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# PATRIOTIC IAS

## DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

### THE HINDU NEWSPAPER

# 01 MAY 2026

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PCS Special:	01 May
01MA	Railway Minister flags off first Jammu-Srinagar direct train रेल मंत्री ने पहली जम्मू-श्रीनगर सीधी ट्रेन को हरी झंडी दिखाई
01MA	99% pass in CISCE exams; southern region tops in 12th standard, west in 10th CISCE परीक्षाओं में 99% पास; 12वीं में दक्षिणी क्षेत्र शीर्ष पर, 10वीं में पश्चिमी क्षेत्र आगे



# Railway Minister flags off first Jammu-Srinagar direct train

**01Ma.Railway Minister flags off first Jammu-Srinagar direct train**  
रेल मंत्री ने पहली जम्मू-श्रीनगर सीधी ट्रेन को हरी झंडी दिखाई

PCS  
Peerzada Ashiq  
SRINAGAR

Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday flagged off the first direct train service between Jammu city and Srinagar city, describing it as "India's first experience with railway operations at such high altitudes", and "a gamechanger for the region's economy".

J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah called it "a historic day".

"The introduction of the expanded Vande Bharat service further strengthens this historic corridor, improving travel comfort, meeting rising passenger demand, and reinforcing



Passengers arrive at Srinagar by the Vande Bharat Express flagged off by Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw. IMRAN NISSAR

all-weather connectivity between Jammu and Srinagar," Mr. Vaishnaw said, crediting Prime Minister Narendra Modi for realising the dream of railway connectivity in the Kashmir Valley.

The focus, in the future, would be on strengthening maintenance systems, and deploying advanced technologies for bridges and tunnels to ensure safety and reliability in the Himalayan terrain, he said.

• Railway Minister flags off first Jammu-Srinagar direct train.

रेल मंत्री ने पहली जम्मू-श्रीनगर सीधी ट्रेन को हरी झंडी दिखाई।

• Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday flagged off the first direct train service between Jammu city and Srinagar city, describing it as "India's first experience with railway operations at such high altitudes", and "a gamechanger for the region's economy".

केंद्रीय रेल मंत्री अश्विनी वैष्णव ने

गुरुवार को जम्मू शहर और श्रीनगर शहर के बीच पहली सीधी ट्रेन सेवा को हरी झंडी दिखाई और इसे "इतनी ऊंचाई पर रेलवे संचालन का भारत का पहला अनुभव" तथा "क्षेत्र की अर्थव्यवस्था के लिए गेमचेंजर" बताया।

- J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah called it "a historic day".  
जम्मू-कश्मीर के मुख्यमंत्री उमर अब्दुल्ला ने इसे "एक ऐतिहासिक दिन" बताया।
- "The introduction of the expanded Vande Bharat service further strengthens this historic corridor, improving travel comfort, meeting rising passenger demand, and reinforcing all-weather connectivity between Jammu and Srinagar," Mr. Vaishnaw said, crediting Prime Minister Narendra Modi for realising the dream of railway connectivity in the Kashmir Valley.  
वैष्णव ने कहा, "विस्तारित वंदे भारत सेवा की शुरुआत इस ऐतिहासिक कॉरिडोर को और मजबूत करती है, जिससे यात्रा सुविधा बढ़ेगी, बढ़ती यात्री मांग पूरी होगी और जम्मू-श्रीनगर के बीच हर मौसम में कनेक्टिविटी मजबूत होगी," और उन्होंने इसके लिए प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी को श्रेय दिया।

GS Paper 1: History		01 May 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
01MA	'No western clothes': Jain temple prescribes dress code for women 'कोई पश्चिमी कपड़े नहीं': जैन मंदिर ने महिलाओं के लिए ड्रेस कोड निर्धारित किया	
01MA	Shah to attend first-ever exposition of Buddha's relics on Ladakh visit शाह लद्दाख दौरे पर बुद्ध के अवशेषों की पहली प्रदर्शनी में शामिल होंगे	
01MA	What happened to Komagata Maru passengers in 1914? 1914 में कोमागाटा मारु के यात्रियों के साथ क्या हुआ?	
01MA	A century after legal recognition, workers still lack real protection कानूनी मान्यता के एक सदी बाद भी श्रमिकों को वास्तविक संरक्षण नहीं	
01MA	QUIZ	
01MA	U.S. top court hollows out law guarding minority voting rights	



अमेरिका की शीर्ष अदालत ने अल्पसंख्यक मतदान अधिकारों की रक्षा करने वाले कानून को कमजोर किया

## 'No western clothes': Jain temple prescribes dress code for women

GS I: History: A&C

Press Trust of India  
BAGHPAT

The Digambar Jain temple in Uttar Pradesh's Baghpat has issued a dress code for women devotees, asking them to avoid "western outfits", wear "modest clothes" and cover their heads while entering the temple premises.

In a notice issued a few days ago, the temple management said women should not enter the temple in "half-pants, bermudas, mini skirts, or western outfits such as jeans and tops".

The temple in Baraut village is a prominent centre of the Digambar Jain tradition and houses an idol of Parshvanath. It is consi-

dered an important spiritual site, attracting devotees from several States, including Delhi, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

### 'Publicity stunt'

Temple committee member Ankush Jain said the guidelines aim to maintain the sanctity and decorum of the religious site and are not intended to curtail personal freedom. "The decision has been taken to promote a sense of devotion and discipline among devotees," he said.

However, Amit Rai Jain, general secretary of the All India Shwetambar Sthanakvasi Jain Conference, termed the move a "publicity stunt".

में प्रवेश न करें।

- The temple in Baraut village is a prominent centre of the Digambar Jain tradition and houses an idol of Parshvanath.

बरौत गांव का यह मंदिर दिगंबर जैन परंपरा का प्रमुख केंद्र है और यहां पार्श्वनाथ की प्रतिमा स्थापित है।

### 01Ma. 'No western clothes': Jain temple prescribes dress code for women

'कोई पश्चिमी कपड़े नहीं': जैन मंदिर ने महिलाओं के लिए ड्रेस कोड निर्धारित किया

- 'No western clothes': Jain temple prescribes dress code for women.

'पश्चिमी कपड़े नहीं': जैन मंदिर ने महिलाओं के लिए ड्रेस कोड निर्धारित किया।

- The Digambar Jain temple in Uttar Pradesh's Baghpat has issued a dress code for women devotees, asking them to avoid "western outfits", wear "modest clothes" and cover their heads while entering the temple premises.

उत्तर प्रदेश के बागपत स्थित दिगंबर जैन मंदिर ने महिला भक्तों के लिए ड्रेस कोड जारी किया है, जिसमें उनसे "पश्चिमी कपड़े" न पहनने, "सादे वस्त्र" पहनने और मंदिर में प्रवेश करते समय सिर ढकने को कहा गया है।

- In a notice issued a few days ago, the temple management said women should not enter the temple in "half-pants, bermudas, mini skirts, or western outfits such as jeans and tops".

कुछ दिन पहले जारी नोटिस में मंदिर प्रबंधन ने कहा कि महिलाएं "हाफ पैट, बरमूडा, मिनी स्कर्ट या जींस-टॉप जैसे पश्चिमी कपड़े" पहनकर मंदिर



# Shah to attend first-ever exposition of Buddha's relics on Ladakh visit

GS I: History: A&C

05

Peerzada Ashiq  
SRINAGAR

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who arrived in Leh on Thursday, will attend the first international exposition of holy relics of Lord Buddha in India on the occasion of Buddha Purnima.

Mr. Shah was welcomed by top officials, elected representatives and the local people, with many dressed in traditional attire. "He [Mr. Shah] will be paying respects to the holy relics of Lord Buddha tomorrow [May 1] on the occasion of the 2,569th Buddha Purnima. The Home Minister's visit and his vision for the development of Ladakh shall motivate us to work for fulfilling the aspirations of the people of Ladakh," the Union Territory's Lieutenant-Governor, Vinai Kumar Saxena said.

This is Mr. Shah's first visit since street protests over the demands of Statehood and inclusion in the



Home Minister Amit Shah being welcomed by Ladakh L-G Vinai Kumar Saxena and other dignitaries in Leh on Thursday. ANI

Sixth Schedule left four protesters dead and over 80 injured last September.

The Centre has already announced May 22 as a fresh date to resume Delhi-Ladakh talks on the demands of the Leh Apex Body and Kargil Democratic Alliance, conglomerates of socio-religious-political groups of the region. The talks hit a roadblock after the protests and the arrest of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, who was championing the causes of State-

hood and Sixth Schedule.

Meanwhile, five more districts have been created in the region, in an apparent outreach ahead of the talks.

"This visit marks a significant moment for Ladakh, underlining the continued focus and engagement of the Central leadership with the region's development and aspirations," Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, senior BJP leader and former MP from Ladakh said. He said Mr.

Shah arrived in Leh to a rousing and heartfelt welcome from the people of Ladakh.

The holy relics of Tathagata Buddha, which arrived in Leh a few days ago, will be on public display from May 1 to 15 across Leh and Zaskar, offering devotees a rare opportunity for prayers, officials said.

**Letter to L-G**

Meanwhile, the LAB and the KDA have written a joint letter to the Lieutenant-Governor and expressed strong objections and key concerns regarding proposed power sector changes in Ladakh.

"We submit this memorandum to express our strong objection and grave concern regarding the proposed formation of a Joint Venture between the Ladakh Power Development Department (49%) and the Rural Electrification Corporation (51%) for the power sector in Ladakh," said the letter.

## 01Ma. Shah to attend first-ever exposition of Buddha's relics on Ladakh visit शाह लद्दाख दौरे पर बुद्ध के अवशेषों की पहली प्रदर्शनी में शामिल होंगे

- "He [Mr. Shah] will be paying respects to the holy relics of Lord Buddha tomorrow [May 1] on the occasion of the 2,569th Buddha Purnima.  
"वह [श्री शाह] कल [1 मई] 2,569वीं बुद्ध पूर्णिमा के अवसर पर भगवान बुद्ध के पवित्र अवशेषों को श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करेंगे।
- This is Mr. Shah's first visit since street protests over the demands of Statehood and inclusion in the **Sixth Schedule** left four protesters dead and over 80 injured last September.  
यह श्री शाह की पहली यात्रा है जब पिछले सितंबर में राज्य का दर्जा और छठी अनुसूची में शामिल करने की मांग को लेकर हुए विरोध प्रदर्शनों में चार लोगों की मौत और 80 से अधिक घायल हुए थे।
- The Centre has already announced May 22 as a fresh date to resume Delhi-Ladakh talks on the demands of **the Leh Apex Body and Kargil Democratic Alliance**, conglomerates of socio-religious-political groups of the region.  
केंद्र ने पहले ही 22 मई को दिल्ली-लद्दाख वार्ता फिर से शुरू करने की नई तारीख घोषित की है, जो लेह एपेक्स बॉडी और कारगिल डेमोक्रेटिक एलायंस की मांगों पर होगी।



- Meanwhile, five more districts have been created in the region, in an apparent outreach ahead of the talks.  
इस बीच, वार्ता से पहले एक पहल के रूप में क्षेत्र में पांच नए जिले बनाए गए हैं।

## What happened to Komagata Maru passengers in 1914?

Why was the Komagata Maru denied entry into Canada? What happened to the passengers?

CS 1: History  
Prathmesh Kher

The story so far:

In the spring of 1914, a Japanese steamship called the Komagata Maru sailed from Hong Kong toward Vancouver, British Columbia, carrying 376 passengers: 340 Sikhs, 24 Muslims, and 12 Hindus from Punjab in British India. They were British subjects hoping to build new lives in Canada. What awaited them was a two-month standoff in the harbour, a brutal denouement on the docks of Calcutta, and a place in the history of both India's anti-colonial movement and Canada's long reckoning with its own past. The episode was recently mentioned by singer Diljit Dosanjh on *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*.

Why was Punjab central to events leading up to the voyage?

By 1914, Punjab had become the primary recruiting ground for the British Indian Army. The British had cultivated Punjab

as a loyal province populated by a "martial race," but the relationship was both lopsided and extractive. Rapid agricultural growth combined with easy credit had created a crisis of rural indebtedness, and epidemics of malaria and plague in the early 1900s pushed families toward emigration as the only way out.

Among those who left were the founders of the Ghadar movement, established in 1913 among expatriate Punjabis on the U.S. West Coast, dedicated to the armed overthrow of British rule in India.

The Komagata Maru voyage was freighted with this politics from the start. Ghadar activists boarded the ship in Yokohama, delivering lectures and distributing anti-colonial literature, and British intelligence was watching closely.

What led to the standoff?

The voyage was organised by Gurdit Singh, a Punjabi entrepreneur based in Singapore, who chartered the ship

specifically to challenge Canada's exclusionary laws. Canada had enacted a "continuous journey regulation" in 1908, barring entry to anyone who had not travelled by a single unbroken journey from their country of birth, while also pressuring shipping companies not to sell direct tickets from India.

When the ship arrived at Vancouver's Burrard Inlet on May 23, 1914, immigration officials refused to let it dock. Prime Minister Robert Borden kept the ship anchored offshore, cutting off communication and stalling proceedings.

The local South Asian community raised over \$20,000 to take over the ship's charter and hired a lawyer to bring a test case, but the British Columbia Court of Appeal unanimously upheld the discriminatory laws. Officials then withheld food and water. On July 19, an armed police force of 150 men attempted to board the ship; the passengers fought them off. Borden dispatched a naval cruiser. Only 22 passengers, mostly those who could prove prior Canadian

residence, were ultimately permitted to disembark. The ship departed under escort on July 23. British colonial authorities, suspicious of the passengers' politics, refused to let the ship dock in Hong Kong or Singapore. When it finally anchored near Calcutta in late September, police tried to force the exhausted passengers onto trains bound for Punjab. They refused, marched toward the city, and were fired upon. Twenty passengers were killed; many more were imprisoned. Gurdit Singh evaded capture for years before surrendering in 1920 and serving five years in prison.

What happened when the ship returned to India?

In the aftermath, the Ghadar movement surged in recruitment. Some members returned to Punjab in 1915 to attempt an armed uprising, which failed due to informers and mass arrests. Dozens were sent to the gallows. But the movement's martyrs became folklore.

Canada was slow to acknowledge what it had done. An apology delivered at a community festival by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in 2008 was rejected by many as insufficient. It took until 2016 for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to deliver a formal apology on the floor of the House of Commons. The Komagata Maru remains a sharp demonstration of what colonial subjects had long understood: that the British Empire's promises of equal subjecthood were never meant for everyone.

THE GIST

The Komagata Maru carried 376 British subjects from Punjab but was denied entry into Canada under the "continuous journey" regulation, leading to a two-month standoff in Vancouver harbour.

On returning to India, the passengers faced police firing near Calcutta, killing 20 people.

### 01Ma. What happened to Komagata Maru passengers in 1914? 1914 में कोमागाटा मारु के यात्रियों के साथ क्या हुआ?

In the spring of 1914 / 1914 के वसंत में

- In the spring of 1914, a Japanese steamship called the **Komagata Maru** sailed from Hong Kong toward Vancouver, British Columbia, carrying 376 passengers: 340 Sikhs, 24 Muslims, and 12 Hindus from Punjab in British India.  
1914 के वसंत में, **कोमागाटा मारु** नामक एक जापानी स्टीमर हांगकांग से वैंकूवर, ब्रिटिश कोलंबिया की ओर रवाना हुआ, जिसमें 376 यात्री थे: 340 सिख, 24 मुस्लिम, और 12 हिंदू, जो ब्रिटिश भारत के पंजाब से थे।
- They were British subjects hoping to build new lives in Canada.  
वे ब्रिटिश प्रजा थे, जो कनाडा में नया जीवन बनाने की आशा कर रहे थे।
- What awaited them was a **two-month standoff in the harbour**, a brutal denouement on the docks of Calcutta, and a place in the history of both India's anti-colonial movement and Canada's long reckoning with its own past.  
उनका सामना बंदरगाह में दो महीने के गतिरोध, कलकत्ता के घाटों पर एक क्रूर अंत, और भारत के औपनिवेशिक विरोधी आंदोलन तथा कनाडा के अपने अतीत के आत्ममंथन के इतिहास में स्थान से हुआ।

Why was Punjab central to events leading up to the voyage? / यात्रा से पहले की घटनाओं में पंजाब क्यों केंद्रीय था?

- By 1914, **Punjab** had become the primary recruiting ground for the **British Indian Army**.  
1914 तक, **पंजाब ब्रिटिश भारतीय सेना** के लिए प्रमुख भर्ती क्षेत्र बन चुका था।
- The **British had cultivated Punjab as a loyal province populated by a "martial race,"** but the relationship was both lopsided and extractive.  
ब्रिटिशों ने पंजाब को "योद्धा जाति" से आबाद एक वफादार प्रांत के रूप में विकसित किया था, लेकिन यह संबंध असंतुलित और शोषणकारी था।



- Rapid agricultural growth combined with easy credit had created a crisis of rural indebtedness, and epidemics of malaria and plague in the early 1900s pushed families toward emigration as the only way out.  
तेजी से कृषि विकास और आसान ऋण ने ग्रामीण ऋणग्रस्तता का संकट उत्पन्न किया, और 1900 के प्रारंभिक वर्षों में मलेरिया तथा प्लेग की महामारियों ने परिवारों को प्रवास की ओर धकेल दिया।
- Among those who left were the founders of the **Ghadar movement**, established in 1913 among expatriate Punjabis on the U.S. West Coast, dedicated to the armed overthrow of British rule in India.  
प्रवासियों में ग़दर आंदोलन के संस्थापक भी थे, जो 1913 में अमेरिका के पश्चिमी तट पर बसे पंजाबी प्रवासियों द्वारा स्थापित किया गया था और जिसका उद्देश्य भारत में ब्रिटिश शासन को सशस्त्र रूप से समाप्त करना था।
- The Komagata Maru voyage was freighted with this politics from the start.  
कोमागाटा मारु की यात्रा प्रारंभ से ही इस राजनीति से प्रभावित थी।
- **Ghadar activists boarded the ship in Yokohama**, delivering lectures and distributing anti-colonial literature, and British intelligence was watching closely.  
ग़दर कार्यकर्ताओं ने योकोहामा में जहाज पर सवार होकर व्याख्यान दिए और औपनिवेशिक विरोधी साहित्य वितरित किया, जबकि ब्रिटिश खुफिया एजेंसियाँ सतर्क थीं।

#### What led to the stando• ? / गतिरोध का कारण क्या था?

- The voyage was organised by **Gurdit Singh**, a Punjabi entrepreneur based in Singapore, who chartered the ship specifically to challenge Canada's exclusionary laws.  
यह यात्रा सिंगापुर स्थित पंजाबी उद्यमी गुरदित सिंह द्वारा आयोजित की गई थी, जिन्होंने विशेष रूप से कनाडा के भेदभावपूर्ण कानूनों को चुनौती देने के लिए जहाज किराए पर लिया था।
- Canada had enacted a "**continuous journey regulation**" in 1908, barring entry to anyone who had not travelled by a single unbroken journey from their country of birth, while also pressuring shipping companies not to sell direct tickets from India.  
कनाडा ने 1908 में "सतत यात्रा नियम" लागू किया था, जिसके तहत किसी भी व्यक्ति को प्रवेश नहीं दिया जाता था जिसने अपने जन्मस्थान से बिना रुके यात्रा नहीं की हो, और शिपिंग कंपनियों पर भारत से सीधे टिकट न बेचने का दबाव डाला गया था।
- When the ship arrived at Vancouver's **Burrard Inlet** on May 23, 1914, immigration officials refused to let it dock.  
23 मई 1914 को जब जहाज वैंकूवर के बुरार्ड इनलेट पहुँचा, तो आब्रजन अधिकारियों ने उसे बंदरगाह पर लगने की अनुमति नहीं दी।
- Prime Minister **Robert Borden** kept the ship anchored off• shore, cutting off communication and stalling proceedings.  
प्रधानमंत्री रॉबर्ट बॉर्डन ने जहाज को तट से दूर लंगर डाले रखा, संचार बंद कर दिया और कार्यवाही को टाल दिया।
- The local South Asian community raised over \$20,000 to take over the ship's charter and hired a lawyer to bring a test case, but the **British Columbia Court of Appeal** unanimously upheld the discriminatory laws.  
स्थानीय दक्षिण एशियाई समुदाय ने जहाज का नियंत्रण लेने के लिए \$20,000 से अधिक जुटाए और एक वकील नियुक्त किया, लेकिन ब्रिटिश कोलंबिया अपील न्यायालय ने सर्वसम्मति से भेदभावपूर्ण कानूनों को सही ठहराया।
- Officials then withheld food and water.  
इसके बाद अधिकारियों ने भोजन और पानी रोक दिया।
- On July 19, an armed police force of 150 men attempted to board the ship; the passengers fought them off.



19 जुलाई को 150 पुलिसकर्मियों की सशस्त्र टुकड़ी ने जहाज पर चढ़ने का प्रयास किया, लेकिन यात्रियों ने उन्हें रोक दिया।

- Borden dispatched a naval cruiser.  
बॉर्डन ने एक नौसैनिक क्रूजर भेजा।
- Only 22 passengers, mostly those who could prove prior Canadian residence, were ultimately permitted to disembark.  
अंततः केवल 22 यात्रियों को उतरने की अनुमति दी गई, जिनमें अधिकांश वे थे जो पहले कनाडा में रहने का प्रमाण दे सके।
- The ship departed under escort on July 23.  
23 जुलाई को जहाज सुरक्षा के साथ रवाना हुआ।
- British colonial authorities, suspicious of the passengers' politics, refused to let the ship dock in Hong Kong or Singapore.  
ब्रिटिश औपनिवेशिक अधिकारियों ने यात्रियों की राजनीतिक गतिविधियों के संदेह के कारण जहाज को हांगकांग या सिंगापुर में ठहरने नहीं दिया।
- When it finally anchored near Calcutta in late September, police tried to force the exhausted passengers onto trains bound for Punjab.  
सितंबर के अंत में जब जहाज कलकत्ता के पास पहुँचा, तो पुलिस ने थके हुए यात्रियों को पंजाब जाने वाली ट्रेनों में बैठाने का प्रयास किया।
- They refused, marched toward the city, and were fired upon.  
उन्होंने इनकार किया, शहर की ओर मार्च किया, और उन पर गोलीबारी की गई।
- Twenty passengers were killed; many more were imprisoned.  
बीस यात्री मारे गए और कई अन्य को कैद कर लिया गया।
- Gurdit Singh evaded capture for years before surrendering in 1920 and serving five years in prison.  
गुरदित सिंह कई वर्षों तक गिरफ्तारी से बचते रहे, फिर 1920 में आत्मसमर्पण किया और पाँच वर्ष की सजा काटी।

What happened when the ship returned to India? / जब जहाज भारत लौटा तो क्या हुआ?

- In the aftermath, the Ghadar movement surged in recruitment.  
इसके बाद ग़दर आंदोलन में भर्ती बढ़ गई।
- Some members returned to Punjab in 1915 to attempt an armed uprising, which failed due to informers and mass arrests.  
कुछ सदस्य 1915 में सशस्त्र विद्रोह का प्रयास करने के लिए पंजाब लौटे, लेकिन मुखबिरों और बड़े पैमाने पर गिरफ्तारियों के कारण यह असफल रहा।
- An apology delivered at a community festival by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in 2008 was rejected by many as insu• cient.  
प्रधानमंत्री स्टीफन हार्पर द्वारा 2008 में सामुदायिक उत्सव में दी गई माफी को कई लोगों ने अपर्याप्त माना।
- It took until 2016 for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to deliver a formal apology on the floor of the House of Commons.  
2016 तक प्रतीक्षा करनी पड़ी, जब प्रधानमंत्री जस्टिन टूडो ने हाउस ऑफ कॉमन्स में औपचारिक माफी दी।
- The Komagata Maru remains a sharp demonstration of what colonial subjects had long understood: that the British Empire's promises of equal subjecthood were never meant for everyone.  
कोमागाटा मारु आज भी इस बात का स्पष्ट उदाहरण है कि औपनिवेशिक प्रजा लंबे समय से समझती थी: कि ब्रिटिश साम्राज्य द्वारा समान नागरिकता के वादे सभी के लिए नहीं थे।



# A century after legal recognition, workers still lack real protection

Since the Trade Union Act first gave workers legal recognition and protection, the law has not lived up to its intent; it preserves rights on paper but, through procedural constraints and silence on platform workers, continues to limit the ability of workers to organise and act

Prathmesh Kher

In 1918, Bahman Pestonji Wadia founded the Madras Labour Union, India's first trade union with regular membership and a relief fund, established to address what he called the "mal-treatment of workers" by European officers. The union he helped build was, in the eyes of British common law, a conspiracy to restrain trade.

In 1921, a Madras court put a price on the act of organising workers against unfair working conditions. £2,000 was awarded against Wadia and fellow unionists for leading a strike against the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills. The management agreed to waive the payment on the condition that Wadia sever all associations with the union he had built. There was no law to protect him. The unionists complied.

But even in compliance, the unionists showed defiance. One of the union leaders, Vengal Chakkarai Chettiar, told the judge in open court: "I am an evangelical worker for the Wesley Mission. I am getting ₹10 per week, with which I am living. I have only my clothes, which I am wearing, and a few spare clothes at home. If necessary, I will remove my clothes and give them to the court. But the amount of compensation ordered by you cannot be recovered from me. At the same time, I cannot be stopped from working for the trade union of workers. Even if my clothes are removed in execution of a decree, I will continue to work for the trade union by wearing my loincloth. If necessary, we will go for work stoppages to win our demands."

The judgment brought into the open something that had been gnawing at the labouring classes for decades. By 1921, India had hundreds of trade unions, yet not one had legal recognition. N.M. Joshi, co-founder and General Secretary of the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), understood the specific nature of the problem. In March 1921, the same month as the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills judgment, he moved a resolution in the Central Legislative Assembly recommending that the government introduce legislation to register and protect trade unions. Five years of legal and political pressure followed before the Act was finally passed in 1926. The Royal Commission on Labour in India, reporting in 1931, described what the struggle had been for: to give trade unions the necessary protection from civil suits and criminal laws relating to conspiracy to enable them to carry on their legitimate activities.

## Letter and spirit

The Trade Union Act of 1926 emerged from five years of sustained pressure from the labour movement, from nationalist leaders who understood that organised workers were essential to the freedom struggle, sharpened by the colonial state's calculation that legal frameworks for managing workers' grievances were safer than the revolutionary alternative.

Section 18 of the Act answered the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills judgment directly: "No suit or other legal proceeding shall be maintainable in any Civil Court against any registered Trade Union or any officer-bearer or member thereof in respect of any act done in contemplation or furtherance of a trade



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dispute" including inducing breach of employment contract, or interfering with the employer's trade or business. The weapon used to silence Wadia was removed from the employer's hands. Section 17 addressed the criminal threat: no office-bearer or member of a registered union shall be liable under the IPC's criminal conspiracy provision, Section 120B, for agreements made to further legitimate union objects, "unless the agreement is an agreement to commit an offence."

An Indian worker now had legal recognition and legally recognised rights. A union was no longer a conspiracy.

By 1928, the Girm Kamgar Union in Bombay had over 70,000 members. That year saw 203 strikes involving over five lakh workers. The left wing of the labour movement, strengthened by the Act's protections, was growing fast and fusing with nationalist politics, as it had in 1908, when Bombay's workers struck for six days over Lokamanya Tilak's imprisonment. Two responses came simultaneously from the colonial state.

The Meerut conspiracy case arrested 33 labour organisers, men working openly, in unions the 1926 Act had made legal, and charged them not under Section 120B, where the Act's immunity held, but under sedition provisions the Act had never touched. Then came two bills together. The Trade Disputes Bill banned sympathetic strikes, built in notice periods long enough to make sustained action practically impossible, and made illegal any strike that extended beyond a purely industrial dispute. What had electrified Indian politics since 1908, the joining of workers' grievances to nationalist ones, was now a criminal act. The Girm Kamgar Union was broken. The 1926 Act's protections remained on the statute book. The letter never came to match the spirit.

On October 30, 1928, months before the bills came to a vote, Lala Lajpat Rai, who had presided over the AITUC's founding session in 1920, led a peaceful protest in Lahore against the All-British Simon Commission. Police Superintendent James Scott ordered a

lathi charge. Rai was beaten across his chest. That same evening, still standing, he addressed the crowd at Mochi Gate: "I declare that the blows struck at me today will be the last nails in the coffin of British rule in India." He died eighteen days later.

At the Bombay Presidency Youth Conference in December 1928, Jawaharlal Nehru told the students: "Ally yourself to the masses of the country, the peasantry and the industrial worker... And if you do so, you will automatically avoid the pitfalls of reformism and petty compromise." By July 1929, with both bills passed and the Meerut accused in custody, his analysis of the Public Safety Bill was unambiguous: "This is dangerous enough at any time and in any country to make the Executive Government the judge of what is in the mind of those opposed to it. It is far more dangerous in India, where there is a foreign government." When the government's spokesman claimed that foreign agitators had caused the country's labour unrest, Nehru was contemptuous. "A strike is always unfortunate and deplorable, just as a fever is unfortunate and deplorable, but it is no good cursing the fever. The wise man treats it and tries to remove the causes of it."

Three months before that analysis, on April 8, 1929, Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw smoke bombs and leaflets from the visitors' gallery of the Central Legislative Assembly. The pamphlet named three provocations: the Meerut arrests, the bills, and the death of Lajpat Rai. "The indiscriminate arrests of labour leaders working in the open field clearly indicate whether the wind blows," it read. Then came the sentence that named the whole situation: "It takes a loud voice to make the deaf hear."

Singh was hanged in 1931, aged 23. Dutt was transported to the Cellular Jail in the Andamans to serve a life sentence. The Meerut accused spent years in prison. The Girm Kamgar Union was broken. The 1926 Act's protections remained on the statute book. The letter never came to match the spirit.

## Past as prologue

The Trade Union Act survived independence and was absorbed into the

constitutional settlement. Article 190(c) gave every Indian citizen the right to form associations or unions. Registered trade unions increased by 625% between 1951 and 1979. The ideological fire of the early movement cooled, over time, into wage bargaining. Then in 1991, the New Economic Policy arrived with its logic that labour flexibility was the price of growth.

In 2020, during a Monsoon Session of Parliament conducted under pandemic restrictions, with the Opposition protesting procedural irregularities, the government passed four labour codes consolidating 29 existing laws. One of them, the Industrial Relations Code 2020, absorbed the Trade Union Act 1926. It came into force on November 21, 2025.

The new Code preserves Sections 16 and 17, successors to the 1926 Act's immunity provisions, in language almost identical to the original. A century's worth of protective words, freshly reprinted. But the dissonance between the letter and the spirit continues.

To be recognised as such, a negotiating union must now demonstrate 51% support among workers on the muster roll. In industries characterised by high turnover, casual labour, fixed-term contracts, achieving and maintaining this numerical ceiling is nigh impossible for most unions, and this is precisely in workers where workers need protection the most. Section 62 requires 60 days' notice before a strike can begin, four times the 15 days the 1929 Trade Disputes Act demanded, the bill Motilal Nehru had already called the "Slavery of India Bill." Workers cannot strike during conciliation proceedings, or for seven days after, or during Tribunal proceedings, or for 60 days after those conclude. Between notice periods and cooling-off clauses, an employer can keep a workforce in procedural suspension without end. Then there is the silence that reveals more than any provision. The words 'gig' and 'platform' do not appear once in the Industrial Relations Code 2020. NITI Aayog estimated 7.7 million platform workers in 2020. Yet a law that came into force five months ago contains not a single word about the workers who run errands across every city in the country. They are legally classified as independent contractors.

## The struggle continues

Despite the hurdles thrown their way, workers continue to organise. The Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union, the Indian Federation of App-Based Transport Workers, and the All-India Gig Workers Union continue to exist, organise meetings on WhatsApp, and occasionally win. In March 2024, platform worker unions forced Zomato to reverse a policy that segregated delivery fleets by food type. This decision was understood to endanger religious minority and lower-caste riders by making their identities visible in a society marked by discrimination.

The Fairwork India Report 2024 assessed 11 major platforms operating in India and found that none recognised a collective body of workers or a trade union. Four States have now passed social security laws for platform workers, welfare benefits designed, with some care, to make the struggle for collective bargaining seem unnecessary. The deaf have not learned to hear. The loud voices are still necessary.

## 01Ma. A century after legal recognition, workers still lack real protection

कानूनी मान्यता के एक सदी बाद भी श्रमिकों को वास्तविक संरक्षण नहीं

• In 1918, Bahman Pestonji Wadia founded the Madras Labour Union, India's first trade union with regular membership and a relief fund, established to address what he called the "mal-treatment of workers" by European officers.

1918 में, बहमन पेस्टनजी वाडिया ने मद्रास लेबर यूनियन की स्थापना की, जो नियमित सदस्यता और राहत कोष वाली भारत की पहली ट्रेड यूनियन थी, जिसे उन्होंने यूरोपीय अधिकारियों द्वारा श्रमिकों के साथ किए जाने वाले "दुर्व्यवहार" को संबोधित करने के लिए स्थापित किया।

• The union he helped build was, in the eyes of British common law, a conspiracy to restrain trade. जिस यूनियन को उन्होंने बनाया, वह ब्रिटिश कॉमन लॉ की दृष्टि में व्यापार को बाधित करने की साजिश थी।

• In 1921, a Madras court put a price on the act of organising workers against unfair working conditions.

1921 में, एक मद्रास न्यायालय ने अनुचित कार्य परिस्थितियों के विरुद्ध श्रमिकों को संगठित करने के कार्य की कीमत निर्धारित की।

• £2,000 was awarded against Wadia and fellow unionists for leading a strike against the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills.

वाडिया और उनके साथी यूनियन नेताओं के विरुद्ध बकिंघम एंड कार्नाटिक मिल्स के खिलाफ हड़ताल का नेतृत्व करने के लिए £2,000 का जुर्माना लगाया गया।

• One of the union leaders, Vengal Chakkarai Chettiar, told the judge in open court: "I am an evangelical worker for the Wesley Mission. I am getting ₹10 per week, with which I am living. I have only my clothes, which I am wearing, and a few spare clothes at home. If necessary, I will remove my clothes and give them to the court. But the amount of compensation ordered by you cannot be recovered from me. At the same time, I cannot be stopped from working for



the trade union of workers. Even if my clothes are removed in execution of a decree, I will continue to work for the trade union by wearing my loincloth. If necessary, we will go for work stoppages to win our demands.”

यूनियन के एक नेता **वेंगल चक्कराई चेट्टियार** ने खुले न्यायालय में न्यायाधीश से कहा: “मैं **वेस्ले मिशन** के लिए एक प्रचारक कार्यकर्ता हूँ। मुझे प्रति सप्ताह ₹10 मिलते हैं, जिससे मैं जीवनयापन करता हूँ। मेरे पास केवल वही कपड़े हैं जो मैंने पहने हैं और घर पर कुछ अतिरिक्त कपड़े हैं। यदि आवश्यक हुआ, तो मैं अपने कपड़े उतारकर अदालत को दे दूँगा। लेकिन आपके द्वारा निर्धारित मुआवजे की राशि मुझसे वसूल नहीं की जा सकती। साथ ही, मुझे श्रमिकों की ट्रेड यूनियन के लिए काम करने से रोका नहीं जा सकता। भले ही मेरे कपड़े डिक्री के पालन में हटा दिए जाएँ, मैं केवल लंगोटी पहनकर भी ट्रेड यूनियन के लिए काम करता रहूँगा। यदि आवश्यक हुआ, तो हम अपनी मांगों को पूरा कराने के लिए कार्य बंद करेंगे।”

- **By 1921, India had hundreds of trade unions, yet not one had legal recognition.**  
1921 तक भारत में सैकड़ों ट्रेड यूनियन थीं, लेकिन एक भी कानूनी मान्यता प्राप्त नहीं थी।
- **N.M. Joshi, co-founder and General Secretary of the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC)**, understood the specific nature of the problem.  
**एन.एम. जोशी, ऑल-इंडिया ट्रेड यूनियन कांग्रेस (AITUC)** के सह-संस्थापक और महासचिव, इस समस्या की विशिष्ट प्रकृति को समझते थे।
- **In March 1921, the same month as the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills judgment, he moved a resolution in the Central Legislative Assembly recommending that the government introduce legislation to register and protect trade unions.**  
मार्च 1921 में, उसी महीने जब बकिंघम एंड कार्नाटिक मिल्स का निर्णय हुआ, उन्होंने **केंद्रीय विधान सभा** में एक प्रस्ताव प्रस्तुत किया जिसमें सरकार से ट्रेड यूनियनों को पंजीकृत और संरक्षित करने के लिए कानून लाने की सिफारिश की गई।
- Five years of legal and political pressure followed before the **Act was finally passed in 1926.**  
पाँच वर्षों के कानूनी और राजनीतिक दबाव के बाद अंततः 1926 में अधिनियम पारित किया गया।
- The **Royal Commission on Labour in India, reporting in 1931, described what the struggle had been for: to give trade unions the necessary protection from civil suits and criminal laws relating to conspiracy to enable them to carry on their legitimate activities.**  
**भारत में श्रम पर रॉयल आयोग**, जिसने 1931 में अपनी रिपोर्ट प्रस्तुत की, ने इस संघर्ष का उद्देश्य बताया: ट्रेड यूनियनों को नागरिक मुकदमों और षड्यंत्र से संबंधित आपराधिक कानूनों से आवश्यक सुरक्षा प्रदान करना ताकि वे अपनी वैध गतिविधियाँ जारी रख सकें।

### Letter and spirit / शब्द और भावना

- The **Trade Union Act of 1926** emerged from five years of sustained pressure from the labour movement, from nationalist leaders who understood that organised workers were essential to the freedom struggle, sharpened by the colonial state's calculation that legal frameworks for managing workers' grievances were safer than the revolutionary alternative.  
**ट्रेड यूनियन अधिनियम, 1926** श्रम आंदोलन के पाँच वर्षों के सतत दबाव से उत्पन्न हुआ, उन राष्ट्रवादी नेताओं से प्रेरित होकर जो समझते थे कि संगठित श्रमिक स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के लिए आवश्यक हैं, और औपनिवेशिक राज्य की उस गणना से तीक्ष्ण हुआ कि श्रमिकों की शिकायतों को प्रबंधित करने के लिए कानूनी ढाँचा क्रांतिकारी विकल्प से अधिक सुरक्षित है।
- Section 18 of the Act answered the **Buckingham and Carnatic Mills judgment** directly: “No suit or other legal proceeding shall be maintainable in any Civil Court against any registered Trade Union or any office-bearer or member thereof in respect of any act done in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute” including inducing breach of employment contract, or interfering with the employer's trade or business.  
अधिनियम की धारा 18 ने सीधे **बकिंघम एंड कार्नाटिक मिल्स निर्णय** का उत्तर दिया: “किसी भी पंजीकृत ट्रेड यूनियन या उसके किसी पदाधिकारी या सदस्य के विरुद्ध किसी भी नागरिक न्यायालय में कोई वाद या अन्य



कानूनी कार्यवाही नहीं चल सकेगी, यदि वह कार्य किसी श्रम विवाद की कल्पना या उसके आगे बढ़ाने के लिए किया गया हो”, जिसमें रोजगार अनुबंध का उल्लंघन कराने या नियोक्ता के व्यापार में हस्तक्षेप करना शामिल है।

- **Section 17 addressed the criminal threat: no office-bearer or member of a registered union shall be liable under the IPC's criminal conspiracy provision, Section 120B**, for agreements made to further legitimate union objects, “unless the agreement is an agreement to commit an offence.”

धारा 17 ने आपराधिक खतरे को संबोधित किया: किसी पंजीकृत यूनियन का कोई पदाधिकारी या सदस्य **आईपीसी की आपराधिक षड्यंत्र धारा 120B** के अंतर्गत उत्तरदायी नहीं होगा, यदि समझौते वैध यूनियन उद्देश्यों को आगे बढ़ाने के लिए किए गए हों, “जब तक कि वह समझौता किसी अपराध को करने के लिए न हो।”

- **By 1928, the Girni Kamgar Union in Bombay had over 70,000 members.** 1928 तक, बॉम्बे की **गिरनी कामगार यूनियन** के 70,000 से अधिक सदस्य हो चुके थे।
- **That year saw 203 strikes involving over five lakh workers.** उस वर्ष 203 हड़तालें हुईं जिनमें पाँच लाख से अधिक श्रमिक शामिल थे।
- **The left wing of the labour movement, strengthened by the Act's protections, was growing fast and fusing with nationalist politics, as it had in 1908, when Bombay's workers struck for six days over Lokmanya Tilak's imprisonment.**

श्रम आंदोलन का वामपंथी धड़ा, जो अधिनियम की सुरक्षा से मजबूत हुआ था, तेजी से बढ़ रहा था और राष्ट्रवादी राजनीति के साथ जुड़ रहा था, जैसा कि 1908 में हुआ था जब बॉम्बे के श्रमिकों ने **लोकमान्य तिलक के कारावास** के विरोध में छह दिनों तक हड़ताल की थी।

- **The Meerut conspiracy case arrested 33 labour organisers**, men working openly, in unions the 1926 Act had made legal, and charged them not under Section 120B, where the Act's immunity held, but under sedition provisions the Act had never touched. **मेरठ षड्यंत्र मामला** में 33 श्रमिक नेताओं को गिरफ्तार किया गया, जो खुले रूप से कार्य कर रहे थे, उन यूनियनों में जिन्हें 1926 के अधिनियम ने वैध बनाया था, और उन पर धारा 120B के अंतर्गत नहीं बल्कि राजद्रोह प्रावधानों के तहत आरोप लगाए गए, जिन्हें अधिनियम ने कभी नहीं छुआ था।

- **The Trade Disputes Bill banned sympathetic strikes**, built in notice periods long enough to make sustained action practically impossible, and made illegal any strike that extended beyond a purely industrial dispute.

**ट्रेड विवाद विधेयक** ने सहानुभूति हड़तालों पर प्रतिबंध लगाया, इतने लंबे नोटिस अवधि निर्धारित की कि निरंतर कार्रवाई लगभग असंभव हो गई, और किसी भी ऐसी हड़ताल को अवैध बना दिया जो केवल औद्योगिक विवाद से आगे बढ़े।

- What had electrified Indian politics since 1908, the joining of workers' grievances to nationalist ones, was now a criminal act.

जो 1908 से भारतीय राजनीति को ऊर्जा दे रहा था, अर्थात् श्रमिकों की शिकायतों का राष्ट्रवादी मुद्दों से जुड़ना, अब एक आपराधिक कृत्य बन गया।

- **Motilal Nehru named it plainly: “the Slavery of India Bill.”**

**मोतीलाल नेहरू** ने इसे स्पष्ट रूप से “**भारत की दासता का विधेयक**” कहा।

- **The Public Safety Bill went further, giving the executive power to act not on what people did but on what they were deemed to intend, with the Governor General as judge of intention.**

**पब्लिक सेफ्टी बिल** इससे भी आगे गया, जिसने कार्यपालिका को यह शक्ति दी कि वह लोगों के कार्यों पर नहीं बल्कि उनकी मंशा पर कार्रवाई करे, जिसमें गवर्नर जनरल मंशा का निर्णायक था।

- **On October 30, 1928, months before the bills came to a vote, Lala Lajpat Rai, who had presided over the AITUC's founding session in 1920, led a peaceful protest in Lahore against the all-British Simon Commission.**

30 अक्टूबर 1928 को, विधेयकों पर मतदान से महीनों पहले, **लाला लाजपत राय**, जिन्होंने 1920 में AITUC



के स्थापना सत्र की अध्यक्षता की थी, ने लाहौर में पूर्णतः ब्रिटिश साइमन कमीशन के विरोध में शांतिपूर्ण प्रदर्शन का नेतृत्व किया।

- **Police Superintendent James Scott ordered a lathi charge.**  
पुलिस अधीक्षक जेम्स स्कॉट ने लाठीचार्ज का आदेश दिया।
- **That same evening, still standing, he addressed the crowd at Mochi Gate: "I declare that the blows struck at me today will be the last nails in the coffin of British rule in India."**  
उसी शाम, खड़े रहते हुए, उन्होंने मोची गेट पर भीड़ को संबोधित करते हुए कहा: "मैं घोषणा करता हूँ कि आज मुझ पर किए गए प्रहार भारत में ब्रिटिश शासन के ताबूत में अंतिम कील साबित होंगे।"
- **Three months before that analysis, on April 8, 1929, Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw smoke bombs and leaflets from the visitors' gallery of the Central Legislative Assembly.**  
उस विश्लेषण से तीन महीने पहले, 8 अप्रैल 1929 को, भगत सिंह और बटुकेश्वर दत्त ने केंद्रीय विधान सभा की दर्शक दीर्घा से धुआँ बम और पर्चे फेंके।
- **The pamphlet named three provocations: the Meerut arrests, the bills, and the death of Lajpat Rai.**  
उस पर्चे में तीन उकसावे बताए गए: मेरठ गिरफ्तारियाँ, विधेयक, और लाजपत राय की मृत्यु।
- **Dutt was transported to the Cellular Jail in the Andamans to serve a life sentence.**  
दत्त को आजीवन कारावास के लिए अंडमान के सेलुलर जेल भेजा गया।
- In 2020, during a **Monsoon Session of Parliament** conducted under pandemic restrictions, with the Opposition protesting procedural irregularities, the government passed **four labour codes consolidating 29 existing laws.**  
2020 में, महामारी प्रतिबंधों के तहत आयोजित संसद के मानसून सत्र के दौरान, जहाँ विपक्ष प्रक्रियात्मक अनियमितताओं का विरोध कर रहा था, सरकार ने 29 मौजूदा कानूनों को समेकित करते हुए चार श्रम संहिताएँ पारित कीं।
- One of them, the **Industrial Relations Code 2020**, absorbed the **Trade Union Act 1926.**  
इनमें से एक, औद्योगिक संबंध संहिता 2020, ने ट्रेड यूनियन अधिनियम 1926 को समाहित कर लिया।
- **It came into force on November 21, 2025.**  
यह 21 नवंबर 2025 को लागू हुआ।
- The new Code preserves **Sections 16 and 17**, successors to the 1926 Act's immunity provisions, in language almost identical to the original.  
नई संहिता धारा 16 और 17 को संरक्षित रखती है, जो 1926 अधिनियम के प्रतिरक्षा प्रावधानों के उत्तराधिकारी हैं, और जिनकी भाषा लगभग मूल के समान है।
- **To be recognised as such, a negotiating union must now demonstrate 51% support among workers on the muster roll.**  
मान्यता प्राप्त करने के लिए, एक वार्ताकार यूनियन को अब उपस्थिति रजिस्टर में श्रमिकों के बीच 51% समर्थन प्रदर्शित करना होगा।
- **Section 62 requires 60 days' notice before a strike can begin, four times the 15 days the 1929 Trade Disputes Act demanded, the bill Motilal Nehru had already called the "Slavery of India Bill."**  
धारा 62 के अनुसार हड़ताल शुरू करने से पहले 60 दिन का नोटिस आवश्यक है, जो 1929 के ट्रेड विवाद अधिनियम द्वारा मांगे गए 15 दिनों से चार गुना अधिक है, जिसे मोतीलाल नेहरू पहले ही "भारत की दासता का विधेयक" कह चुके थे।
- **Workers cannot strike during conciliation proceedings, or for seven days after, or during Tribunal proceedings, or for 60 days after those conclude.**  
श्रमिक सुलह प्रक्रिया के दौरान, उसके सात दिन बाद, न्यायाधिकरण की कार्यवाही के दौरान या उसके समाप्त होने के 60 दिन बाद तक हड़ताल नहीं कर सकते।
- The words **'gig'** and **'platform'** do not appear once in the **Industrial Relations Code 2020.**  
'गिग' और 'प्लेटफॉर्म' शब्द औद्योगिक संबंध संहिता 2020 में एक बार भी नहीं आते।



- **NITI Aayog estimated 7.7 million platform workers in 2020.**  
नीति आयोग ने 2020 में 7.7 मिलियन प्लेटफॉर्म श्रमिकों का अनुमान लगाया।
- **They are legally classified as independent contractors.**  
उन्हें कानूनी रूप से स्वतंत्र ठेकेदार के रूप में वर्गीकृत किया गया है।
- **The Fairwork India Report 2024 assessed 11 major platforms operating in India and found that none recognised a collective body of workers or a trade union.**  
फेयरवर्क इंडिया रिपोर्ट 2024 ने भारत में कार्यरत 11 प्रमुख प्लेटफॉर्म का आकलन किया और पाया कि उनमें से किसी ने भी श्रमिकों के सामूहिक संगठन या ट्रेड यूनियन को मान्यता नहीं दी।
- **Four States have now passed social security laws for platform workers, welfare benefits designed, with some care, to make the struggle for collective bargaining seem unnecessary.**  
चार राज्यों ने अब प्लेटफॉर्म श्रमिकों के लिए सामाजिक सुरक्षा कानून पारित किए हैं, जिनमें कुछ हद तक इस प्रकार के कल्याणकारी लाभ दिए गए हैं कि सामूहिक सौदेबाजी की आवश्यकता कम प्रतीत हो।

## 01Ma. QUIZ: Meaning of 'Führer' and its Use for Hitler

### Questions and Answers to the previous day's

**daily quiz:** 1. What word meaning 'guide' in German was used to refer to Hitler? **Ans: Führer**

2. In 1923, Hitler attempted to pull off a coup and overthrow the Weimar Republic; the attempt landed him in prison. What was it called? **Ans: The Munich Putsch**

3. What is the name of the totalitarian dictatorship set up by Hitler from 1933 to 1945? **Ans: The Third Reich**

4. In 1936, the Nazi regime used this international sporting event for propaganda. It wasn't held again until 1948. Which event was this and what event caused its delay? **Ans: Olympics. World War 2**

5. The Axis Alliance was formed between Hitler, Mussolini, and another leader. Name him. **Ans: Japanese emperor Hirohito**

**Visual:** If you're a Harry Potter fan, you would have heard of the Chamber of Secrets. But have you heard of the Chamber of Horrors? This statue is found in which museum's chamber of horrors? **Ans: Madame Tussauds**

**Early Birds:** C. Saravanan | Sunil Madhavan | Arun Kumar Singh | Mohan Lal Patel | Prem Nath Tiwari

### Meaning of the Word 'Führer'

- The German word "**Führer**" literally means "**leader**" or "**guide.**" It is derived from the verb *führen*, which means "to lead." In general usage, it can refer to any leader or person who guides others.

### Use in Context of Adolf Hitler

- **Adolf Hitler** adopted the title "**Führer**" to establish himself as the supreme and unquestioned leader of Nazi Germany. After the death of President Paul von Hindenburg in 1934, Hitler merged the offices of President and Chancellor, assuming absolute power.

### The Munich Putsch (1923)

- The **Munich Putsch** (Beer Hall Putsch) was a failed coup attempt by **Adolf Hitler** in November 1923 to overthrow the **Weimar Republic**.
- Exploiting political instability and economic crisis, Hitler tried to seize power in Bavaria. The attempt was quickly suppressed by police,

leading to his arrest.

- He was sentenced for treason and jailed, where he wrote **Mein Kampf** and later shifted to constitutional methods to gain power.

### The Third Reich (1933–1945)

- The **Third Reich** refers to the totalitarian dictatorship established by **Adolf Hitler** in Germany from 1933 to 1945. After becoming Chancellor, Hitler consolidated power through laws like the **Enabling Act**, eliminating democracy.
- The regime promoted extreme nationalism, racial ideology, and expansionism. It suppressed opposition, controlled the media, and led to World War II and the Holocaust.

### 1936 Olympics and World War II Impact

- The **1936 Olympics**, held in Berlin, were used by the Nazi regime under **Adolf Hitler** as a propaganda tool to showcase Germany's strength and ideology.
- The event projected an image of a peaceful and powerful nation despite underlying repression.





# Empty LNG ship from Dahej heads into Strait of Hormuz for loading in the UAE's Das Island

GS I: Geography

M. Kalyanaraman  
CHENNAI

In a development that has given hope of normalcy returning across the Strait of Hormuz, LNG carrier *Umm Al Ashtan*, which had departed from Dahej in Gujarat after unloading its cargo there, is heading up towards crossing the strait. The vessel, which had finished cargo operations early in March and had been drifting, is likely to cross the strait early on Friday and make way to Das Island, an LNG terminal in the UAE.

This is among the first instance since the war started that an empty ship



Some Indian-flagged oil tankers have passed through the Strait of Hormuz and are seen docked at a Mumbai offloading terminal. AFP

in ballast condition is sailing upstream of the Strait of Hormuz to load cargo even as hundreds of loaded ships are still stuck west of the strait inside the Persian Gulf.

The passage of *Umm Al Ashtan* indicates that LNG production is starting at Das Island, which has a capacity of 6 million tonnes per year, almost 1% of global LNG manufacturing capacity.

Shipping industry sources, however, say that a sure sign of normalcy would be when the dozen LNG carriers that loaded in Qatar start heading out.

*Umm Al Ashtan* is managed by Adnoc Logistics and Services, belonging to the well-known Adnoc Group of Abu Dhabi. It has a cargo carrying capacity of 73,100 tonnes and has delivered cargoes to India.

In another India-related LNG shipping, *Mubaraz*, an LNG tanker, after loading in Das Island, has transited and is currently en route to China but currently cruising on the west coast of India. *Mubaraz* had switched off its auto-

matic identification system (AIS) as it transited the strait and sailed into the Arabian Sea. The AIS was switched on as it neared the Indian coast.

*Mubaraz*, carrying some 59,000 tonnes of LNG and owned by Adnoc's shipping company, was originally scheduled to deliver to India. It was among the 22 energy-carrying ships that the government had earmarked for evacuation to India.

In another positive development, *Idemitsu Maru*, carrying 2 million barrels of crude oil, also transited the strait recently and is headed to Nagoya, Japan.

## 01Ma. Empty LNG ship from Dahej heads into Strait of Hormuz for loading in the UAE's Das Island

दहेज से खाली एलएनजी जहाज यूई के दास द्वीप में लोडिंग के लिए होर्मुज जलडमरूमध्य की ओर बढ़ा

- An empty LNG ship from Dahej heads into the Strait of Hormuz for loading in the UAE's Das Island.  
दहेज से खाली एलएनजी जहाज यूई के दास द्वीप में लोडिंग के लिए होर्मुज जलडमरूमध्य की ओर बढ़ा।
- In a development that has given hope of normalcy returning across the Strait of Hormuz, LNG carrier *Umm Al Ashtan*, which had departed from **Dahej in Gujarat** after unloading its cargo there, is heading up towards crossing the strait.  
इस घटनाक्रम से होर्मुज जलडमरूमध्य में सामान्य स्थिति लौटने की उम्मीद जगी है, क्योंकि एलएनजी कैरियर उम्म अल अशतान, जिसने गुजरात के दहेज में कार्गो उतारने के बाद प्रस्थान किया था, अब जलडमरूमध्य पार करने की ओर बढ़ रहा है।
- The vessel, which had finished cargo operations early in March and had been drifting, is likely to cross the strait early on Friday and make way to **Das Island, an LNG terminal in the UAE**.  
यह जहाज, जिसने मार्च की शुरुआत में कार्गो संचालन पूरा कर लिया था और तब से बहाव में था, शुक्रवार सुबह जलडमरूमध्य पार कर यूई के दास द्वीप स्थित एलएनजी टर्मिनल की ओर जाएगा।
- The passage of *Umm Al Ashtan* indicates that LNG production is starting at Das Island, which has a capacity of 6 million tonnes per year, almost 1% of global LNG manufacturing capacity.  
उम्म अल अशतान का गुजरना संकेत देता है कि दास द्वीप पर एलएनजी उत्पादन शुरू हो रहा है, जिसकी क्षमता 60 लाख टन प्रति वर्ष है, जो वैश्विक एलएनजी उत्पादन का लगभग 1% है।
- *Umm Al Ashtan* is managed by Adnoc Logistics and Services, belonging to the well-known Adnoc Group of Abu Dhabi.  
उम्म अल अशतान का प्रबंधन एडनोक लॉजिस्टिक्स एंड सर्विसेज द्वारा किया जाता है, जो अबू धाबी के एडनोक समूह का हिस्सा है।



- Mubarak had switched off its automatic identification system (AIS) as it transited the strait and sailed into the Arabian Sea.  
मुबराक ने जलडमरूमध्य पार करते समय अपना ऑटोमैटिक आइडेंटिफिकेशन सिस्टम (AIS) बंद कर दिया था और अरब सागर में प्रवेश किया।

GS Paper II: Polity		01 May 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
01MA	K.C. Venugopal to return as chairman of House panel के.सी. वेणुगोपाल हाउस पैनल के अध्यक्ष के रूप में लौटेंगे	
01MA	EC set to implement QR code-based access at counting centres मतगणना केंद्रों पर क्यूआर कोड आधारित प्रवेश लागू करने की तैयारी में चुनाव आयोग	
01MA	Should the PIL jurisdiction be reconsidered? क्या जनहित याचिका (PIL) के अधिकार क्षेत्र पर पुनर्विचार किया जाना चाहिए?	

## K.C. Venugopal to return as chairman of House panel

GS II: Polity  
Press Trust of India  
NEW DELHI

Congress leader K.C. Venugopal was reappointed Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament for 2026-27, on Thursday, while the Bharatiya Janata Party's Bajjayant Panda will head the Committee on Public Undertakings.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has appointed BJP leader Faggan Singh Kulaste Chairman of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for the term starting on May 1, 2026, and ending on April 30, 2027, according to an official notification.

Mr. Birla has also appointed BJP leader Sanjay Jaiswal as Chairperson of the Committee on Estimates (2026-27) of the Lok Sabha. "The Speaker has appointed Shri K C Venugopal as the Chairperson of the Committee on Public Accounts (2026-27)," the notification said.

The other members of the Committee on Public Accounts for the term beginning on May 1, 2026 include the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam's T.R. Baalu;



K.C. Venugopal

Trinamool Congress's Kalyan Banerjee; Nishikant Dubey, Jagdambika Pal, Ravi Shankar Prasad, C.M. Ramesh, Aparajita Sarangi, Tejasvi Surya, Anurag Singh Thakur (all from the BJP); Jai Parkash, Amar Singh and Venugopal (from the Congress); Telugu Desam Party's Magunta Sreenivasulu Reddy; Samajwadi Party's Dharmendra Yadav; and Janasena Party's Balashowry Vallabhaneni from the Lok Sabha.

Among the Rajya Sabha members are Ashokrao Shankarrao Chavan, K. Laxman and Sudhanshu Trivedi (all BJP); Praful Patel (Nationalist Congress Party); Sukhendu Sekhar Ray (Trinamool); and Akhilesh Prasad Singh (Congress).

### 01Ma. K.C. Venugopal to return as chairman of House panel

के.सी. वेणुगोपाल हाउस पैनल के अध्यक्ष के रूप में लौटेंगे

K.C. Venugopal to return as chairman of the House panel.

के.सी. वेणुगोपाल हाउस पैनल के अध्यक्ष के रूप में लौटेंगे।

Congress leader **K.C. Venugopal was reappointed Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament for 2026-27**, on Thursday, while the **Bharatiya Janata Party's Bajjayant Panda will head the Committee on Public Undertakings.**

कांग्रेस नेता के.सी. वेणुगोपाल को गुरुवार को 2026-27 के लिए संसद की पब्लिक अकाउंट्स कमेटी का अध्यक्ष पुनः नियुक्त किया गया, जबकि भारतीय जनता पार्टी के बैजयंत पांडा पब्लिक अंडरटेकिंग्स समिति का नेतृत्व करेंगे।

**Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has appointed BJP leader Faggan Singh Kulaste Chairman of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes** for the term starting on May 1, 2026, and ending on April 30, 2027, according to an official notification.

लोकसभा अध्यक्ष ओम बिड़ला ने भाजपा नेता फगगन सिंह कुलस्ते को 1 मई 2026 से 30 अप्रैल 2027 तक के लिए अनुसूचित जाति और जनजाति कल्याण समिति का अध्यक्ष नियुक्त किया है, आधिकारिक अधिसूचना के अनुसार।

**Mr. Birla has also appointed BJP leader Sanjay Jaiswal as Chairperson of the Committee on Estimates (2026-27) of the Lok Sabha.**

बिड़ला ने भाजपा नेता संजय जायसवाल को लोकसभा की अनुमान समिति (2026-27) का अध्यक्ष भी नियुक्त किया है।

"The **Speaker has appointed Shri K C Venugopal as the Chairperson of the Committee on Public Accounts**

(2026-27)," the notification said.



अधिसूचना में कहा गया, “अध्यक्ष ने के.सी. वेणुगोपाल को पब्लिक अकाउंट्स कमेटी (2026-27) का अध्यक्ष नियुक्त किया है।”

- The other members of the Committee on Public Accounts for the term beginning on May 1, 2026 include the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam's T.R. Baalu; Trinamool Congress's Kalyan Banerjee; Nishikant Dubey, Jagdambika Pal, Ravi Shankar Prasad, C.M. Ramesh, Aparajita Sarangi, Tejasvi Surya, Anurag Singh Thakur (all from the BJP); Jai Parkash, Amar Singh and Venugopal (from the Congress); Telugu Desam Party's Magunta Sreenivasulu Reddy; Samajwadi Party's Dharmendra Yadav; and Janasena Party's Balashowry Vallabhaneni from the Lok Sabha.

# EC set to implement QR code-based access at counting centres

Poll body launches new photo identity cards with QR codes for persons authorised to enter counting halls, including officials and candidates

GS II: Polity  
The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission on Thursday introduced a QR code-based photo identity card system to eliminate the possibility of any unauthorised persons entering counting centres.

After its introduction during the counting to be held on May 4 for the Assembly elections in Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Puducherry and the byelections in seven Assembly constituencies across five States, the system will be extended to all future general and byelections to the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies, the EC said in a statement.

A three-tier security mechanism has been prescribed for verification of identity at counting centres. At the first and second tiers, photo identity cards issued by the Returning Officer (RO) shall be checked manually. At the third and innermost security cordon near the counting hall, entry shall be permitted only after successful verification through QR code scanning.

The new QR code-based



Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar with the two Election Commissioners at the ECINET launch on January 22. ANI

cards will be applicable for categories of persons authorised by EC to enter counting centres and halls, including ROs, Assistant Returning Officers (AROs), counting staff, technical personnel, candidates, election agents and counting agents, among others.

The EC has also introduced a module on the ECINET 2.0 platform for the QR code-based cards.

A media centre will be set up near the counting halls in each centre for the facilitation of authorised presspersons. Entry of presspersons will continue to be permitted on the basis of authority letters issued by the EC in accor-

dance with the existing instructions of the commission.

All Chief Electoral Officers, District Election Officers (DEOs), ROs and AROs have been directed to ensure strict compliance with these instructions to uphold the highest standards of transparency, security and efficiency in the counting process.

The DEOs and ROs have been directed to make all necessary arrangements for the effective implementation of this system, including deployment of trained personnel at designated checkpoints to ensure seamless and secure access control.

1 मई 2026 से शुरू होने वाले कार्यकाल के लिए पब्लिक अकाउंट्स कमेटी के अन्य सदस्यों में द्रविड़ मुनेत्र कड़गम के टी.आर. बालू; तृणमूल कांग्रेस के कल्याण बनर्जी; भाजपा के निशिकांत दुबे, जगदंबिका पाल, रवि शंकर प्रसाद, सी.एम. रमेश, अपराजिता सारंगी, तेजस्वी सूर्या, अनुराग सिंह ठाकुर; कांग्रेस के जय प्रकाश, अमर सिंह और वेणुगोपाल; तेलुगु देशम पार्टी के मगुंटा श्रीनिवासुलु रेड्डी; समाजवादी पार्टी के धर्मेंद्र यादव; और जनसेना पार्टी के बालाशौरी वल्लभनेनी शामिल हैं।

- Among the Rajya Sabha members are Ashokrao Shankarrao Chavan, K. Laxman and Sudhanshu Trivedi (all BJP); Praful Patel (Nationalist Congress Party); Sukhendu Sekhar Ray (Trinamool); and Akhilesh Prasad Singh (Congress).

राज्यसभा के सदस्यों में अशोकराव शंकरराव चव्हाण, के. लक्ष्मण और सुधांशु त्रिवेदी (भाजपा); प्रफुल्ल पटेल (राष्ट्रवादी कांग्रेस पार्टी); सुखेंदु शेखर राय (तृणमूल); और अखिलेश प्रसाद सिंह (कांग्रेस) शामिल हैं।

## 01Ma. EC set to implement QR code-based access at counting centres

मतगणना केंद्रों पर क्यूआर कोड आधारित प्रवेश लागू करने की तैयारी में चुनाव आयोग

- The Election Commission on Thursday introduced a QR code-based photo identity card system to eliminate the possibility of any unauthorised persons entering counting centres.



चुनाव आयोग ने गुरुवार को क्यूआर कोड आधारित फोटो पहचान पत्र प्रणाली शुरू की ताकि मतगणना केंद्रों में किसी भी अनधिकृत व्यक्ति के प्रवेश की संभावना समाप्त हो सके।

- After its introduction during the counting to be held on May 4 for the Assembly elections in Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Puducherry and the byelections in seven Assembly constituencies across five States, the system will be extended to all future general and byelections to the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies, the EC said in a statement.

चुनाव आयोग ने कहा कि 4 मई को असम, केरल, तमिलनाडु, पश्चिम बंगाल और पुडुचेरी में विधानसभा चुनावों और पांच राज्यों की सात विधानसभा सीटों पर उपचुनावों की मतगणना के दौरान इसकी शुरुआत के बाद, इस प्रणाली को भविष्य के सभी लोकसभा और विधानसभा चुनावों में लागू किया जाएगा।

- A three-tier security mechanism has been prescribed for verification of identity at counting centres.

मतगणना केंद्रों पर पहचान सत्यापन के लिए तीन-स्तरीय सुरक्षा प्रणाली निर्धारित की गई है।

- The new QR code-based cards will be applicable for categories of persons authorised by EC to enter counting centres and halls, including ROs, Assistant Returning Officers (AROs), counting staff, technical personnel, candidates, election agents and counting agents, among others.

नए क्यूआर कोड आधारित कार्ड उन सभी श्रेणियों के लोगों पर लागू होंगे जिन्हें चुनाव आयोग ने मतगणना केंद्रों में प्रवेश की अनुमति दी है, जैसे ROs, AROs, मतगणना स्टाफ, तकनीकी कर्मी, उम्मीदवार, चुनाव एजेंट और काउंटिंग एजेंट।

- The EC has also introduced a module on the ECINET 2.0 platform for the QR code-based cards.

चुनाव आयोग ने ECINET 2.0 प्लेटफॉर्म पर भी क्यूआर कोड आधारित कार्ड के लिए एक मॉड्यूल शुरू किया है।

- All Chief Electoral Officers, District Election Officers (DEOs), ROs and AROs have been directed to ensure strict compliance with these instructions to uphold the highest standards of transparency, security and efficiency in the counting process.

सभी मुख्य निर्वाचन अधिकारी, जिला निर्वाचन अधिकारी (DEO), ROs और AROs को निर्देश दिया गया है कि वे इन निर्देशों का सख्ती से पालन सुनिश्चित करें ताकि मतगणना प्रक्रिया में पारदर्शिता, सुरक्षा और दक्षता के उच्चतम मानकों को बनाए रखा जा सके।



## Should the PIL jurisdiction be reconsidered?



**Anuj Bhuwania**  
Professor of law and author of "Courting the People: Public Interest Litigation in Post-Emergency India"



**Talha Abdul Rahman**  
Advocate based in Delhi

SS II: Polity

PARLEY

**P**ublic Interest Litigation (PIL) emerged in the 1970s as a transformative judicial innovation aimed at widening access to justice for the poor and the marginalised. This was achieved by relaxing the strict rules of standing to permit representative actions, and by broadening the scope of judicial notice to allow courts to take *suo motu* cognisance of public issues and convert them into litigation. Over time, however, concerns have been raised about the misuse of this jurisdiction. More recently, during the ongoing proceedings in the Sabarimala reference case, the Union government has urged the Supreme Court to reconsider the PIL framework altogether, citing the rise of "agenda-driven litigation." Should the PIL jurisdiction be reconsidered? Anuj Bhuwania and Talha Abdul Rahman discuss the question in a conversation moderated by Aaratrika Bhaumik.

**Where should courts draw the line on who can file PILs?**

**Anuj Bhuwania:** The evolution of PIL can be traced to the Supreme Court decisions of the late 1970s, such as *Hussainara Khaton & Ors. vs. Home Secretary, State of Bihar* (1979), which marked a departure from the traditional doctrine of *locus standi*, under which only an aggrieved party could approach the court, towards permitting representative standing. This enabled third parties to institute proceedings on behalf of marginalised groups unable to access justice due to systemic barriers. Over time, however, there has been a discernible shift towards a broader model of citizen standing, where individuals approach the court not as representatives of affected groups but in their own capacity as members of the citizenry. This transition has led courts to engage with issues in an open-ended and, at times, indeterminate manner. In my view, the court's jurisdiction ought, as far as possible, to be invoked by those who are directly affected or, at the very least, by those with a clear interest in the matter.

**Talha Abdul Rahman:** I do not believe that the rules of *locus standi* should be reverted to their earlier, restrictive form. The structural barriers that justified its relaxation decades ago remain largely intact, and courts continue to be inaccessible to the poor and marginalised. For instance, individuals whose homes are demolished by the state as a purported punitive measure may often lack the means or capacity to seek judicial redress. In such circumstances, if third parties step forward to challenge these demolitions on the ground that due process has

MCQ



The Supreme Court of India.

not been followed, they ought to be accorded standing. This is not merely a representative action, but an assertion of a constitutional guarantee – that the rule of law must be upheld in its full measure, even where the harm is not personally suffered.

**PILs often involve complex, polycentric disputes. Do they risk judicial overreach and the exclusion of key stakeholders?**

**TAR:** The concern is valid. There have been instances where courts, while hearing such matters, have had to respond to executive inaction. This then raises a recurring question: do they possess the institutional competence to navigate such issues? In my view, they do, particularly when assisted by able counsel and robust adversarial presentation. At the same time, courts have also consciously refrained from encroaching upon the domains reserved for the executive or the legislature. For instance, on April 29, the Supreme Court declined to direct the enactment of specific laws on hate speech, instead leaving any legislative redress to the appropriate authorities. This reflects an important reality – there are limits to what the courts can do.

**AB:** In the past, there have been several instances where courts, while hearing PILs, have proceeded without hearing those directly affected. This was particularly evident in a series of cases before the Delhi High Court in the mid-2000s concerning slum evictions, where PILs filed by resident welfare associations sought the removal of slums, but the slum dwellers themselves were not implicated as parties. Similarly, the Supreme Court's handling of pollution-related litigation over the past four decades, much of it arising from PILs filed by environmentalist M.C. Mehta, highlights the limits of judicial intervention in addressing



There have been instances where courts have had to respond to executive inaction. This then raises a recurring question: do they possess the institutional competence to navigate such issues?

**TALHA ABDUL RAHMAN**

problems of such scale and complexity.

**How can courts address the rise of 'ambush PILs' filed to preclude genuine claims?**

**AB:** Increasingly, there have been instances of litigants rushing to court with poorly drafted petitions, often with the intention of securing an early dismissal and thereby precluding genuine litigants from approaching the court. These petitions are frequently driven by partisan motives. This is deeply concerning, as it risks prompting courts to deal with such matters in a cursory manner, without fully engaging with the complexities they warrant. In my view, this is not merely an issue of abuse of jurisdiction, but a problem rooted in the very nature of PIL itself.

**TAR:** It is often difficult to distinguish an 'ambush PIL' from one that raises genuine grievances. Yet, their proliferation has fostered an environment of suspicion, with courts increasingly questioning the *bona fides* of petitioners. While this may not fully address systemic concerns, there are procedural safeguards. The Supreme Court Rules, 2013, require that a writ petition contain a specific pleading identifying the fundamental rights alleged to have been violated. In the absence of such a disclosure, the Registry may decline to list the petition. Courts have also imposed costs to deter such filings.

**Have courts ensured meaningful compliance with the directives issued in PILs?**

**TAR:** Ensuring compliance with the directives in PILs often depends on the Bench. Where a judge is inclined to see a matter through, the case is kept pending, interim directions are issued, and compliance is periodically monitored. However, there has been a growing tendency in the Supreme Court to step back once a final judgment is delivered, leaving enforcement to the High Courts and trial courts. This is where gaps begin to emerge. In my view, the Supreme Court ought to retain some degree of oversight post-judgment, including initiating contempt proceedings for non-compliance.

**AB:** There are clear violations of several

important directives issued by the Supreme Court in PILs, often without any recourse to contempt proceedings. This tends to create a culture of impunity, allowing authorities to disregard court orders with little consequence. That said, the problem is more endemic and not confined to the PIL jurisdiction.

**Should guidelines be laid down on the role of the amicus curiae (a lawyer appointed to assist the court)?**

**AB:** The role accorded to an *amicus* in PIL proceedings raises several concerns. In dealing with complex cases, courts have, at times, expanded the role of the *amicus* to an extent that risks diluting basic procedural safeguards, particularly the right of affected parties to be heard. For instance, in *T.N. Godavarman Thirumalpad vs Union of India*, which originated as a PIL to protect forest areas in the Nilgiris and Kerala, the *amicus*, at various stages, was filing applications for directions and had effectively stepped into the role of the petitioner's counsel. The issuance of guidelines in this regard would be a welcome step.

**TAR:** Typically, courts appoint lawyers of a certain competence and integrity as *amicus*, with the expectation that they will assist the court in navigating the pleadings and arguments in a case. However, the role of the *amicus* is not uniform and can vary across jurisdictions. In my view, an *amicus* should refrain from taking sides and instead assist the court by fairly presenting the arguments on all sides. Given how fluid the role is, clearer guidelines are needed.

**What reforms are needed to strengthen the PIL jurisdiction?**

**TAR:** One requirement for entertaining a PIL should be that it is well-researched and confined to challenging enacted laws or executive action or inaction, rather than inviting the court to make policy choices. For instance, a petitioner should not approach the court seeking the enactment of a Uniform Civil Code.

**AB:** We need to return to the fundamental idea that PILs are an extrapolation of the principle underlying *habeas corpus* – that parties who cannot, for unavoidable reasons, appear before the court are represented by someone else. Only then will PILs retain their legitimacy.



To listen to the full interview  
Scan the code or go to the link  
[www.thehindu.com](http://www.thehindu.com)

### 01Ma. Should the PIL jurisdiction be reconsidered?

क्या जनहित याचिका (PIL) के अधिकार क्षेत्र पर पुनर्विचार किया जाना चाहिए?

Public Interest Litigation (PIL) emerged / लोकहित याचिका (PIL) का उद्भव हुआ

- More recently, during the ongoing proceedings in the **Sabarimala reference case**, the Union government has urged the **Supreme Court** to reconsider the PIL framework altogether, citing the rise of "**agenda-driven litigation**."

हाल ही में, सबरीमाला संदर्भ मामले की कार्यवाही के दौरान, केंद्र सरकार ने सुप्रीम कोर्ट से "एजेंडा-पेरित मुकदमों" के बढ़ते चलन का हवाला देते हुए PIL ढांचे पर पुनर्विचार करने का आग्रह किया है।

- **Anuj Bhuwania:** The evolution of PIL can be traced to the **Supreme Court decisions** of the late 1970s, such as **Hussainara Khaton & Ors. vs. Home Secretary, State of Bihar (1979)**, which marked a departure from the traditional doctrine of *locus standi*, under which only an aggrieved party could approach the court, towards permitting representative standing.

**अनुज भुवानिया:** PIL का विकास 1970 के दशक के उत्तरार्ध में सुप्रीम कोर्ट के निर्णयों से जुड़ा है, जैसे **हुसैनारा खतून बनाम गृह सचिव, बिहार राज्य (1979)**, जिसने पारंपरिक लोकस स्टैंडी सिद्धांत से हटकर प्रतिनिधिक याचिकाओं की अनुमति दी, जिसके अंतर्गत केवल प्रभावित पक्ष ही न्यायालय जा सकता था।

- This enabled third parties to institute proceedings on behalf of marginalised groups unable to access justice due to systemic barriers.

इससे तृतीय पक्षों को उन वंचित समूहों की ओर से कार्यवाही शुरू करने की अनुमति मिली जो प्रणालीगत बाधाओं के कारण न्याय तक नहीं पहुंच सकते थे।

- Over time, however, there has been a discernible shift towards a broader model of **citizen standing**, where individuals approach the court not as representatives of affected groups but in their own capacity as members of the citizenry.



समय के साथ, नागरिक स्टैंडी के एक व्यापक मॉडल की ओर स्पष्ट परिवर्तन हुआ है, जिसमें व्यक्ति प्रभावित समूहों के प्रतिनिधि के रूप में नहीं बल्कि नागरिक के रूप में स्वयं न्यायालय का रुख करते हैं।

- This transition has led courts to engage with issues in an open-ended and, at times, indeterminate manner.  
इस परिवर्तन ने न्यायालयों को कई बार खुले और अनिश्चित तरीके से मुद्दों से जुड़ने के लिए प्रेरित किया है।
- In my view, the court's jurisdiction ought, as far as possible, to be invoked by those who are directly affected or, at the very least, by those with a clear interest in the matter.  
मेरे विचार में, न्यायालय के क्षेत्राधिकार का उपयोग यथासंभव उन्हीं लोगों द्वारा किया जाना चाहिए जो सीधे प्रभावित हैं या कम से कम जिनका मामले में स्पष्ट हित है।
- The structural barriers that justified its relaxation decades ago remain largely intact, and courts continue to be inaccessible to the poor and marginalised.  
वे संरचनात्मक बाधाएँ, जिन्होंने दशकों पहले इसे शिथिल करने को उचित ठहराया था, अभी भी काफी हद तक बनी हुई हैं, और न्यायालय अब भी गरीबों और वंचितों के लिए सुलभ नहीं हैं।
- For instance, individuals whose homes are demolished by the state as a purported punitive measure may often lack the means or capacity to seek judicial redress.  
उदाहरण के लिए, जिन व्यक्तियों के घर राज्य द्वारा दंडात्मक उपाय के रूप में ध्वस्त किए जाते हैं, उनके पास न्यायिक राहत पाने के साधन या क्षमता अक्सर नहीं होती।
- In such circumstances, if third parties step forward to challenge these demolitions on the ground that due process has not been followed, they ought to be accorded standing.  
ऐसी परिस्थितियों में, यदि तृतीय पक्ष यह कहकर इन विध्वंसों को चुनौती देते हैं कि उचित प्रक्रिया का पालन नहीं हुआ है, तो उन्हें याचिका दायर करने का अधिकार दिया जाना चाहिए।
- This is not merely a representative action, but an assertion of a constitutional guarantee — that the rule of law must be upheld in its full measure, even where the harm is not personally suffered.  
यह केवल एक प्रतिनिधिक कार्रवाई नहीं है, बल्कि एक संवैधानिक गारंटी का दावा है — कि कानून का शासन पूरी तरह से लागू होना चाहिए, भले ही क्षति व्यक्तिगत रूप से न हुई हो।

**PILs often involve complex, polycentric disputes. Do they risk judicial overreach and the exclusion of key stakeholders? / लोकहित याचिकाएँ प्रायः जटिल, बहु-केंद्रीय विवादों से जुड़ी होती हैं। क्या वे न्यायिक अतिक्रमण और प्रमुख हितधारकों के बहिष्कार का जोखिम उत्पन्न करती हैं?**

- There have been instances where courts, while hearing such matters, have had to respond to executive inaction.  
ऐसे उदाहरण रहे हैं जहाँ न्यायालयों को इन मामलों की सुनवाई के दौरान कार्यपालिका की निष्क्रियता पर प्रतिक्रिया देनी पड़ी है।
- This then raises a recurring question: do they possess the institutional competence to navigate such issues?  
इससे एक पुनरावर्ती प्रश्न उठता है: क्या उनके पास ऐसे मुद्दों से निपटने की संस्थागत क्षमता है?
- For instance, on April 29, the Supreme Court declined to direct the enactment of specific laws on hate speech, instead leaving any legislative redress to the appropriate authorities.  
उदाहरण के लिए, 29 अप्रैल को सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने घृणा भाषण पर विशिष्ट कानून बनाने का निर्देश देने से इंकार कर दिया और इसे संबंधित प्राधिकरणों पर छोड़ दिया।

**How can courts address the rise of 'ambush PILs' filed to preclude genuine claims? / न्यायालय 'अम्बुश PIL' की बढ़ती प्रवृत्ति से कैसे निपट सकते हैं?**

- AB: Increasingly, there have been instances of litigants rushing to court with poorly drafted petitions, often with the intention of securing an early dismissal and thereby precluding genuine litigants from approaching the court.



**अनुज भुवानिया:** अब ऐसे मामलों में वृद्धि हो रही है जहाँ याचिकाकर्ता खराब तरीके से तैयार याचिकाओं के साथ न्यायालय पहुँचते हैं, जिनका उद्देश्य शीघ्र खारिज करवाना और वास्तविक याचिकाकर्ताओं को न्यायालय आने से रोकना होता है।

- This is deeply concerning, as it risks prompting courts to deal with such matters in a  **cursory manner**, without fully engaging with the complexities they warrant.

यह अत्यंत चिंताजनक है, क्योंकि इससे न्यायालय ऐसे मामलों को **सरसरी तौर पर** निपटाने लग सकते हैं, बिना उनकी जटिलताओं को समझे।

- The **Supreme Court Rules, 2013**, require that a writ petition contain a specific pleading identifying the **fundamental rights** alleged to have been violated.

**सुप्रीम कोर्ट नियम, 2013** के अनुसार, एक रिट याचिका में स्पष्ट रूप से उन **मौलिक अधिकारों** का उल्लेख होना चाहिए जिनके उल्लंघन का आरोप लगाया गया है।

**Have courts ensured meaningful compliance with the directives issued in PILs? / क्या न्यायालयों ने PIL में जारी निर्देशों के प्रभावी अनुपालन को सुनिश्चित किया है?**

- **TAR: Ensuring compliance with the directives in PILs often depends on the Bench.**  
**तल्हा अब्दुल रहमान:** PIL में निर्देशों के अनुपालन को सुनिश्चित करना अक्सर पीठ पर निर्भर करता है।
- **Where a judge is inclined to see a matter through, the case is kept pending, interim directions are issued, and compliance is periodically monitored.**  
जहाँ न्यायाधीश मामले को अंत तक देखने के इच्छुक होते हैं, वहाँ मामला लंबित रखा जाता है, अंतरिम निर्देश जारी किए जाते हैं, और अनुपालन की समय-समय पर निगरानी की जाती है।
- **However, there has been a growing tendency in the Supreme Court to step back once a final judgment is delivered, leaving enforcement to the High Courts and trial courts.**  
हालाँकि, **सुप्रीम कोर्ट** में अंतिम निर्णय दिए जाने के बाद पीछे हटने की प्रवृत्ति बढ़ रही है, जिससे प्रवर्तन का कार्य **उच्च न्यायालयों** और निचली अदालतों पर छोड़ दिया जाता है।
- **In my view, the Supreme Court ought to retain some degree of oversight post-judgment, including initiating contempt proceedings for non-compliance.**  
मेरे विचार में, **सुप्रीम कोर्ट** को निर्णय के बाद भी कुछ स्तर की निगरानी बनाए रखनी चाहिए, जिसमें अनुपालन न होने पर **अवमानना कार्यवाही** शुरू करना शामिल हो।
- **This tends to create a culture of impunity, allowing authorities to disregard court orders with little consequence.**  
यह **दण्डहीनता की संस्कृति** को जन्म देता है, जिससे प्राधिकरण बिना परिणाम के न्यायालय के आदेशों की अवहेलना करते हैं।

**Should guidelines be laid down on the role of the amicus curiae (a lawyer appointed to assist the court)? / क्या अमीकस क्यूरी (न्यायालय की सहायता हेतु नियुक्त वकील) की भूमिका पर दिशा-निर्देश निर्धारित किए जाने चाहिए?**

- For instance, in **T.N. Godavarman Thirumulpad vs Union of India**, which originated as a **PIL** to protect forest areas in the Nilgiris and Kerala, the **amicus**, at various stages, was filing applications for directions and had effectively stepped into the role of the petitioner's counsel. उदाहरण के लिए, **टी.एन. गोदावरमन थिरुमुलपाद बनाम भारत संघ**, जो नीलगिरि और केरल के वन क्षेत्रों की रक्षा हेतु एक **PIL** के रूप में शुरू हुआ था, उसमें **अमीकस** ने विभिन्न चरणों में निर्देशों के लिए आवेदन दायर किए और प्रभावी रूप से याचिकाकर्ता के वकील की भूमिका निभाई।
- **TAR: Typically, courts appoint lawyers of a certain competence and integrity as amici, with the expectation that they will assist the court in navigating the pleadings and arguments in a case.**



तल्हा अब्दुल रहमान: सामान्यतः न्यायालय योग्य और ईमानदार वकीलों को **अमीकस** के रूप में नियुक्त करते हैं, इस अपेक्षा के साथ कि वे न्यायालय को याचिकाओं और तर्कों को समझने में सहायता करेंगे।

- In my view, an **amicus** should refrain from taking sides and instead assist the court by fairly presenting the arguments on all sides.  
मेरे विचार में, **अमीकस** को पक्षपात से बचना चाहिए और सभी पक्षों के तर्कों को निष्पक्ष रूप से प्रस्तुत करके न्यायालय की सहायता करनी चाहिए।

What reforms are needed to strengthen the PIL jurisdiction? / PIL क्षेत्राधिकार को सुदृढ़ करने हेतु कौन से सुधार आवश्यक हैं?

- TAR:** One requirement for entertaining a **PIL** should be that it is well-researched and con• nected to challenging enacted laws or executive action or inaction, rather than inviting the court to make **policy choices**.

तल्हा अब्दुल रहमान: **PIL** स्वीकार करने के लिए एक आवश्यक शर्त यह होनी चाहिए कि वह अच्छी तरह से शोधित हो और केवल लागू कानूनों या कार्यपालिका के कार्य/अकार्य को चुनौती दे, न कि न्यायालय को **नीतिगत निर्णय** लेने के लिए आमंत्रित करे।

- AB:** We need to return to the fundamental idea that **PILs** are an extrapolation of the principle underlying **habeas corpus** —that parties who cannot, for unavoidable reasons, appear before the court are represented by someone else.

अनुज भुवानिया: हमें इस मूल विचार पर लौटना चाहिए कि **PIL हेबियस कॉर्पस** के सिद्धांत का विस्तार है — जहाँ वे पक्ष जो अपरिहार्य कारणों से न्यायालय के समक्ष उपस्थित नहीं हो सकते, उनका प्रतिनिधित्व कोई अन्य करता है।

GS Paper II: Governance		01 May 2026
<b>TOPICS COVERED</b>		
01MA	<b>'Systemic failures' made tribal man take his sister's skeletal remains to bank, finds probe</b> ‘प्रणालीगत विफलताओं’ के कारण आदिवासी व्यक्ति अपनी बहन के कंकाल अवशेष बैंक ले गया, जांच में खुलासा	
01MA	<b>How residential segregation shapes public health access in India</b> भारत में आवासीय पृथक्करण किस प्रकार सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं की पहुँच को प्रभावित करता है	



# 'Systemic failures' made tribal man take his sister's skeletal remains to bank, finds probe

GS II: Governance

Satyasundar Barik  
BHUBANESWAR

A preliminary inquiry by the Odisha government has indicated systemic failures behind the desperate and disturbing act of a tribal man who carried his sister's skeletal remains to a bank in order to prove her death.

Asked by the bank to submit proof of his sister's death to withdraw money from her account, Jitu Munda of Diananali village under Patna block in Keonjhar district had exhumed the body and carried the skeletal remains on his shoulder to the bank on April 27. Mr. Munda wanted to withdraw ₹19,300 that was in the account of Kalara Munda, who died two months ago.

A day after the unsettling visuals posted online sparked outrage across the country, the Keonjhar ad-



The amount was handed over to three legal heirs, including Jitu Munda, at his residence on April 28. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ministration moved at breakneck speed issuing a death certificate and legal heir certificate, the documents required for withdrawal from the deceased's account. The bank handed over the amount at Mr. Munda's doorstep – all in one day on Tuesday.

"I, along with the District Collector of Keonjhar, examined an hour-long CCTV footage capturing banking inside the Malipasi

branch of Odisha Grameen Bank, on the day (April 27, 2026). It shows lapses on part of the bank authorities," said Sangram Keshari Mohapatra, Revenue Divisional Commissioner (RDC), who is heading the probe announced by the Odisha government.

"The CCTV footage does not have audio. However, the man stayed inside the bank for a considerable period of time (11.26 a.m. to

11.58 a.m). During the time, the man approached the cashier, manager and other employees. What it seemed from footage is that the man got aggrieved when the bank manager finally turned him away," Mr. Mohapatra said.

"The incident is absolutely shameful. I wondered as to why the family was not provided an ATM card against the account as is being offered to every customer. With an ATM card in possession, the family could have easily withdrawn the amount. The bank authorities were of the opinion that the ATM card is generally not made available to persons who are illiterate or ignorant of procedures," Mr. Mohapatra said.

"The bank authorities at Odisha Grameen Bank knew Jitu Munda and the deceased Kalara Munda. Both had withdrawn mo-

ney about eight times in amounts ranging from ₹100 to ₹500. When the man came to withdraw ₹19,300, the bank authorities could have been more responsive," he said.

The RDC said there were delays in issuance of a death certificate.

"Death certificate was applied for on March 30, 2026 with an affidavit, which was not at all required in hospital. The death certificate should have been issued by April 4, but it did not happen. After the unfortunate incident happened, the death certificate was issued to Mr. Munda," said the RDC.

He said recommendations would be sent to the State government to strengthen the system in banks to assist people belonging to weaker sections and to those who may have difficulties with banking operations.

## 01Ma. 'Systemic failures' made tribal man take his sister's skeletal remains to bank, finds probe

'प्रणालीगत विफलताओं' के कारण आदिवासी व्यक्ति अपनी बहन के कंकाल अवशेष बैंक ले गया, जांच में खुलासा

- 'Systemic failures' made a tribal man take his sister's skeletal remains to the bank, finds a probe.

'प्रणालीगत विफलताओं' के कारण आदिवासी व्यक्ति अपनी बहन के कंकाल अवशेष बैंक ले गया, जांच में पाया गया।

- A preliminary inquiry by the Odisha government has indicated systemic failures behind the desperate and disturbing act of a tribal man who carried his sister's skeletal remains to a bank in order to prove her death.

ओडिशा सरकार की प्रारंभिक जांच में यह संकेत मिला है कि एक आदिवासी व्यक्ति द्वारा अपनी बहन के कंकाल अवशेष बैंक ले जाने के पीछे प्रणालीगत विफलताएं थीं, ताकि उसकी मृत्यु साबित की जा सके।

- Asked by the bank to submit proof of his sister's death to withdraw money from her account, Jitu Munda of Diananali village under Patna block in Keonjhar district had exhumed the body and carried the skeletal remains on his shoulder to the bank on April 27.

बैंक द्वारा अपनी बहन की मृत्यु का प्रमाण देने के लिए कहे जाने पर, केओड़र जिले के दिआनानाली गांव के जीतू मुंडा ने शव को बाहर निकालकर 27 अप्रैल को कंधे पर कंकाल अवशेष लेकर बैंक पहुंचा।

- Mr. Munda wanted to withdraw ₹19,300 that was in the account of Kalara Munda, who died two months ago.

श्री मुंडा अपनी बहन कलारा मुंडा, जिनकी दो महीने पहले मृत्यु हो गई थी, के खाते से ₹19,300 निकालना चाहते थे।



- A day after the unsettling visuals posted online sparked outrage across the country, the Keonjhar administration moved at breakneck speed issuing a death certificate and legal heir certificate, the documents required for withdrawal from the deceased's account.  
ऑनलाइन वीडियो से देशभर में आक्रोश फैलने के एक दिन बाद, केओझर प्रशासन ने तेजी से मृत्यु प्रमाण पत्र और कानूनी उत्तराधिकारी प्रमाण पत्र जारी किया, जो पैसे निकालने के लिए आवश्यक थे।
- The bank handed over the amount at Mr. Munda's doorstep — all in one day on Tuesday.  
बैंक ने मंगलवार को एक ही दिन में राशि घर पहुंचाकर दे दी।
- “I, along with the District Collector of Keonjhar, examined an hour-long CCTV footage capturing banking inside the Malipasi branch of Odisha Grameen Bank, on the day (April 27, 2026). It shows lapses on part of the bank authorities,” said Sangram Keshari Mohapatra, Revenue Divisional Commissioner (RDC), who is heading the probe announced by the Odisha government.  
राजस्व मंडल आयुक्त (RDC) संग्राम केशरी मोहापात्रा ने कहा कि उन्होंने केओझर के जिला कलेक्टर के साथ मिलकर 27 अप्रैल 2026 को ओडिशा ग्रामीण बैंक की मालिपासी शाखा के एक घंटे के CCTV फुटेज की जांच की, जिसमें बैंक अधिकारियों की लापरवाही दिखी।
- “The CCTV footage does not have audio. However, the man stayed inside the bank for a considerable period of time (11.26 a.m. to 11.58 a.m). During the time, the man approached the cashier, manager and other employees. What it seemed from footage is that the man got aggrieved when the bank manager finally turned him away,” Mr. Mohapatra said.  
मोहापात्रा ने कहा कि CCTV में ऑडियो नहीं है, लेकिन व्यक्ति 11:26 बजे से 11:58 बजे तक बैंक में रहा और कैशियर, मैनेजर और अन्य कर्मचारियों से मिला, तथा अंत में मैनेजर द्वारा मना किए जाने पर वह निराश हो गया।
- “The incident is absolutely shameful. I wondered as to why the family was not provided an ATM card against the account as is being offered to every customer. With an ATM card in possession, the family could have easily withdrawn the amount. The bank authorities were of the opinion that the ATM card is generally not made available to persons who are illiterate or ignorant of procedures,” Mr. Mohapatra said.  
उन्होंने कहा, “यह घटना पूरी तरह शर्मनाक है। मैंने सोचा कि परिवार को ATM कार्ड क्यों नहीं दिया गया, जबकि यह हर ग्राहक को दिया जाता है। ATM कार्ड होता तो पैसा आसानी से निकाला जा सकता था, लेकिन बैंक का मानना था कि अशिक्षित लोगों को कार्ड नहीं दिया जाता।”
- “The bank authorities at Odisha Grameen Bank knew Jitu Munda and the deceased Kalara Munda. Both had withdrawn money about eight times in amounts ranging from ₹100 to ₹500. When the man came to withdraw ₹19,300, the bank authorities could have been more responsive,” he said.  
उन्होंने कहा कि ओडिशा ग्रामीण बैंक के अधिकारी जीतू और कलारा मुंडा को जानते थे, जिन्होंने पहले 100 से 500 रुपये तक की राशि लगभग आठ बार निकाली थी, इसलिए 19,300 रुपये के लिए उन्हें अधिक संवेदनशील होना चाहिए था।
- The RDC said there were delays in issuance of a death certificate.  
RDC ने कहा कि मृत्यु प्रमाण पत्र जारी करने में देरी हुई।
- “Death certificate was applied for on March 30, 2026 with an affidavit, which was not at all required in hospital. The death certificate should have been issued by April 4, but it did not happen. After the unfortunate incident happened, the death certificate was issued to Mr. Munda,” said the RDC.  
उन्होंने कहा, “30 मार्च 2026 को हलफनामे के साथ आवेदन किया गया, जो आवश्यक नहीं था। प्रमाण पत्र 4 अप्रैल तक मिल जाना चाहिए था, लेकिन नहीं मिला। घटना के बाद ही इसे जारी किया गया।”
- He said recommendations would be sent to the State government to strengthen the system in banks to assist people belonging to weaker sections and to those who may have difficulties with banking operations.  
उन्होंने कहा कि राज्य सरकार को सुझाव भेजे जाएंगे ताकि कमजोर वर्गों और बैंकिंग में कठिनाई झेलने वाले लोगों की मदद के लिए बैंक प्रणाली को मजबूत किया जा सके।



# How residential segregation shapes public health access in India

Neighbourhoods with higher concentrations of Dalit and Muslim communities are significantly less likely to have schools, health centres, piped water, sanitation, or electricity; this means limited access to care, as well as **higher risks of disease, delayed treatment, and worse health outcomes**

**CS II: Governance**  
Christianez Raina Kiruba

As a child travelling to her grandparents' home, Nancy Angeline remembers getting off at a bus stop that was never quite her destination.

The bus would halt at Valliyur—a village with paved roads, shops, a school, and a health centre. From there, she walked in near darkness, under starlight, past the last row of houses and across an invisible boundary into her grandparents' home.

Magizhipuram, where they lived, was a Dalit Christian settlement—physically separated from the village, neglected, and socially excluded. The line drawn was not geographical; it was caste.

Only decades later, as a community medicine doctor, did she find a name for it: residential segregation. With it came a sharper realisation—this separation shaped not just where people lived, but who could access healthcare.

What Nancy experienced reflects a bigger, largely invisible pattern.

A working paper, 'Residential Segregation and Unequal Access to Local Public Services in India', by Sam Asher et al, analysing over 15 lakh neighbourhoods, finds high levels of segregation among Muslims and Scheduled Castes—closely tied to unequal access to basic services.

In urban areas, segregation indices range from 0.52 for Muslims to 0.59 for Scheduled Castes—meaning over half would need to relocate for full integration. Nearly one in four urban Muslims lives in neighbourhoods that are more than 80% Muslim.

Neighbourhoods with higher concentrations of these communities are significantly less likely to have schools, health centres, piped water, sanitation, or electricity. These disparities are often invisible at district or State levels, where policy is made, but stark at the neighbourhood level—clusters of just a few hundred households. Inequality in India is not only widespread; it is spatially organised and hidden in plain sight.

During her community medicine training, Nancy returned to villages as a researcher. "In many places, the Anganwadi, school, and primary health centre would all be in the main village—and inaccessible to those in Dalit settlements," she says.

Healthcare infrastructure is typically placed based on centrality and connectivity—locations with roads, buses, and ambulance access. But in caste-segregated geographies, these "central" points are usually dominant caste areas, leaving Dalit settlements excluded by default.

Health camps, too, are often held in dominant caste spaces—temples, central squares, community halls—where Dalit residents may not be allowed or, feel safe entering. Village health committees, meant to guide local planning, are frequently dominated by upper-caste men, shaping where these services are placed.

Nancy recalls a case that continues to stay with her from her work in a village. A child with severe malnutrition lived in a Dalit settlement. When she urged the mother to take the child to the Anganwadi



**Living on the margins:** In urban areas, segregation indices range from 0.52 for Muslims to 0.59 for Scheduled Castes—meaning over half would need to relocate for full integration. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

to access free meals, the response was not what she expected. "It was not that she did not want care," Nancy says. "She told me it was unsafe for her to go to that part of the village as a Dalit woman. Every time she went, she was humiliated." The mother's refusal, she realised, was not a failure of awareness or intent—but of dignity.

## Dynamics across India

These dynamics extend beyond Tamil Nadu. Tanya Tanisha Mohanty, an English literature scholar who has done field work on women in villages in Odisha, describes how social identity continues to shape not just where people live, but also who they can ask for care or support from.

In one cluster of villages near Patia, she recalls, a single clinic served multiple surrounding settlements. Yet since the clinic was located within an upper-caste area, access to it was regulated. Dalit residents could only visit on specific days and within fixed hours and these restrictions were even displayed on the clinic board.

"These timings were set so that upper-caste residents would not be offended," she says. "If you had an emergency outside that window, you simply could not go."

For those needing urgent care—particularly pregnant women or those with acute conditions—this effectively placed healthcare out of reach.

Access to medicines, too, followed informal hierarchies. In some cases, intermediaries would procure medicines from nearby towns, but distribution was uneven or came at higher costs.

These patterns are not limited to caste. In urban and peri-urban India, Muslim-majority neighbourhoods often face similar spatial exclusion.

Shakeeb Ahmed Khan, a physiotherapist who has worked extensively in Muslim-majority areas,

**Neighbourhoods with fewer services, poorer infrastructure, and limited access to care face higher risks of disease, delayed treatment, and worse health outcomes**

recalls supervisors telling him these neighbourhoods would have higher disability due to consanguineous marriages—a reflection of entrenched bias against the Muslim community. But prevalence data did not support these assumptions.

"People who deliver healthcare to these areas also carry their biases and assumptions with them," he says.

In parts of Nagpur, he notes, Muslim-dominated areas had weaker infrastructure, fewer amenities, and limited services. Healthcare access followed similar lines. Health centres in marginalised areas were often understaffed or non-functional, forcing residents to travel farther for care, while centres in more affluent areas were better resourced.

"There was an implicit understanding that if you want better care, you would go to a PHC in a better neighborhood," he says. Over time, he says, many residents adapt. "People focus on work and on earning more to access private facilities. They also try to get what they can, within what is available."

These implications for public health are profound. Neighbourhoods with fewer services, poorer infrastructure, and limited access to care face higher risks of disease, delayed treatment, and worse health outcomes.

Despite decades of welfare programmes, Indian public policy has rarely treated residential segregation as a driver of inequality. Most interventions assume services within a village or district

are equally accessible. In reality, access depends on where services are located—and who can enter those spaces. There have been moments of recognition. The Sachar Committee Report noted that many Muslim communities live in segregated, under-served localities. But such insights have not translated into policy frameworks that account for segregation itself.

## Policy in practice

These patterns are also shaped—and at times reinforced—by policy. Laws such as the Gujarat Disturbed Areas Act restrict property transactions in notified areas. Initially introduced to prevent distress sales of property in areas of sectarian violence, it is now used to make it difficult for Muslims to buy homes in Hindu-majority neighbourhoods, thereby deepening segregation. Rajasthan has seen similar moves through administrative and policy directions. In Assam, although no equivalent legislation exists, a series of eviction drives and administrative controls over land have reshaped settlement patterns, disproportionately affecting minority communities.

Together, these measures risk formalising existing divides, contributing to the ghettoisation of minority communities, a trend that accelerated over the past decade, as noted by many researchers.

Large structural changes are needed to dismantle geography as a barrier for healthcare delivery. In the meantime, however, the public health system must recognise the existence of these barriers at the level of neighbourhoods and work on solutions to actively redistribute care to reach those kept at the margins.

*(Dr. Christianez Raina Kiruba is an internal medicine doctor, with a passion for patient rights advocacy. christianezdennis@gmail.com)*

## THE GIST

▼ A working paper analysing over 15 lakh neighbourhoods, finds high levels of segregation among Muslims and Scheduled Castes—closely tied to unequal access to basic services

▼ Healthcare infrastructure is typically placed based on centrality and connectivity—locations with roads, buses, and ambulance access. But in caste-segregated geographies, these "central" points are usually dominant caste areas, leaving Dalit settlements excluded by default

▼ Large structural changes are needed to dismantle geography as a barrier for healthcare delivery. In the meantime, however, the public health system must recognise the existence of these barriers at the level of neighbourhoods and work on solutions

## 01Ma. How residential segregation shapes public health access in India

भारत में आवासीय पृथक्करण किस प्रकार सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं की पहुँच को प्रभावित करता

लै

- Nearly one in four urban Muslims lives in neighbourhoods that are more than **80% Muslim**. लगभग हर चार में से एक शहरी मुसलमान ऐसे मोहल्लों में रहता है जहाँ **80% से अधिक मुस्लिम आबादी है।**
- Neighbourhoods with higher concentrations of these communities are significantly less likely to have **schools, health centres, piped water, sanitation, or electricity**.



इन समुदायों की अधिक सघनता वाले क्षेत्रों में स्कूल, स्वास्थ्य केंद्र, पाइप जल, स्वच्छता या बिजली की उपलब्धता काफी कम होती है।

- **Inequality in India is not only widespread; it is spatially organised and hidden in plain sight.** भारत में असमानता केवल व्यापक ही नहीं है; यह स्थानिक रूप से संगठित है और स्पष्ट रूप से दिखाई देने के बावजूद छिपी हुई है।
- “In many places, the **Anganwadi, school, and primary health centre** would all be in the **main village — and inaccessible to those in Dalit settlements,**” she says. वह कहती हैं, “कई स्थानों पर आंगनवाड़ी, स्कूल और प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य केंद्र सभी मुख्य गांव में होते हैं — और दलित बस्तियों के लोगों के लिए पहुंच से बाहर होते हैं।”
- **But in caste-segregated geographies, these “central” points are usually dominant caste areas, leaving Dalit settlements excluded by default.** लेकिन जाति-आधारित विभाजित भूगोल में, ये “केंद्रीय” स्थान आमतौर पर प्रमुख जातियों के क्षेत्र होते हैं, जिससे दलित बस्तियाँ स्वाभाविक रूप से बाहर रह जाती हैं।
- Health camps, too, are often held in **dominant caste spaces** — temples, central squares, community halls — where Dalit residents may not be allowed or, feel safe entering. स्वास्थ्य शिविर भी प्रायः प्रभुत्वशाली जातियों के स्थानों — मंदिरों, केंद्रीय चौकों, सामुदायिक सभागारों — में आयोजित किए जाते हैं, जहाँ दलित निवासियों को प्रवेश की अनुमति नहीं होती या वे स्वयं को सुरक्षित महसूस नहीं करते।
- **Village health committees, meant to guide local planning, are frequently dominated by upper-caste men, shaping where these services are placed.** ग्राम स्वास्थ्य समितियाँ, जो स्थानीय योजना का मार्गदर्शन करने के लिए होती हैं, प्रायः उच्च जाति के पुरुषों के प्रभुत्व में होती हैं, जिससे यह तय होता है कि सेवाएँ कहाँ स्थापित होंगी।
- “She told me it was unsafe for her to go to that part of the village as a **Dalit woman.** “उसने मुझे बताया कि एक दलित महिला के रूप में उस गांव के उस हिस्से में जाना उसके लिए असुरक्षित था।”
- **Dalit residents could only visit on specific days and within fixed hours and these restrictions were even displayed on the clinic board.** दलित निवासी केवल निर्धारित दिनों और निश्चित समय पर ही जा सकते थे और ये प्रतिबंध क्लिनिक के बोर्ड पर भी प्रदर्शित थे।
- “These timings were set so that upper-caste residents would not be offended,” she says. वह कहती हैं, “ये समय इसलिए निर्धारित किए गए थे ताकि उच्च जाति के निवासी आहत न हों।”
- “If you had an emergency outside that window, you simply could not go.” “यदि उस समय सीमा के बाहर कोई आपात स्थिति होती, तो आप जा ही नहीं सकते थे।”
- **For those needing urgent care — particularly pregnant women or those with acute conditions — this effectively placed healthcare out of reach.** जिन्हें आपातकालीन चिकित्सा की आवश्यकता थी — विशेषकर गर्भवती महिलाएँ या गंभीर स्थिति वाले लोग — उनके लिए स्वास्थ्य सेवा व्यावहारिक रूप से पहुंच से बाहर हो जाती थी।
- The **Sachar Committee Report** noted that many Muslim communities live in segregated, under-serviced localities. सचचर समिति रिपोर्ट ने उल्लेख किया कि कई मुस्लिम समुदाय विभाजित और कम सेवाओं वाले क्षेत्रों में रहते हैं।
- Laws such as the **Gujarat Disturbed Areas Act** restrict property transactions in notified areas. गुजरात डिस्टर्ब्ड एरियाज एक्ट जैसे कानून अधिसूचित क्षेत्रों में संपत्ति लेन-देन को प्रतिबंधित करते हैं।
- Together, these measures risk formalising existing divides, contributing to the **ghettoisation of minority communities**, a trend that accelerated over the past decade, as noted by many researchers. इन उपायों से मौजूदा विभाजनों को औपचारिक रूप देने का खतरा है, जिससे अल्पसंख्यक समुदायों का घेदोकरण बढ़ता है, जो पिछले दशक में तेज हुआ है, जैसा कि कई शोधकर्ताओं ने बताया है।



GS Paper II: International Relations		01 May 2026
TOPICS COVERED		
01MA	Israeli forces 'kidnap' Gaza flotilla crew in international waters इज़राइली बलों ने अंतरराष्ट्रीय जल में गाजा फ्लोटिला के चालक दल का 'अपहरण' किया	
01MA	Gulf within खाड़ी के भीतर अंतर्विरोध	
01MA	How is the next UN chief being chosen? अगले संयुक्त राष्ट्र प्रमुख का चयन कैसे किया जा रहा है?	
01MA	Russia rejects Tuareg rebels' call to withdraw its forces from Mali रूस ने माली से अपनी सेनाएं वापस बुलाने के तुआरेग विद्रोहियों के आह्वान को खारिज किया	

## Israeli forces 'kidnap' Gaza flotilla crew in international waters

GS II: IR  
Athens

Organisers of a Gaza-bound aid flotilla on Thursday said Israel's army had "kidnapped" 211 activists, including a Paris city councillor, in a raid in international waters off Greece.

Helene Coron, a spokeswoman for the Global Sumud France, told an online news conference the operation had taken place near the Greek island of Crete, at an "unprecedented" distance from the Gaza coast. Yasmine Scola, an activist on board the flotilla, said her colleagues had been "kidnapped" by Israel.

Israel's Foreign Ministry had earlier put the number of those detained at 175.

Ms. Coron said those intercepted included Paris Communist local councillor Raphaëlle Primet and 10 more French nationals.

"We don't have the information for the other nationalities, but the boats were mixed in terms of nationality, so there were crew members from all 48 delegations," she said.

Rome, in a government statement, called for the immediate release of "all the unlawfully detained Italians".

The organisers of the latest flotilla of pro-Palestinian

activists seeking to break Israel's blockade on Gaza announced early on Thursday that their boats had been surrounded by Israeli military ships while off the coast of Crete.

"At the time of publishing this statement [06:30 am Paris time, 04:30 GMT], at least 22 of the flotilla's 58 boats have been stormed by Israeli forces in complete violation of international law," the Global Sumud Flotilla said in a statement. According to an AFP verification, based on tracking data from the organisers, the boats were intercepted in the Greek exclusive economic zone.

### 30 more boats en route

Around 30 boats from the flotilla are still en route, most now in Greek territorial waters south of Crete, according to the same source. Ms. Coron said the operation had taken place over 1,000 km from Gaza. The longest such operation to date had been 185 km in June 2025, she said.

Israel's Foreign Ministry dismissed the initiative as a "condom flotilla" after pro-phylactics were found in a previous convoy, adding that more than 20 of the ships were "now making their way peacefully to Israel".

### 01Ma. Israeli forces 'kidnap' Gaza flotilla crew in international waters

इज़राइली बलों ने अंतरराष्ट्रीय जल में गाजा फ्लोटिला के चालक दल का 'अपहरण' किया

- Israeli forces 'kidnap' Gaza flotilla crew in international waters.

इज़राइली बलों ने अंतरराष्ट्रीय जल में गाजा फ्लोटिला के चालक दल का 'अपहरण' किया।

- Organisers of a Gazabound aid flotilla on Thursday said Israel's army had "kidnapped" 211 activists, including a Paris city councillor, in a raid in international waters off Greece.

गाजा जाने वाली सहायता फ्लोटिला के आयोजकों ने गुरुवार को कहा कि इज़राइल की सेना ने ग्रीस के पास अंतरराष्ट्रीय जल में छापेमारी कर 211 कार्यकर्ताओं, जिनमें एक पेरिस नगर पार्षद भी शामिल हैं, का "अपहरण" किया।

- The organisers of the latest flotilla of pro-Palestinian activists seeking to break Israel's blockade on Gaza announced early on Thursday that their boats had been surrounded by Israeli military ships while off the coast of Crete.

गाजा पर इज़राइल की नाकाबंदी तोड़ने की कोशिश कर रहे फिलिस्तीन समर्थक कार्यकर्ताओं के फ्लोटिला आयोजकों ने गुरुवार सुबह कहा कि उनकी नावों को क्रेट के तट के पास इज़राइली सैन्य जहाजों ने घेर लिया।

- "At the time of publishing this statement [06:30 am Paris time, 04:30 GMT], at least 22 of the flotilla's 58 boats have been stormed by Israeli forces in complete violation of international law," the Global Sumud Flotilla said in a statement.

ग्लोबल सुमुद फ्लोटिला ने बयान में कहा, "इस बयान के प्रकाशन के समय [सुबह 06:30 पेरिस समय, 04:30 GMT], फ्लोटिला की 58 में से कम से कम 22 नावों पर इज़राइली बलों ने अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून का पूर्ण उल्लंघन करते हुए हमला किया है।"



MQB  
GS II: IR

## Gulf within

Differences with Saudi Arabia and Iran's attacks led to the UAE's exit from OPEC

The UAE has withdrawn from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), a cartel that it joined in 1967, and OPEC+. It was OPEC's fourth-largest producer (3.12 million barrels per day) and its third-largest exporter (2.88 mbd) in 2025, behind Saudi Arabia and Iraq. The Emiratis clearly sought to free themselves of production constraints set largely by the cartel's dominant producer, Saudi Arabia. With significant spare capacity, the Emiratis believe that they are better off with the autonomy to ramp up exports, a capability now constrained by the de facto closure of the Strait of Hormuz, the largest disruption to oil supply in history, following U.S.-Israel attacks on Iran. Brent crude prices barely budged on the announcement, revealing how heavily the Strait crisis weighs on the market. But once the UAE weathers this crisis, whether through the Strait's reopening, or by routing more crude through a pipeline bypassing Hormuz, analysts estimate that it could lift production by roughly a million barrels a day. While Saudi Arabia, OPEC's bellwether, has remained chary of over-supply and sought to keep prices high, the UAE has long pushed for higher production for revenues that it intends to funnel into AI infrastructure and other diversification projects.

Unsaid in the UAE's move is also its frustration with what it sees as a lack of cartel-wide coordination in responding to Iran's missile and drone attacks on Gulf oil and military facilities; Iran is also an OPEC member. The Emiratis have also differed sharply with the Saudis on external interventions: in Yemen and Sudan. The UAE also seeks closer ties with Israel than most Gulf states, which remain uncomfortable with any thaw given Israel's genocidal actions in Gaza and its attacks on Iran and Lebanon. The U.S., a non-OPEC member, and the world's largest oil producer at 13.6 mbd, has long viewed the cartel's price-setting unfavourably, and President Donald Trump has repeatedly pressed it to pump more. The UAE perhaps calculates that aligning with Washington will yield benefits for its production and pipeline ambitions, though Mr. Trump's transactional and mercurial foreign policy offers little guarantee. The UAE's exit also reflects a structural issue: OPEC's share of global crude dropped to 36.7% in 2025, and with Hormuz shut, pricing power has shifted to American producers in the short term. OPEC will continue, but with a reduced ability to set prices. For net oil-importing countries such as India, however, the immediate threat is not the cartel's unravelling but the "double blockade" in the Strait of Hormuz and the fragile Iran-U.S. ceasefire. Unless a new geopolitical détente emerges between Iran and the Gulf states, volatility will persist, threatening energy security regardless of what unfolds within OPEC.

### 01Ma. Gulf within

#### खाड़ी के भीतर अंतर्विरोध

- The UAE has withdrawn from the **Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)**, a cartel that it joined in 1967, and **OPEC+**.

संयुक्त अरब अमीरात (UAE) ने पेट्रोलियम निर्यातक देशों का संगठन

(OPEC), जिसमें वह 1967 में शामिल हुआ था, तथा OPEC+ से स्वयं को अलग कर लिया है।

- It was OPEC's fourth-largest producer (**3.12 million barrels per day**) and its third-largest exporter (**2.88 mbd**) in 2025, behind **Saudi Arabia and Iraq**.

यह 2025 में OPEC का चौथा सबसे बड़ा उत्पादक (**3.12 मिलियन बैरल प्रतिदिन**) और तीसरा सबसे बड़ा निर्यातक (**2.88 मिलियन बैरल प्रतिदिन**) था, जो सऊदी अरब और इराक के बाद आता है।

- With significant **spare capacity**, the Emiratis believe that they are better off with the autonomy to ramp up exports, a capability now constrained by the de facto closure of the **Strait of Hormuz**, the largest disruption to oil supply in history, following U.S.-Israel attacks on Iran.

महत्वपूर्ण अतिरिक्त क्षमता के साथ, अमीराती मानते हैं कि निर्यात बढ़ाने की स्वतंत्रता उनके लिए अधिक लाभकारी है, लेकिन यह क्षमता अब **होर्मुज**

**जलडमरूमध्य** के वास्तविक बंद होने से बाधित है, जो अमेरिका-इजराइल द्वारा ईरान पर हमलों के बाद तेल आपूर्ति में इतिहास की सबसे बड़ी बाधा बन गया है।

- While Saudi Arabia, OPEC's bellwether, has remained chary of over-supply and sought to keep prices high, the UAE has long pushed for higher production for revenues that it intends to funnel into **AI infrastructure and other diversification projects**.

जहाँ सऊदी अरब, जो OPEC का प्रमुख संकेतक है, अधिक आपूर्ति से बचते हुए कीमतों को ऊँचा बनाए रखना चाहता है, वहीं यूईए लंबे समय से अधिक उत्पादन के पक्ष में रहा है ताकि वह आय को **एआई अवसंरचना** और अन्य विविधीकरण परियोजनाओं में निवेश कर सके।

- The Emiratis have also differed sharply with the Saudis on external interventions: in **Yemen and Sudan**.

अमीरातियों का सऊदियों के साथ बाहरी हस्तक्षेपों—**यमन और सूडान**—को लेकर भी तीखा मतभेद रहा है।

- The UAE also seeks closer ties with **Israel** than most Gulf states, which remain uncomfortable with any thaw given Israel's genocidal actions in **Gaza** and its attacks on **Iran and Lebanon**.

यूईए अधिकांश खाड़ी देशों की तुलना में **इजराइल** के साथ अधिक निकट संबंध चाहता है, जबकि अन्य देश **गाज़ा** में इजराइल की कार्रवाइयों तथा **ईरान और**

**लेबनान** पर हमलों के कारण किसी भी नरमी से असहज हैं।

- The **U.S.**, a non-OPEC member, and the world's largest oil producer at **13.6 mbd**, has long viewed the cartel's price-setting unfavourably, and President **Donald Trump** has repeatedly pressed it to pump more.

संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका, जो OPEC का सदस्य नहीं है और **13.6 मिलियन बैरल प्रतिदिन** के साथ दुनिया का सबसे बड़ा तेल उत्पादक है, लंबे समय से कार्टेल की मूल्य निर्धारण प्रणाली को नापसंद करता रहा है, और राष्ट्रपति **डोनाल्ड ट्रंप** बार-बार इसे अधिक उत्पादन के लिए दबाव डालते रहे हैं।

- The UAE perhaps calculates that aligning with Washington will yield benefits for its production and pipeline ambitions, though Mr. Trump's transactional and mercurial foreign policy



offers little guarantee.

यूआई संभवतः यह मानता है कि वाशिंगटन के साथ तालमेल उसके उत्पादन और पाइपलाइन महत्वाकांक्षाओं के लिए लाभकारी होगा, हालांकि ट्रंप की लेन-देन आधारित और अनिश्चित विदेश नीति कोई ठोस गारंटी नहीं देती।

- The UAE's exit also reflects a structural issue: OPEC's share of global crude dropped to **36.7% in 2025**, and with Hormuz shut, pricing power has shifted to **American producers in the short term**.

यूआई का बाहर होना एक संरचनात्मक समस्या को भी दर्शाता है: 2025 में वैश्विक कच्चे तेल में OPEC की हिस्सेदारी घटकर **36.7%** रह गई, और होर्मुज के बंद होने से अल्पकाल में मूल्य निर्धारण की शक्ति **अमेरिकी उत्पादकों** के पास चली गई है।

## How is the next UN chief being chosen?

Why is the role of Secretary-General important? Who are the candidates? What factors shape the choice? Why does this election matter now? What are the candidates' campaign priorities? What happens next?

### EXPLAINER

Raja Karthikeya

#### The story so far:

The election of the next UN Secretary-General is underway. On April 21-22, four candidates – two women and two men – pitched their records of public service and leadership to the UN General Assembly in “informal, interactive dialogues”.

#### Why is the role of Secretary-General important?

The UN Charter defines the Secretary-General as the UN's Chief Administrative Officer, who oversees the work of the UN Secretariat and fulfils “any other functions and duties entrusted” to them by the organisation's principal organs, including the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the Economic and Social Council. The Secretary-General also has the mandate to bring to the Security Council's attention any issue that threatens global peace and security.

Where needed, the Secretary-General has the authority to appoint “Personal Envoys” (as Antonio Guterres has now done for the current West Asia conflict). Often described as the world's “chief diplomat,” the Secretary-General is the face and voice of the UN, speaking as the world's conscience on issues ranging from the arms race in space and climate change to persistent inequality that hampers economic growth.

#### How is the Secretary-General elected?

The UN Charter states that the Secretary-General is appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council. This means that the Permanent Members of the Security Council – China, France, Russia, the U.K., and the U.S. – have a significant say in who gets elected.

#### What considerations play a role?

While the term of a Secretary-General is



Often described as the world's “chief diplomat,” the Secretary-General is the voice of the UN. REUTERS

technically “discretionary,” incumbents have, since 1981, voluntarily limited themselves to two terms. By custom, the post rotates among five regions of the world: Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean. This is the turn of the latter. Within the region, there are dynamics at play, with Spanish-speaking Latin American countries and English-speaking Caribbean nations supporting different candidates.

#### Who are the candidates?

The four candidates now officially in the race are: Michelle Bachelet, former President of Chile and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; Macky Sall, former President of Senegal; Rafael Grossi, Head of the International Atomic Energy Agency; and Rebecca Grynspan, Head of the UN Conference on Trade and Development.

#### Why is this election crucial?

Eighty years after its founding, the UN is facing a deep financial and political crisis. The Secretariat relies on mandatory “assessed contributions” collected from member states. Still, non-payment, partial payment, and delay in payment of dues by

leading contributors have triggered an unprecedented financial situation.

The Security Council is paralysed by acrimony and persistent vetoes by the permanent members. The UN is also struggling to mobilise funds and troops for missions in places such as Haiti, and with host country relations in cases such as in Mali, where the UN mission was forced to withdraw.

Over the past decade, the UN played a key role in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, advancing climate action through the Paris Agreement, and promoting sustainable development via the 2030 Agenda. However, recent conflicts in Gaza, Lebanon, Sudan, Ukraine, and Iran have raised questions about its ability to prevent war – a central idea of the UN Charter. There are increasing calls for the UN to “return to basics” by focusing more on conflict resolution. The Sustainable Development Goals are now universal markers of developmental progress but there is rising concern that only 18% of the targets are on track to be met by 2030. Meanwhile, the humanitarian system is under severe strain due to multiple conflicts, intensifying disasters, and pressures on international humanitarian law. The next

Secretary-General will have the unenviable task of not just administering, but rejuvenating the organisation.

#### What are the candidates' campaign priorities?

During their interactions with the General Assembly, Ms. Bachelet, Ms. Grynsan, and Mr. Sall all emphasised preventive diplomacy – the UN term for preventing conflicts through adroit behind-the-scenes parley with the stakeholders to the conflict. However, their approaches differ. Ms. Bachelet prioritised field presence, while Ms. Grynsan focused on merging the UN's work in the prevention of conflict with its work on human rights. Ms. Grynsan was arguably the most vocal on UN reform, proposing restructuring the Secretary-General's office within the first 100 days if elected. Among areas for priority action, Ms. Bachelet highlighted climate, Mr. Sall highlighted migration, and Mr. Grossi highlighted UN-World Bank relations. Ms. Grynsan stressed the need to protect least-developed nations from funding cuts.

All candidates committed to gender parity, while Ms. Bachelet emphasised improving geographic diversity within the UN workforce, a longstanding demand of developing countries. On the stasis in the Security Council, Ms. Grynsan and Mr. Sall said they would publicly call out permanent members of the council who violate international law, while Mr. Grossi promised to uphold the UN Charter. Ms. Bachelet said she will use the Secretary-General's office to build political viability for Security Council reform.

#### What happens next?

In the next phase, the Security Council will hold closed-door deliberations and straw polls before recommending a candidate to the General Assembly around October. Once the latter confirms the choice through a simple majority vote, the new Secretary-General will take office on January 1, 2027. (Raja Karthikeya is a former international civil servant)

### THE GIST

The UN is facing a deep financial and political crisis, with Security Council paralysis, funding shortfalls, and rising global conflicts.

The next Secretary-General will have the task of rejuvenating the organisation, focusing on conflict prevention, reform, and advancing sustainable development goals.

### 01Ma. How is the next UN chief being chosen?

#### अगले संयुक्त राष्ट्र प्रमुख का चयन कैसे किया जा रहा है?

- The election of the next **UN Secretary-General** is underway. अगले संयुक्त राष्ट्र महासचिव का चुनाव जारी है।
- The **UN Charter** defines the Secretary-General as the UN's Chief Administrative Officer, who oversees the work of the **UN Secretariat** and fulfils “any other functions and duties entrusted” to them by the organisation's principal organs, including the **General Assembly**, the **Security Council**, and the **Economic and Social Council**.



संयुक्त राष्ट्र चार्टर महासचिव को संयुक्त राष्ट्र का मुख्य प्रशासनिक अधिकारी परिभाषित करता है, जो संयुक्त राष्ट्र सचिवालय के कार्यों की देखरेख करता है और संगठन के प्रमुख अंगों — महासभा, सुरक्षा परिषद, तथा आर्थिक और सामाजिक परिषद — द्वारा सौंपे गए “अन्य कार्यों और कर्तव्यों” का निर्वहन करता है।

- The **Secretary-General** also has the mandate to bring to the **Security Council's** attention any issue that threatens global peace and security.

महासचिव के पास यह अधिकार भी है कि वे वैश्विक शांति और सुरक्षा को खतरे में डालने वाले किसी भी मुद्दे को सुरक्षा परिषद के समक्ष प्रस्तुत करें।

- Where needed, the **Secretary-General** has the authority to appoint “**Personal Envoys**” (as **Antonio Guterres** has now done for the current West Asia conflict).

जहाँ आवश्यक हो, महासचिव को “व्यक्तिगत दूत” नियुक्त करने का अधिकार है (जैसा कि एंटोनियो गुटेरेस ने वर्तमान पश्चिम एशिया संघर्ष के लिए किया है)।

- The **UN Charter** states that the **Secretary-General** is appointed by the **General Assembly** on the recommendation of the **Security Council**.

संयुक्त राष्ट्र चार्टर के अनुसार, महासचिव की नियुक्ति महासभा द्वारा सुरक्षा परिषद की सिफारिश पर की जाती है।

- This means that the **Permanent Members** of the **Security Council** — China, France, Russia, the U.K., and the U.S. — have a significant say in who gets elected.

इसका अर्थ है कि सुरक्षा परिषद के स्थायी सदस्य — चीन, फ्रांस, रूस, यूनाइटेड किंगडम और संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका — के पास चुनाव में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका होती है।

#### What considerations play a role? / किन कारकों की भूमिका होती है?

- While the term of a **Secretary-General** is technically “discretionary,” incumbents have, since 1981, voluntarily limited themselves to two terms.

यद्यपि महासचिव का कार्यकाल तकनीकी रूप से “विवेकाधीन” होता है, परंतु 1981 से पदधारियों ने स्वयं को दो कार्यकाल तक सीमित किया है।

- By custom, the post rotates among five regions of the world: Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Western Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

परंपरा के अनुसार, यह पद विश्व के पाँच क्षेत्रों — अफ्रीका, एशिया, पूर्वी यूरोप, पश्चिमी यूरोप, तथा लैटिन अमेरिका और कैरेबियन — के बीच घूमता है।

- This is the turn of the latter.

इस बार यह अवसर अंतिम क्षेत्र का है।

- Within the region, there are dynamics at play, with Spanish-speaking Latin American countries and English-speaking Caribbean nations supporting different candidates.

क्षेत्र के भीतर भी गतिशीलताएँ हैं, जहाँ स्पेनिश-भाषी लैटिन अमेरिकी देश और अंग्रेजी-भाषी कैरेबियाई राष्ट्र अलग-अलग उम्मीदवारों का समर्थन कर रहे हैं।

#### Who are the candidates? / उम्मीदवार कौन हैं?

- The four candidates now officially in the race are: **Michelle Bachelet**, former President of Chile and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; **Macky Sall**, former President of Senegal; **Rafael Grossi**, Head of the **International Atomic Energy Agency**; and **Rebecca Grynszpan**, Head of the **UN Conference on Trade and Development**.

इस दौड़ में आधिकारिक रूप से चार उम्मीदवार हैं: **मिशेल बाचेलेट**, चिली की पूर्व राष्ट्रपति और संयुक्त राष्ट्र मानवाधिकार उच्चायुक्त; **मैकी सॉल**, सेनेगल के पूर्व राष्ट्रपति; **राफेल ग़ोसी**, अंतर्राष्ट्रीय परमाणु ऊर्जा एजेंसी के प्रमुख; तथा **रेबेका ग्रिन्सपैन**, संयुक्त राष्ट्र व्यापार और विकास सम्मेलन की प्रमुख।



## Why is this election crucial? / यह चुनाव क्यों महत्वपूर्ण है?

- Eighty years after its founding, the **UN** is facing a deep financial and political crisis. स्थापना के अस्सी वर्ष बाद, **संयुक्त राष्ट्र** एक गहरे वित्तीय और राजनीतिक संकट का सामना कर रहा है।
- The **Secretariat relies on mandatory "assessed contributions" collected from member states.** सचिवालय सदस्य देशों से एकत्र किए जाने वाले अनिवार्य **"आकलित योगदान"** पर निर्भर करता है।
- Still, **non-payment, partial payment, and delay in payment of dues by leading contributors have triggered an unprecedented financial situation.** फिर भी, प्रमुख योगदानकर्ताओं द्वारा भुगतान न करना, आंशिक भुगतान, और देरी से भुगतान ने अभूतपूर्व वित्तीय स्थिति उत्पन्न कर दी है।
- The **Security Council** is paralysed by acrimony and persistent vetoes by the permanent members. **सुरक्षा परिषद** स्थायी सदस्यों के मतभेद और लगातार वीटो के कारण निष्क्रिय हो गई है।
- The **UN** is also struggling to mobilise funds and troops for missions in places such as **Haiti**, and with host country relations in cases such as in **Mali**, where the UN mission was forced to withdraw. संयुक्त राष्ट्र को **हैती** जैसे स्थानों पर मिशनों के लिए धन और सैनिक जुटाने में कठिनाई हो रही है, तथा **माली** जैसे मामलों में मेज़बान देश के साथ संबंधों में भी समस्याएँ हैं, जहाँ संयुक्त राष्ट्र मिशन को वापस लेना पड़ा।

## Over the past decade / पिछले दशक में

- Over the past decade, the **UN** played a key role in responding to the **COVID-19 pandemic**, advancing climate action through the **Paris Agreement**, and promoting sustainable development via the **2030 Agenda**. पिछले दशक में, **संयुक्त राष्ट्र (UN)** ने **COVID-19 महामारी** से निपटने, **पेरिस समझौते** के माध्यम से जलवायु कार्रवाई को आगे बढ़ाने, तथा **2030 एजेंडा** के माध्यम से सतत विकास को प्रोत्साहित करने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई।
- However, recent conflicts in **Gaza, Lebanon, Sudan, Ukraine**, and **Iran** have raised questions about its ability to prevent war — a central idea of the **UN Charter**. हालाँकि, **गाज़ा, लेबनान, सूडान, यूक्रेन, और ईरान** में हालिया संघर्षों ने युद्ध को रोकने की इसकी क्षमता पर प्रश्न उठाए हैं — जो **संयुक्त राष्ट्र चार्टर** का एक प्रमुख उद्देश्य है।
- There are increasing calls for the UN to **"return to basics"** by focusing more on conflict resolution. संयुक्त राष्ट्र से **"मूलभूत कार्यों पर लौटने"** और संघर्ष समाधान पर अधिक ध्यान केंद्रित करने की माँग बढ़ रही है।
- The **Sustainable Development Goals** are now universal markers of developmental progress but there is rising concern that only 18% of the targets are on track to be met by 2030. **सतत विकास लक्ष्य (SDGs)** अब विकासात्मक प्रगति के सार्वभौमिक संकेतक बन चुके हैं, लेकिन यह चिंता बढ़ रही है कि 2030 तक केवल 18% लक्ष्य ही पूरे हो पाएंगे।
- Meanwhile, the **humanitarian system** is under severe strain due to multiple conflicts, intensifying disasters, and pressures on **international humanitarian law**. इस बीच, अनेक संघर्षों, बढ़ती आपदाओं और **अंतरराष्ट्रीय मानवीय कानून** पर दबाव के कारण **मानवीय प्रणाली** गंभीर तनाव में है।
- The next **Secretary-General** will have the unenviable task of not just administering, but **rejuvenating the organisation**. अगले **महासचिव** के सामने केवल प्रशासन करने ही नहीं, बल्कि संगठन को पुनर्जीवित करने का कठिन कार्य होगा।



## What are the candidates' campaign priorities? / उम्मीदवारों की प्रमुख प्राथमिकताएँ क्या हैं?

- During their interactions with the **General Assembly**, Ms. **Bachelet**, Ms. **Grynspan**, and Mr. **Sall** all emphasised **preventive diplomacy** — the UN term for preventing conflicts through **adroit behind-the-scenes parley with the stakeholders to the conflict**.  
महासभा के साथ अपनी बातचीत के दौरान, सुश्री **बाचेलेट**, सुश्री **ग्रिन्सपैन**, और श्री **सॉल** ने **निवारक कूटनीति** पर बल दिया — यह संयुक्त राष्ट्र का वह शब्द है जो पर्दे के पीछे कुशल वार्ताओं के माध्यम से संघर्षों को रोकने को दर्शाता है।
- Ms. **Bachelet** prioritised **elder presence**, while Ms. **Grynspan** focused on merging the UN's work in the prevention of conflict with its work on **human rights**.  
सुश्री **बाचेलेट** ने क्षेत्रीय उपस्थिति को प्राथमिकता दी, जबकि सुश्री **ग्रिन्सपैन** ने संघर्ष-निवारण कार्यों को **मानवाधिकार** कार्यों के साथ जोड़ने पर ध्यान केंद्रित किया।
- Ms. **Grynspan** was arguably the most vocal on **UN reform**, proposing restructuring the **Secretary-General's office** within the **first 100 days** if elected.  
सुश्री **ग्रिन्सपैन** संभवतः **संयुक्त राष्ट्र सुधार** के मुद्दे पर सबसे मुखर थीं, और उन्होंने चुने जाने पर पहले 100 दिनों में **महासचिव कार्यालय** के पुनर्गठन का प्रस्ताव दिया।
- Among areas for priority action, Ms. **Bachelet** highlighted **climate**, Mr. **Sall** highlighted **migration**, and Mr. **Grossi** highlighted **UN-World Bank relations**.  
प्राथमिक कार्रवाई के क्षेत्रों में, सुश्री **बाचेलेट** ने **जलवायु**, श्री **सॉल** ने **प्रवास**, और श्री **ग्रोसी** ने **संयुक्त राष्ट्र-विश्व बैंक संबंधों** पर जोर दिया।
- Ms. **Grynspan** stressed the need to protect **least-developed nations** from funding cuts.  
सुश्री **ग्रिन्सपैन** ने **अल्पविकसित देशों** को वित्तीय कटौती से बचाने की आवश्यकता पर बल दिया।
- All candidates committed to **gender parity**, while Ms. **Bachelet** emphasised improving **geographic diversity** within the UN workforce, a longstanding demand of developing countries.  
सभी उम्मीदवारों ने **लैंगिक समानता** के प्रति प्रतिबद्धता जताई, जबकि सुश्री **बाचेलेट** ने संयुक्त राष्ट्र कार्यबल में **भौगोलिक विविधता** बढ़ाने पर जोर दिया, जो विकासशील देशों की लंबे समय से मांग रही है।
- On the stasis in the **Security Council**, Ms. **Grynspan** and Mr. **Sall** said they would publicly call out permanent members of the council who violate **international law**, while Mr. **Grossi** promised to uphold the **UN Charter**.  
सुरक्षा परिषद में गतिरोध पर, सुश्री **ग्रिन्सपैन** और श्री **सॉल** ने कहा कि वे **अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून** का उल्लंघन करने वाले स्थायी सदस्यों को सार्वजनिक रूप से चिन्हित करेंगे, जबकि श्री **ग्रोसी** ने **संयुक्त राष्ट्र चार्टर** का पालन सुनिश्चित करने का वादा किया।
- Ms. **Bachelet** said she will use the **Secretary-General's office** to build political viability for **Security Council reform**.  
सुश्री **बाचेलेट** ने कहा कि वे **महासचिव कार्यालय** का उपयोग **सुरक्षा परिषद सुधार** के लिए राजनीतिक समर्थन बनाने में करेंगी।

## What happens next? / आगे क्या होगा?

- In the next phase, the **Security Council** will hold closed-door deliberations and **straw polls** before recommending a candidate to the **General Assembly** around October.  
अगले चरण में, **सुरक्षा परिषद** बंद कमरे में विचार-विमर्श और **स्ट्रॉ पोल** आयोजित करेगी, जिसके बाद अक्टूबर के आसपास एक उम्मीदवार की सिफारिश **महासभा** को करेगी।
- Once the latter confirms the choice through a simple majority vote, the new **Secretary-General** will take office on January 1, 2027.  
जब **महासभा** साधारण बहुमत से चयन की पुष्टि कर देगी, तब नया **महासचिव** 1 जनवरी 2027 को पदभार ग्रहण करेगा।



**MOSCOW**

**Russia rejects Tuareg rebels' call to withdraw its forces from Mali**



**GS II: IR**  
AFP  
Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Thursday said Russian forces would stay in Mali, rejecting a call from Tuareg rebels for Moscow to withdraw after separatists and jihadists launched the largest attacks against the military junta's rule in 15 years. Russia is a crucial military backer to the Malian government. AFP

**01Ma. Russia rejects Tuareg rebels' call to withdraw its forces from Mali**

**रूस ने माली से अपनी सेनाएं वापस बुलाने के तुआरेग विद्रोहियों के आह्वान को खारिज किया**

- Russia rejects Tuareg rebels' call to withdraw its forces from Mali.  
रूस ने तुआरेग विद्रोहियों के माली से अपनी सेनाएं वापस बुलाने के आह्वान को खारिज किया।

- Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Thursday said Russian forces would stay in Mali, rejecting a call from Tuareg rebels for Moscow to withdraw after separatists and jihadists launched the largest attacks against the military junta's rule in 15 years.

**क्रेमलिन प्रवक्ता दिमित्री पेस्कोव ने गुरुवार को कहा कि रूसी सेनाएं माली**

**में बनी रहेंगी, और उन्होंने तुआरेग विद्रोहियों की उस मांग को खारिज किया जिसमें माँस्को से वापसी की बात कही गई थी, यह उस समय हुआ जब अलगाववादियों और जिहादियों ने पिछले 15 वर्षों में सैन्य जुंटा शासन के खिलाफ सबसे बड़े हमले किए।**

- **Russia is a crucial military backer to the Malian government.**

**रूस माली सरकार का एक महत्वपूर्ण सैन्य समर्थक है।**

<b>GS Paper III: Economy</b>		<b>01 May 2026</b>
<b>TOPICS COVERED</b>		
<b>01MA</b>	<b>States with revenue deficits may face fiscal stress: Centre</b> राजस्व घाटे वाले राज्यों को राजकोषीय दबाव का सामना करना पड़ सकता है: केंद्र	
<b>01MA</b>	<b>On May Day, a workforce in India without a floor</b> मई दिवस पर भारत में एक ऐसा कार्यबल जिसके पास कोई आधार नहीं	
<b>01MA</b>	<b>India's sprint beyond the dairy red line to the Pacific</b> भारत का डेयरी 'रेड लाइन' से आगे प्रशांत क्षेत्र की ओर तेज़ कदम	
<b>01MA</b>	<b>Foreign investors dump ₹60,847 cr. in April, devaluing rupee</b> विदेशी निवेशकों ने अप्रैल में ₹60,847 करोड़ बेचे, रुपये का अवमूल्यन	
<b>01MA</b>	<b>DIPAM gives nod for NLC arm's listing; ₹4,000 cr. IPO in FY27</b> DIPAM ने NLC की इकाई की लिस्टिंग को मंजूरी दी; FY27 में ₹4,000 करोड़ का IPO	
<b>01MA</b>	<b>FDI easing for foreign firms with up to 10% Chinese stake to be notified soon under FEMA</b> 10% तक चीनी हिस्सेदारी वाली विदेशी कंपनियों के लिए FDI में ढील, जल्द FEMA के तहत अधिसूचित होगी	



## States with revenue deficits may face fiscal stress: Centre

GS III: Economy

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan  
NEW DELHI

The Union Finance Ministry has warned that States with revenue deficits and high debt burdens will find it harder to deal with fiscal shocks, including from the West Asia crisis, forcing them to either reprioritise expenditure away from productive areas, or approach the Centre for more funds at a time when it is trying to consolidate its own finances.

In its Monthly Economic Review for April, the Department of Economic Affairs in the Ministry said nine of the 18 large States analysed were in revenue deficit as per their own projections for 2026-27. Seven are projected to be revenue surplus, while one is

in revenue balance.

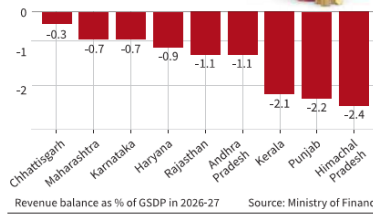
A revenue deficit is when expenditure on recurring items such as salaries, pensions, subsidies, and interest payments exceed the revenue earned from sources such as taxes and fees.

The States with projected revenue deficits as a percentage of their gross state domestic products (GSDP) are Himachal Pradesh (-2.4%), Punjab (-2.2%), Kerala (-2.1%), Andhra Pradesh (-1.1%), Rajasthan (-1.1%), Haryana (-0.9%), Karnataka (-0.7%), Maharashtra (-0.7%), and Chhattisgarh (-0.3%).

Tamil Nadu and West Bengal were excluded from the analysis as they have so far presented only interim budgets for 2026-27. "Revenue-deficit States

### In the red

Nine of the 18 large States analysed by the Ministry of Finance are in revenue deficit



Revenue balance as % of GSDP in 2026-27 Source: Ministry of Finance

are constrained by the debt servicing obligations and carry, on average, significantly higher outstanding liabilities than revenue-surplus States, and many of them spend more than 15% of their revenue receipts on interest pay-

ments," the report noted.

Of all the States analysed, Punjab has the highest projected ratio of interest payments to revenue receipts of 22.8%.

"States simultaneously running a revenue deficit and high outstanding lia-

bilities have fewer degrees of freedom to respond to fiscal shocks," the report said. "Specifically, they may have to resort to expenditure restructuring or may demand higher central transfers to meet the present unforeseen shocks."

On the other hand, the report highlighted the States that were doing fiscally well. The eight States with projected revenue surpluses as a percentage of their GSDPs are Odisha (3%), Jharkhand (2.5%), Uttar Pradesh (1.6%), Goa (1.3%), Gujarat (0.8%), Uttarakhand (0.6%), Telangana (0.3%), and Bihar (0.1%). "Notably, eight States which have budgeted revenue surpluses for 2026-27, save for Telangana, have their capital out-

lay as a percentage of State GDP higher than their projected fiscal deficit," the report said.

It highlighted the example of Odisha: while the State's 3.5% fiscal deficit is higher than the 3% norm, the fact that it is in revenue surplus and its capital outlay is 6.5% of GSDP "mark it as a case of deliberate investment rather than fiscal stress".

"States that are unable to maintain the golden rule of fiscal financing, that is, zero revenue deficit, will face increased stress as a result of the present crisis," the report said. "Stressed states with compressed fiscal space make demands on the Centre at precisely the moment that the Centre is attempting consolidation."

### 01Ma. States with revenue deficits may face fiscal stress: Centre

#### राजस्व घाटे वाले राज्यों को राजकोषीय दबाव का सामना करना पड़ सकता है: केंद्र

- The Union Finance Ministry has warned that **States with revenue deficits and high debt burdens** will find it harder to deal with fiscal shocks, including from the West Asia crisis, forcing them to either reprioritise expenditure away from productive areas, or approach the Centre for more funds at a time when it is trying to consolidate its own finances.

केंद्रीय वित्त मंत्रालय ने चेतावनी दी है कि राजस्व घाटा और अधिक ऋण बोझ वाले राज्यों को राजकोषीय

झटकों, जिनमें पश्चिम एशिया संकट भी शामिल है, से निपटना कठिन होगा, जिससे उन्हें या तो उत्पादक क्षेत्रों से खर्च हटाना पड़ेगा या अधिक धन के लिए केंद्र के पास जाना पड़ेगा, जब केंद्र स्वयं अपने वित्त को सुदृढ़ करने की कोशिश कर रहा है।

- In its Monthly Economic Review for April, the **Department of Economic Affairs in the Ministry** said **nine of the 18 large States analysed were in revenue deficit as per their own projections for 2026-27**.

अप्रैल के मासिक आर्थिक समीक्षा में मंत्रालय के आर्थिक मामलों के विभाग ने कहा कि विश्लेषण किए गए 18 बड़े राज्यों में से 9 अपने 2026-27 के अनुमान के अनुसार राजस्व घाटे में हैं।

- Seven are projected to be revenue surplus, while one is in revenue balance.**

सात राज्यों के राजस्व अधिशेष में रहने का अनुमान है, जबकि एक राज्य राजस्व संतुलन में है।

- A revenue deficit is when expenditure on recurring items such as salaries, pensions, subsidies, and interest payments exceed the revenue earned from sources such as taxes and fees.**

राजस्व घाटा तब होता है जब वेतन, पेंशन, सब्सिडी और ब्याज भुगतान जैसे आवर्ती खर्च, कर और शुल्क जैसे स्रोतों से अर्जित राजस्व से अधिक हो जाते हैं।

- The States with projected revenue deficits as a percentage of their gross state domestic products (GSDP) are Himachal Pradesh (-2.4%), Punjab (-2.2%), Kerala (-2.1%), Andhra Pradesh (-1.1%), Rajasthan (-1.1%), Haryana (-0.9%), Karnataka (-0.7%), Maharashtra (-0.7%), and Chhattisgarh (-0.3%).

अपने सकल राज्य घरेलू उत्पाद (GSDP) के प्रतिशत के रूप में अनुमानित राजस्व घाटा वाले राज्य हैं:

हिमाचल प्रदेश (-2.4%), पंजाब (-2.2%), केरल (-2.1%), आंध्र प्रदेश (-1.1%), राजस्थान (-1.1%), हरियाणा (-0.9%), कर्नाटक (-0.7%), महाराष्ट्र (-0.7%), और छत्तीसगढ़ (-0.3%)।



- Tamil Nadu and West Bengal were excluded from the analysis as they have so far presented only interim budgets for 2026-27.  
तमिलनाडु और पश्चिम बंगाल को विश्लेषण से बाहर रखा गया क्योंकि उन्होंने 2026-27 के लिए अभी तक केवल अंतरिम बजट प्रस्तुत किए हैं।
- “Revenue-deficit States are constrained by the debt servicing obligations and carry, on average, significantly higher outstanding liabilities than revenue-surplus States, and many of them spend more than 15% of their revenue receipts on interest payments,” the report noted.  
रिपोर्ट में कहा गया, “राजस्व घाटे वाले राज्य ऋण सेवा दायित्वों से बाधित होते हैं और औसतन राजस्व अधिशेष राज्यों की तुलना में अधिक बकाया देनदारियां रखते हैं, तथा उनमें से कई अपने राजस्व का 15% से अधिक ब्याज भुगतान पर खर्च करते हैं।”
- Of all the States analysed, Punjab has the highest projected ratio of interest payments to revenue receipts of 22.8%.  
विश्लेषित सभी राज्यों में पंजाब का ब्याज भुगतान से राजस्व प्राप्ति अनुपात सबसे अधिक 22.8% है।
- “States simultaneously running a revenue deficit and high outstanding liabilities have fewer degrees of freedom to respond to fiscal shocks,” the report said.  
रिपोर्ट में कहा गया, “जो राज्य एक साथ राजस्व घाटा और उच्च बकाया देनदारियां चला रहे हैं, उनके पास राजकोषीय झटकों का सामना करने के लिए कम विकल्प होते हैं।”
- “Specifically, they may have to resort to expenditure restructuring or may demand higher central transfers to meet the present unforeseen shocks.”  
“विशेष रूप से, उन्हें खर्च पुनर्गठन करना पड़ सकता है या वर्तमान अप्रत्याशित झटकों से निपटने के लिए अधिक केंद्रीय हस्तांतरण की मांग करनी पड़ सकती है।”
- On the other hand, the report highlighted the States that were doing fiscally well.  
दूसरी ओर, रिपोर्ट ने उन राज्यों को उजागर किया जो राजकोषीय रूप से मजबूत हैं।
- The eight States with projected revenue surpluses as a percentage of their GSDPs are Odisha (3%), Jharkhand (2.5%), Uttar Pradesh (1.6%), Goa (1.3%), Gujarat (0.8%), Uttarakhand (0.6%), Telangana (0.3%), and Bihar (0.1%).  
अपने GSDP के प्रतिशत के रूप में अनुमानित राजस्व अधिशेष वाले आठ राज्य हैं: ओडिशा (3%), झारखंड (2.5%), उत्तर प्रदेश (1.6%), गोवा (1.3%), गुजरात (0.8%), उत्तराखंड (0.6%), तेलंगाना (0.3%), और बिहार (0.1%)।
- It highlighted the example of Odisha: while the State's 3.5% fiscal deficit is higher than the 3% norm, the fact that it is in revenue surplus and its capital outlay is 6.5% of GSDP “mark it as a case of deliberate investment rather than fiscal stress”.  
इसने ओडिशा का उदाहरण दिया: जहां राज्य का 3.5% राजकोषीय घाटा 3% मानक से अधिक है, लेकिन उसका राजस्व अधिशेष और 6.5% GSDP का पूंजीगत व्यय इसे “राजकोषीय दबाव के बजाय योजनाबद्ध निवेश का मामला” बनाता है।
- “States that are unable to maintain the golden rule of fiscal financing, that is, zero revenue deficit, will face increased stress as a result of the present crisis,” the report said.  
रिपोर्ट में कहा गया, “जो राज्य राजकोषीय वित्तपोषण के स्वर्ण नियम, यानी शून्य राजस्व घाटा, बनाए रखने में असमर्थ हैं, उन्हें वर्तमान संकट के कारण अधिक दबाव का सामना करना पड़ेगा।”
- “Stressed states with compressed fiscal space make demands on the Centre at precisely the moment that the Centre is attempting consolidation.”  
“राजकोषीय रूप से दबावग्रस्त राज्य, जिनके पास सीमित वित्तीय क्षमता है, ठीक उसी समय केंद्र से मांग करते हैं जब केंद्र वित्तीय समेकन की कोशिश कर रहा होता है।”



## On May Day, a workforce in India without a floor

SS III: Economy

MCB

**T**his year, May Day arrives not as a commemoration, but as a diagnosis. Within a single fortnight last month, two events clarified the state of Indian labour more sharply than any official review.

On April 10, thousands of garment workers in Noida's Phase 2 Hosiery Complex stepped out of nearly 300 factories and onto the streets, demanding a minimum monthly wage of ₹20,000. On April 14, a high-pressure steam tube ruptured at Vedanta's 1,200 MW Singhitari thermal plant in Chhattisgarh, killing 20 workers and injuring 15. One protest was about the price of labour; the other, about the price of being alive while performing it. Both answer the same question: what has India's labour reform actually produced?

The Noida strike began with a specific arithmetic grievance. On April 9, the Haryana government notified a 35% hike in minimum wages, raising unskilled monthly wages from ₹11,274 to ₹15,220, with effect from April 1, 2026. Across the border in Noida, unskilled workers were earning roughly ₹435 a day, compared to ₹585 in Haryana for identical work. Protesters at the Hosiery Complex – employees of different companies – assembled in B Block, blocked traffic, and refused to disperse without written assurances.

By April 13, the administration had deployed over 1,200 personnel, including the Provincial Armed Constabulary and Rapid Action Force; lathi charges and stone-pelting followed, and nearly 400 people were detained. Under pressure, the Uttar Pradesh government announced an interim 21% hike, setting wages at ₹13,690 for unskilled workers in Gautam Buddha Nagar and ₹16,868 for skilled workers. The workers rejected it; their demand remained ₹20,000.

### Between pay and survival

The gap between ₹16,868 and ₹20,000 is not a bargaining position. It is the difference between what a family pays for rent, gas, and school fees in the NCR and what the state is willing to concede as a dignified minimum.

Four days later, the furnace at Singhitari did its own counting. A preliminary report from the Chief Boiler Inspector, backed by the Forensic Science Laboratory in Sakti, Chhattisgarh, attributed the explosion to 'excessive fuel buildup inside the furnace', which produced pressure surges that displaced critical piping. The probe flagged "repeated negligence in equipment upkeep" by Vedanta and its contractor NGLS (NTPC GE Power Services Pvt. Ltd.). A first information report has been registered against Vedanta's Chairman Anil Agarwal, the plant manager, and others under Sections 106(i), 289 and 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

The dead were not Vedanta's own employees; they worked for a subcontractor. This, too, is a pattern.



Rejimon Kuttappan

A workers' rights expert

Chhattisgarh alone has recorded 296 industrial deaths over three years. Across India, the Directorate General of Factory Advice Service and Labour Institutes recorded 3,331 factory deaths between 2018 and 2020 – three a day – yet only 14 people were imprisoned under the Factories Act during the same period. The global union IndustriALL counted over 400 workplace fatalities in India in 2024, with the chemical sector alone accounting for 220. In July 2025, an explosion at Sigachi Industries in Telangana had killed 44 people, mostly migrant workers, at a plant that the State fire department found lacked basic fire alarms and heat sensors.

### A structural shift

These are not disconnected episodes. They are the operating conditions of an economy that, on November 21, 2025, formally adopted the four labour codes. In a single stroke, and without any transition period, the four codes – the Code on Wages, the Industrial Relations Code, the Social Security Code and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSHC) Code – replaced 29 central labour laws. The Indian Labour Conference, the country's apex tripartite forum, had not been convened since 2015.

The new regime raises the threshold for prior government permission for layoffs, retrenchment, and closure from 100 workers to 300 under the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, enabling firms below that size – an estimated majority of India's factory units – to retrench workers without administrative scrutiny. A peer-reviewed analysis in the National Library of Medicine archive notes that this merely restores the pre-1982 threshold, reversing an Emergency-era protection enacted after a wave of mass layoffs affected over half a million workers. The OSHWC Code, 2020, simultaneously raises the statutory definition of a 'factory' from 10 workers in a factory with power to 20, and from 20 workers in a factory without power to 40, lifting an entire tier of smaller workplaces – where India's textile, garment, metal, hosiery, and food-processing clusters are concentrated – out of mandatory safety oversight. Labour economists warn that this technical reclassification has a profound impact on worker coverage, since a majority of India's small manufacturing units employ fewer than 20 workers.

The inspection architecture has been similarly diluted. The OSHWC Code replaces unannounced inspections with an 'Inspector-cum-Facilitator' model, combined with randomised, web-based allocation through the Shram Suvidha portal and employer self-certification – a shift that, as the International Labour Organization's India Labour Inspection Profile notes, may contravene the requirement for independent, unannounced inspections under ILO Convention No. 81.

Procedural hurdles for collective action have also stiffened. Under the IR Code, no worker may

strike without 60 days' prior notice, flash strikes are prohibited outright, and strikes are barred during and for weeks after any conciliation or tribunal proceeding. "Mass casual leave" by more than 50% of a workforce is now deemed a strike. Trade unions argue that, in combination, these provisions make lawful industrial action virtually impossible to organise, completing the regime's pro-employer tilt.

A reform that raises statutory thresholds in almost every operative clause, is not rationalising protection. It is removing it. The enforcement chapters read more like a facilitation framework than a compliance regime.

Ten central trade unions, excluding the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), observed a "Black Day" on November 26, 2025, calling the codes a "deceptive fraud on the working class". Their objection was not sentimental. When the legal definition of a factory excludes the smallest and most dangerous workplaces; when inspectors announce their visits through a portal; when retrenchment requires no permission below 300 workers; and when strikes are bound by procedural tightropes, the predictable result is the Noida street and the Singhitari shop floor.

The wage stagnation that drove workers from Motherhood Sumi and Richa Global into a baton charge, and the deferred maintenance that caused a boiler tube to rupture, are not separate problems. They are two ends of the same system.

### Old laws, new realities

There is an honest public case for labour reform. The Factories Act of 1948 is older than most Indian States; the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1923 predates the Constitution. A regulatory architecture built for the industrial economy of late-colonial India – of jute mills, textile mills, and railway workshops – cannot plausibly govern a workforce that today includes gig workers, platform workers, and digital-media workers. No serious observer, and no Indian trade union, disputes that consolidation was overdue. The question is not whether the law should have changed; it is what it changed into.

Consolidation is not dilution, and simplification is not exemption.

On May Day, the test for any labour framework is modest: does it allow a worker to earn enough to live, and to live through the shift? In April 2026, the answer from Noida and Singhitari is the same. In Noida, police fired tear gas at factory workers protesting for a living wage as fuel-driven inflation outpaced wages. In Singhitari, a boiler tube burst at a Vedanta power plant on April 14, releasing 600°C steam onto workers eating lunch; 20 were killed, all contract workers employed through a business partner rather than as direct employees. Neither a wage that sustains life, nor a workplace that preserves it. A regime that cannot deliver the second while pricing out the first has not been rationalised. It has been rewritten against the very people it was meant to protect.

From Noida's streets to furnace rooms in Chhattisgarh, India's new labour regime delivers for employers – and for workers, what it long warned of

## 01Ma. On May Day, a workforce in India without a floor

### मई दिवस पर भारत में एक ऐसा कार्यबल जिसके पास कोई आधार नहीं

- On April 10, thousands of garment workers in Noida's Phase 2 Hosiery Complex stepped out of nearly 300 factories and onto the streets, demanding a minimum monthly wage of ₹20,000.

10 अप्रैल को, नोएडा के फेज 2 होजरी कॉम्प्लेक्स में हजारों परिधान श्रमिक लगभग 300 कारखानों से बाहर निकलकर सड़कों पर आए और ₹20,000 मासिक न्यूनतम वेतन की मांग की।

- On April 14, a high-pressure steam tube ruptured at Vedanta's 1,200 MW Singhitari thermal plant in Chhattisgarh, killing 20 workers and injuring 15.

14 अप्रैल को, छत्तीसगढ़ में वेदांता के 1,200 मेगावाट सिंहतराई तापीय संयंत्र में एक उच्च-दाब भाप पाइप फट गया, जिससे 20 श्रमिकों की मृत्यु हो गई और 15 घायल हो गए।

- One protest was about the price of labour; the other, about the price of being alive while performing it.

एक विरोध श्रम की कीमत के बारे में था; दूसरा, उस कार्य को करते हुए जीवित रहने की कीमत के बारे में।

- On April 9, the Haryana government notified a 35% hike in minimum wages, raising unskilled monthly wages from ₹11,274 to ₹15,220, with effect from April 1, 2026.

9 अप्रैल को, हरियाणा सरकार ने न्यूनतम वेतन में 35% वृद्धि की घोषणा की, जिससे अकुशल श्रमिकों का मासिक वेतन ₹11,274 से बढ़कर ₹15,220 हो गया, जो 1 अप्रैल 2026 से प्रभावी हुआ।



- Across the border in Noida, unskilled workers were earning roughly ₹435 a day, compared to ₹585 in Haryana for identical work.  
सीमा के पार नोएडा में, अकुशल श्रमिक लगभग ₹435 प्रतिदिन कमा रहे थे, जबकि हरियाणा में समान कार्य के लिए ₹585 मिल रहे थे।
- By April 13, the administration had deployed over **1,200 personnel**, including the **Provincial Armed Constabulary** and **Rapid Action Force**; lathi charges and stone-pelting followed, and nearly 400 people were detained.  
13 अप्रैल तक, प्रशासन ने **1,200 से अधिक कर्मियों** को तैनात किया, जिसमें **प्रांतीय सशस्त्र बल** और **रैपिड एक्शन फोर्स** शामिल थे; इसके बाद लाठीचार्ज और पत्थरबाजी हुई और लगभग 400 लोगों को हिरासत में लिया गया।
- Under pressure, the **Uttar Pradesh government** announced an interim 21% hike, setting wages at ₹13,690 for unskilled workers in **Gautam Buddh Nagar** and ₹16,868 for skilled workers.  
दबाव में, **उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार** ने अंतरिम 21% वृद्धि की घोषणा की, जिससे **गौतम बुद्ध नगर** में अकुशल श्रमिकों का वेतन ₹13,690 और कुशल श्रमिकों का ₹16,868 निर्धारित किया गया।
- **The workers rejected it; their demand remained ₹20,000.**  
श्रमिकों ने इसे अस्वीकार कर दिया; उनकी मांग ₹20,000 ही बनी रही।

#### Between pay and survival / वेतन और जीवन के बीच

- A preliminary report from the **Chief Boiler Inspector**, backed by the **Forensic Science Laboratory** in Sakti, Chhattisgarh, attributed the explosion to 'excessive fuel buildup inside the furnace', which produced pressure surges that displaced critical piping.  
छत्तीसगढ़ के सक्ती स्थित **फॉरेंसिक साइंस लैबोरेटरी** द्वारा समर्थित **मुख्य बॉयलर निरीक्षक** की प्रारंभिक रिपोर्ट ने विस्फोट का कारण 'भट्ठी के अंदर अत्यधिक ईंधन जमाव' बताया, जिससे दबाव बढ़ा और महत्वपूर्ण पाइपलाइनें विस्थापित हो गईं।
- The probe flagged "repeated negligence in equipment upkeep" by **Vedanta** and its contractor **NGSL (NTPC GE Power Services Pvt. Ltd.)**.  
जांच में वेदांता और उसके ठेकेदार **NGSL (NTPC GE Power Services Pvt. Ltd.)** द्वारा "उपकरण रखरखाव में बार-बार की गई लापरवाही" को उजागर किया गया।
- A first information report has been registered against Vedanta's Chairman **Anil Agarwal**, the plant manager, and others under **Sections 106(1), 289 and 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita**.  
**भारतीय न्याय संहिता** की धाराओं 106(1), 289 और 3(5) के तहत वेदांता के अध्यक्ष **अनिल अग्रवाल**, संयंत्र प्रबंधक और अन्य के खिलाफ प्राथमिकी दर्ज की गई है।
- Across India, the **Directorate General of Factory Advice Service and Labour Institutes** recorded 3,331 factory deaths between 2018 and 2020 — three a day — yet only 14 people were imprisoned under the **Factories Act** during the same period.  
पूरे भारत में, **डायरेक्टरेट जनरल ऑफ फैक्टरी एडवाइस सर्विस एंड लेबर इंस्टीट्यूट्स** ने 2018 से 2020 के बीच 3,331 फैक्टरी मौतें दर्ज कीं — प्रतिदिन तीन — फिर भी इसी अवधि में **फैक्टरी अधिनियम** के तहत केवल 14 लोगों को कारावास हुआ।
- The global union **IndustriALL** counted over 400 workplace fatalities in India in 2024, with the **chemical sector** alone accounting for 220.  
वैश्विक यूनियन **इंडस्ट्रीऑल** ने 2024 में भारत में 400 से अधिक कार्यस्थल मौतें दर्ज कीं, जिनमें से केवल **रासायनिक क्षेत्र** में 220 थीं।
- In July 2025, an explosion at **Sigachi Industries** in Telangana had killed 44 people, mostly migrant workers, at a plant that the State fire department found lacked basic **fire alarms and heat sensors**.  
जुलाई 2025 में, तेलंगाना की **सिगाची इंडस्ट्रीज** में हुए विस्फोट में 44 लोगों की मृत्यु हो गई, जिनमें अधिकांश



प्रवासी श्रमिक थे, और राज्य अग्निशमन विभाग ने पाया कि वहाँ बुनियादी फायर अलार्म और ताप सेंसर का अभाव था।

### A structural shift / एक संरचनात्मक परिवर्तन

- In a single stroke, and without any transition period, the **four codes — the Code on Wages, the Industrial Relations Code, the Social Security Code and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSHC) Code** — replaced 29 central labour laws. एक ही कदम में, और बिना किसी संक्रमण अवधि के, इन चार संहिताओं — वेतन संहिता, औद्योगिक संबंध संहिता, सामाजिक सुरक्षा संहिता और व्यावसायिक सुरक्षा, स्वास्थ्य एवं कार्य परिस्थितियाँ (OSHC) संहिता — ने 29 केंद्रीय श्रम कानूनों को प्रतिस्थापित कर दिया।
- The **new regime raises the threshold for prior government permission for layoffs, retrenchment, and closure from 100 workers to 300 under the Industrial Relations Code, 2020**, enabling firms below that size — an estimated majority of India's factory units — to retrench workers without administrative scrutiny. नया ढांचा औद्योगिक संबंध संहिता, 2020 के तहत छंटनी, सेवा समाप्ति और बंदी के लिए पूर्व सरकारी अनुमति की सीमा 100 से बढ़ाकर 300 श्रमिक कर देता है, जिससे इस सीमा से नीचे की कंपनियाँ — जो भारत की अधिकांश फैक्ट्रियों का अनुमानित बहुमत हैं — बिना प्रशासनिक निगरानी के श्रमिकों को निकाल सकती हैं।
- A peer-reviewed analysis in the **National Library of Medicine archive** notes that this merely restores the pre-1982 threshold, reversing an Emergency-era protection enacted after a wave of mass layoffs affected over half a million workers. **नेशनल लाइब्रेरी ऑफ मेडिसिन** के संग्रह में प्रकाशित एक समकक्ष-समीक्षित विश्लेषण बताता है कि यह केवल 1982 से पहले की सीमा को बहाल करता है, जिससे आपातकाल काल में लागू उस सुरक्षा को उलट दिया गया, जो आधे मिलियन से अधिक श्रमिकों को प्रभावित करने वाली सामूहिक छंटनी के बाद लागू की गई थी।
- The **OSHC Code, 2020**, simultaneously raises the statutory definition of a 'factory' from 10 workers in a factory with power to 20, and from 20 workers in a factory without power to 40, lifting an entire tier of smaller workplaces — where India's textile, garment, metal, hosiery, and food-processing clusters are concentrated — out of mandatory safety oversight. **OSHC संहिता, 2020** एक साथ 'फैक्ट्री' की वैधानिक परिभाषा को बिजली वाली फैक्ट्री में 10 से बढ़ाकर 20 और बिना बिजली वाली फैक्ट्री में 20 से बढ़ाकर 40 कर देता है, जिससे छोटे कार्यस्थलों का एक पूरा वर्ग — जहाँ भारत के वस्त्र, परिधान, धातु, होजरी और खाद्य प्रसंस्करण उद्योग केंद्रित हैं — अनिवार्य सुरक्षा निगरानी से बाहर हो जाता है।
- Labour economists warn that this technical reclassification has a profound impact on worker coverage, since a majority of India's small manufacturing units employ fewer than 20 workers. श्रम अर्थशास्त्री चेतावनी देते हैं कि यह तकनीकी पुनर्वर्गीकरण श्रमिक कवरेज पर गहरा प्रभाव डालता है, क्योंकि भारत की अधिकांश लघु विनिर्माण इकाइयाँ 20 से कम श्रमिकों को रोजगार देती हैं।
- The **OSHC Code** replaces unannounced inspections with an 'Inspector-cum-Facilitator' model, combined with randomised, web-based allocation through the **Shram Suvidha portal** and employer self-certification — a shift that, as the **International Labour Organization's India Labour Inspection Profile** notes, may contravene the requirement for independent, unannounced inspections under **ILO Convention No. 81**. **OSHC संहिता** बिना सूचना के निरीक्षण को 'इंस्पेक्टर-कम-फैसिलिटेटर' मॉडल से बदल देती है, जिसमें **श्रम सुविधा पोर्टल** के माध्यम से यादृच्छिक, वेब-आधारित आवंटन और नियोक्ता का स्व-प्रमाणीकरण शामिल है — एक ऐसा परिवर्तन जो **अंतरराष्ट्रीय श्रम संगठन के भारत श्रम निरीक्षण प्रोफाइल** के अनुसार **ILO सम्मेलन संख्या 81** के तहत स्वतंत्र और बिना सूचना वाले निरीक्षण की आवश्यकता का उल्लंघन कर सकता है।
- Under the **IR Code**, no worker may strike without 60 days' prior notice, flash strikes are prohibited outright, and strikes are barred during and for weeks after any conciliation or tribunal proceeding.



औद्योगिक संबंध संहिता के तहत कोई भी श्रमिक 60 दिन की पूर्व सूचना के बिना हड़ताल नहीं कर सकता, अचानक हड़तालों पर पूर्ण प्रतिबंध है, और किसी भी सुलह या न्यायाधिकरण प्रक्रिया के दौरान तथा उसके बाद कई सप्ताह तक हड़तालें प्रतिबंधित हैं।

- **"Mass casual leave" by more than 50% of a workforce is now deemed a strike.** कार्यबल के 50% से अधिक द्वारा लिया गया "सामूहिक आकस्मिक अवकाश" अब हड़ताल माना जाएगा।
- **Trade unions argue that, in combination, these provisions make lawful industrial action virtually impossible to organise, completing the regime's pro-employer tilt.** ट्रेड यूनियन का तर्क है कि ये प्रावधान मिलकर वैध औद्योगिक कार्रवाई को संगठित करना लगभग असंभव बना देते हैं, जिससे व्यवस्था का **नियोक्ता-पक्षीय झुकाव** पूर्ण हो जाता है।
- **The Factories Act of 1948 is older than most Indian States; the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1923 predates the Constitution.** **1948 का फैक्ट्री अधिनियम** अधिकांश भारतीय राज्यों से भी पुराना है; **1923 का श्रमिक मुआवजा अधिनियम** संविधान से भी पहले का है।
- **In Singhitarai, a boiler tube burst at a Vedanta power plant on April 14, releasing 600°C steam onto workers eating lunch; 20 were killed, all contract workers employed through a business partner rather than as direct employees.** सिंहितरई में, 14 अप्रैल को वेदांता के पावर प्लांट में एक बॉयलर ट्यूब फट गई, जिससे 600°C की भाप भोजन कर रहे श्रमिकों पर गिर गई; 20 लोगों की मृत्यु हुई, जो सभी प्रत्यक्ष कर्मचारी नहीं बल्कि ठेका श्रमिक थे।

## India's sprint beyond the dairy red line to the Pacific

GS III: Economy

M.08

02

India concluded a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with New Zealand in December 2025, at a time marked by fractured supply chains and rising protectionist tendencies among nations. Guided by the vision of "Viksit Bharat", India has recalibrated its foreign trade policy, transitioning from a cautious, tariff-focused negotiator to a strategic, high-velocity partner. This shift characterises a clear departure from the historical "slow burn" model of trade diplomacy. There are six key wins for India in this FTA, as it aligns with the Viksit Bharat blueprint for trade policy based on strategic autonomy and global integration."

### India's rapid FTA execution

First, this pact is one of India's fastest-concluded FTAs, with negotiations officially launched in March 2025 and concluded in December 2025. This gives India a first-mover advantage in Oceania while also signalling its swift institutional integration and ambitious posture to other partners. This fresh display of efficiency and the ability to compress negotiation cycle times is a new deliverable from India to its trade partners.

Second, this FTA embeds talent mobility as a core economic pillar with the "Yoga and Māori" reciprocity between the two nations. There are many provisions for human capital outflow, including professional pathways, youth engagement and bi-directional exchange of traditional medicine. The FTA allows for a separate annual quota of 5,000 professional visas for skilled Indian professionals in high-skill jobs



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The Free Trade Agreement with New Zealand reflects India's evolving trade diplomacy strategy

such as IT, engineering, and health care, with a tenure period of up to three years. An annual quota of 1,000 work-and-holiday visas will also be permitted for young Indians, aligning India's workforce with New Zealand's age requirements. Most importantly, it is the first bilateral reciprocity agreement that will allow international recognition of India's Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) system along with the native Māori health practices of New Zealand.

Third, the FTA lays down a commitment of capital inflow of around \$20 billion over a period of 15 years in high-priority sectors such as agri-tech and food processing, renewable energy, education and health-care management, wherein New Zealand's technology and capital will be the much-needed catalyst for growth. This influx will also strengthen the "Make in India" programme.

### Strategically shielded

Fourth, India has been so far successful in negotiating for an agreement which protects one of the sensitive sectors of India's economy – "dairy". The mechanics of the pact include the exclusion of fluid milk, cheese, and yogurt from duty concessions. India will grant progressive market access, on a duty-free basis, for infant formula and high-value-added dairy products, over a seven-year period, allowing domestic nutritional firms access to quality raw materials. The pact proposes a "Ring Fenced Value Addition Framework" to boost downstream processing of manufacturing. Under this agreement, New

Zealand firms are permitted to import dairy products from India duty-free for manufacturing purposes, if 100% of the products are exported out of India. The pact uses an advanced tariff rate quota mechanism, providing for a minimum import price and seasonal constraints on select commodities such as apples, honey, and kiwifruit.

The fifth win is that New Zealand has pledged to change its legislation within 18 months. This change will provide Indian Geographical Indication (GI) products with protection such as that offered by the European Union. As a result, brands such as Darjeeling tea and Basmati rice will receive top-quality legal protection in Oceania.

### Securing a South Pacific foothold

Last, this FTA with New Zealand is increasingly significant, as it creates a geopolitical hedge for India and opens new markets, with New Zealand serving as a gateway to Oceania and the Pacific Island countries (PICs). By adopting New Zealand's trade regulations and norms, India secures a logistical centre and "regulatory reference point" in the South Pacific. Through this trade agreement, India demonstrates its ability to meet Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) standards and sets a precedent for further negotiations with other partners. The FTA signals India's ability to open and engage in global supply chains while maintaining a balance between market access and domestic protection.

## 01Ma. India's sprint beyond the dairy red line to the Pacific

### भारत का डेयरी 'रेड लाइन' से आगे प्रशांत क्षेत्र की ओर तेज़ कदम

- Second, this FTA embeds **talent mobility** as a core economic pillar with the **"Yoga and Māori" reciprocity** between the two nations. द्वितीय, यह FTA प्रतिभा गतिशीलता को एक प्रमुख आर्थिक स्तंभ के रूप में स्थापित करता है, जिसमें दोनों देशों के बीच **"योग और माओरी"** पारस्परिकता शामिल है।
- There are many provisions for **human capital outflow**, including professional pathways, youth engagement and bi-directional exchange of traditional medicine.



इसमें मानव पूंजी प्रवाह के लिए कई प्रावधान हैं, जिनमें पेशेवर अवसर, युवा सहभागिता और पारंपरिक चिकित्सा का द्वािदिश आदान-प्रदान शामिल है।

- The FTA allows for a separate annual quota of **5,000 professional visas** for skilled Indian professionals in high-skill jobs such as IT, engineering, and health care, with a tenure period of up to three years.

यह FTA कुशल भारतीय पेशेवरों के लिए IT, इंजीनियरिंग और स्वास्थ्य सेवा जैसे उच्च-कौशल क्षेत्रों में प्रति वर्ष **5,000 पेशेवर वीजा** की अलग कोटा प्रदान करता है, जिसकी अवधि तीन वर्ष तक हो सकती है।

- An annual quota of **1,000 work-and-holiday visas** will also be permitted for young Indians, aligning India's workforce with New Zealand's age requirements.

युवा भारतीयों के लिए प्रति वर्ष **1,000 कार्य-और-छुट्टी वीजा** की अनुमति भी दी जाएगी, जो भारत के कार्यबल को न्यूजीलैंड की आयु आवश्यकताओं के अनुरूप बनाएगा।

- Most importantly, it is the first bilateral reciprocity agreement that will allow international recognition of India's **Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy (AYUSH)** system along with the native **Māori health practices** of New Zealand.

सबसे महत्वपूर्ण, यह पहला द्विपक्षीय पारस्परिक समझौता है जो भारत की **आयुर्वेद, योग, यूनानी, सिद्ध और होम्योपैथी (AYUSH)** प्रणाली के साथ न्यूजीलैंड की मूल **माओरी स्वास्थ्य परंपराओं** को अंतरराष्ट्रीय मान्यता प्रदान करेगा।

- Third, the FTA lays down a commitment of **capital inflow of around \$20 billion** over a period of 15 years in high-priority sectors such as agri-tech and food processing, renewable energy, education and health-care management, wherein New Zealand's technology and capital will be the much-needed catalyst for growth.

तृतीय, यह FTA 15 वर्षों की अवधि में लगभग **20 अरब डॉलर के पूंजी निवेश** की प्रतिबद्धता निर्धारित करता है, जो कृषि-प्रौद्योगिकी, खाद्य प्रसंस्करण, नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा, शिक्षा और स्वास्थ्य प्रबंधन जैसे उच्च-प्राथमिकता क्षेत्रों में होगा, जहाँ न्यूजीलैंड की तकनीक और पूंजी विकास के लिए आवश्यक उत्प्रेरक होगी।

- The mechanics of the pact include the exclusion of **fluid milk, cheese, and yogurt** from duty concessions.

समझौते की संरचना में **तरल दूध, पनीर और दही** को शुल्क रियायतों से बाहर रखा गया है।

- India will grant progressive market access, on a duty-free basis, for **infant formula and high-value-added dairy products**, over a seven-year period, allowing domestic nutritional firms access to quality raw materials.

भारत सात वर्षों की अवधि में **शिशु आहार और उच्च-मूल्य संवर्धित डेयरी उत्पादों** के लिए क्रमिक रूप से शुल्क-मुक्त बाजार पहुंच प्रदान करेगा, जिससे घरेलू पोषण कंपनियों को उच्च गुणवत्ता वाले कच्चे माल तक पहुंच मिलेगी।

- The pact proposes a **"Ring Fenced Value Addition Framework"** to boost downstream processing of manufacturing.

यह समझौता विनिर्माण के निम्नधारा प्रसंस्करण को बढ़ावा देने के लिए **"रिंग फेंसड वैल्यू एडिशन फ्रेमवर्क"** का प्रस्ताव करता है।

- Under this agreement, New Zealand firms are permitted to import dairy products from India duty-free for manufacturing purposes, if 100% of the products are exported out of India.

इस समझौते के तहत, न्यूजीलैंड की कंपनियों को भारत से डेयरी उत्पादों को विनिर्माण हेतु शुल्क-मुक्त आयात करने की अनुमति है, यदि 100% उत्पाद भारत से निर्यात किए जाते हैं।

- The pact uses an advanced **tariff rate quota mechanism**, providing for a minimum import price and seasonal constraints on select commodities such as apples, honey, and kiwifruit. यह समझौता एक उन्नत **टैरिफ रेट कोटा तंत्र** का उपयोग करता है, जिसमें न्यूनतम आयात मूल्य और सेब, शहद तथा कीवी जैसे चयनित उत्पादों पर मौसमी प्रतिबंध शामिल हैं।

- The fifth win is that **New Zealand has pledged to change its legislation within 18 months**. पाँचवीं उपलब्धि यह है कि न्यूजीलैंड ने **18 महीनों के भीतर अपने कानून में परिवर्तन** करने का वचन दिया है।



- This change will provide Indian **Geographical Indication (GI)** products with protection such as that offered by the **European Union**.  
यह परिवर्तन भारतीय **भौगोलिक संकेतक (GI)** उत्पादों को **यूरोपीय संघ** जैसी सुरक्षा प्रदान करेगा।
- As a result, brands such as **Darjeeling tea** and **Basmati rice** will receive top-quality legal protection in **Oceania**.  
इसके परिणामस्वरूप **दार्जिलिंग चाय** और **बासमती चावल** जैसे ब्रांडों को ओशिनिया में उच्च-स्तरीय कानूनी सुरक्षा प्राप्त होगी।
- Through this trade agreement, India demonstrates its ability to meet **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** standards and sets a precedent for further negotiations with other partners.  
इस व्यापार समझौते के माध्यम से भारत **आर्थिक सहयोग और विकास संगठन (OECD)** के मानकों को पूरा करने की अपनी क्षमता प्रदर्शित करता है और अन्य साझेदारों के साथ आगे की वार्ताओं के लिए एक उदाहरण स्थापित करता है।

# Foreign investors dump ₹60,847 cr. in April, devaluing rupee

This was the primary reason for the rupee depreciating further, touching a low of ₹95 a dollar before closing just short of that on Thursday

GS III: Economy  
Ashokamithran T.  
MUMBAI

Foreign investors sold ₹60,847 crore in stocks of Indian listed companies as of April 2026, continuing the two-year trend of capital outflow, data from the National Securities Depositories Ltd. (NSDL) show.

The outflow makes it the third in the first four months of the calendar year. There was a net inflow of ₹22,615 crore in February 2026. It was then followed by the highest ever outflow of more than ₹1.1 lakh crore in March 2026. The April sell-off is, however, much lower than the month before.

In the four months of calendar year 2026, ₹1.9 lakh crore worth of foreign money exited from Indian equities alone.

This is what had primarily led to the rupee touching a low of ₹95 a dollar before closing just short of that on Thursday. The rupee-dollar pair depreciated 5.5% between January 2026 and April 2026, backed by increasing import bills due to the West Asia crisis and the continued foreign money outflow from domestic capital markets.

"The interaction bet-



**Money matters:** The rupee-dollar pair depreciated 5.5% between January 2026 and April 2026, backed by increasing import bills. AFP



Continued FII outflow would mean the

foreign exchange rate can touch ₹96 a dollar

**ANINDYA BANERJEE,**  
Head of Commodity and Currency Research, Kotak Securities

ween portfolio outflows and exchange rate movements has exhibited self-reinforcing dynamics: rupee depreciation reduces dollar-denominated returns for foreign investors, prompting further outflows, which in turn exacerbates currency pressures. As India's integration with global financial markets deepens, such episodes underscore the heightened sensitivity of capital flows to shifts in global risk sentiment," the

Ministry of Finance observed in its monthly Economic Review.

A continued closure of the Strait of Hormuz would mean a heightened oil price and continued FII outflow would mean the foreign exchange rate can touch ₹96 a dollar. A break over that would lead to the rupee depreciating to ₹97 a dollar, said Anindya Banerjee, Head of Commodity and Currency Research, Kotak Securities. He further said that the rupee appreciating more than ₹94.8 is not likely without a "significant dip in oil prices."

The outlook for rupee and the foreign money's sensitivity to India's foreign exchange rate may make their immediate return unlikely in the context of global geo-politics.

**01Ma. Foreign investors dump ₹60,847 cr. in April, devaluing rupee**

**विदेशी निवेशकों ने अप्रैल में ₹60,847 करोड़ बेचे, रुपये का अवमूल्यन**

• Foreign investors sold ₹60,847 crore in stocks of Indian listed companies as of April 2026, continuing the two-year trend of capital outflow, data from the **National Securities Depositories Ltd. (NSDL)** show.

**विदेशी निवेशकों ने अप्रैल 2026 तक**

**भारतीय सूचीबद्ध कंपनियों के शेयरों में ₹60,847 करोड़ की बिकवाली की, जिससे दो साल से जारी पूंजी बहिर्वाह का रुझान जारी रहा, जैसा कि NSDL के आंकड़े बताते हैं।**

• **This is what had primarily led to the rupee touching a low of ₹95 a dollar before closing just short of that on Thursday.**

**इसी कारण रुपया ₹95 प्रति डॉलर के निचले स्तर तक पहुंचा।**

• **The rupee-dollar pair depreciated 5.5% between January 2026 and April 2026, backed by increasing import bills due to the West Asia crisis and the continued foreign money outflow from domestic capital markets.**



जनवरी 2026 से अप्रैल 2026 के बीच रुपया-डॉलर दर 5.5% गिर गई, जिसका कारण पश्चिम एशिया संकट से बढ़ते आयात बिल और विदेशी पूंजी का लगातार बहिर्वाह था।

- “The interaction between portfolio outflows and exchange rate movements has exhibited self-reinforcing dynamics: rupee depreciation reduces dollar-denominated returns for foreign investors, prompting further outflows, which in turn exacerbates currency pressures.  
“पोर्टफोलियो बहिर्वाह और विनिमय दर के बीच संबंध एक-दूसरे को बढ़ाने वाला है: रुपये की गिरावट से विदेशी निवेशकों की डॉलर में कमाई घटती है, जिससे वे और पैसा निकालते हैं, जिससे मुद्रा पर और दबाव बढ़ता है।

## DIPAM gives nod for NLC arm's listing; ₹4,000 cr. IPO in FY27

GS III: Economy

Saptaparno Ghosh  
NEW DELHI

The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) has given the green light for listing of Neyveli Lignite Corp. India's (NLC India) renewable energy arm, NLC India Renewables (NIRL), a senior government official privy to the development told *The Hindu*.

The official further said that NIRL would be debuting on the bourses with its ₹4,000-crore IPO within the ongoing financial year.

“Last week, DIPAM had given their go-ahead for

**NIRL's debut on the bourses is premised on augmenting its current renewable energy capacity**

the listing of NIRL. We expect the listing to be completed within FY 2027 itself,” the official stated.

As also confirmed by the senior official, the latest development implies that three of India's State-owned mining companies – Bilaspur-headquartered South Eastern Coalfields Ltd. (SECL) and Sambalpur-headquartered Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd. (MCL),

– and now NIRL, are all set to hit Dalal Street within the ongoing financial year.

NLC India's board had given its in-principle approval to list their renewable energy arm on January 12 this year.

This was in line with the targets laid out as per the National Monetisation Pipeline.

NIRL's debut on the bourses is premised on further augmenting its current renewable energy capacity.

The renewable energy arm of NLC India is eyeing 10.11 GW of renewable capacity by 2030 and 32 GW by 2047.

**01Ma. DIPAM gives nod for NLC arm's listing; ₹4,000 cr. IPO in FY27**

**DIPAM ने NLC की इकाई की लिस्टिंग को मंजूरी दी; FY27 में ₹4,000 करोड़ का IPO**

- DIPAM gives nod for NLC arm's listing; ₹4,000 cr. IPO in FY27.

**DIPAM ने NLC की इकाई की लिस्टिंग को मंजूरी दी; FY27 में ₹4,000 करोड़ का IPO।**

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**निवेश और सार्वजनिक संपत्ति प्रबंधन विभाग**

**(DIPAM) ने नेवेली लिग्नाइट कॉर्प इंडिया (NLC India) की नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा इकाई NLC India Renewables (NIRL) की लिस्टिंग को मंजूरी दी है, एक वरिष्ठ सरकारी अधिकारी ने बताया।**

## FDI easing for foreign firms with up to 10% Chinese stake to be notified soon under FEMA

GS III: Economy

Press Trust of India  
NEW DELHI

The decision to ease foreign direct investment norms for overseas companies with up to 10% stake in Chinese companies will be notified soon under the FEMA law, a senior government official said on Thursday. After that, the changes will come into effect.

In March, the Union Cabinet approved amendments in the press note (PN) 3 of 2020 under which foreign companies having a Chinese shareholding of up to 10% will be eligible to invest in India under the automatic route across sectors.

However, the relaxed FDI rules will not apply to entities registered in China/Hong Kong or other countries sharing land borders with India.

The government has also decided that FDI proposals in specified sectors/activities of manufacturing in capital goods, electronic capital goods, electronic components, polysilicon and ingot-wafer or any other sector/activity added by the committee of secretaries headed by the Cabinet Secretary will be processed within 60 days.

Though the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has notified these changes,

the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) has not yet notified them.

“The DEA will have to issue the notification under FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act). It will be notified very soon. It requires a lot of fine-tuning,” DPIIT Joint Secretary Jai Prakash Shivahare told reporters here.

He added that the department is working to identify sub-sectors whose applications will be processed within 60 days.

Mr. Shivahare also informed that total FDI, which includes reinvested earnings, has touched \$88.29 billion during April-February 2025-26.

**01Ma. FDI easing for foreign firms with up to 10% Chinese stake to be notified soon under FEMA**

**10% तक चीनी हिस्सेदारी वाली**

**विदेशी कंपनियों के लिए FDI में ढील, जल्द FEMA के तहत अधिसूचित होगी**

- **FDI easing for foreign firms with up to 10% Chinese stake to be notified soon under FEMA.**

**10% तक चीनी हिस्सेदारी वाली विदेशी**

**कंपनियों के लिए FDI में ढील जल्द FEMA के तहत अधिसूचित होगी।**

- **The decision to ease foreign direct investment norms for overseas**



companies with up to 10% stake in Chinese companies will be notified soon under the FEMA law, a senior government official said on Thursday.

एक वरिष्ठ सरकारी अधिकारी ने कहा कि चीनी कंपनियों में 10% तक हिस्सेदारी वाली विदेशी कंपनियों के लिए FDI नियमों में ढील को जल्द ही FEMA कानून के तहत अधिसूचित किया जाएगा।

- After that, the changes will come into effect.  
इसके बाद ये बदलाव लागू हो जाएंगे।
- In March, the Union Cabinet approved amendments in the press note (PN) 3 of 2020 under which foreign companies having a Chinese shareholding of up to 10% will be eligible to invest in India under the automatic route across sectors.  
मार्च में केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल ने प्रेस नोट 3 (2020) में संशोधन को मंजूरी दी, जिसके तहत 10% तक चीनी हिस्सेदारी वाली विदेशी कंपनियां भारत में ऑटोमेटिक रूट से निवेश कर सकेंगी।
- However, the relaxed FDI rules will not apply to entities registered in China/Hong Kong or other countries sharing land borders with India.  
हालांकि, ये ढीले FDI नियम चीन/हांगकांग या भारत के साथ स्थलीय सीमा साझा करने वाले देशों में पंजीकृत संस्थाओं पर लागू नहीं होंगे।
- The government has also decided that FDI proposals in specified sectors/activities of manufacturing in capital goods, electronic capital goods, electronic components, polysilicon and ingot-wafer or any other sector/activity added by the committee of secretaries headed by the Cabinet Secretary will be processed within 60 days.  
सरकार ने यह भी तय किया है कि पूंजीगत वस्तुएं, इलेक्ट्रॉनिक उपकरण, इलेक्ट्रॉनिक कंपोनेंट, पॉलीसिलिकॉन और इंगोट-वेफर जैसे क्षेत्रों में FDI प्रस्तावों को 60 दिनों के भीतर संसाधित किया जाएगा।
- Though the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has notified these changes, the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) has not yet notified them.  
हालांकि DPIIT ने इन बदलावों को अधिसूचित कर दिया है, लेकिन आर्थिक मामलों का विभाग (DEA) ने अभी तक इन्हें अधिसूचित नहीं किया है।
- "The DEA will have to issue the notification under FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act).  
"DEA को FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act) के तहत अधिसूचना जारी करनी होगी।
- It will be notified very soon.  
इसे बहुत जल्द अधिसूचित किया जाएगा।

<b>GS Paper III: Science and Technology</b>		<b>01 May 2026</b>
<b>TOPICS COVERED</b>		
<b>01MA</b>	<b>QUIZ</b>	
<b>01MA</b>	<b>Hezbollah's new weapon against Israel: fibre-optic drones honed in Ukraine war</b> <b>इज़राइल के खिलाफ हिज़बुल्लाह का नया हथियार: यूक्रेन युद्ध में विकसित फाइबर-ऑप्टिक ड्रोन</b>	

**Answers to previous edition's quiz:**

1. Repeated untreated middle ear infections in childhood can lead to long-term hearing problems. True or False.  
**Ans: True** 2. A persistent ringing or buzzing sound in the ears without an external source is called \_\_\_\_\_. **Ans: Tinnitus**  
3. A routine test used to check a person's hearing ability? **Ans: Audiometry** 4. Name one sign that may suggest a child has hearing difficulty. **Ans: Frequently asking for repetition/Turning one ear toward the speaker** 5. Hearing loss that develops after long-term exposure to loud sounds is called \_\_\_\_\_. **Ans: Conductive**  
Visual: Injury to which inner ear structure would most directly impair the ear's ability to convert sound vibrations into signals transmitted to the brain? **Ans: The cochlea**

**01Ma. QUIZ:**

- **Tinnitus (Persistent Ear Ringing)**
  - **Tinnitus** refers to the perception of a persistent **ringing, buzzing, or similar sound** in the ears without any external source.
  - It is not a disease but a symptom linked to conditions such as hearing loss, ear infections, prolonged noise exposure, or age-related changes.
- **Audiometry (Hearing Test)**
  - **Audiometry** is a routine clinical test used to evaluate a person's **hearing ability**.
  - It measures the ability to hear sounds of varying **frequencies and intensities** using specialized equipment like an audiometer.
- **Signs of Hearing Difficulty in Children**



- One common sign of hearing difficulty in children is frequently asking for repetition or turning one ear toward the speaker.

# Hezbollah's new weapon against Israel: fibre-optic drones honed in Ukraine war

Unlike other drones, these small, hard-to-track and potentially lethal weapons are almost impossible to electronically jam; experts say militaries must either intercept them — difficult due to their size and short flight path — or find a way to sever the nearly invisible cable linking them to the operator

GS III: S&T

Associated Press  
TEL AVIV

Hezbollah has launched a new weapon against northern Israel in the latest round of fighting: small drones controlled with fibre-optic cables the width of dental floss that avoid electronic detection. These drones — used widely in the war in Ukraine — are small, hard to track and potentially lethal.

Many drones are susceptible to electronic jamming by air defences. Jamming can cause a drone to crash or return to its point of origin.

But fibre-optic drones are not controlled remotely. They have a thin cable that connects an operator directly to the drone, making it impossible to electronically jam.

The drones are not infallible because the wind — or other drones — can cause the cables to tangle.

But, "if you know what you're doing, it's absolutely deadly," said Robert Tolst, a drone expert and researcher at the Royal United Services Institute in London, explaining how the drone can fly low and creep up on a target.

Experts say militaries must either intercept the drones, which is difficult due to their small size and short flight path, or find a way to snip the nearly invisible cable.

Hezbollah — the Iran-

backed militant group in Lebanon — has mostly been using the fibre optic drones on Israeli soldiers operating in southern Lebanon or towns on the border.

Here's a closer look at these weapons.

An Israeli military official told AP the fibre optic drones are a relatively new threat during the latest round of fighting with Hezbollah. Hezbollah seems to have turned to them because Israeli air defenses have been successful against larger and more powerful rockets, missiles and other drones, said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity in line with military guidelines.

Israel believes the drones are made locally and are easy to produce — requiring little more than an off-the-shelf drone, a small amount of explosives, and transparent wire that is readily available on the consumer market, he said.

He called the drones the biggest threat to troops inside Lebanon but said the Israeli military is working on technological solutions. In the meantime, Israel is taking measures on the ground to defend troops, such as adding nets and cages to military vehicles.

The fibre-optic drones are the latest part of a cat-and-mouse race as Israel's high-tech defences race to intercept new threats, es-



**Tried and tested:** A Ukrainian made FPV fibre-optic drone is displayed at a military market place in Kyiv, Ukraine. AP

pecially ones that are less sophisticated.

Ran Kochav, a former head of the Israeli military's air defence command, said Israel is failing in its attempts to defend against the fibre-optic drones.

"They fly very low and very fast, and are very small, it's very difficult to detect them, and even after they're detected, they are really hard to track," he said.

Mr. Kochav said Israel spent years focusing on strengthening its air defence systems to improve protection against rockets and missiles. But drones were not seen as a top priority.

He said Israel should have been following the advances in fibre-optic drones in the war in Ukraine and assumed that

like Russia, other Iranian allies would eventually use them.

Throughout the war in Ukraine, Moscow and Kyiv have been engaged in a race to develop new technology.

Russia pummels Ukraine almost nightly with Shahed long-range attack drones — originally from Iran. Although Moscow has made many improvements to the drones, some can still be taken down by electronic jamming.

Fibre-optic drones were developed to get around that problem — although they do not have the same range as a drone that uses a radio link or artificial intelligence to navigate.

In some cases, fibre-optic drones have been recorded with cables extending as far as 31 miles (50 kilometres) said Mr. Tol-

st, the expert in London. Russia and Ukraine are using many different types of drones "at a phenomenal scale," he said.

The fibre-optic drones are in such wide use that footage shows front-line Ukrainian towns coated with shiny, fishing line-like strings, resembling massive spiderwebs shimmering in the sunlight.

Israel has sufficient firepower to intercept drones, but the key is early detection, Mr. Kochav said.

He explained that Israel already has suitable technology that tracks changes in light, identifies signals and communications, and can recognise the sound of drone propellers.

But he said these monitoring systems haven't been widely deployed along the northern border.

Over the past weeks, Hezbollah has aired videos through social media platforms and its Al-Manar TV station of attacks with these new drones, especially against Israeli troops in southern Lebanon.

These attacks have captured public attention. One attack killed one Israeli soldier and wounded six others, some of them seriously, last weekend. Another attack, on Tuesday, killed an Israeli civilian contractor in southern Lebanon.

In the attack that killed the soldier, Hezbollah issued a video taken by the drone until it exploded in the middle of troops gath-

ering near a vehicle. Another drone was fired at the same location as a military helicopter landed to evacuate the wounded but narrowly missed.

Hezbollah announced that it began using fibre-optic guided drones for the first time during the round of fighting that began March 2, after using other types of drones for years.

Israel also has a fleet of drones that carry out surveillance and attacks, though not necessarily with the fibre-optic cables, to target Hezbollah militants.

Zevik Glidai, a 78-year-old math teacher and volunteer ambulance driver, discovered coils of the translucent fibre-optic cables surrounding a drone that crashed into his backyard in the northern Israeli city of Kiryat Shmona on April 13. He was sitting at home when he heard a high-pitched shriek and a small crash. His neighbour yelled the yard was on fire.

The two of them put out the fire with a garden hose but noticed something new: the destroyed drone was surrounded by loops and curls of a white thread.

He said the bomb squad that responded called it a miracle that nearly 2 kilograms (4.4 pounds) of explosives failed to detonate. "They picked up all of the pieces that they could pick up, and left me a few optical fibres as a keepsake."

## 01Ma. Hezbollah's new weapon against Israel: fibre-optic drones honed in Ukraine war

इज़राइल के खिलाफ हिज़बुल्लाह का नया हथियार: यूक्रेन युद्ध में विकसित फाइबर-ऑप्टिक ड्रोन

- Unlike other drones, these small, hard-to-track and potentially lethal weapons are almost impossible to electronically jam; experts say militaries must either intercept them — difficult due to their size and short flight path — or find a way to sever the nearly invisible cable linking them to the operator.

अन्य ड्रोन के विपरीत, ये छोटे, पकड़ में न आने वाले और संभावित रूप से घातक हथियार लगभग इलेक्ट्रॉनिक रूप से जाम करना असंभव हैं; विशेषज्ञों का कहना है कि सेनाओं को या तो इन्हें रोकना होगा — जो इनके छोटे



आकार और कम उड़ान पथ के कारण कठिन है — या फिर ऑपरेटर से जोड़ने वाली लगभग अदृश्य केबल को काटने का तरीका ढूँढना होगा।

- Hezbollah has launched a new weapon against northern Israel in the latest round of fighting: **small drones controlled with fibre-optic cables the width of dental floss that avoid electronic detection.**

हिज़्बुल्लाह ने उत्तरी इज़राइल के खिलाफ हालिया संघर्ष में एक नया हथियार तैनात किया है: छोटे ड्रोन जो डेंटल फ्लॉस जितनी पतली फाइबर-ऑप्टिक केबल से नियंत्रित होते हैं और इलेक्ट्रॉनिक पहचान से बचते हैं।

- But **fibre-optic drones are not controlled remotely.**  
लेकिन **फाइबर-ऑप्टिक ड्रोन दूर से नियंत्रित नहीं होते।**
- **They have a thin cable that connects an operator directly to the drone, making it impossible to electronically jam.**

इनमें एक पतली केबल होती है जो ऑपरेटर को सीधे ड्रोन से जोड़ती है, जिससे इन्हें इलेक्ट्रॉनिक रूप से जाम करना असंभव हो जाता है।

- **The drones are not infallible because the wind — or other drones — can cause the cables to tangle.**

ये ड्रोन पूरी तरह अचूक नहीं हैं क्योंकि हवा — या अन्य ड्रोन — उनकी केबलों को उलझा सकते हैं।

- **The drone can fly low and creep up on a target.**

लेकिन “अगर आपको पता है कि आप क्या कर रहे हैं, तो यह पूरी तरह घातक है,” लंदन के **रॉयल यूनाइटेड सर्विसेज इंस्टीट्यूट** के ड्रोन विशेषज्ञ **रॉबर्ट टोलास्ट** ने कहा, जिन्होंने बताया कि यह ड्रोन बहुत नीचे उड़कर लक्ष्य के पास चुपचाप पहुंच सकता है।

- **Experts say militaries must either intercept the drones, which is difficult due to their small size and short flight path, or find a way to snip the nearly invisible cable.**

विशेषज्ञों का कहना है कि सेनाओं को या तो इन ड्रोन को रोकना होगा, जो इनके छोटे आकार और कम उड़ान पथ के कारण कठिन है, या फिर लगभग अदृश्य केबल को काटने का तरीका ढूँढना होगा।

- In the meantime, Israel is taking measures on the ground to defend troops, such as **adding nets and cages to military vehicles.**

इस बीच, इज़राइल जमीन पर सैनिकों की सुरक्षा के लिए उपाय कर रहा है, जैसे सैन्य वाहनों पर जाल और पिंजरे लगाना।

- **Russia pummels Ukraine almost nightly with Shahed long-range attack drones — originally from Iran.**

रूस लगभग हर रात यूक्रेन पर ईरान से आए **शाहेद लंबी दूरी के ड्रोन** से हमला करता है।

- Fibre-optic drones were developed to get around that problem — although they do not have the same range as **a drone that uses a radio link or artificial intelligence to navigate.**

फाइबर-ऑप्टिक ड्रोन इस समस्या को दूर करने के लिए विकसित किए गए, हालांकि इनकी रेंज रेडियो या एआई आधारित ड्रोन जितनी नहीं होती।

- **In some cases, fibre-optic drones have been recorded with cables extending as far as 31 miles (50 kilometres),** said Mr. Tollast, the expert in London.

कुछ मामलों में फाइबर-ऑप्टिक ड्रोन की केबलें **31 मील (50 किलोमीटर)** तक लंबी दर्ज की गई हैं, लंदन के विशेषज्ञ टोलास्ट ने कहा।

<b>GS Paper III: Environment</b>		<b>01 May 2026</b>
<b>TOPICS COVERED</b>		
<b>01MA</b>	<b>Forest workers launch indefinite stir at Bandipur against outsourcing</b> वन कर्मियों ने आउटसोर्सिंग के खिलाफ बांदीपुर में अनिश्चितकालीन आंदोलन शुरू किया	
<b>01MA</b>	<b>Kerala starts programme to restore sacred groves</b> केरल ने पवित्र उपवनों को पुनर्स्थापित करने के लिए कार्यक्रम शुरू किया	
<b>01MA</b>	<b>Tigress, four cubs die in past two weeks at Kanha Tiger Reserve</b>	



	<b>कान्हा टाइगर रिजर्व में पिछले दो हफ्तों में बाघिन और चार शावकों की मौत</b>
<b>01MA</b>	<b>India's first green methanol plant to turn Kutch's most invasive weed into marine fuel</b> <b>भारत का पहला ग्रीन मेथनॉल प्लांट कच्छ की सबसे आक्रामक घास को समुद्री ईंधन में बदलेगा</b>

## Forest workers launch indefinite stir at Bandipur against outsourcing

**GS III: Environment**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
MYSURU

Temporary forest workers began an indefinite strike at the Bandipur National Park in Chamarajnagar district of Karnataka on Thursday, calling for an end to the outsourcing system and seeking direct wage payments from the Forest Department.

The strike comes amid concerns over forest fires during the peak summer season.

The agitating workers, engaged in wildlife and territorial divisions, said they had earlier staged a protest in November last year, after which the government assured them their demands would be considered. However, no action had been taken so far, and when they had resumed



**Livelihood woes:** Forest staff hold a protest at the Bandipur National Park in Karnataka on Thursday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ten commitment from the government," he said.

**'Salaries delayed'**

Mr. Nagaraju said that until 2017, wages and benefits were given under a welfare framework, but the system was later replaced by a tender-based outsourcing model in which payments were made through the agencies. "Since then, workers have faced delays in salary payments and difficulty accessing benefits. We want this system scrapped," he said.

Association vice-president S.S. Harish expressed concern over the government's move to initiate a fresh one-year contract process from April 1, stating that it would further complicate the existing issues instead of resolving them.

their agitation.

In a statement, A.M. Nagaraju, the president of the Karnataka State Forest Department Wildlife Units Daily Wage and Contract Workers' Association, alleged that although the Forest Minister had shown

willingness to address their concerns, senior officials had failed to follow them through. "We have protested twice before, but nothing has changed beyond verbal assurances. This time, the strike will continue until we receive a writ-

**01Ma. Forest workers launch indefinite stir at Bandipur against outsourcing**

**वन कर्मियों ने आउटसोर्सिंग के**

**खिलाफ बांदीपुर में अनिश्चितकालीन**

**आंदोलन शुरू किया**

**Bandipur National Park in Chamarajnagar district of Karnataka**

**01Ma. Kerala starts programme to restore sacred groves**

**केरल ने पवित्र उपवनों को**

**पुनर्स्थापित करने के लिए कार्यक्रम**

**शुरू किया**

- The Kerala State Biodiversity

**Board (KSBB) has initiated a pilot restoration programme for sacred groves in collaboration with the local Biodiversity Management Committees.**

## Kerala starts programme to restore sacred groves

**GS III: Environment**

**Sarath Babu George**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala State Biodiversity Board (KSBB) has initiated a pilot restoration programme for sacred groves in collaboration with the local Biodiversity Management Committees.

Five sacred groves have been selected from Ezhikkara in Ernakulam, Pattanchery in Palakkad, Villiappally in Kozhikode, Iritty in Kannur, and Uduma in Kasaragod for the initial phase of the project.

**'Kavu nurseries'**

The major activities under the project include biodiversity assessment of the groves and identification of endangered and invasive species, establishment of 'kavu nurseries' for propagating sacred grove plant species, bio-fencing using



**Green hub:** A sacred grove in Kerala. H. VIBHU

native plants, removal of invasive species and plastic waste, and rejuvenation of ponds in sacred groves. The programme will be funded by the board and the respective local bodies.

Sacred groves (or 'kavus') are culturally protected ecosystems that support rare, endemic and medicinal plant species and help conserve soil and water.

"However, due to developmental pressures and changing socio-cultural practices, many of these groves are declining in extent and ecological health," an official said.

For ecological restoration, over a hundred native and threatened plant species have been identified, and nearly 3,000 saplings will be planted at the selected sites.

**केरल राज्य जैव विविधता बोर्ड (KSBB) ने स्थानीय जैव विविधता प्रबंधन समितियों के सहयोग से पवित्र उपवनों के लिए एक पायलट पुनर्स्थापन कार्यक्रम शुरू किया है।**

• Five sacred groves have been selected from Ezhikkara in Ernakulam, Pattanchery in Palakkad, Villiappally in Kozhikode, Iritty in Kannur, and Uduma in Kasaragod for the initial phase of the project.

परियोजना के प्रारंभिक चरण के लिए एर्नाकुलम के एझिक्कारा, पलक्कड़ के पट्टनचेरी, कोझिकोड के विल्लियापल्ली, कन्नूर के इरिट्टी, और कासरगोड के उदुमा से पांच पवित्र उपवन चुने गए हैं।

**'Kavu nurseries'**

**'कावु नर्सरी'**

• The major activities under the project include biodiversity assessment of the groves and identification of endangered and invasive species, establishment of 'kavu nurseries' for propagating sacred grove plant species, bio-fencing using



native plants, removal of invasive species and plastic waste, and rejuvenation of ponds in sacred groves.

परियोजना के तहत प्रमुख गतिविधियों में उपवनों की जैव विविधता का आकलन, लुप्तप्राय और आक्रामक प्रजातियों की पहचान, पवित्र उपवन पौधों के प्रसार के लिए 'कावु नर्सरी' की स्थापना, स्थानीय पौधों से बायो-फेंसिंग, आक्रामक प्रजातियों और प्लास्टिक कचरे को हटाना, तथा उपवनों में तालाबों का पुनर्जीवन शामिल है।

- Sacred groves (or 'kavus') are culturally protected ecosystems that support rare, endemic and medicinal plant species and help conserve soil and water.

पवित्र उपवन (कावु) सांस्कृतिक रूप से संरक्षित पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र हैं जो दुर्लभ, स्थानिक और औषधीय पौधों का समर्थन करते हैं और मिट्टी तथा जल संरक्षण में मदद करते हैं।

- "However, due to developmental pressures and changing socio-cultural practices, many of these groves are declining in extent and ecological health," an official said.

एक अधिकारी ने कहा, "हालांकि, विकास के दबाव और बदलती सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक प्रथाओं के कारण इन उपवनों का क्षेत्रफल और पारिस्थितिक स्वास्थ्य घट रहा है।"

## Tigress, four cubs die in past two weeks at Kanha Tiger Reserve

GS III: Environment  
Mentor Manoj Kumar

BHOPAL

A tigress and her four cubs died in Madhya Pradesh's Kanha Tiger Reserve (KTR) in the past two weeks, with the mother and a cub passing away on Wednesday, officials said.

So far, 27 tigers died in the State in 2026.

The five animals died due to a lung infection, prompting the State's wildlife officials to launch an investigation into the deaths as they suspect an outbreak of canine distemper virus (CDV), which spreads through dogs.

According to officials, the 10-year-old female tiger and her 18-month-old cub had been under quarantine since April 26 and died during treatment.

The two had been tranquillised and brought in for



So far, 27 tigers have died in Madhya Pradesh in 2026.

treatment after three of her cubs were found dead between April 17 and 25 in the Sarhi range of KTR.

### CDV confirmed

Chief Wildlife Warden Samita Rajora told *The Hindu* that the presence of CDV had been confirmed in the third cub that was found dead while samples of the mother and a cub who died on Wednesday had been sent for testing.

"The first two carcasses were found late in decomposed state and the local

officials initially suspected that since their mother was sick and could not hunt, they had died of starvation. But when the third cub was found, I was coincidentally there and suspected that this could be something serious," Ms. Rajora said, adding that the carcass of the third cub was sent to School Of Wildlife Forensic And Health (SWFH), Jabalpur.

Ms. Rajora said the SWFH found that the cub was suffering from severe respiratory issues, heat strokes and pneumonic conditions, and confirmed the presence of CDV.

She said various preventive measures had been taken in the area to curb the spread of the virus in other tigers and animals and that regular monitoring was being conducted to keep an eye on them.

a lung infection, prompting the State's wildlife officials to launch an investigation into the deaths as they suspect an outbreak of **canine distemper virus (CDV), which spreads through dogs.**

इन पांचों जानवरों की मौत फेफड़ों के संक्रमण से हुई, जिसके बाद राज्य के वन्यजीव अधिकारियों ने जांच शुरू की, क्योंकि उन्हें कैनाइन डिस्टेंपर वायरस (CDV) के प्रकोप का संदेह है, जो कुत्तों के माध्यम से फैलता है।

- Ms. Rajora said the SWFH found that the cub was suffering from severe respiratory issues, heat strokes and pneumonic conditions, and confirmed the presence of CDV.

राजोरा ने कहा कि SWFH ने पाया कि शावक गंभीर श्वसन समस्याओं, हीट स्ट्रोक और निमोनिया जैसी स्थिति से पीड़ित था और सीडीवी की पुष्टि की।

### 01Ma. Tigress, four cubs die in past two weeks at Kanha Tiger Reserve

कान्हा टाइगर रिजर्व में पिछले दो हफ्तों में बाघिन और चार शावकों की मौत

- A tigress and her four cubs died in Madhya Pradesh's Kanha Tiger Reserve (KTR) in the past two weeks, with the mother and a cub passing away on Wednesday, officials said.

अधिकारियों ने बताया कि मध्य प्रदेश के कान्हा टाइगर रिजर्व (KTR) में पिछले दो हफ्तों में एक बाघिन और उसके चार शावकों की मौत हो गई, जिसमें मां और एक शावक की मौत बुधवार को हुई।

- So far, 27 tigers have died in the State in 2026.

अब तक 2026 में राज्य में 27 बाघों की मौत हो चुकी है।

- The five animals died due to



# India's first green methanol plant to turn Kutch's most invasive weed into marine fuel

GS III: Environment

Jacob Koshy  
NEW DELHI

A plant that has been ranked as one of the "top 100 invasive species in the world" and has for decades threatened biodiversity in Kutch's Banni grasslands, may soon be harnessed for the production of green methanol and fuel for ocean-going ships.

The Mexican-origin shrub called *Prosopis juliflora*, known as *Gando Baval* in the region, *Vilayati Keekar* in North India and *Seemai Karuvelam* in Tamil, has crowded out native grasses over thousands of kilometres in Kutch. The plant was first introduced by the British in the 1920s to 'green' Delhi and by the Gujarat Forest Department in 1961 to halt the encroaching salt desert in the Rann. This weed is to become the feedstock for In-



*Prosopis juliflora* has crowded out native grasses over thousands of kilometres in Kutch. FILE PHOTO

dia's first green methanol production plant.

Methanol is used as a fuel in shipping often as a replacement to what is called 'bunker oil'. Conventional methanol is produced from fossil fuels such as gas or coal gasification. Green methanol uses biomass from agricultural residue as source material as in the case with the *juli-*

*flora*.

The project, sited at the Deendayal Port Authority (DPA) in Kandla, will produce five tonnes of methanol a day and is being built by Pune-based Thermax Energy with gasification technology from Vadodara's Ankur Scientific, and will be owned by the port authority. Both companies are betting that the Go-

vernment of India's policy to convert ports along the western coast into "green ports" will create demand for a fuel that the global shipping industry is being obliged to adopt under International Maritime Organization (IMO) rules.

## Greenhouse gas cuts

Methanol made from renewable feedstocks can cut a vessel's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by up to 95% and NO<sub>x</sub> (nitrogen oxides) by up to 80%, according to the Methanol Institute, while eliminating sulphur oxides and particulate matter.

Ankur Jain, who heads Ankur Scientific, said his company's role lies in the first stage of a two-step process. "The starting point for most fuels and chemicals is going to be syngas because syngas typically has hydrogen, CO and CO<sub>2</sub>," he told *The Hin-*

*du*. Gasification, he explained, sits between combustion and pyrolysis. "You are heating it in the absence of oxygen, taking it out, improving its quality, burning them a bit and then breaking them down into hydrogen and CO (carbon monoxide) or syngas," he said. Thermax will handle the second step, converting that syngas into methanol.

"It [*juliflora*] is one of the best feedstocks because it is hardwood, dense, has a good energy profile, and low in acids," Mr Jain said, adding Gujarat already wants the species cleared. The plant will be certified to run on other agricultural residues such as bagasse and cotton stalk, which Mr. Jain estimates could, at their maximum potential, displace up to a third of India's oil imports.

## 01Ma. India's first green methanol plant to turn Kutch's most invasive weed into marine fuel

### भारत का पहला ग्रीन मेथनॉल प्लांट कच्छ की सबसे आक्रामक घास को समुद्री ईंधन में बदलेगा

- India's first green methanol plant to turn Kutch's most invasive weed into marine fuel. भारत का पहला ग्रीन मेथनॉल प्लांट कच्छ की सबसे आक्रामक घास को समुद्री ईंधन में बदलेगा।
- A plant that has been ranked as one of the "top 100 invasive species in the world" and has for decades threatened biodiversity in Kutch's Banni grasslands, may soon be harnessed for the production of green methanol and fuel for ocean-going ships. एक पौधा जिसे दुनिया की "शीर्ष 100 आक्रामक प्रजातियों" में शामिल किया गया है और जिसने दशकों से कच्छ के बन्नी घास के मैदानों की जैव विविधता को खतरा पहुंचाया है, अब ग्रीन मेथनॉल और समुद्री जहाजों के ईंधन के उत्पादन के लिए उपयोग किया जाएगा।
- The Mexican-origin shrub called *Prosopis juliflora*, known as *Gando Baval* in the region, *Vilayati Keekar* in North India and *Seemai Karuvelam* in Tamil, has crowded out native grasses over thousands of kilometres in Kutch. मेक्सिको मूल की झाड़ी प्रोसोपिस जुलिफ्लोरा, जिसे क्षेत्र में गांडो बावल, उत्तर भारत में विलायती कीकर और तमिल में सीमाई करुवेलम कहा जाता है, ने कच्छ में हजारों किलोमीटर तक स्थानीय घासों को खत्म कर दिया है।
- The plant was first introduced by the British in the 1920s to 'green' Delhi and by the Gujarat Forest Department in 1961 to halt the encroaching salt desert in the Rann. इस पौधे को पहली बार 1920 के दशक में अंग्रेजों द्वारा दिल्ली को 'हरा' बनाने के लिए और 1961 में गुजरात वन विभाग द्वारा रण में फैलते नमक रेगिस्तान को रोकने के लिए लाया गया था।
- This weed is to become the feedstock for India's first green methanol production plant. यह घास अब भारत के पहले ग्रीन मेथनॉल उत्पादन प्लांट के लिए कच्चा माल बनेगी।



- Methanol is used as a fuel in shipping often as a replacement to what is called 'bunker oil'.  
मेथनॉल का उपयोग शिपिंग में ईंधन के रूप में होता है, जो अक्सर बंकर ऑयल का विकल्प होता है।
- Conventional methanol is produced from fossil fuels such as gas or coal gasification.  
पारंपरिक मेथनॉल गैस या कोयले के गैसीकरण जैसे जीवाश्म ईंधनों से बनाया जाता है।
- Green methanol uses biomass from agricultural residue as source material as in the case with the julfiflora.  
ग्रीन मेथनॉल कृषि अवशेषों से प्राप्त बायोमास का उपयोग करता है, जैसा कि जुलिफ्लोरा के मामले में है।
- The project, sited at the Deendayal Port Authority (DPA) in Kandla, will produce five tonnes of methanol a day and is being built by Pune-based Thermax Energy with gasification technology from Vadodara's Ankur Scientific, and will be owned by the port authority.  
यह परियोजना कांडला के दीनदयाल पोर्ट अथॉरिटी (DPA) में स्थित है, जो प्रतिदिन 5 टन मेथनॉल का उत्पादन करेगी और इसे थेर्मेक्स एनर्जी (पुणे) तथा अंकुर साइंटिफिक (वडोदरा) द्वारा बनाया जा रहा है, जबकि इसका स्वामित्व पोर्ट अथॉरिटी के पास होगा।
- Both companies are betting that the Government of India's policy to convert ports along the western coast into "green ports" will create demand for a fuel that the global shipping industry is obliged to adopt under International Maritime Organization (IMO) rules.  
दोनों कंपनियां मानती हैं कि भारत सरकार की पश्चिमी तट के बंदरगाहों को ग्रीन पोर्ट बनाने की नीति से ऐसे ईंधन की मांग बढ़ेगी, जिसे वैश्विक शिपिंग उद्योग को अंतरराष्ट्रीय समुद्री संगठन (IMO) के नियमों के तहत अपनाना होगा।

## Greenhouse gas cuts

### ग्रीनहाउस गैसों में कमी

- Methanol made from renewable feedstocks can cut a vessel's CO2 emissions by up to 95% and NOx (nitrogen oxides) by up to 80%, according to the Methanol Institute, while eliminating sulphur oxides and particulate matter.  
नवीकरणीय स्रोतों से बने मेथनॉल से जहाजों के CO2 उत्सर्जन में 95% तक और NOx में 80% तक कमी आ सकती है, साथ ही सल्फर ऑक्साइड और कण पदार्थ समाप्त हो जाते हैं।
- "The starting point for most fuels and chemicals is going to be syngas because syngas typically has hydrogen, CO and CO2," he told The Hindu.  
उन्होंने कहा, "अधिकांश ईंधनों और रसायनों का प्रारंभिक बिंदु सिंथेसिस गैस (सिंगैस) होता है, जिसमें हाइड्रोजन, CO और CO2 होते हैं।"
- Gasification, he explained, sits between combustion and pyrolysis.  
उन्होंने बताया कि गैसीकरण दहन और पायरोलिसिस के बीच की प्रक्रिया है।
- "You are heating it in the absence of oxygen, taking it out, improving its quality, burning them a bit and then breaking them down into hydrogen and CO (carbon monoxide) or syngas," he said.  
उन्होंने कहा, "इसे ऑक्सीजन की अनुपस्थिति में गर्म किया जाता है, फिर उसकी गुणवत्ता सुधारकर थोड़ा जलाया जाता है और उसे हाइड्रोजन और CO या सिंगैस में तोड़ा जाता है।"
- Thermax will handle the second step, converting that syngas into methanol.  
थेर्मेक्स दूसरे चरण को संभालेगा, जिसमें सिंगैस को मेथनॉल में बदला जाएगा।
- "It [julfiflora] is one of the best feedstocks because it is hardwood, dense, has a good energy profile, and low in acids," Mr Jain said, adding Gujarat already wants the species cleared.  
जैन ने कहा, "जुलिफ्लोरा सबसे अच्छे फीडस्टॉक में से एक है क्योंकि यह कठोर, घना और ऊर्जा से भरपूर है तथा इसमें अम्ल कम है," और गुजरात पहले से इसे हटाना चाहता है।
- The plant will be certified to run on other agricultural residues such as bagasse and cotton stalk, which Mr. Jain estimates could, at their maximum potential, displace up to a third of India's oil imports.