक्ति है कि आप लोकतांत्रिक सरकार चुनने की प्रक्रिया में भाग लेते हैं," न्यायमूर्ति **जॉयमल्या बागची** ने कहा।

- "The original **SIR notification** said voters in the 2002 electoral roll would not be touched. The 2002 roll would be the benchmark.

"मूल **SIR अधिसूचना** में कहा गया था कि 2002 की मतदाता सूची को नहीं छुआ जाएगा और वही मानक होगी।

- But when you introduced 'logical discrepancy', you infringed that rule," Justice Bagchi told the poll body.



लेकिन जब आपने 'तार्किक विसंगति' लागू की, तो आपने उस नियम का उल्लंघन किया," न्यायमूर्ति बागची ने कहा।

Congress issues three-line whip to its LS MPs; unlikely to back delimitation

GS II: Polity

Sandeep Phukan
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday issued a three-line whip to all its Lok Sabha members to "be present without fail and support the party stand" during the three-day special session of Parliament, which has been convened to amend the women's reservation law and carry out a delimitation exercise on the basis of the 2011 Census.

The government has proposed increasing the strength of the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies by 50%. In the Lok Sabha, it plans to increase the strength from 543 to 816 members and then reserve 272 seats for women lawmakers.

Though the Congress



Sonia Gandhi

will take a joint position after a meeting of the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) bloc on Wednesday, sources told *The Hindu* that it will not support the constitutional amendment on delimitation.

At the same time, the party wants to ensure that it is not seen as going

against the women's reservation law and, therefore, may suggest operationalising the law by offering one-third seats from the existing 543.

In September 2023, when the Nari Shakti Vandana Adhiniyam (the women's reservation Bill) was being passed in Parliament, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge had argued that the law should be implemented for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

The party's stance echoed the opinion piece that Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi wrote in *The Hindu* on Monday. "Reservation for women is not the issue here. That issue has been settled. The real issue is delimitation, which based on the information

unofficially available, is extremely dangerous and an assault on the Constitution itself," Ms. Gandhi argued.

Ms. Gandhi as well as Mr. Kharge have both insisted that the government convene an all-party meeting on the issue of delimitation after April 29, when the State elections get over.

Timing of the session

Speaking at a press conference, party's social media head Supriya Shrinete accused the Modi government of trying to hide behind the women's reservation to push through delimitation and avoid the caste census. She pointed out the Special Session was being held in the middle of the election campaign in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu.

14A. Congress issues three-line whip to its LS MPs; unlikely to back delimitation

कांग्रेस ने अपने लोकसभा सांसदों को तीन-लाइन व्हिप जारी किया; सीमांकन का समर्थन करने की संभावना कम

- The Congress on Monday issued a **three-line whip** to all its **Lok Sabha members** to "be present without fail and support the party stand" during the **three-day special session of Parliament**, which has been convened to amend the **women's reservation law** and carry out a **delimitation exercise** on the basis of the **2011 Census**.

कांग्रेस ने सोमवार को अपने सभी लोकसभा सदस्यों को तीन-लाइन व्हिप जारी किया ताकि वे तीन दिवसीय विशेष संसद सत्र के दौरान "अनिवार्य रूप से उपस्थित रहें और पार्टी के रुख का समर्थन करें", जिसे महिला आरक्षण कानून में संशोधन और 2011 जनगणना के आधार पर सीमांकन प्रक्रिया के लिए बुलाया गया है।



Harivansh likely to return as Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman

GS II: Polity

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

The outgoing Deputy Chairman, Harivansh (69), who began his third term in the Upper House on Friday, is likely to return to office, according to informed sources. Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha and Union Minister J.P. Nadda have placed calls to the floor leaders of Opposition parties to build unanimity.

President Droupadi Murmu nominated him to the House following a vacancy created by the retirement of former Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi. Mr. Harivansh's second term as a Rajya Sabha member ended on April 9.

According to the sources, the election for the Deputy Chairman's post will be held during the extended Budget Session, which will convene on April 16 and conclude on April 18.

The Opposition has not yet made up its mind on whether to field a candidate against Mr. Harivansh, and it does not have the requisite numbers to put up a credible challenge. The ruling coalition enjoys the

The Congress and the Trinamool have flagged the speed shown by the Centre to fill the post

support of around 140 MPs in the Upper House, compared to about 70 MPs belonging to the INDIA bloc.

In 2020, the Opposition had fielded senior RJD leader Manoj K. Jha against Mr. Harivansh when he stood for election for the second time to the post. He was elected by voice vote as the Opposition did not press for a division, seeing that it did not have the numbers.

Assembly polls

Attendance on the Opposition benches is expected to be thin, considering the ongoing Assembly polls in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, further narrowing the margin between the two sides.

The Congress and the Trinamool Congress both raised questions about the speed shown by the government in trying to fill the Deputy Chairman's post.

14A. Harivansh likely to return as Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman हरिवंश के राज्यसभा उपसभापति के रूप में लौटने की संभावना

- President **Droupadi Murmu** nominated him to the House following a vacancy created by the retirement of former **Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi**.

राष्ट्रपति द्रौपदी मुर्मू ने उन्हें सदन में नामित किया, जो पूर्व भारत के मुख्य न्यायाधीश रंजन गोगोई के सेवानिवृत्त होने से बनी रिक्ति के बाद हुआ।

- According to the sources, the election for the **Deputy Chairman's post** will be held during the extended **Budget Session**, which will convene on **April 16** and conclude on **April 18**.

सूत्रों के अनुसार, **उपसभापति पद** के लिए चुनाव विस्तारित **बजट सत्र** के दौरान होगा, जो 16 अप्रैल को शुरू होकर 18 अप्रैल को समाप्त होगा।

- The **ruling coalition** enjoys the support of around 140 MPs in the **Upper House**, compared to about 70 MPs belonging to the **INDIA bloc**.

सत्तारूढ़ गठबंधन को **राज्यसभा** में लगभग 140 सांसदों का समर्थन प्राप्त है, जबकि **INDIA गठबंधन** के पास लगभग 70 सांसद हैं।

- In 2020, the Opposition had fielded senior **RJD leader Manoj K. Jha** against Mr. Harivansh when he stood for election for the second time to the post.

2020 में, विपक्ष ने वरिष्ठ **राजद नेता मनोज के. झा** को हरिवंश के खिलाफ उतारा था, जब वह दूसरी बार इस पद के लिए चुनाव लड़ रहे थे।

- He was elected by **voice vote** as the **Opposition** did not press for a division, seeing that it did not have the numbers.

उन्हें **वॉयस वोट** से निर्वाचित किया गया क्योंकि विपक्ष ने संख्या की कमी देखते हुए विभाजन की मांग नहीं की।

Assembly polls विधानसभा चुनाव



Onus on SC to protect faith in democracy

GS II: Polity

The Ides of March and April being the “cruellest month” dominated the world stage recently. “Ides” (from Latin *idus*) marked the approximate midpoint of Roman months. On March 15, 44 BCE, a few Roman senators stabbed Julius Caesar, a scene immortalised by William Shakespeare in *Julius Caesar*, where a soothsayer warns Caesar about his death “*beware the Ides of March*”. In *The Waste Land*, T.S. Eliot called April “the cruellest month”.

Throughout these past few weeks, we saw “broken images” caused by the violence unleashed in March continuing in early April. Thousands perished in an insane man-made disaster. Fortunately, the boxers are in the white corner of the ring for the time being.

A few thousand kilometres from Delhi, in West Asia, the world saw an audacious attempt by a 250-year-old democracy (the U.S.) to “restore democracy” in a civilization spanning nearly 40 centuries (Iran).

A few hundred kilometres east of Delhi, a different kind of battle of democracy raged, where people tried to save their right to vote, not from a distant aggressor but from an unprecedented aggression of the Election Commission of India.

The tragic irony is that this institution was created by the Constitution to protect the same right it conferred on every citizen. That is how Indian electoral democracy was conceived. The vision of the founding fathers was painstakingly and honestly turned into a collective dream since 1950 when India pledged itself to being a Republic launching one of the most audacious attempts at enfranchising an illiterate mass of humanity.

Many were apprehensive of the capability of the unlettered to use this right rationally, but few doubted the ability and intent of those responsible for protecting that right. And yet today, seeing the way in which millions find their voting right being “snatched”



Ashok Lavasa

Former Election Commissioner and Union Finance Secretary of India

just as they prepared to cast their vote, raises uncomfortable questions regarding the guardian institutions.

In undertaking the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), the ECI claimed a noble intent – “purging” the billion strong Indian electoral roll. This ‘ambition’ led to the innovative methodology of the SIR. It singled out West Bengal to apply the freshly-sharpened scythe of “logical discrepancy”, which identified six million voters for ‘special treatment’. The ‘last twist of the knife’ was that this was with the consent of the Supreme Court (SC), the most venerable and dependable last resort of the aggrieved. The cruelty is that the SC seems to not mind that the 2.7 million ‘deleted’ electors remained in a state of ‘suspended animation’. In effect, the sentence is “to be hanged by the neck”. Whether it is “till death” will be decided by the appellate tribunals set up under its aegis.

Let us make no mistake. The outcome of the West Bengal elections cannot determine the fairness of this procedure adopted by the ECI. Even if the Trinamool Congress (TMC), the party that cries ‘foul’ most loudly, wins the elections, the ‘abduction’ of the voting right of those denied a chance to establish the genuineness of their contention cannot be overlooked. They were left stranded by a half-baked process, maimed by the weapon of “logical discrepancy”, and undone by the apathy of the protector institutions they trusted. The apathy of one of them was evident in the ‘ultimatum to TMC tweet’, showing the yellow card before any foul was committed.

Last year, during the Bihar SIR hearing, the SC asserted that it would not allow mass deletions. Apparently, the scale of deletions in West Bengal has not dismayed the SC whereas even one elector deprived unfairly should be enough to upset the court. For the ECI, it would be a matter of shame if its famous clarion call of “no voter to be left behind” hereafter

sounds like a hollow slogan.

Instead of creating a conducive environment encouraging citizens to become electors, ECI actually devised hurdles that many found impossible to cross. Instead of pursuing its motto “every vote matters”, ECI created a situation that risks making people apathetic towards the process. Hitherto, it focused all its energy on increasing poll percentage, which in General Elections have never exceeded 68%. Now, its success might owe to lowering the denominator due to the large-scale deletions.

Voting is not just a public service everyone should be able to access with equal ease. It is a right guaranteed by the Constitution; a democratic duty every citizen is obliged to perform. That is the primary responsibility of the ECI, which like Hamlet sees the ghost of an intruder in every Bengali-speaking Muslim and is attempting to do what the State was obliged to but could not.

It is this obsession to ‘purge’ the electoral roll that has brought the ECI dangerously close to the sin of democide. Every genuine citizen pushed into limbo is entitled to feel that for him electoral democracy is dead and that for him the festival became a funeral because his grave was dug by the institutions meant to take him to the promised land.

Courts can punish illegalities, not sins. A sin only has consequences. It could keep nibbling at your conscience, if you have one. It will sully your reputation, if you care for it. But the most dangerous is if people stop believing in fairness, if people lose hope in the guardians of their rights, if they reconcile to injustice being their collective destiny.

The Supreme Court still has a chance to prevent a sin of commission and redeem the constitutional right of those who had originally passed the test of ECI’s due process, successfully navigated the eddies of the SIR, only to be caught in a procedural whirlpool as they seemed ashore.

ECI devised hurdles that many found impossible to cross and created a situation that risks making people apathetic towards the process

14A. Onus on SC to protect faith in democracy लोकतंत्र में विश्वास की रक्षा की जिम्मेदारी सुप्रीम कोर्ट पर

- Instead of pursuing its motto “every vote matters”, ECI created a situation that risks making people apathetic towards the process. “हर वोट मायने रखता है” के अपने आदर्श का पालन करने के बजाय, ECI ने ऐसी स्थिति बनाई जिससे लोग प्रक्रिया के प्रति उदासीन हो सकते हैं।

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Hungary for change

Magyar's win may reverse hard-right domestic and foreign policies

GS II: IR

The voter's verdict in Hungary, that ousted Victor Orban, Hungary's Christian-nationalist, populist and hard-right Prime Minister with a record 20 years in power (1998-2002 and 2010-2026) and four previous consecutive electoral wins, is unambiguous. According to the latest results, opposition leader Peter Magyar's Tisza party has won about 138 seats, to Mr. Orban's Fidesz party's 55. The massive two-thirds majority in the Hungarian parliament is enough to help Mr. Magyar overturn many of the Orban-era shifts on education and health, judicial independence, and the controversial NER (Nemzeti Együttműködés Rendszere) or National Cooperation System that the opposition said had led to an economic downturn, widespread corruption and crony capitalism, as well as an anti-European Union stance. Mr. Magyar, who was a Fidesz party leader until just two years ago when he quit the ruling party in protest of its policies and set up his own political movement, is unlikely to reverse Mr. Orban's anti-immigrant policies, however. Ahead of the polls, Victor Orban was endorsed by three powerful leaders, all seen as aggressors in recent conflicts – U.S. President Donald Trump, who even sent Vice-President J.D. Vance to address a public rally with Mr. Orban in Budapest last week; Russian President Vladimir Putin; and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, whom Mr. Orban supported unequivocally. Hungary actually quit the International Criminal Court after it issued a warrant against the Israeli Prime Minister for war crimes. It remains to be seen whether post-Orban Hungary turns its course on the wars in Iran, Ukraine or Gaza.

Most significantly for the world, that saw the rise of many populist leaders through elections in the 2010s, Hungary's election verdict denotes that voters worldwide may be tiring of the hard-right, anti-pluralistic, anti-immigrant and xenophobic rhetoric they favoured. Similar outcomes have been seen in elections in Canada, Australia, the Netherlands, the U.K. and Poland. Such trends also provide a check to the authoritarian single-party rule that a whole range of leaders have tried to implement using illiberal policies, politically motivated cases against the opposition, the denigration of democratic institutions and a clampdown on free speech. Mr. Magyar has his work cut out if he aims to reverse these policies in Hungary. The real test of a democratic leader is not just winning elections, but in pursuing inclusive policies, representational of the entire population and providing accountability for their actions, long after forming the government.

14A. Hungary for change परिवर्तन के लिए हंगरी

• Magyar's win may reverse hard-right domestic and foreign policies

मैज्यार की जीत कठोर दक्षिणपंथी घरेलू और विदेश नीतियों को पलट सकती है

The voter's verdict in Hungary हंगरी में मतदाताओं का फैसला

• The voter's verdict in **Hungary**, that ousted **Victor Orban**, Hungary's **Christian-nationalist**, populist and hard-right Prime Minister with a record 20 years in power (1998-2002 and 2010-2026) and four previous consecutive electoral wins, is unambiguous.

हंगरी में मतदाताओं का फैसला, जिसने **विक्टर ऑर्बन** को सत्ता से हटा दिया — जो **क्रिश्चियन-नेशनलिस्ट**, जनवादी और कठोर दक्षिणपंथी प्रधानमंत्री थे, जिन्होंने कुल 20 वर्षों (1998-2002 और 2010-2026) तक शासन किया और लगातार चार चुनाव जीते — बिल्कुल स्पष्ट है।

• According to the latest results, opposition leader **Peter Magyar's Tisza party** has won about 138 seats, to **Mr. Orban's Fidesz party's** 55.

नवीनतम परिणामों के अनुसार, विपक्षी नेता **पीटर मग्यार की तिसज़ा पार्टी** ने लगभग 138 सीटें जीती हैं, जबकि श्री ऑर्बन की **फिदेस पार्टी** को 55 सीटें मिली हैं।

• The massive two-thirds majority in the Hungarian parliament is enough to help Mr. Magyar overturn many of the Orban-era shifts on **education and health**, **judicial independence**, and the controversial **NER (Nemzeti Együttműködés Rendszere)** or National Cooperation System that the opposition said had led to an economic downturn, widespread corruption and crony capitalism, as well as an **anti-European Union stance**.

हंगरी की संसद में दो-तिहाई का विशाल बहुमत श्री मग्यार को **शिक्षा और स्वास्थ्य**, **न्यायिक स्वतंत्रता**, और विवादास्पद **NER (नेमज़ेती एग्युटम्यूकोदेस रेंडसेरे)** या नेशनल कोऑपरेशन सिस्टम में ऑर्बन काल के कई बदलावों को पलटने में सक्षम बनाएगा, जिसे विपक्ष ने आर्थिक गिरावट, व्यापक भ्रष्टाचार, क्रोनी कैपिटलिज्म और **यूरोपीय संघ विरोधी रुख** का कारण बताया।

• Ahead of the polls, **Victor Orban** was endorsed by three powerful leaders, all seen as aggressors in recent conflicts — **U.S. President Donald Trump**, who even sent Vice-President **J.D. Vance** to address a public rally with Mr. Orban in Budapest last week; **Russian President Vladimir Putin**; and **Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu**, whom Mr. Orban supported unequivocally.



चुनाव से पहले, **विक्टर ऑर्बन** को तीन शक्तिशाली नेताओं का समर्थन मिला, जिन्हें हालिया संघर्षों में आक्रामक माना जाता है — **अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप**, जिन्होंने उपराष्ट्रपति **जे.डी. वेंस** को बुडापेस्ट में ऑर्बन के साथ रैली को संबोधित करने भेजा; **रूसी राष्ट्रपति व्लादिमीर पुतिन**; और **इज़राइली प्रधानमंत्री बेंजामिन नेतन्याहू**, जिनका ऑर्बन ने पूरी तरह समर्थन किया।

- Hungary actually quit the **International Criminal Court** after it issued a warrant against the Israeli Prime Minister for war crimes.

हंगरी ने वास्तव में **अंतरराष्ट्रीय आपराधिक न्यायालय** को छोड़ दिया जब उसने इज़राइली प्रधानमंत्री के खिलाफ युद्ध अपराधों का वारंट जारी किया।

- Most significantly for the world, that saw the rise of many **populist leaders** through elections in the 2010s, Hungary's election verdict denotes that voters worldwide may be tiring of the **hard-right, anti-pluralistic, anti-immigrant and xenophobic rhetoric** they favoured.

विश्व के लिए सबसे महत्वपूर्ण बात यह है कि 2010 के दशक में कई **जनवादी नेताओं** के उभार के बाद, हंगरी का चुनाव परिणाम यह दर्शाता है कि विश्वभर के मतदाता अब **कट्टर दक्षिणपंथी, बहुलतावाद-विरोधी, आप्रवासन-विरोधी और विदेशी-विरोधी भाषणों** से थक रहे हैं।

MANILA

Philippines accuses China of poisoning disputed waters



AFP

CS II: IR

The Philippines accused Chinese fishermen on Monday of **pouring cyanide in waters in the Spratly Islands**, a flashpoint in the disputed South China Sea that has been the site of violent confrontations with Chinese vessels. These actions also "threaten our Navy personnel" through exposure to contaminated water, it said. AFP

14A. Philippines accuses China of poisoning disputed waters

फिलीपींस ने चीन पर विवादित जल को ज़हर देने का आरोप लगाया

- The **Philippines** accused Chinese fishermen on Monday of pouring **cyanide** in waters in the **Spratly Islands**, a flashpoint in the disputed **South China Sea** that has been the site of violent confrontations with Chinese vessels.

फिलीपींस ने सोमवार को चीनी मछुआरों पर **स्प्रेटली द्वीप समूह** के जल में **सायनाइड** डालने का आरोप लगाया, जो विवादित **दक्षिण चीन सागर** में एक प्रमुख तनाव बिंदु है, जहां चीनी जहाजों के साथ हिंसक झड़पें होती रही हैं।



U.S. military 'blockades' Iran ports; Tehran threatens ports in region

U.S. President Donald Trump says any Iranian ship coming close 'to our blockade will be eliminated'; Tehran says security in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman 'is either for everyone or for no one', adding no port in the region would be safe

GS II: IR
Associated Press
CAIRO

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Monday that the American military had begun a blockade of Iranian ports as part of his effort to force Tehran to open the Strait of Hormuz and accept a deal to end the war that has raged for more than six weeks.

Iran responded with threats on all ports in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, taking aim at U.S.-allied countries.

That set the stage for an extraordinary showdown that posed serious risks for the global economy and raised the spectre that a ceasefire that is currently holding could collapse and the war could resume.



A U.S. Air Force KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft refuelling a U.S. Air Force F-35A Lightning II aircraft during Operation Epic Fury. AFP

Talks aimed at permanently ending the conflict – which began on February 28 with U.S. and Israeli strikes on Iran – failed to reach an agreement this past weekend, and there has been no word on whether negotiations will resume.

In Washington, Mr. Trump said the blockade started at 10 a.m. EDT.

"We can't let a country blackmail the world because that's what they're doing," Mr. Trump said in Iran.

Speaking outside the Oval Office, Mr. Trump

suggested the U.S. is still willing to engage with Iran. "I can tell you that we've been called by the other side," Mr. Trump said.

He added: "We've been called this morning by the right people, the appropriate people, and they want to work a deal."

A notice to mariners issued by the U.K. Maritime Trade Operations agency said the restrictions included "the entirety of the Iranian coastline, including ports and energy infrastructure".

The U.S. military's Central Command announced that the blockade would be enforced "against vessels of all nations entering or departing Iranian ports and coastal areas". It said that would include all of Iran's ports on the Persian

Gulf and Gulf of Oman.

CENTCOM's decision to allow ships travelling between non-Iranian ports to transit the strait was a step down from Mr. Trump's earlier threat to blockade the waterway.

In a social media message, Mr. Trump warned that "if any of these ships come anywhere close to our BLOCKADE, they will be immediately ELIMINATED."

Iran issued threats of its own. "Security in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman is either for everyone or for NO ONE," the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting reported on Monday. "NO PORT in the region will be safe," read a statement from the Iranian military and the Revolutionary Guard.

14A. U.S. military 'blockades' Iran ports; Tehran threatens ports in region अमेरिकी सेना ने ईरान के बंदरगाहों की 'नाकेबंदी' की; तेहरान ने क्षेत्र के बंदरगाहों को दी धमकी

- U.S. President Donald Trump said on Monday that the American military had begun a blockade of Iranian ports as part of his effort to force Tehran to open the Strait of Hormuz and accept a deal to end the war that has raged for more than six weeks.

डोनाल्ड ट्रंप ने सोमवार को कहा कि अमेरिकी सेना ने ईरानी बंदरगाहों की नाकेबंदी शुरू कर दी है ताकि तेहरान को हॉर्मुज़ जलडमरूमध्य खोलने और छह सप्ताह से अधिक समय से चल रहे युद्ध को समाप्त करने के लिए समझौता करने पर मजबूर किया जा सके।

- A notice to mariners issued by the U.K. Maritime Trade Operations agency said the restrictions included "the entirety of the Iranian coastline, including ports and energy infrastructure".

यू.के. मैरिटाइम ट्रेड ऑपरेशंस एजेंसी द्वारा जारी नोटिस में कहा गया कि प्रतिबंधों में "पूरी ईरानी तटरेखा, जिसमें बंदरगाह और ऊर्जा अवसंरचना शामिल हैं" को शामिल किया गया है।

Iran and Strait of Hormuz: a lone struggle for control of the world's vital artery

GS II: IR
NEWS ANALYSIS

M. Kalyanaraman

In the negotiations that began on Saturday in Baghdad, a key U.S. demand from Iran will be free passage – both unrestricted and cost-free – for merchant ships through the Strait of Hormuz. Although Iran has often threatened to control the strait and use it as leverage, including during the Iran-Iraq war, this is the first time the issue has been formally raised at the international negotiating table.

Iran has floated the idea of levying tolls to fund post-war reconstruction. However, tolls are typically charged only in artificial waterways such as the Suez Canal and Panama

Canal – not in natural maritime chokepoints. Naturally occurring straits such as Malacca, Bosphorus and Dardanelles, Bab-el-Mandab, the Baltic Strait, and Gibraltar have traditionally allowed free passage.

The distinction lies in sovereignty and construction. The Suez and Panama canals are man-made channels within national territories, and tolls are effectively rents for their use. Additional fees apply for services such as pilotage, escorting, and mooring.

Both Egypt and Panama earn billions of dollars annually from these canals. The Panama Canal, in particular, remains a striking engineering achievement, lifting ships across elevations like an escalator between the Atlantic and Pacific. Historically, inter-

national straits have been flashpoints between littoral states and external powers, often serving as bargaining tools during conflicts. In the early stages of the current crisis, Iranian officials suggested the Strait of Hormuz would remain open to merchant shipping. That position quickly shifted, with warnings issued against transit. Even the perception of instability drove insurance premiums to unsustainable levels, sharply reducing shipping traffic.

Historical parallel

Iran has since permitted limited transits, mainly for its own vessels and those of friendly nations. India remains among the more favoured countries, despite having reduced its engagement with Iran over the



Iran initially suggested that the Strait of Hormuz would remain open to merchant shipping, but that position quickly shifted. REUTERS

past decade – cutting oil imports, scaling back involvement in Chabahar port, and dissolving the Iran O Hind shipping joint venture.

For India, some degree of Iranian control may not be entirely negative, aside from increased costs. However, other Persian Gulf states strongly oppose such a shift. Some point to Turkey's control over the Bosphorus and Darda-

nelles as a precedent.

There is indeed a historical parallel. The current Iran conflict has been driven in-part by U.S. President Donald Trump's assertive posture. In 1915, Winston Churchill, as the head of the British Navy who saw himself as an assertive leader defending British imperial power, led the Gallipoli campaign in an attempt to seize control of the Turkish straits. Al-

lied forces suffered heavy losses and withdrew in defeat. While Churchill's campaign failed, the Ottoman Empire – long the gatekeeper of the straits – was also weakened and eventually collapsed.

The aftermath reshaped the region. Mustafa Kemal Pasha emerged to lead a secular Turkish state that sought formal sovereignty over the straits. Various treaties attempted to regulate access, but the issue was ultimately settled by the Montreux Convention of 1936.

Under this framework, Turkey retained control while guaranteeing free passage for merchant vessels, subject to safety regulations. Warships faced restrictions, and no tolls could be charged for passage, though fees for ser-

vices were allowed. The rules tightened in wartime: Turkey could block warships of belligerent states and restrict merchant vessels if national security was at risk. This framework remains relevant. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Turkey invoked the convention to block Russian warships. It also restricted certain merchant shipping, citing safety concerns after sanctions caused ships carrying Russian oil to lose insurance.

Since then, maritime law has evolved significantly. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) treats oceans as global commons and enshrines freedom of navigation, including for warships under innocent passage. These provisions currently govern the Strait

of Hormuz.

The Montreux precedent shows that altering such frameworks requires complex, prolonged negotiations involving multiple stakeholders and competing interests. Any move away from the principle of free navigation would face significant resistance.

UNCLOS cannot easily be modified to accommodate an exception for Iran. Turkey's success in securing control over its straits was shaped by great-power rivalries – particularly between Western powers and Russia, later the Soviet Union. Iran lacks comparable backing.

With multiple stakeholders opposed, Iran may find itself once again negotiating largely on its own, with even its allies reluctant to intervene directly.



14A. Iran and Strait of Hormuz: a lone struggle for control of the world's vital artery

ईरान और स्ट्रेट ऑफ होर्मुज़: विश्व की महत्वपूर्ण धमनियों पर नियंत्रण के लिए अकेला संघर्ष

- In the negotiations that began on Saturday in Pakistan, a key U.S. demand from Iran will be free passage — both unrestricted and cost-free — for merchant ships through the Strait of Hormuz.
शनिवार को **Pakistan** में शुरू हुई वार्ताओं में, **U.S.** की एक प्रमुख मांग यह होगी कि **Strait of Hormuz** से गुजरने वाले **merchant ships** को पूरी तरह **unrestricted और cost-free passage** मिले।
- Although Iran has often threatened to control the strait and use it as leverage, including during the Iran-Iraq war, this is the first time the issue has been formally raised at the international negotiating table.
हालांकि **Iran** ने पहले भी, विशेषकर **Iran-Iraq war** के दौरान, इस जलडमरूमध्य को नियंत्रित करने और इसे दबाव के रूप में इस्तेमाल करने की धमकी दी है, लेकिन यह पहली बार है जब यह मुद्दा औपचारिक रूप से अंतरराष्ट्रीय वार्ता में उठाया गया है।
- Iran has boasted the idea of levying tolls to fund post-war reconstruction.**
Iran ने युद्ध के बाद पुनर्निर्माण के लिए **tolls** लगाने का विचार प्रस्तुत किया है।
- However, tolls are typically charged only in artificial waterways such as the Suez Canal and Panama Canal — not in natural maritime chokepoints.**
हालांकि, **tolls** आमतौर पर केवल कृत्रिम जलमार्गों जैसे **Suez Canal** और **Panama Canal** में लगाए जाते हैं — प्राकृतिक समुद्री संकरे मार्गों में नहीं।
- Naturally occurring straits such as Malacca, Bosphorus and Dardanelles, Bab-el-Mandab, the Baltic Strait, and Gibraltar have traditionally allowed free passage.**
प्राकृतिक जलडमरूमध्य जैसे **Malacca, Bosphorus, Dardanelles, Bab-el-Mandeb, Baltic Strait** और **Gibraltar** में पारंपरिक रूप से **free passage** की अनुमति होती है।
- The **distinction lies in sovereignty and construction.**
अंतर **sovereignty** और **construction** में निहित है।
- The **Suez and Panama canals are man-made channels within national territories, and tolls are effectively rents for their use.**
Suez और **Panama canals** राष्ट्रीय क्षेत्रों में बने **man-made channels** हैं, और उनके उपयोग के लिए लिया जाने वाला शुल्क वास्तव में किराया है।
- Additional fees apply for services such as **pilotage, escorting, and mooring.**
अतिरिक्त शुल्क **pilotage, escorting और mooring** जैसी सेवाओं के लिए भी लागू होते हैं।
- Both Egypt and Panama earn billions of dollars annually from these canals.**
Egypt और **Panama** इन नहरों से हर साल अरबों डॉलर कमाते हैं।
- The **Panama Canal, in particular, remains a striking engineering achievement, lifting ships across elevations like an escalator between the Atlantic and Pacific.**
विशेष रूप से **Panama Canal** एक अद्भुत इंजीनियरिंग उपलब्धि है, जो जहाजों को **Atlantic और Pacific** के बीच ऊँचाई पर ले जाता है।
- Iran has since permitted limited transits, mainly for its own vessels and those of friendly nations.
इसके बाद **Iran** ने सीमित पारगमन की अनुमति दी, मुख्यतः अपने जहाजों और मित्र देशों के लिए।
- India remains among the more favoured countries, despite having reduced its engagement with Iran over the past decade.**
India अभी भी पसंदीदा देशों में है, जबकि पिछले दशक में उसने **Iran** के साथ अपनी भागीदारी कम कर दी है।
- For India, some degree of Iranian control may not be entirely negative, aside from increased costs.**
भारत के लिए, **Iranian control** का कुछ स्तर पूरी तरह नकारात्मक नहीं हो सकता, हालांकि लागत बढ़ेगी।
- However, other Persian Gulf states strongly oppose such a shift.
हालांकि, अन्य **Persian Gulf states** इस बदलाव का कड़ा विरोध करते हैं।



- Some point to Turkiye's control over the Bosphorus and Dardanelles as a precedent. कुछ लोग Turkiye के Bosphorus और Dardanelles पर नियंत्रण को एक उदाहरण के रूप में देखते हैं।
- In 1915, Winston Churchill led the Gallipoli campaign to seize control of the Turkish straits. 1915 में Winston Churchill ने Gallipoli campaign का नेतृत्व किया ताकि Turkish straits पर नियंत्रण प्राप्त किया जा सके।
- Various treaties attempted to regulate access, but the issue was settled by the **Montreux Convention of 1936**. कई संधियों ने प्रवेश को नियंत्रित करने की कोशिश की, लेकिन अंततः 1936 की **Montreux Convention** ने इस मुद्दे को सुलझाया।
- Under this framework, Turkiye retained control while guaranteeing free passage for merchant vessels. इस व्यवस्था के तहत, Turkiye ने नियंत्रण बनाए रखा और merchant vessels के लिए free passage सुनिश्चित किया।
- Warships faced restrictions, and no tolls could be charged for passage. Warships पर प्रतिबंध लगाए गए और पारगमन के लिए कोई tolls नहीं लिया जा सकता था।
- UNCLOS cannot easily be modified to accommodate an exception for Iran. UNCLOS को Iran के लिए अपवाद बनाने हेतु आसानी से संशोधित नहीं किया जा सकता।
- Turkiye's success was shaped by great-power rivalries. Turkiye की सफलता महान शक्तियों की प्रतिस्पर्धा से प्रभावित थी।
- Iran lacks comparable backing. Iran के पास ऐसा समर्थन नहीं है।

GS Paper III: Economy		14 April 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
14A	Food prices push retail inflation up to 3.4% in March खाद्य कीमतों ने मार्च में खुदरा मुद्रास्फीति को 3.4% तक बढ़ाया	
14A	The fallout of the crisis in West Asia on India's economy पश्चिम एशिया में संकट का भारत की अर्थव्यवस्था पर प्रभाव	
14A	Rise in middle class vulnerability मध्यम वर्ग की संवेदनशीलता में वृद्धि	
14A	'India will have preferential access to 38 developed nations' 'भारत को 38 विकसित देशों तक वरीयतापूर्ण पहुंच मिलेगी'	
14A	West Asia war's global energy crisis boosts China's clean tech advantage पश्चिम एशिया युद्ध का वैश्विक ऊर्जा संकट चीन की स्वच्छ तकनीक की बढ़त को बढ़ाता है	



Food prices push retail inflation up to 3.4% in March

GS III: Economy
Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Retail inflation inched up to 3.4% in March from 3.21% February, mainly due to an uptick in prices of certain food items, show data released on Monday. The food inflation, based on the consumer price index (CPI), was estimated at 3.87% as against 3.47% in February. This remains below the Reserve Bank of India's median target of 4%.

The data released by the National Statistics Office is based on a new series with a base year 2024.

High inflation was noticed during March in gold and silver jewellery, coconut (copra), tomato, and cauliflower. On the other hand, inflation was in negative in onion, potato, garlic, arhar dal, and chickpeas, according to the NSO data.

The CPI was at 1.65% in 'electricity, gas and other fuels' segment during March as against 1.52% in the preceding month. Inflation rates for rural and urban segments are 3.63% and 3.11%, respectively. Housing inflation rate for March 2026 was 2.11%.

Highest inflation was in Telangana at 5.83% and the lowest in Mizoram at 0.66%.

Food inflation, based on the consumer price index, was estimated at 3.87% as against 3.47% in Feb.

Commenting on CPI data, ASSOCHAM President Nirmal K. Minda said the government's approach to manage prices by keeping petrol and diesel rates unchanged, despite a sharp rise in international crude oil prices, is highly commendable.

The RBI has also supported economic activity by maintaining a stable repo rate, he added.

ICRA Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said the CPI inflation rose slightly to 3.4% in March over February, indicating a mild initial impact of the West Asian crisis on the headline number. "The sequential uptick in year-on-year inflation was driven by food and electricity, gas and other fuels groups, with the latter reflecting the impact of the West Asia crisis across LPG and alternate fuels," she said.

NSO collects real-time price data from selected 1,407 urban markets (including online markets) and 1,465 villages covering all States/U.T.s.

14A. Food prices push retail inflation up to 3.4% in March

खाद्य कीमतों ने मार्च में खुदरा मुद्रास्फीति को 3.4% तक बढ़ाया

• **Retail inflation** inched up to **3.4%** in March from 3.21% February, mainly due to an uptick in prices of certain **food items**, show data released on Monday.

खुदरा मुद्रास्फीति फरवरी के 3.21% से बढ़कर मार्च में **3.4%** हो गई, जिसका मुख्य कारण कुछ **खाद्य वस्तुओं** की कीमतों में वृद्धि है, सोमवार को जारी आंकड़ों में यह दिखाया गया।

• The **food inflation**, based on the **consumer price index (CPI)**, was estimated at **3.87%** as against 3.47% in February.

खाद्य मुद्रास्फीति, जो **उपभोक्ता मूल्य सूचकांक (CPI)** पर आधारित है, फरवरी के 3.47% के मुकाबले **3.87%** आंकी गई।

• This remains below the **Reserve Bank of India's** median target of 4%.

यह अभी भी **भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक** के 4% के मध्य लक्ष्य से नीचे है।

• The **data released by the National Statistics Office** is based on a new series with a base year **2024**.

राष्ट्रीय सांख्यिकी कार्यालय द्वारा जारी आंकड़े **2024** को आधार वर्ष मानकर नई श्रृंखला पर आधारित हैं।

• **High inflation** was noticed during March in **gold and silver jewellery, coconut (copra), tomato, and cauliflower**. मार्च के दौरान **सोने और चांदी के आभूषण, नारियल (कोप्रा), टमाटर और फूलगोभी** में उच्च मुद्रास्फीति देखी गई।

• **On the other hand**, inflation was negative in **onion, potato, garlic, arhar dal, and chickpeas**, according to the **NSO data**.

दूसरी ओर, **एनएसओ के आंकड़ों** के अनुसार **प्याज, आलू, लहसुन, अरहर दाल और चना** में मुद्रास्फीति **नकारात्मक** रही।

• Inflation rates for **rural and urban segments** are **3.63% and 3.11%**, respectively.

ग्रामीण और शहरी क्षेत्रों में मुद्रास्फीति दर क्रमशः **3.63% और 3.11%** है।

• **Housing inflation rate** for March 2026 was **2.11%**.

मार्च 2026 के लिए **आवास मुद्रास्फीति दर 2.11%** थी।

• **Highest inflation** was in **Telangana** at **5.83%** and the lowest in **Mizoram** at **0.66%**.

सबसे अधिक मुद्रास्फीति **तेलंगाना** में **5.83%** और सबसे कम **मिजोरम** में **0.66%** रही।

• Commenting on **CPI data**, **ASSOCHAM President Nirmal K. Minda** said the government's approach to manage prices by keeping **petrol and diesel rates unchanged**, despite a sharp rise in international crude oil prices, is highly commendable.

सीपीआई आंकड़ों पर टिप्पणी करते हुए **एसोचैम अध्यक्ष निर्मल के. मिंडा** ने कहा कि अंतरराष्ट्रीय कच्चे तेल की कीमतों में तेज वृद्धि के बावजूद **पेट्रोल और डीजल की कीमतें स्थिर रखने** का सरकार का दृष्टिकोण सराहनीय है।

• The **RBI** has also supported economic activity by maintaining a stable **repo rate**, he added. उन्होंने कहा कि **आरबीआई** ने स्थिर **रेपो दर** बनाए रखकर आर्थिक गतिविधियों को भी समर्थन दिया है।

• **NSO** collects real-time price data from selected **1,407 urban markets (including online markets)** and **1,465 villages** covering all States/U.T.s.

एनएसओ सभी राज्यों/केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों को कवर करते हुए चुने गए **1,407 शहरी बाजारों (ऑनलाइन बाजार सहित)** और **1,465 गांवों** से वास्तविक समय मूल्य डेटा एकत्र करता है।



The fallout of the crisis in West Asia on India's economy

SS III: Economy

MOB

While the Russia-Ukraine war shows no sign of abatement, another major crisis in West Asia has hit the global economy. This war has disrupted production, storage, and transport of various energy products including crude oil, natural gas and fertilizers, and has led to supply disruptions and increase in sectoral prices. There is a serious, although partial, blockade of the Strait of Hormuz thereby restricting the passage of crude oil, gas and other petroleum products as well as other goods. Even if matters get resolved in the near future, it may take considerable time for the normalisation of the supply chain. However, even the temporary ceasefire that has been agreed to has brought down the Brent crude oil price from \$109.3 per barrel as on April 7 and 8, to about \$95.

India has been diversifying its sources of imported crude oil, gas and fertilizers. At present, India is importing crude oil from 41 source countries. In fact, India's dependence on imported crude has been increasing in recent years and it is presently close to 90%.

The relevant crude price index for India is the Indian crude basket comprising Sweet grade (Brent) and Sour grade (Oman and Dubai average), which remains linked to the global crude oil price (average of Brent, WTI and Dubai). Considering the average of March 2026, the Indian crude basket was about 19% higher than the global crude price. The rise in the price of the Indian crude basket in March 2026 was even 64.5% that of February 2026 on average, even though the price increase for end-users were moderated.

With the temporary ceasefire, the Indian basket has come down to \$120.28 per barrel on April 9, 2026 from the peak of \$157 per barrel on March 23, 2026 – that is by a margin of \$37/bbl.

Multiple stressors

The impact on the Indian economy will come through several channels. First is supply disruptions. Supply bottlenecks will affect production processes primarily in energy intensive sectors. However, any disruptions in these sectors would cascade into other sections of the economy, with the affected industries likely being textiles, paints, chemicals, fertilizers, cement and tyres among others. The non-availability of fertilizers and other chemicals particularly would affect the agricultural output in the Kharif season which will start from June.

Secondly, logistics. Storage and transport are



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Former Director,
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The non-availability of fertilizers and other chemicals would affect the agricultural output in the Kharif season which will start from June

highly energy intensive. Increased logistics costs will lead to the increase in the prices of all final products through cascading.

Third, Indian exports will take a hit from both demand and supply sides. The demand side will be affected not only due to disruptions in West Asia but also due to a slowdown in other countries, including the U.S. and Europe. The share of India's merchandise exports to West Asian countries was 16.4% of total merchandise exports in 2024-25. The depreciation of the rupee, that is already underway, may partially help Indian exporters.

Fourth, exchange rate and remittances will be affected. The Indian rupee has been depreciating in recent months. The rate of depreciation has accelerated after the start of the West Asian crisis. As global crude prices, and the prices of fertilizers and other energy products also increase, there would be an additional demand for the dollar and other hard currencies; the exchange rate will be under pressure. Moreover, India receives a considerable number of remittances from Indians employed in the Gulf countries. These remittances are bound to go down, adding further pressure on the exchange rate. However, any improvement in the overall environment may lift the rupee.

In fact, the sharp decline in the value of the rupee has been caused mainly by the substantial capital outflows triggered by uncertainty and fear. When the war ends, the value of the rupee will also rise. The net Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) outflows in March 2026 amounted to \$13.6 billion, which is huge.

Fifth, is the current account deficit. The fall in the volume of Indian exports is expected to be accompanied by an increase in the value of Indian imports leading to an increase in the current account deficit, if the war continues.

Sixth is rising inflation. Cost push inflation would affect relative prices in sectors that are directly affected such as petroleum products, fertilizers etc. However, if liquidity also increases, there would be pressure on overall inflation. The country needs to avoid any large liquidity increases.

And finally is the fiscal deficit problem. The Government of India may have to provide additional subsidies to Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) as it insists on keeping retail prices at present levels. While to some extent, the reduction in excise duty on petrol and diesel would reduce losses for the OMCs, it would be a direct revenue loss to the Indian government. If

real GDP growth goes down and profit margins fall for major producers, there will be an adverse impact on the government's tax revenues. State finances will also be affected due to lower economic activity. Their share in tax devolution would be adversely affected if the Central government's tax revenues go down. States may also face pressure to reduce sales tax/VAT on petroleum products. In fact, the government must rethink the reduction in excise duty on petroleum products. The present move is due to the ongoing State elections. After that, the retail prices should go up, if the war resumes. In that situation, the higher price may constrain demand which is desirable.

Myriad policy responses

As per information shared by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) chairman on March 27, the fortnightly loss on account of lower excise duties on petrol and diesel will be ₹7,000 crore whereas there would be a gain of ₹1,500 crore per fortnight on account of export tax on Aviation Turbine Fuel. This implies a net loss of ₹5,500 crore per fortnight, translating into an annual loss in tax revenue of about ₹1,32,000 crore for the government, should the crisis continue for the full year.

In all likelihood, food, fertilizers and petroleum subsidies would be higher than their budget estimates for 2026-27. As already mentioned, retail prices must be allowed to go up so long as crude prices remain high.

Although it is difficult to estimate the quantitative impact of the current crisis, some impacts were given by the RBI in its October 2025 Monetary Policy Report. In their estimates, for every 10% increase in the price of the Indian crude basket from a baseline of \$70 per barrel, that is an increase of \$7 per barrel, real GDP growth may fall by around 15 basis points. Further, assuming full pass-through to domestic product prices, inflation would be higher by 30 basis points.

As on April 9, 2026, the price of the Indian crude basket at \$120.28 per barrel has exceeded the baseline by about \$50 per barrel. If this margin of increase becomes applicable for the whole year, real GDP growth may fall from baseline estimates by 1 percentage point and inflation may increase by more than 2 percentage points. While these effects would be lower if the crisis gets resolved quickly, much depends upon when true peace will dawn.

Views expressed are personal.

14A. The fallout of the crisis in West Asia on India's economy

पश्चिम एशिया में संकट का भारत की अर्थव्यवस्था पर प्रभाव

- At present, India is importing crude oil from 41 source countries. वर्तमान में भारत 41 देशों से कच्चा तेल आयात कर रहा है।
- In fact, India's dependence on imported crude has been increasing in recent years and it is presently close to 90%. वास्तव में, हाल के वर्षों में आयातित कच्चे तेल पर भारत की निर्भरता बढ़ी है और वर्तमान में यह लगभग 90% है।
- The relevant crude price index for India is the Indian crude basket comprising Sweet grade (Brent) and Sour grade (Oman and Dubai average), which remains linked to the global crude oil price (average of Brent, WTI and Dubai). भारत के लिए प्रासंगिक कच्चे तेल का मूल्य सूचकांक इंडियन क्रूड बास्केट है, जिसमें स्वीट ग्रेड (ब्रेंट) और सॉर ग्रेड (ओमान और दुबई औसत) शामिल हैं, जो वैश्विक कच्चे तेल की कीमत (ब्रेंट, WTI और दुबई के औसत) से जुड़ा रहता है।
- Supply bottlenecks will affect production processes primarily in energy intensive sectors. आपूर्ति की बाधाएँ मुख्यतः ऊर्जा-गहन क्षेत्रों में उत्पादन प्रक्रियाओं को प्रभावित करेंगी।
- However, any disruptions in these sectors would cascade into other sections of the economy, with the affected industries likely being textiles, paints, chemicals, fertilizers, cement and tyres among others.



हालाँकि, इन क्षेत्रों में किसी भी व्यवधान का प्रभाव अर्थव्यवस्था के अन्य हिस्सों पर भी पड़ेगा, जिनमें **कपड़ा, पेंट, रसायन, उर्वरक, सीमेंट और टायर** उद्योग शामिल हैं।

- The non-availability of **fertilizers** and other chemicals particularly would affect the agricultural output in the **Kharif season** which will **start from June**.

उर्वरकों और अन्य रसायनों की अनुपलब्धता विशेष रूप से जून से शुरू होने वाले **खरीफ मौसम** में कृषि उत्पादन को प्रभावित करेगी।

- Increased logistics costs will lead to the increase in the prices of all final products through cascading.

लॉजिस्टिक्स लागत में वृद्धि से सभी अंतिम उत्पादों की कीमतों में श्रृंखलाबद्ध वृद्धि होगी।

Impact on Indian Economy (Continued)

भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था पर प्रभाव (जारी)

- Third, **Indian exports** will take a hit from both demand and supply sides.
तीसरा, भारतीय **निर्यात** को मांग और आपूर्ति दोनों पक्षों से झटका लगेगा।
- The demand side will be affected not only due to disruptions in **West Asia** but also due to a slowdown in other countries, including the **U.S. and Europe**.
मांग पक्ष केवल **पश्चिम एशिया** में व्यवधान के कारण ही नहीं बल्कि **अमेरिका और यूरोप** सहित अन्य देशों में मंदी के कारण भी प्रभावित होगा।
- The **share of India's merchandise exports to West Asian countries was 16.4% of total merchandise exports in 2024-25**.
2024-25 में भारत के कुल माल निर्यात में पश्चिम एशियाई देशों का हिस्सा 16.4% था।
- The depreciation of the **rupee**, that is already underway, may partially help Indian exporters. पहले से जारी **रुपये के अवमूल्यन** से भारतीय निर्यातकों को आंशिक लाभ मिल सकता है।
- Fourth, **exchange rate and remittances** will be affected.
चौथा, **विनिमय दर और प्रेषण (रेमिटेंस)** प्रभावित होंगे।
- In fact, **the sharp decline in the value of the rupee has been caused mainly by the substantial capital outflows** triggered by uncertainty and fear.
वास्तव में, रुपये के मूल्य में तेज गिरावट मुख्यतः अनिश्चितता और भय से उत्पन्न भारी **पूंजी बहिर्वाह** के कारण हुई है।
- The **net Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) outflows in March 2026 amounted to \$13.6 billion**, which is huge.
मार्च 2026 में शुद्ध **विदेशी पोर्टफोलियो निवेश (FPI) बहिर्वाह** \$13.6 बिलियन था, जो बहुत बड़ा है।
- Fifth, is the **current account deficit**.
पाँचवाँ, **चालू खाता घाटा** है।
- The **fall in the volume of Indian exports is expected to be accompanied by an increase in the value of Indian imports leading to an increase in the current account deficit**, if the war continues.
यदि युद्ध जारी रहता है, तो भारतीय निर्यात में गिरावट के साथ आयात के मूल्य में वृद्धि होगी, जिससे चालू खाता घाटा बढ़ेगा।
- Sixth is rising **inflation**.
छठा है बढ़ती हुई **मुद्रास्फीति**।
- **Cost push inflation** would affect relative prices in sectors that are directly affected such as petroleum products, fertilizers etc.
लागत-प्रेरित मुद्रास्फीति सीधे प्रभावित क्षेत्रों जैसे पेट्रोलियम उत्पादों और उर्वरकों में सापेक्ष कीमतों को प्रभावित करेगी।
- And finally is the **fiscal deficit problem**.
और अंत में **राजकोषीय घाटे** की समस्या है।
- The Government of India may have to provide additional **subsidies** to Oil Marketing Companies (**OMCs**) as it insists on keeping retail prices at present levels.
भारत सरकार को खुदरा कीमतों को वर्तमान स्तर पर बनाए रखने के कारण ऑयल मार्केटिंग कंपनियों (**OMCs**) को अतिरिक्त **सब्सिडी** देनी पड़ सकती है।
- While to some extent, the reduction in **excise duty** on petrol and diesel would reduce losses for the OMCs, it would be a direct revenue loss to the Indian government.



हालाँकि पेट्रोल और डीजल पर **उत्पाद शुल्क** में कमी से OMCs का नुकसान कुछ हद तक कम होगा, लेकिन यह सरकार के लिए सीधा राजस्व नुकसान होगा।

- If real **GDP growth** goes down and profit margins fall for major producers, there will be an adverse impact on the government's tax revenues.
यदि वास्तविक **GDP वृद्धि** घटती है और प्रमुख उत्पादकों के लाभ मार्जिन कम होते हैं, तो सरकार के कर राजस्व पर नकारात्मक प्रभाव पड़ेगा।
- State finances will also be affected due to lower economic activity.
कम आर्थिक गतिविधि के कारण राज्यों की वित्तीय स्थिति भी प्रभावित होगी।
- Their share in tax devolution would be adversely affected if the Central government's tax revenues go down.
यदि केंद्र सरकार के कर राजस्व में कमी आती है, तो राज्यों की कर-वितरण में हिस्सेदारी भी प्रभावित होगी।
- States may also face pressure to reduce **sales tax/VAT** on petroleum products.
राज्यों पर पेट्रोलियम उत्पादों पर **सेल्स टैक्स/VAT** कम करने का दबाव भी पड़ सकता है।
- In fact, the government must rethink the reduction in excise duty on petroleum products.
वास्तव में, सरकार को पेट्रोलियम उत्पादों पर उत्पाद शुल्क में कमी के निर्णय पर पुनर्विचार करना चाहिए।
- The present move is due to the ongoing **State elections**.
वर्तमान कदम चल रहे **राज्य चुनावों** के कारण उठाया गया है।
- After that, the retail prices should go up, if the war resumes.
इसके बाद, यदि युद्ध फिर शुरू होता है, तो खुदरा कीमतें बढ़नी चाहिए।
- In that situation, the higher price may constrain demand which is desirable.
उस स्थिति में, उच्च कीमतें मांग को सीमित कर सकती हैं, जो वांछनीय है।

Myriad policy responses विविध नीतिगत प्रतिक्रियाएँ

- As per information shared by the **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)** chairman on March 27, the fortnightly loss on account of lower **excise duties** on petrol and diesel will be ₹7,000 crore whereas there would be a gain of ₹1,500 crore per fortnight on account of export tax on **Aviation Turbine Fuel**.
27 मार्च को **केंद्रीय अप्रत्यक्ष कर और सीमा शुल्क बोर्ड (CBIC)** के अध्यक्ष द्वारा साझा की गई जानकारी के अनुसार, पेट्रोल और डीजल पर कम **उत्पाद शुल्क** के कारण प्रति पखवाड़ा ₹7,000 करोड़ का नुकसान होगा, जबकि **एविएशन टर्बाइन फ्यूल** पर निर्यात कर से प्रति पखवाड़ा ₹1,500 करोड़ का लाभ होगा।
- This implies a net loss of ₹5,500 crore per fortnight, translating into an annual loss in tax revenue of about ₹1,32,000 crore for the government, should the crisis continue for the full year.
इसका अर्थ है कि प्रति पखवाड़ा ₹5,500 करोड़ का शुद्ध नुकसान होगा, जो पूरे वर्ष संकट जारी रहने पर सरकार के लिए लगभग ₹1,32,000 करोड़ के वार्षिक कर राजस्व नुकसान में परिवर्तित होगा।
- In all likelihood, **food, fertilizers and petroleum subsidies** would be higher than their budget estimates for 2026-27.
संभावना है कि **खाद्य, उर्वरक और पेट्रोलियम सब्सिडी** 2026-27 के बजटीय अनुमानों से अधिक होंगी।
- As already mentioned, retail prices must be allowed to go up so long as crude prices remain high.
जैसा कि पहले उल्लेख किया गया है, जब तक कच्चे तेल की कीमतें उँची रहती हैं, खुदरा कीमतों को बढ़ने दिया जाना चाहिए।
- Although it is difficult to estimate the quantitative impact of the current crisis, some impacts were given by the **RBI** in its October 2025 **Monetary Policy Report**.
हालाँकि वर्तमान संकट के मात्रात्मक प्रभाव का आकलन करना कठिन है, लेकिन कुछ प्रभावों का उल्लेख **RBI** ने अपनी अक्टूबर 2025 की **मौद्रिक नीति रिपोर्ट** में किया था।
- In their estimates, for every 10% increase in the price of the **Indian crude basket** from a baseline of \$70 per barrel, that is an increase of \$7 per barrel, real **GDP growth** may fall by around 15 basis points.
उनके अनुमान के अनुसार, **इंडियन क्रूड बास्केट** की कीमत में \$70 प्रति बैरल के आधार से हर 10% वृद्धि (अर्थात \$7 प्रति बैरल की वृद्धि) पर वास्तविक **GDP वृद्धि** लगभग 15 बेसिस पॉइंट घट सकती है।



Rise in middle class vulnerability

India is lifting its people out of income-based poverty but not moving them ahead for better upward mobility and economic opportunity. A World Bank policy paper proposes shifting welfare analysis from merely counting those below the poverty line to measuring how far people are from a reasonable standard of living.

ISS III: Economy
ECONOMIC NOTES

Deepanshu Mohan
Ankur Singh

Amid rising geoeconomic uncertainty that risks deepening domestic inequality in emerging market economies, India's macroeconomic performance is still widely seen as a story of progress, with its recent growth model often held up as a success in reducing poverty, and by conventional measures, that claim does hold with its caveats.

The share of Indians living below the World Bank's lower middle income poverty line has fallen sharply from over 50% a decade ago to roughly 30% in recent estimates. Welfare programs through improved last-mile distributive connectivity now reach hundreds of millions through subsidised food, direct transfers and financial inclusion. Hence, extreme deprivation may have declined amongst vulnerable groups.

Yet this narrative rests on a narrow question. Poverty lines tell us whether people have crossed a threshold of subsistence.

They do not tell us what lies above that threshold, or whether it offers a meaningful pathway forward.

Well-being as a spectrum

That limitation has long been recognised. What is more recent is the attempt to move beyond it.

A World Bank policy paper proposes a different way of thinking about welfare, one that does not simply count how many people fall below a line but asks how far people are from a reasonable standard of living. Instead of a binary classification, it treats well-being as a spectrum and gives greater weight to those furthest behind.

This is not just a statistical refinement. It challenges how economic progress is interpreted and how policy success is assessed. It suggests that falling poverty may be masking a deeper failure, the inability of growth to translate into sustained economic movement across large sections of the population.

Seen through this lens, India's growth story appears less reassuring.

The country has been among the fastest growing major economies in the world. Yet concerns about inequality, wage stagnation and employment generation have intensified rather than receded. The issue is not that growth has failed. It is that growth has not translated into mobility.

Crossing a poverty line, in this context, does not necessarily mark entry into stability. It often marks entry into a zone of vulnerability, where incomes remain low, volatile and insufficient to support sustained improvement in living standards. What is expanding is not a secure middle class, but a vulnerable middle.

This pattern reflects deeper structural constraints. Growth in India has increasingly been driven by sectors that are either capital intensive or limited in their ability to absorb labour at scale. Output expands, but the transmission mechanism into stable employment remains weak.

That disconnect is visible in the labour market. Fewer than 10% of Indian workers hold formal jobs with social security protections. The rest operate in an informal economy where productivity growth is limited and earnings remain uncertain.

Government data from the e-Shram portal shows that 94.11% of registered

MOB



Walk the line: Surveys suggest that real wages for salaried workers have remained stagnant in recent years, even as overall productivity has improved. REUTERS

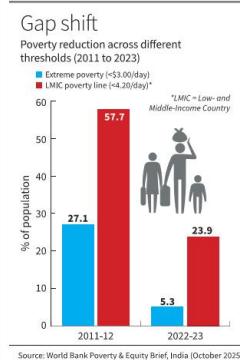
informal workers earn less than ₹10,000 a month. At such income levels, the ability to convert earnings into durable improvements in well-being remains constrained. Access to better education, healthcare and financial security depends not only on income, but on its reliability and scale. Volatility itself becomes a barrier to mobility.

This is where the structure of growth begins to matter more than its pace. Even in sectors where output has expanded, employment has not kept up.

Data from labour and industry surveys suggest that real wages for salaried workers have remained largely stagnant in recent years, even as overall productivity has improved. The link between growth and income is not just weak, it is increasingly fractured.

This disconnect is not just a short-term fluctuation in demand but points to deeper structural fault lines in the economy. It is here that the limits of growth become clearer, as the movement of workers into more productive sectors has stalled rather than accelerated.

From here, the problem reveals itself as structural. Economic transformation depends on the continuous movement of workers into higher productivity activities.



In India, that movement has slowed and, in some respects, reversed.

Manufacturing has not expanded at the pace required to absorb the roughly twelve million people entering the labour force each year. Between 2016 and 2021, the sector shed roughly 24 million jobs even as the economy continued to grow. Many workers have instead moved back into agriculture, which still employs nearly 46% of the workforce while producing only about 18% of national output. The income implications are stark. The average farm household earns about ₹10,218 per month across all members, translating to roughly ₹75 per person per day. For a large share of the workforce, the distance from subsistence may have narrowed, but the distance from economic security remains substantial.

At the same time, gains at the top have accelerated. Recent estimates suggest that 271 billionaires now hold wealth equivalent to roughly one quarter of India's net national income. The top 1% alone captures more than 22% of national income.

These trends are not contradictory. They reflect the limits of how progress is measured. Indicators that track poverty reduction capture the elimination of extreme deprivation. They do not capture whether the economy is generating broad-based opportunity or concentrating gains across regions, sectors and income groups.

In that sense, the problem is not only economic. It is also statistical. When metrics focus on thresholds, they can obscure the conditions just above them, signalling success even as mobility stalls.

Falling poverty, fragile households

The consequences are visible across the economy. Youth unemployment stands at around 45%, while the unemployment rate among graduates is close to 29%. For many households, education no longer reliably translates into upward movement.

Household balance sheets reflect similar pressures. Net household financial savings have fallen to roughly 5% of GDP, while household debt has risen sharply, much of it in unsecured borrowing. Increasingly, credit is being used not to

finance aspiration, but to smooth volatility and sustain basic consumption. In effect, subsistence itself is becoming financialised.

Even human development indicators point in the same direction. India's child wasting rate remains the highest in the world at 18.7%, and about 35.5% of children under five are stunted. These are not only indicators of deprivation. They are indicators of constrained future mobility.

Shifting challenge

Taken together, these patterns suggest that the central economic challenge is shifting. It is no longer only about reducing poverty. It is about preventing those who move above it from being trapped just beyond it.

This is precisely where the new measurement approach becomes useful. By focusing on the distance from a reasonable standard of living rather than a fixed threshold, it captures whether growth is enabling people to move forward or simply preventing them from falling back.

For India, that distinction is becoming critical. An economy can reduce poverty rates while leaving large segments of its population clustered just above them. It can generate growth without generating mobility. What it produces, instead, is a vulnerable middle with limited pathways upward.

The policy challenge, therefore, is not only to sustain growth, but to restore the link between growth and mobility. That requires expanding productive employment, strengthening the connection between productivity and wages and ensuring that gains are not confined to a narrow segment of the economy.

India's development story is entering a more demanding phase. The question is no longer how many people can be lifted out of poverty. It is whether growth is quietly creating a class that can neither fall back nor move forward. (Deepanshu Mohan, Professor and Dean, O.P. Jindal Global University, Director, Centre for New Economics Studies (CNES), Visiting Professor, LSE, and Visiting Research Fellow, University of Oxford; Ankur Singh, Research Assistant, CNES)

THE GIST

India is among the fastest growing major economies in the world. Yet concerns about inequality, wage stagnation and employment generation have intensified rather than receded.

Fewer than 10% of workers hold formal jobs with social security protections. The rest operate in an informal economy where growth is limited and earnings remain uncertain. Data shows 94% of informal workers earn less than ₹10,000 per month.

Between 2016 and 2021, the manufacturing sector shed close to 24 million jobs even as the economy grew. At the same time, gains at the top have accelerated. Estimates suggest that 271 billionaires hold wealth equivalent to roughly one quarter of the country's net national income.

14A. Rise in middle class vulnerability मध्यम वर्ग की संवेदनशीलता में वृद्धि

- A World Bank policy paper proposes shifting welfare analysis from merely counting those below the poverty line to measuring how far people are from a reasonable standard of living
- विश्व बैंक के एक नीति पत्र में सुझाव दिया गया है कि कल्याण विश्लेषण को केवल गरीबी रेखा के नीचे



रहने वालों की गिनती तक सीमित रखने के बजाय यह मापा जाए कि लोग एक उचित जीवन स्तर से कितनी दूर हैं

India's growth and inequality debate

भारत की वृद्धि और असमानता पर बहस

- **Welfare programs** through improved last-mile distributive connectivity now reach hundreds of millions through subsidised food, direct transfers and financial inclusion.
बेहतर अंतिम छोर वितरण प्रणाली के माध्यम से **कल्याणकारी कार्यक्रम** अब सब्सिडी वाले खाद्य, प्रत्यक्ष हस्तांतरण और वित्तीय समावेशन के जरिए करोड़ों लोगों तक पहुँच रहे हैं।
- Hence, **extreme deprivation** may have declined amongst vulnerable groups.
इस प्रकार, कमजोर वर्गों में **अत्यधिक गरीबी** कम हुई हो सकती है।
- Yet this narrative rests on a narrow question.
फिर भी यह कहानी एक संकीर्ण प्रश्न पर आधारित है।
- **Poverty lines** tell us whether people have crossed a threshold of subsistence.
गरीबी रेखाएँ यह बताती हैं कि क्या लोग जीवन निर्वाह की सीमा पार कर चुके हैं।
- They do not tell us what lies above that threshold, or whether it offers a meaningful pathway forward.
वे यह नहीं बताती कि उस सीमा के ऊपर क्या है या क्या वह आगे बढ़ने का सार्थक मार्ग प्रदान करती है।

Well-being as a spectrum

कल्याण एक स्पेक्ट्रम के रूप में

- That limitation has long been recognised.
इस सीमा को लंबे समय से पहचाना गया है।
- What is more recent is the attempt to move beyond it.
जो नया है, वह इससे आगे बढ़ने का प्रयास है।
- A **World Bank policy paper** proposes a different way of thinking about welfare, one that does not simply count how many people fall below a line but asks how far people are from a reasonable standard of living.
एक **विश्व बैंक नीति पत्र** कल्याण के बारे में सोचने का एक अलग तरीका प्रस्तुत करता है, जो केवल यह नहीं गिनता कि कितने लोग गरीबी रेखा के नीचे हैं, बल्कि यह पूछता है कि लोग एक उचित जीवन स्तर से कितनी दूर हैं।
- Instead of a binary classification, it treats well-being as a spectrum and gives greater weight to those furthest behind.
द्विआधारी वर्गीकरण के बजाय, यह कल्याण को एक स्पेक्ट्रम मानता है और सबसे पीछे छूटे लोगों को अधिक महत्व देता है।
- Yet concerns about **inequality, wage stagnation and employment generation** have intensified rather than receded.
फिर भी **असमानता, वेतन ठहराव और रोजगार सृजन** को लेकर चिंताएँ कम होने के बजाय बढ़ी हैं।
- The issue is not that growth has failed.
समस्या यह नहीं है कि विकास विफल हुआ है।
- It is that growth has not translated into **mobility**.
समस्या यह है कि विकास **गतिशीलता** में परिवर्तित नहीं हुआ है।
- Growth in India has increasingly been driven by sectors that are either **capital intensive or limited in their ability to absorb labour at scale**.
भारत में विकास तेजी से ऐसे क्षेत्रों द्वारा संचालित हो रहा है जो या तो **पूंजी-गहन** हैं या बड़े पैमाने पर श्रम को समाहित करने में सीमित हैं।
- Government data from the **e-Shram portal** shows that **94.11% of registered informal workers earn less than ₹10,000 a month**.
ई-श्रम पोर्टल के सरकारी आंकड़े बताते हैं कि 94.11% पंजीकृत अनौपचारिक श्रमिक ₹10,000 प्रति माह से कम कमाते हैं।
- At such income levels, the ability to convert earnings into durable improvements in **well-being** remains constrained.
ऐसे आय स्तर पर **कल्याण** में स्थायी सुधार लाने की क्षमता सीमित रहती है।



- Access to better education, healthcare and financial security depends not only on income, but on its **reliability and scale**.
बेहतर शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य और वित्तीय सुरक्षा तक पहुँच केवल आय पर नहीं बल्कि उसकी स्थिरता और स्तर पर भी निर्भर करती है।

'India will have preferential access to 38 developed nations'

GS III: Economy
The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Monday said the U.K. FTA with India would likely be operationalised and would come into effect on May 1, after the four nations – Switzerland, Norway, Liechtenstein, and Iceland—had already come into effect in October.

Asked about the outlook for FY27, he said India would grow because so many more FTAs were coming into play.

"Just talked to the Oman ministers. I am telling you, the Oman FTA will be effective from June 1. The U.K. minister and I talked about a week ago, and I met him in Cameroon also at the WTO. The New Zealand minister is coming in on April 24, and I get free from here on April 21. He met me in Cameroon. He says I am coming to sign and ink the deal. Once that is done, he can go to Parliament, and by October, November he says we will clear it. So maybe by January, New Zealand will come into play," he told journalists of *The Hindu*.

India-U.S. trade deal

On the state of play of trade talks with the U.S., he said India had finalised the trade deal, but a trade deal should give preferential access and market access compared with competitors.

"So if my rate is X, it has to be lower than my competitors, so I get a chance to increase my business. That's the essence of any trade deal that we do. We finalised the trade deal, and then the Supreme Court (of the U.S) order took away that competitive edge. So we have to work with the U.S. to see how that competitive edge can come back to us, and the



Piyush Goyal

trade deal is on," he said.

Mr. Goyal said, in fact, the U.K. and EU, in their history, would not have cleared any FTA as fast as they did with India.

"Early next year, maybe January, February next year, if not earlier, the EU will be operational. So gentlemen, 38 developed countries, covering two-thirds of global trade and global GDP. Now India will have preferential access (to)," he said.

'Major job creation'

He said in Tirupur alone there would be a huge amount of jobs, ₹45,000 crore worth of production, and Tirupur industrialists were telling him that they would double their business in the next three or four years.

About Chinese investment, he said if there were sectors – desirable sectors like electronic components and stuff like that – India was willing to allow Chinese investment with technology transfer to come into India.

"The automatic approval, what we have done – beneficial up to 10%, you will appreciate – is to cover large funds and all who may have a small Chinese element. So that we have allowed up to 10% beneficial, but we are cautious in our approach. But we are also conscious that India needs investment, India needs capital for growth. That's what we are encouraging," he added.

14A. 'India will have preferential access to 38 developed nations'

'भारत को 38 विकसित देशों तक वरीयतापूर्ण पहुंच मिलेगी'

• Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal on Monday said the U.K. FTA with India would likely be operationalised and would come into effect on May 1, after the four nations — **Switzerland, Norway, Liechtenstein, and Iceland**—had already come into effect in October.

केंद्रीय वाणिज्य और उद्योग मंत्री पीयूष गोयल ने सोमवार को कहा कि भारत के साथ यू.के. एफटीए संभवतः लागू हो जाएगा और 1 मई से प्रभाव में आ जाएगा, जबकि चार देश — **स्विट्जरलैंड, नॉर्वे, लिक्टेनस्टाइन और आइसलैंड** — पहले ही अक्टूबर में लागू हो चुके हैं।

• He met me in **Cameroon**. He says I am coming to sign and ink the deal.

वह मुझसे **कैमरून** में मिले थे। उन्होंने कहा कि मैं समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर करने आ रहा हूँ।

• So gentlemen, 38 developed countries, covering two-thirds of global trade and global GDP.

तो सज्जनों, 38 विकसित देश, जो वैश्विक व्यापार और वैश्विक जीडीपी के दो-तिहाई हिस्से को कवर करते हैं।

• Now India will have **preferential access (to)**," he said.

अब भारत को **वरीयतापूर्ण पहुंच** मिलेगी," उन्होंने कहा।

'Major job creation'

'बड़े पैमाने पर रोजगार सृजन'

• About **Chinese investment**, he said if there were sectors — desirable sectors like electronic components and stuff like that — India was willing to allow Chinese investment with **technology transfer** to come into India.

चीनी निवेश के बारे में उन्होंने कहा कि यदि ऐसे क्षेत्र हों — जैसे इलेक्ट्रॉनिक घटक आदि — तो भारत **प्रौद्योगिकी हस्तांतरण** के साथ चीनी निवेश को आने देने के लिए तैयार है।



- “The automatic approval, what we have done — beneficial up to 10%, you will appreciate — is to cover large funds and all who may have a small Chinese element.
“जो स्वचालित स्वीकृति हमने दी है — 10% तक लाभकारी — इसका उद्देश्य बड़े फंड और उन सभी को कवर करना है जिनमें थोड़ा चीनी निवेश हो सकता है।
- So that we have allowed up to 10% beneficial, but we are cautious in our approach.
इसलिए हमने 10% तक की अनुमति दी है, लेकिन हम अपने दृष्टिकोण में सावधानी बरत रहे हैं।

West Asia war's global energy crisis boosts China's clean tech advantage

China is likely to benefit from the fossil fuel disruptions caused by a mostly shut Strait of Hormuz, despite being the biggest purchaser of Iranian oil; the war is driving demand for Chinese tech, whose exports of items such as solar panels, batteries and EV hit a record of about \$22.3 billion in Dec.

GS III: Economy
Associated Press
HONG KONG

China is poised to benefit from the Iran war as global energy disruptions accelerate a shift away from fossil fuels and toward clean technologies and renewable power, industries that China dominates.

Most of the oil and gas from the now mostly shut Strait of Hormuz was Asia-bound. Asian nations are scrambling to conserve energy and bolster dwindling reserves. As a temporary ceasefire teeters, gasoline prices in the U.S. and Europe are spiking.

While most of Asia is hit hard, China will likely benefit from the fossil fuel disruptions despite being the biggest purchaser of Iranian oil. China leads the world in battery, solar and electric vehicle exports, and its industries are forecast to face a rise in demand for renewable products.

Before the start of the Iran war in late February, China's lead in clean technologies was lengthening. The U.S. under President Donald Trump scaled back on renewable energy and leaned on its vast oil and gas resources, promoting energy exports to achieve what Mr. Trump described as “energy dominance.”

Now Chinese industry giants like vehicle-maker BYD and battery-producer CATL are well-positioned

to capitalise on growing interest in low-emission energy products as the world confronts the fragility of fossil fuels.

“China's approach to energy sector development and geopolitics has been completely validated by the Iran conflict,” said Sam Reynolds with the U.S.-based Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis.

Over a decade ago, Chinese President Xi Jinping merged energy security with national security. China has since stepped up its focus on renewable energy, even though fossil fuels still dominate its domestic energy mix.

China makes up over 70% of EV manufacturing and about 85% of battery cell production globally, according to the International Energy Agency. Its current five-year plan until 2030 continues to prioritise these industries.

“They are at the very forefront of this, more so than any other countries in the world, certainly more so than the United States,” said Li Shuo, director of the Asia Society Policy Institute's China Climate Hub.

The U.S. is the world's top oil producer and has pushed liquefied natural gas. The American approach — summed up by Mr. Trump as “drill, baby, drill” — favours fossil fuels over renewables.

Markets were witness-



China accounts for over 70% of global EV manufacturing and about 85% of battery cell production, says International Energy Agency, AP

ing a “bifurcation” before the war, Mr. Reynolds said, with the superpowers pushing very different energy futures, leaving other countries with complex choices on which approach to back.

The Iran war is driving demand for Chinese technology, whose exports of items such as solar panels, batteries and electric cars hit a record of almost \$22.3 billion in December. That was up about 47% from the year before, with much going to Southeast Asia and Europe, according to the think tank Ember.

Investment in renewable power and battery storage — designed to save energy when the sun isn't shining or the wind isn't blowing — is expected to increase in nations heavily dependent on energy imports, including European

countries, according to the credit rating firm Fitch Ratings.

Investors are betting the war will boost demand for renewables. In March, CATL and BYD's Hong Kong traded shares rose roughly 24% and 11%, respectively.

Steady ground

Over the past few years, Chinese automakers were already expanding EV development and production while growing exports faster than American or European rivals, offering cheaper models and gaining ground in regions like Southeast Asia.

These trends are expected to accelerate.

The energy shock is “going to help the Chinese industry globally and hurt the American car industry globally,” said Amy Myers

Jaffe of New York University's Center for Global Affairs. Meanwhile, high U.S. tariffs have largely shut Chinese EVs out of the American market.

Rising fuel prices also may boost BYD growth in China, said Chris Liu with the research and advisory firm Omdia.

Households facing higher energy costs are likely to move to clean power, said James Bowen of the Australia-based consultancy ReMap Research.

Pakistan offers an early example. Its renewable rollout in 2017 led to more than 50 gigawatts of Chinese solar panels imported by December 2025.

Pakistan still imports a third of its energy. About 80% of its oil flowed through the Strait of Hormuz, and Qatar had been supplying a quarter of its LNG. But “the shock isn't as big as it would have been without solar,” said Nabiya Imran of Renewables First.

If prices remain high, solar could save Pakistan \$6.3 billion in fossil fuel imports over the next year, according to think tanks Renewables First and the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air.

In the United Kingdom, EV leasing demand jumped by more than a third in the first three weeks of March compared to a similar period in February before the war, according to Octopus Energy,

a renewable group. Octopus also reported increases in rooftop solar sales and solar-related inquiries.

In Southeast Asia, Vietnamese EV maker VinFast is offering discounts to offset fuel price shocks.

Prolonged fuel spikes may act as a future catalyst for EVs, but it will take time to see the trend reflected in purchases, partly because customers are likely waiting to see how the conflict plays out, said Patrick Tan, with the energy consultancy Aurora Research.

Even Indonesia, the world's largest coal exporter, is recalibrating in ways that could make it a bigger customer for China's clean energy technology.

In March, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto announced a push into EVs, including plans to produce electric cars and expand charging infrastructure.

The dream of electrified transportation is gaining renewed attention, said Putra Adhiguna of the Jakarta-based think tank Energy Shift Institute.

Chinese firms play a major role in Indonesia's clean energy supply chain. They signed more than \$54 billion dollars' worth of deals with the state utility in 2023 and added a \$10 billion pledge during Prabowo's visit to Beijing in 2024.

“There will be direct financial benefits to Chinese companies,” said Mr. Reynolds of IEEFA.

14A. West Asia war's global energy crisis boosts China's clean tech advantage पश्चिम एशिया युद्ध का वैश्विक ऊर्जा संकट चीन की स्वच्छ तकनीक की बढ़त को बढ़ाता है

- China leads the world in battery, solar and electric vehicle exports, and its industries are forecast to face a rise in demand for renewable products.
चीन battery, solar और electric vehicle exports में विश्व का नेतृत्व करता है, और उसके उद्योगों के लिए renewable products की मांग बढ़ने का अनुमान है।
- China makes up over 70% of EV manufacturing and about 85% of battery cell production globally, according to the International Energy Agency.
International Energy Agency के अनुसार, चीन वैश्विक EV manufacturing का 70% और battery production का लगभग 85% करता है।



- The U.S. is the world's top oil producer and has pushed liquefied natural gas.
U.S. दुनिया का सबसे बड़ा oil producer है और उसने liquefied natural gas को बढ़ावा दिया है।

GS Paper III: Science and Technology		14 April 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
14A	Physics has not figured out why matter comes in 'flavours' भौतिकी यह नहीं समझ पाई है कि पदार्थ 'फ्लेवर' (प्रकारों) में क्यों आता है	
14A	Artemis II draws flood of conspiracy theories आर्टेमिस II साजिश सिद्धांतों की बाढ़ को आकर्षित करता है	
14A	Paediatrician who flagged ORS labelling resigns from IAP आईएपी से ORS लेबलिंग पर सवाल उठाने वाली बाल रोग विशेषज्ञ ने इस्तीफा दिया	

Men and machines



Putting to test: A visitor uses a virtual reality (VR) device at a stand during the second edition of the International Exhibition on Artificial Intelligence, Defence and Space in Abidjan on April 13. AFP

Putting to test: A visitor uses a virtual reality (VR) device at a stand during the second edition of the International Exhibition on Artificial Intelligence, Defence and Space in Abidjan on April 13.



Physics has not figured out why matter comes in 'flavours'

Addressing the flavour puzzle will not just tidy up loose ends in the theory of forces and particles, it would reveal something profound about how nature organises its complexity at a fundamental level; the solution can involve new forces of nature, extra spatial dimensions or extra universes

GS III: S&T

Nirmal Raj

At the smallest scales, nature often repeats itself. It makes families of subatomic particles that look identical in almost every way. Yet when scientists measured them, they found these 'copies' didn't line up neatly. Some are far heavier than others for no clear reason. Some change into one another at oddly chosen rates. While physicists can describe these patterns with impressive precision, they don't know why the pattern exists at all.

These effects occur at a deeper level in particle physics, going by the name 'flavour puzzle'. It consists of several questions. Consider the electron: it was discovered in 1897 and found not to be unique in 1936, when scientists found the muon. Oddly, the muon has the same properties as the electron but is 200 times heavier, prompting the physicist Isidor Rabi to ask: "Who ordered that?" The meaning of this question was that the theory of electrons told us how it behaves and interacts with other particles, but it didn't predict there would be another copy of it.

To make matters more confusing, scientists discovered the tauon in 1975, weighing 17 times the muon.

Why in threes?

Over the years, scientists have found other elementary particles occurring in similar triplicates. Each copy, like the electron, muon or tauon, is called a generation. Neutrinos also come in three generations. Protons and neutrons are built from quarks called up and down, and each of these quarks comes in three generations (up, charm, top; down, strange, bottom).

The Standard Model, which is the reigning theory of particle physics, says precisely how all these particles communicate to make the universe. But it is silent on why they come in threes. Why not one or two, or 17?

Over decades, physicists have learnt that while this question is deceptively easy to pose, it is notoriously difficult to answer.

Masses and mixing

The arrangement of masses has been inexplicable as well. The electron and the top quark respectively weigh about 1/1,800-times and 180-times the proton, with the masses of other charged particles taking values between these extremes in no clear scheme. The Koide formula relates the masses of the electron, muon, and tauon in a mathematical guess but lacks a solid fundamental explanation.

Neutrinos are another puzzle: the Standard Model says they should have no mass, yet they do – and even then each neutrino weighs at least a million times less than an electron.

Further yet, an effect called quantum mixing plus a fundamental force called the weak force allow particles of different generations to morph into one another. But even then, the rates at which quarks mix (meaning how much they



The Large Hadron Collider can zoom in on phenomena happening at a scale of 10^{-18} m. But to fathom flavour, theoretical estimates suggest we need to plumb at least 10^{-21} m, which would require much more powerful particle accelerators. CERN

masquerade as other particles) look nothing like those at which neutrinos mix.

The weak force is also involved in an effect called CP violation, which scientists believe is responsible for our universe containing almost no antimatter. However, the magnitude of CP violation the Standard Model makes room for is insufficient to explain the dominance of matter over antimatter observed in the cosmos. Another force called the strong nuclear force predicts a large degree of CP violation, but scientists have found no signs of it. This is called the strong CP problem.

The flavour puzzle

Why are there three generations? Why do the masses span so vast a range? What is behind the peculiar patterns of the masses? What explains the different mixing? Where is the amount of CP violation required to explain the matter-antimatter asymmetry?

All of these mysteries together constitute the flavour puzzle. The name comes from the fact that physicists use the word 'flavour' as a label for different types of otherwise similar particles – a name the physicists Murray Gell-Mann and Harald Fritzsch coined at a Baskin-Robbins store. The electron, muon, and tauon are the same kind of particle (leptons) but come in three flavours. The same is true for the quarks. Each flavour has a different mass and can mix.

One way to think about it is to ask what would happen if flavour didn't exist and we had just one generation of matter particles. The fundamental forces will still

The electron, muon, and tauon are the same kind of particle (leptons) but come in three flavours. The same is true for the quarks. Each flavour has a different mass and can mix

operate and we will still have atoms, chemistry, and life. Only, physics would lack some of its richness, such as the phenomena induced by CP violation, rare processes, and the conversion of flavours between neutrinos. The thing is these processes are not essential for atoms, chemistry or life. It's as if nature has them for decoration, with no tangible purpose.

Free parameters

The Standard Model is the most successful theory of science to date. It owes this compliment to the fact that it is internally self-consistent and that countless lab experiments have successfully tested its predictions.

The problem is that while the Standard Model says how particles behave, it doesn't predict the numerical values of many of the particles' properties. For example, it doesn't say that an electron at rest has an energy of 511 keV. Instead scientists have measured these values in experiments and then plugged them into the theory. These numbers are called free parameters.

The Standard Model has 19 free parameters – and 14 of them arise due to flavour, making it seem as if the Model is swaddled in its mysteries.

How do we crack the flavour puzzle? Scientists figured out that they could

explain atoms of the same element behaving differently in nuclear reactions by zooming in, revealing that some of the nuclei had more or fewer neutrons (these nuclei are called isotopes). The Large Hadron Collider in Europe can zoom in on phenomena happening at a scale of 10^{-18} m. But to fathom flavour, theoretical estimates suggest we need to plumb at least 10^{-21} m, which would require much more powerful particle accelerators.

New forces of nature

Ultimately, the solution to the flavour puzzle could involve new forces of nature, grand unified theories of fundamental forces, extra spatial dimensions or even extra universes. Or perhaps it could be that there is no puzzle at all. Scientists have yet to unearth a logic that explains flavours in the subatomic world – yet there is also no reason for them to not be what they are. We don't have enough information right now to know which way the sword really cuts. Perhaps flavours are an environmental accident, perhaps they vary in other universes, perhaps we're overthinking all of this.

That said, one thing is for sure: addressing the flavour puzzle wouldn't merely tidy up loose ends in an otherwise successful theory of forces and particles. It would reveal something profound about how nature organises its complexity at a fundamental level. The rhyme of flavours is not noise but a code. We've learnt how to read it but we haven't yet deciphered what it's trying to tell us.

(Nirmal Raj is an assistant professor of theoretical physics at the Centre for High Energy Physics at the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru. nraj@iisc.ac.in)



14A. Physics has not figured out why matter comes in 'flavours' भौतिकी यह नहीं समझ पाई है कि पदार्थ 'फ्लेवर' (प्रकारों) में क्यों आता है

- Consider the **electron**: it was discovered in 1897 and found not to be unique in 1936, when scientists found the **muon**.
इलेक्ट्रॉन पर विचार करें: इसकी खोज 1897 में हुई और 1936 में यह अद्वितीय नहीं पाया गया, जब वैज्ञानिकों ने म्यूऑन खोजा।
- Oddly, the **muon has the same properties as the electron but is 200 times heavier**, prompting the physicist **Isidor Rabi** to ask: "Who ordered that?"
अजीब बात यह है कि म्यूऑन के गुण इलेक्ट्रॉन जैसे ही हैं, लेकिन यह 200 गुना भारी है, जिससे भौतिक विज्ञानी **इसिडोर राबी** ने पूछा: "यह किसने आदेश दिया?"
- To make matters more confusing, scientists discovered **the tauon in 1975, weighing 17 times the muon**.
स्थिति को और अधिक भ्रमित करते हुए, वैज्ञानिकों ने 1975 में **टाउऑन** की खोज की, जो म्यूऑन से 17 गुना भारी है।

Why in threes? तीनों में ही क्यों?

- Over the years, scientists have found other **elementary particles** occurring in similar triplicates.
वर्षों में, वैज्ञानिकों ने अन्य **मौलिक कणों** को भी इसी तरह तीन-तीन के समूह में पाया है।
- Each copy, like the electron, muon or tauon, is called a **generation**.
प्रत्येक प्रति, जैसे इलेक्ट्रॉन, म्यूऑन या टाउऑन, को एक **जनरेशन** कहा जाता है।
- **Neutrinos** also come in three generations.
न्यूट्रिनो भी तीन जनरेशन में आते हैं।
- Protons and neutrons are built from quarks called **up** and **down**, and each of these quarks comes in three generations (up, charm, top; down, strange, bottom).
प्रोटॉन और न्यूट्रॉन **अप** और **डाउन** नामक क्वार्क से बने होते हैं, और इन प्रत्येक क्वार्क की तीन जनरेशन होती हैं (अप, चार्म, टॉप; डाउन, स्ट्रेज, बॉटम)।
- The **Koide formula** relates the masses of the electron, muon, and tauon in a mathematical guess but lacks a solid fundamental explanation.
कोइडे सूत्र इलेक्ट्रॉन, म्यूऑन और टाउऑन के द्रव्यमानों को एक गणितीय अनुमान के रूप में जोड़ता है, लेकिन इसका कोई ठोस मौलिक स्पष्टीकरण नहीं है।
- **Neutrinos** are another puzzle: the **Standard Model** says they should have no mass, yet they do — and even then each neutrino weighs at least a million times less than an electron.
न्यूट्रिनो एक और पहेली हैं: **स्टैंडर्ड मॉडल** कहता है कि उनका कोई द्रव्यमान नहीं होना चाहिए, फिर भी उनका द्रव्यमान होता है — और तब भी प्रत्येक न्यूट्रिनो इलेक्ट्रॉन से कम से कम दस लाख गुना हल्का होता है।
- Further yet, an effect called **quantum mixing** plus a fundamental force called the **weak force** allow particles of different generations to morph into one another.
इसके अलावा, **क्वांटम मिक्सिंग** नामक प्रभाव और **वीक फोर्स** नामक मूलभूत बल विभिन्न जनरेशन के कणों को एक-दूसरे में बदलने की अनुमति देते हैं।
- The **weak force** is also involved in an effect called **CP violation**, which scientists believe is responsible for our universe containing almost no antimatter.



वीक फोर्स एक अन्य प्रभाव सीपी उल्लंघन (CP violation) में भी शामिल है, जिसे वैज्ञानिक मानते हैं कि यह हमारे ब्रह्मांड में लगभग कोई एंटीमैटर न होने के लिए जिम्मेदार है।

- Another force called the **strong nuclear force** predicts a large degree of CP violation, but scientists have found no signs of it.

एक अन्य बल जिसे स्ट्रॉन्ग न्यूक्लियर फोर्स कहा जाता है, बड़े स्तर पर CP उल्लंघन की भविष्यवाणी करता है, लेकिन वैज्ञानिकों ने इसके कोई संकेत नहीं पाए हैं।

- This is called the **strong CP problem**. इसे स्ट्रॉन्ग सीपी समस्या कहा जाता है।
- All of these mysteries together constitute the **flavour puzzle**. ये सभी रहस्य मिलकर फ्लेवर पज़ल का निर्माण करते हैं।
- The name comes from the fact that physicists use the word '**flavour**' as a label for different types of otherwise similar particles — a name the physicists **Murray Gell-Mann** and **Harald Fritzsch** coined at a Baskin-Robbins store.

Artemis II draws flood of conspiracy theories

GS III: S&T

Agence France-Presse

From false claims that a historic lunar fly-by was staged in a movie studio to unfounded narratives that footage of the crew was AI-generated, the Artemis II mission has been clouded by a blizzard of misinformation.

The falsehoods – circulating across tech platforms including X, TikTok, and Facebook – have also added fresh fuel to a longstanding conspiracy theory that the 1969 Apollo II moon landing was faked. Hashtags such as “fake space” and “fake NASA” have gained traction online since NASA’s lunar fly-by sent astronauts farther from Earth than any human before.

Among the falsehoods was an image, viewed over a million times on X, purporting to show the Artemis II crew floating before a green screen and facing film cameras – suggesting their mission was staged in a studio, but in reality bore the hallmarks of AI manipulation.

Some users also shared a video showing text appearing through the

Conspiracy theories have now moved into the mainstream and scientific achievements such as the lunar mission are “easy content for conspiracy influencers”

mission’s official mascot as purported proof the flight was staged.

But a digital forensics expert said the anomaly was the result of a failed text overlay by a news station that had syndicated the official feed.

Unfounded claims that the Artemis II mission detected a mysterious moving object on the moon’s surface also racked up millions of views across platforms.

The misinformation spread as four astronauts captivated the world with stunning visuals from their fly-by of the Earth’s natural satellite from aboard the Orion spacecraft.

Once confined to the internet’s fringes, conspiracy theories have moved squarely into the mainstream amid growing mistrust of public institutions and traditional media.

Scientific achievements such as the lunar mission present “very easy content for conspiracy influencers,” said disinformation researcher Mike Rothschild. “There are some people whose reflexive reaction to any kind of major event is to claim it’s fake and staged,” Rothschild said. Many of them “pass themselves off as experts in science and physics because it’s somehow more believable to their followers than just going with ‘the official story.’”

Several tech platforms have gutted trust and safety teams and scaled back moderation, making them what researchers call a hotbed for misinformation.

Further sowing online confusion were claims that the entire Artemis II mission was a hoax powered by artificial intelligence tools.

The assertion underscores how the rise of widely available AI tools has given misinformation peddlers a handy incentive to cast doubt on authentic content – a tactic researchers have dubbed as the “liar’s dividend.”

The swirl of falsehoods has also bolstered one of the longest enduring conspiracy theories – that NASA faked the 1969 Apollo II moon landing, broadcasting visuals shot in a Hollywood studio.

The conspiratorial discourse has seeped into pop culture, becoming a plotline in movies like romantic comedy “Fly Me to the Moon” – with Scarlett Johansson’s character tasked with faking a moon landing – and some celebrities also amplifying the claim.

यह नाम इस तथ्य से आता है कि भौतिक विज्ञानी ‘फ्लेवर’ शब्द का उपयोग समान दिखने वाले विभिन्न प्रकार के कणों के लिए करते हैं — यह नाम भौतिक विज्ञानी मरे गेल-मैन और हेराल्ड फ्रिट्श ने एक Baskin-Robbins स्टोर में दिया था।

- The **electron, muon, and tauon** are the same kind of particle (**leptons**) but come in three flavours.

इलेक्ट्रॉन, म्यूऑन और टाउऑन एक ही प्रकार के कण (लेप्टॉन) हैं, लेकिन तीन फ्लेवर में आते हैं।

14A. Artemis II draws flood of conspiracy theories

आर्टेमिस II साजिश सिद्धांतों की बाढ़ को आकर्षित करता है

From false claims that a historic lunar fly-by was staged in a movie studio to unfounded narratives that footage of the crew was AI-generated, the Artemis II mission has been clouded by a blizzard of misinformation.

एक ऐतिहासिक चंद्र फ्लाई-बाय को फिल्म स्टूडियो में मंचित बताए जाने से लेकर चालक दल के फुटेज को AI-जनित बताने वाले निराधार दावों तक, आर्टेमिस II मिशन गलत सूचनाओं के तूफान से घिर गया है।

- The **falsehoods** — circulating across tech platforms including X, TikTok, and Facebook — have also added



fresh fuel to a longstanding conspiracy theory that the 1969 **Apollo 11 moon landing** was faked.

ये झूठे दावे — जो **X, TikTok, और Facebook** जैसे प्लेटफॉर्म पर फैल रहे हैं — ने 1969 के **अपोलो 11 चंद्र मिशन** को फर्जी बताने वाली पुरानी साजिश सिद्धांत को और बढ़ावा दिया है।

- **Hashtags** such as “fake space” and “fake NASA” have gained traction online since **NASA's lunar fly-by** sent astronauts farther from Earth than any human before. “fake space” और “fake NASA” जैसे **हैशटैग** ऑनलाइन लोकप्रिय हो गए हैं, जब से **NASA के चंद्र फ्लाय-बाय** ने अंतरिक्ष यात्रियों को पृथ्वी से पहले से कहीं अधिक दूर भेजा।
- **Among the falsehoods was an image, viewed over a million times on X, purporting to show the Artemis II crew floating before a green screen and facing film cameras — suggesting their mission was staged in a studio, but in reality bore the hallmarks of AI manipulation.** इन झूठों में एक छवि भी शामिल थी, जिसे **X** पर एक मिलियन से अधिक बार देखा गया, जिसमें आर्टेमिस II दल को **ग्रीन स्क्रीन** के सामने और कैमरों की ओर देखते हुए दिखाया गया — जिससे यह संकेत मिलता था कि मिशन स्टूडियो में बनाया गया था, जबकि वास्तव में यह **AI हेरफेर** के संकेत दिखाता था।
- Some users also shared a video showing text appearing through the mission's official **mascot** as purported proof the flight was staged. कुछ उपयोगकर्ताओं ने एक वीडियो भी साझा किया जिसमें मिशन के आधिकारिक **मैस्कॉट** के माध्यम से टेक्स्ट दिखाई दे रहा था, जिसे उड़ान के नकली होने का प्रमाण बताया गया।
- But a digital **forensics expert** said the anomaly was the result of a failed text overlay by a news station that had syndicated the official feed. लेकिन एक डिजिटल **फॉरेंसिक विशेषज्ञ** ने कहा कि यह असामान्यता एक समाचार चैनल द्वारा आधिकारिक फीड पर असफल टेक्स्ट ओवरले के कारण हुई थी।
- Unfounded claims that the Artemis II mission detected a mysterious moving object on the moon's surface also racked up millions of views across platforms. यह निराधार दावा कि आर्टेमिस II मिशन ने चंद्रमा की सतह पर एक रहस्यमयी गतिशील वस्तु देखी, भी विभिन्न प्लेटफॉर्म पर लाखों बार देखा गया।
- The misinformation spread as four astronauts captivated the world with stunning visuals from their fly-by of the Earth's natural satellite from aboard the **Orion spacecraft**. यह गलत जानकारी तब फैली जब चार अंतरिक्ष यात्रियों ने **ओरियन अंतरिक्ष यान** से पृथ्वी के प्राकृतिक उपग्रह के फ्लाय-बाय के शानदार दृश्य दिखाकर दुनिया को आकर्षित किया।
- Once confined to the internet's fringes, conspiracy theories have moved squarely into the mainstream amid growing mistrust of public institutions and traditional media. जो साजिश सिद्धांत पहले इंटरनेट के सीमित हिस्सों तक सीमित थे, वे अब सार्वजनिक संस्थानों और पारंपरिक मीडिया पर बढ़ते अविश्वास के बीच मुख्यधारा में आ गए हैं।
- Scientific achievements such as the lunar mission present “very easy content for conspiracy influencers,” said disinformation researcher **Mike Rothschild**. गलत सूचना शोधकर्ता **माइक रोथ्सचाइल्ड** ने कहा कि चंद्र मिशन जैसी वैज्ञानिक उपलब्धियाँ “साजिश फैलाने वालों के लिए बहुत आसान सामग्री” प्रस्तुत करती हैं।
- “There are some people whose reflexive reaction to any kind of major event is to claim it's fake and staged,” Rothschild said. रोथ्सचाइल्ड ने कहा, “कुछ लोग ऐसे होते हैं जिनकी किसी भी बड़े घटना पर स्वाभाविक प्रतिक्रिया यह होती है कि उसे नकली और मंचित बताया जाए।”
- Many of them “pass themselves off as experts in science and physics because it's somehow more believable to their followers than just going with ‘the official story.’” उनमें से कई “खुद को विज्ञान और भौतिकी के विशेषज्ञ के रूप में प्रस्तुत करते हैं क्योंकि यह उनके अनुयायियों के लिए ‘आधिकारिक कहानी’ से अधिक विश्वसनीय लगता है।”
- Several tech platforms have gutted **trust and safety teams** and scaled back moderation, making them what researchers call a hotbed for misinformation. कई तकनीकी प्लेटफॉर्म ने अपने **ट्रस्ट और सेफ्टी टीमों** को कमजोर कर दिया है और मॉडरेशन कम कर दिया है, जिससे वे गलत सूचना के केंद्र बन गए हैं।
- Further sowing online confusion were claims that the entire Artemis II mission was a hoax powered by **artificial intelligence tools**. ऑनलाइन भ्रम को और बढ़ाने वाले दावे यह थे कि पूरा आर्टेमिस II मिशन **कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता उपकरणों** द्वारा संचालित एक धोखा था।



- The assertion underscores how the rise of widely available **AI tools** has given misinformation peddlers a handy incentive to cast doubt on authentic content — a tactic researchers have dubbed as the “**liar’s dividend**.”
यह दावा दिखाता है कि व्यापक रूप से उपलब्ध **AI टूल्स** ने गलत सूचना फैलाने वालों को वास्तविक सामग्री पर संदेह करने का एक आसान तरीका दिया है — जिसे शोधकर्ताओं ने “**लायर’स डिविडेंड**” कहा है।
- The swirl of falsehoods has also bolstered one of the longest enduring conspiracy theories — that **NASA** faked the 1969 **Apollo 11 moon landing**, broadcasting visuals shot in a Hollywood studio.
इन झूठों के प्रसार ने सबसे पुराने साजिश सिद्धांतों में से एक को भी मजबूत किया है — कि **NASA** ने 1969 के **अपोलो 11 चंद्र मिशन** को नकली बनाया और हॉलीवुड स्टूडियो में शूट किए गए दृश्य प्रसारित किए।

Paediatrician who flagged ORS labelling resigns from IAP

GS III: S&T

P.T. Jyothi Datta
MUMBAI

A paediatrician who raised concerns over the labelling of oral rehydration salts (ORS) and pushed for clearer regulatory separation between ORS and electrolyte/energy drinks has resigned from the Indian Academy of Paediatrics (IAP), sparking a debate within the medical community.

Sivaranjani Santosh said her resignation was driven by differences with the IAP leadership, including its recent position statement on ORS and electrolyte drinks, references to the use of the sweetener sucralose, and concerns over alleged corporate funding.

Dr. Santosh’s earlier advocacy had led the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India issuing a directive in October 2025 barring companies from using “ORS” as a label or trademark for beverages. “Products regulated under FSSAI should be sold outside pharmacies and hospitals so parents are not confused or misled,” she told *businessline* after stepping down from the IAP.

ORS is a pharmaceutical formulation that must meet World Health Organization standards and is used to treat dehydration caused by acute diarrhoeal diseases, particularly in infants and young children.



Sivaranjani Santosh

Following the FSSAI directive, Kenvue (formerly the consumer healthcare division of Johnson & Johnson) in January introduced two distinct brands – ORSL for diarrhoeal treatment and eRZL for routine hydration. Dr. Santosh, however, has alleged that eRZL could still mislead consumers, continuing her campaign for clearer differentiation. She has since received a legal notice from the company.

The IAP recently issued a position statement on the “rational use of ORS and electrolyte drinks,” reiterating that “ORS (WHO formulation) remains the gold standard for prevention and treatment of dehydration due to diarrhoea.” However, its reference to non-nutritive sweeteners such as sucralose has drawn criticism from some doctors, including Dr. Santosh.

A response from the IAP President is awaited.

(The writer is with *The Hindu businessline*.)

The conspiratorial discourse has seeped into pop culture, becoming a plotline in movies like romantic comedy “**Fly Me to the Moon**” — with **Scarlett Johansson’s** character tasked with faking a moon landing — and some celebrities also amplifying the claim.

यह साजिश भरी चर्चा पॉप संस्कृति में भी प्रवेश कर चुकी है, जैसे रोमांटिक कॉमेडी फिल्म “**Fly Me to the Moon**” में — जिसमें **स्कारलेट जोहानसन** का किरदार चंद्र लैंडिंग को नकली बनाने का कार्य करता है — और कुछ सेलिब्रिटी भी इस दावे को बढ़ावा देते हैं।

14A. Paediatrician who flagged ORS labelling resigns from IAP

आईएपी से ORS लेबलिंग पर सवाल उठाने वाली बाल रोग विशेषज्ञ ने इस्तीफा दिया

• A paediatrician who raised concerns over the labelling of oral rehydration salts (ORS) and pushed for clearer regulatory separation between ORS and electrolyte/energy drinks has resigned from the Indian Academy of Paediatrics (IAP), sparking a debate within the medical community.

एक **बाल रोग विशेषज्ञ** जिन्होंने **ओआरएस (ORS)** की **लेबलिंग** पर चिंता जताई और ORS तथा **इलेक्ट्रोलाइट/एनर्जी ड्रिंक्स** के बीच स्पष्ट नियामक विभाजन की मांग की, उन्होंने **इंडियन एकेडमी ऑफ पीडियाट्रिक्स (IAP)** से इस्तीफा दे दिया, जिससे चिकित्सा समुदाय में बहस छिड़ गई।

• **Sivaranjani Santosh** said her resignation was driven by differences with the IAP leadership, including its recent position statement on ORS and electrolyte drinks, references to the use of the sweetener **sucralose**, and concerns over alleged corporate funding.

सिवरंजननी संतोष ने कहा कि उनका इस्तीफा **IAP नेतृत्व** से मतभेदों के कारण था, जिसमें ORS और इलेक्ट्रोलाइट ड्रिंक्स पर हालिया **पोजीशन स्टेटमेंट**, **सुक़ालोज़** के उपयोग के संदर्भ, और कथित **कॉर्पोरेट फंडिंग** को लेकर चिंताएं शामिल हैं।

• Dr. Santosh’s earlier advocacy had led the **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** issuing a directive in October 2025 barring companies from using “ORS” as a label or trademark for beverages.



डॉ. संतोष की पूर्व पहल के चलते **भारतीय खाद्य सुरक्षा और मानक प्राधिकरण (FSSAI)** ने अक्टूबर 2025 में कंपनियों को पेय पदार्थों के लिए “ORS” को लेबल या ट्रेडमार्क के रूप में उपयोग करने से रोकने का निर्देश जारी किया था।

- “Products regulated under FSSAI should be sold outside pharmacies and hospitals so parents are not confused or misled,” she told businessline after stepping down from the IAP.

“IAP से इस्तीफा देने के बाद उन्होंने कहा कि FSSAI के तहत आने वाले उत्पादों को **फार्मसी और अस्पतालों के बाहर बेचा जाना चाहिए**, ताकि माता-पिता भ्रमित या गुमराह न हों।”

- ORS** is a pharmaceutical formulation that must meet **World Health Organization (WHO)** standards and is used to treat dehydration caused by acute diarrhoeal diseases, particularly in infants and young children.

ORS एक **औषधीय फॉर्मूलेशन** है जिसे **विश्व स्वास्थ्य संगठन (WHO)** के मानकों को पूरा करना होता है और इसका उपयोग **दस्त से होने वाले डिहाइड्रेशन** के इलाज में, विशेषकर शिशुओं और छोटे बच्चों में, किया जाता है।

- Following the FSSAI directive, **Kenvue** (formerly the consumer healthcare division of **Johnson & Johnson**) in January introduced two distinct brands — ORSL for diarrhoeal treatment and eRZL for routine hydration.

FSSAI निर्देश के बाद, **Kvue** (पूर्व में **Johnson & Johnson** का उपभोक्ता स्वास्थ्य विभाग) ने जनवरी में दो अलग ब्रांड पेश किए — दस्त के उपचार के लिए **ORSL** और सामान्य हाइड्रेशन के लिए **heRZL**।

- Dr. Santosh, however, has alleged that eRZL could still mislead consumers, continuing her campaign for clearer differentiation.

हालांकि, डॉ. संतोष ने आरोप लगाया कि **eRZL** अभी भी उपभोक्ताओं को भ्रमित कर सकता है और उन्होंने स्पष्ट भेद के लिए अपना अभियान जारी रखा है।

- She has since received a legal notice from the company.

उन्हें इसके बाद कंपनी से **कानूनी नोटिस** भी प्राप्त हुआ है।

- The IAP recently issued a position statement on the “**rational use of ORS and electrolyte drinks**,” reiterating that “ORS (WHO formulation) remains the **gold standard** for prevention and treatment of dehydration due to diarrhoea.”

IAP ने हाल ही में “**ORS और इलेक्ट्रोलाइट ड्रिंक्स के तर्कसंगत उपयोग**” पर एक बयान जारी किया, जिसमें दोहराया गया कि “ORS (WHO फॉर्मूलेशन) दस्त से होने वाले डिहाइड्रेशन की रोकथाम और उपचार के लिए **गोल्ड स्टैंडर्ड** बना हुआ है।”

- However, its reference to non-nutritive sweeteners such as **sucralose** has drawn criticism from some doctors, including Dr. Santosh.

हालांकि, **सुक़ालोज़** जैसे गैर-पोषक स्वीटनर्स के संदर्भ ने कुछ डॉक्टरों, जिनमें डॉ. संतोष भी शामिल हैं, की आलोचना को जन्म दिया है।

- A response from the IAP President is awaited.

IAP अध्यक्ष की प्रतिक्रिया का अभी इंतजार है।

GS Paper III: Environment

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TOPICS COVERED

14A

Tribute to Ambedkar



Despite the Coastal Regulation Zone Act being in force, people allege that private individuals are illegally extracting sand from the seashore using excavators. One such machine was seen on the shore of Ongole in Andhra Pradesh on Monday. KOMMURI SRINIVAS

Despite the Coastal Regulation Zone Act being in force, people allege that private individuals are illegally extracting sand from the seashore using excavators. One such machine was seen on the shore of Ongole in Andhra Pradesh on Monday