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16\_01\_2025 DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

TOPICS COVERED

1. Gaza Ceasefire Agreement Ready, Say U.S. and Hamas / गाज़ा संघर्षविराम समझौता तैयार, अमेरिका और हमास ने कहा (GS Paper-II)
2. India's Goods Exports Dip 1% in December; Trade Deficit Narrows to Three-Month Low / दिसंबर में भारत के वस्तुओं के निर्यात में 1% की गिरावट; व्यापार घाटा तीन महीने के निचले स्तर पर पहुंचा (GS Paper-III: External Sector)
3. BSF, BGB Officials Hold Border Coordination Meet to 'Strengthen Ties' / बीएसएफ और बीजीबी अधिकारियों ने 'संबंधों को मजबूत करने' के लिए सीमा समन्वय बैठक की (GS Paper-III: Internal Security)
4. HC orders police cover for Torres 'whistle-blower' / हाईकोर्ट ने टोरेस के लिए पुलिस कवर का आदेश दिया 'व्हिसलब्लोअर' (GS Paper-II: Governance / PCS)
5. SC stays byelection result for expelled Bihar MLC's seat / सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने निष्कासित बिहार एमएलसी की सीट के उपचुनाव के परिणाम पर रोक लगाई (GS Paper-II: Legislative Assembly)
6. Students detained in Tripura over Roman script for Kokborok / कोकबोरोक के लिए रोमन लिपि को लेकर त्रिपुरा में छात्रों को हिरासत में लिया गया (GS Paper-I: A&C / PCS)
7. Submarine, 2 Warships Commissioned / पनडुब्बी और 2 युद्धपोत कमीशन किए गए (GS Paper-III: Internal Security)

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8. **Top Court Asks Kerala Not to Publish Data on Church Denominations** / शीर्ष न्यायालय ने केरल को चर्च संप्रदायों पर डेटा प्रकाशित करने से रोका (GS Paper-II: Right to Religion: Denomination)
9. **Social justice and a lost chance by a Prime Minister** / सामाजिक न्याय और प्रधानमंत्री द्वारा खोया हुआ अवसर (GS Paper-II: Social justice)
10. **The red flag as China's expansionist strategy rolls on** / चीन की विस्तारवादी रणनीति के चलते लाल झंडा (GS Paper-II: India-China)
11. **Burrow tragedy** / बरो त्रासदी (GS Paper-III: Disaster Management)
12. **Safety and piety** / सुरक्षा और धर्मपरायणता (GS Paper-III: Disaster Management)
13. **OYO's new policy may be at the cost of rights** / OYO की नई नीति अधिकारों की कीमत पर हो सकती है (GS Paper-II: Right to Privacy and Bodily Freedom)
14. **What is 'blood money'?** / 'ब्लड मनी' क्या है? (GS Paper-I: Society)
15. **Pannun case: panel seeks action against key person** / पन्नून मामले में: पैनल ने मुख्य व्यक्ति के खिलाफ कार्रवाई की सिफारिश की (GS Paper-III: Internal Security)
16. **Three Indian nuclear entities no more on U.S. restrictions list** / अमेरिका द्वारा तीन भारतीय परमाणु संस्थाओं को प्रतिबंधों की सूची से बाहर किया गया (PCS)
17. **Agasthyar's legacy to be the focus of Kashi Tamil Sangamam 3.0** / आगस्थ्य के योगदान पर काशी तमिल संगमम 3.0 का ध्यान केंद्रित होगा (GS Paper-I: A&C)
18. **In an attempt to address 'lack of diversity', INSA selects non-scientists too as its Fellows** / 'विविधता की कमी' को संबोधित

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करने के प्रयास में, INSA ने गैर-वैज्ञानिकों को भी अपने साथी के रूप में चुना (GS Paper-III: S&T / PCS)

19. Singapore President honours Tarun Das / सिंगापुर राष्ट्रपति ने तरुण दास को सम्मानित किया (PCS)
20. All We Imagine As Light scores a nomination at 2025 BAFTA Awards / "ऑल वी इमेजिन ऐज़ लाइट" को 2025 BAFTA अवार्ड्स में नामांकन मिला (PCS)
21. Sheikh Hasina's niece Tulip Siddiq resigns as U.K. Treasury Minister / शेख हसीना की भतीजी तूलिप सिद्दीकी ने यू.के. ट्रेजरी मंत्री के पद से इस्तीफा दिया (PCS)
22. English author Neil Gaiman denies rape and assault accusations / अंग्रेज़ लेखक नील गैमैन ने बलात्कार और हमले के आरोपों को नकारा (PCS)
23. Iran acknowledges Israel's tampering of centrifuge platforms using explosives / ईरान ने इजराइल द्वारा सेंट्रीफ्यूज प्लेटफार्मों में विस्फोटक पदार्थ लगाने की बात मानी (GS Paper-II: West Asia)

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# Gaza ceasefire agreement ready, say U.S. and Hamas

Israeli PM Netanyahu says final details of the deal are still being ironed out; agreement promises release of hostages held by Hamas and Palestinians jailed in Israel during a six-week pause in war

GS Paper II

Associated Press

DOHA

Israel and Hamas agreed to a ceasefire deal to pause the devastating war in the Gaza Strip, multiple officials announced on Wednesday, raising the possibility of winding down the deadliest and most destructive fighting between the bitter enemies.

The deal, coming after weeks of painstaking negotiations in the Qatari capital, promises the release of dozens of hostages held by Hamas in phases, the release of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners in Israel, and would allow hundreds of thousands of people displaced in Gaza to return to what remains of their homes. It also would flood badly needed humanitar-



**Hopes up:** Supporters of Israelis kidnapped by Hamas react to the news reports on ceasefire deal in Tel Aviv on Wednesday. REUTERS

ian aid into a territory ravaged by 15 months of war.

Three officials from the U.S. and one from Hamas confirmed that a deal had

been reached, while the office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said final details were still being ironed out.

All three U.S. officials and the Hamas official requested anonymity to discuss the contours of the deal before the official announcement by mediators in Doha.

Mr. Netanyahu's office said in a statement that it hoped "details will be finalised tonight." Any agreement needs to be approved by Netanyahu's Cabinet.

Once official, the deal is expected to deliver an initial six-week halt to fighting that is to be accompanied by the opening of negotiations on ending the war altogether.

Over six weeks, 33 of the nearly 100 hostages are to be reunited with their loved ones after months in captivity.

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## Gaza Ceasefire Agreement Ready, Say U.S. and Hamas

गज़ा संघर्षविराम समझौता तैयार, अमेरिका और हमास ने कहा

Israeli PM Netanyahu stated that final details of the deal are still being ironed out.

इज़राइली प्रधानमंत्री नेतन्याहू ने कहा कि समझौते के अंतिम विवरण अभी भी तय किए जा रहे हैं।

- The agreement includes the release of hostages held by Hamas and Palestinians jailed in Israel during a six-week pause in war.



यह समझौता हमास द्वारा बंधक बनाए गए लोगों और इज़राइल में कैद फिलिस्तीनियों की रिहाई का प्रावधान करता है, जो छह हफ्तों के युद्धविराम के दौरान होगा।

- The **ceasefire deal** aims to **pause the devastating war** in the **Gaza Strip**.  
यह संघर्षविराम समझौता गाज़ा पट्टी में विनाशकारी युद्ध को रोकने का उद्देश्य रखता है।
- **Multiple officials** confirmed the deal on **Wednesday**, stating that it raises the possibility of **ending the deadliest fighting** between **Israel** and **Hamas**.  
बुधवार को कई अधिकारियों ने इस समझौते की पुष्टि की और कहा कि यह इज़राइल और हमास के बीच अब तक के सबसे घातक संघर्ष को समाप्त करने की संभावना बढ़ाता है।
- The **negotiations took place in Doha, the capital of Qatar**, over **several weeks**.  
कतर की राजधानी दोहा में कई हफ्तों तक यह वार्ता चली।
- The deal promises the **release of dozens of hostages** in **phases** and **hundreds of Palestinian prisoners** in **Israel**.  
यह समझौता कई चरणों में दर्जनों बंधकों की रिहाई और इज़राइल में सैकड़ों फिलिस्तीनी कैदियों की रिहाई का वादा करता है।
- The deal will allow **displaced people in Gaza** to return to their **homes** and will **flood humanitarian aid** into the territory.  
यह समझौता गाज़ा में विस्थापित लोगों को अपने घरों में लौटने और प्रभावित क्षेत्र में मानवीय सहायता पहुंचाने की अनुमति देगा।
- Three **U.S. officials** and one **Hamas official** confirmed that the **deal had been reached**, requesting **anonymity** before an **official announcement** by **mediators** in **Doha**.  
तीन अमेरिकी अधिकारियों और एक हमास अधिकारी ने इस समझौते की पुष्टि की, लेकिन दोहा के मध्यस्थों द्वारा औपचारिक घोषणा से पहले गोपनीयता की मांग की।
- **Netanyahu's office** stated that **final details** would be **finalised soon**, possibly by **tonight**.  
नेतन्याहू के कार्यालय ने कहा कि अंतिम विवरण आज रात तक तय हो सकते हैं।
- The **deal** will result in an **initial six-week halt to fighting**.  
यह समझौता प्रारंभ में छह हफ्तों के संघर्षविराम का परिणाम देगा।
- **Negotiations on ending the war** will begin during this **six-week period**.  
इस छह हफ्ते की अवधि में युद्ध समाप्त करने के लिए बातचीत शुरू होगी।
- Over six weeks, **33 hostages** out of nearly **100** are expected to be **reunited with their families**.  
छह हफ्तों में लगभग 100 में से 33 बंधकों को उनके परिवारों से मिलाने की संभावना है।



# India's goods exports dip 1% in December; trade deficit narrows to three-month low

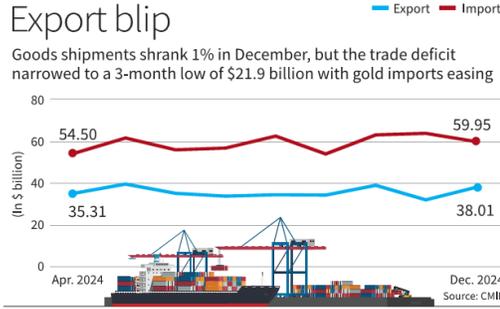
GS Paper III: External Sector

NEW DELHI

India's goods exports contracted 1% year-on-year in December to a fraction over \$38 billion, while imports grew 4.9% to almost \$60 billion, but this narrowed the merchandise trade deficit to a three-month low of \$21.9 billion, reflecting a sharp moderation from November's record gap of \$31.8 billion.

Gold imports that were feared to have spiked to a fresh high of \$14.9 billion in November, before the Centre corrected that tally by \$5 billion last week to \$9.9 billion citing an erroneous 'double count', more than halved sequentially in December to \$4.7 billion. However, this still marked a significant 55.4% increase over the December 2023 gold imports.

Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal sought to



play down concerns about the export blip, saying that shipment values have grown in every quarter through the first nine months of this financial year. This shows that they have not only been resilient during a challenging year but also more consistent, he said. Officials also stressed that December's export tally marked only the third occasion in 2024-25 that outbound shipments' value has crossed

the \$38 billion mark.

Overall goods exports are now estimated to be 1.6% higher through the April to December 2024 period at \$321.7 billion, while imports have risen 5.15% to \$532.5 billion. On a year-on-year basis, December's trade deficit was 17% higher, while the total deficit through the year is up 11.1% at \$210.8 billion.

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## India's Goods Exports Dip 1% in December; Trade Deficit Narrows to Three-Month Low

दिसंबर में भारत के वस्तुओं के निर्यात में 1% की गिरावट; व्यापार घाटा तीन महीने के निचले स्तर पर पहुंचा

• India's goods exports contracted 1% year-on-year in December to a fraction over \$38 billion, while imports grew 4.9% to almost \$60 billion.

दिसंबर में भारत के वस्तुओं का निर्यात साल-दर-साल 1% घटकर \$38 बिलियन के ऊपर रहा, जबकि आयात 4.9% बढ़कर लगभग \$60 बिलियन तक पहुंच गया।

• This narrowed the merchandise trade deficit to a three-month low of \$21.9 billion, reflecting a sharp moderation from November's record gap of \$31.8 billion.

इससे माल व्यापार घाटा तीन महीने के निचले

स्तर \$21.9 बिलियन पर आ गया, जो नवंबर के रिकॉर्ड \$31.8 बिलियन के अंतर से काफी कम है।

• Gold imports, feared to have spiked to a fresh high of \$14.9 billion in November, were corrected by the Centre last week to \$9.9 billion, citing an erroneous 'double count'.

सोने का आयात, जो नवंबर में \$14.9 बिलियन तक बढ़ने की आशंका थी, को केंद्र ने पिछले सप्ताह \$9.9 बिलियन पर सही किया, जिसमें 'दोहरी गिनती' की त्रुटि का हवाला दिया गया।

• In December, gold imports more than halved sequentially to \$4.7 billion, marking a 55.4% increase over December 2023 gold imports.

दिसंबर में, सोने का आयात क्रमशः घटकर \$4.7 बिलियन हो गया, जो दिसंबर 2023 के सोने के आयात की तुलना में 55.4% की वृद्धि है।

• Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal played down concerns about the export dip, stating that shipment values have grown in every quarter during the first nine months of FY 2024-25.

वाणिज्य सचिव सुनील बर्थवाल ने निर्यात में गिरावट को लेकर चिंता को खारिज किया और कहा कि वित्त वर्ष 2024-25 के पहले नौ महीनों में प्रत्येक तिमाही में शिपमेंट मूल्य में वृद्धि हुई है।



- Officials also stressed that **December's export tally marked only the third occasion in FY 2024-25** when the **outbound shipments' value crossed \$38 billion**.  
अधिकारियों ने यह भी बताया कि दिसंबर 2024-25 में तीसरी बार निर्यात का मूल्य \$38 बिलियन को पार कर गया।
- Overall goods exports from April to December 2024 are estimated to be 1.6% higher at \$321.7 billion, while imports have risen 5.15% to \$532.5 billion.  
अप्रैल से दिसंबर 2024 के बीच कुल वस्तुओं का निर्यात लगभग 1.6% बढ़कर \$321.7 बिलियन होने का अनुमान है, जबकि आयात 5.15% बढ़कर \$532.5 बिलियन हो गया है।
- December's trade deficit was 17% higher on a year-on-year basis, while the total deficit through the year is up 11.1% at \$210.8 billion.  
दिसंबर का व्यापार घाटा साल-दर-साल 17% अधिक रहा, जबकि पूरे वर्ष का कुल घाटा 11.1% बढ़कर \$210.8 बिलियन हो गया है।

## BSF, BGB officials hold border coordination meet to 'strengthen ties'

High-level interaction highlights 'unwavering commitment of both forces towards ensuring the sanctity of the international border' amid disagreements over construction of border fences

GS Paper III: Internal Security

KOLKATA

The Border Security Force (BSF) and the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) held a border-coordination meeting on Wednesday at the Sector Commandment level at the Petrapole-Benapole border to discuss critical issues of mutual interest.

The issues included development projects in border areas, implementation of the single row fence (SRF), and effective measures to combat cross-border crime such as cattle smuggling, human trafficking, and illegal immigration, according to a statement released by the South Bengal Frontier of the BSF.

The high-level interaction also reportedly highlighted "the unwavering commitment of both the forces towards strengthening bilateral relations and ensuring the sanctity of the international border".

The development comes amid tensions along the India-Bangladesh bor-



On alert: BSF personnel keep vigil at the India-Bangladesh border at Chhatrahathi in Dakshin Dinajpur district, West Bengal. FILE PHOTO

der, with recent reports of disagreements over the construction of border fences in certain areas such as Sukdebpur in West Bengal's Malda.

The BSF delegation was led by Tarni Kumar, Deputy Inspector General, Sector Headquarters BSF Kolkata, while the BGB delegation was led by Colonel Mehedi Hasan Chowdhury, Sector Commander, Sector Headquarters BGB Khulna. The delegation also comprised battalion

commanders and staff officers from both forces.

"These high-level meetings are testimony to the unbreakable partnership between India and Bangladesh. Through open dialogue and cooperation, both forces have reaffirmed their commitment to maintain the sanctity of the international border while addressing shared concerns. The BSF is steadfast in its mission to faithfully guard its borders and promote harmony with its

neighbours," the public relations officer of BSF South Bengal Frontier said.

The interaction follows a January 10 meeting between the two forces, in which Inspector-General of BSF's South Bengal Frontier Maninder P.S. Pawar was present along with BGB's Regional Commander of the South West Region Brigadier-General Mohammad Humayun Kabir. Subjects like mutual cooperation and maintaining peace along the border were discussed.

### Infiltration bid foiled

The BSF's South Bengal Frontier had foiled multiple smuggling and infiltration attempts at the border on Tuesday in several districts such as North 24 Parganas, Nadia, Murshidabad, and Malda. According to a press statement, BSF personnel pushed back 13 illegal Bangladeshi intruders, seized 1,236 bottles of banned Phensedyl syrup, rescued 18 cattle, and apprehended three Bangladeshi cattle smugglers.

## BSF, BGB Officials Hold Border Coordination Meet to 'Strengthen Ties'

बीएसएफ और बीजीबी

अधिकारियों ने 'संबंधों को

मजबूत करने' के लिए सीमा

समन्वय बैठक की

- The **Border Security Force (BSF)** and the **Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB)** held a **border-coordination meeting on Wednesday** at the **Sector Commandment level at the Petrapole-Benapole border** to discuss critical issues of mutual interest.

बॉर्डर सिक्योरिटी फोर्स (बीएसएफ) और

बॉर्डर गार्ड बांग्लादेश (बीजीबी) ने बुधवार को

सेक्टर कमांडमेंट स्तर पर पेट्रापोल-बेनापोल

सीमा पर एक सीमा समन्वय बैठक की

ताकि आपसी रुचि के महत्वपूर्ण मुद्दों पर चर्चा की जा सके।



- The key issues discussed included **development projects in border areas**, the **implementation of the Single Row Fence (SRF)**, and **effective measures to combat cross-border crimes like cattle smuggling, human trafficking, and illegal immigration**.

चर्चा किए गए मुख्य मुद्दों में सीमा क्षेत्रों में विकास परियोजनाएं, सिंगल रो फेंस (SRF) का कार्यान्वयन, और पार सीमा अपराधों को रोकने के प्रभावी उपाय, जैसे मवेशी तस्करी, मानव तस्करी, और अवैध आब्रजन शामिल थे।

- The high-level interaction highlighted the **unwavering commitment** of both forces towards **strengthening bilateral relations** and ensuring the **sanctity of the international border**.

इस उच्च-स्तरीय बातचीत ने दोनों बलों के बीच द्विपक्षीय संबंधों को मजबूत करने और अंतरराष्ट्रीय सीमा की पवित्रता सुनिश्चित करने की अटूट प्रतिबद्धता को उजागर किया।

## Disagreements Over Border Fence Construction

### सीमा बाड़ निर्माण को लेकर असहमति

- The meeting took place amid **tensions along the India-Bangladesh border**, with recent reports of **disagreements over border fence construction in areas like Sukdebpur in Malda, West Bengal**.

यह बैठक भारत-बांग्लादेश सीमा पर तनाव के बीच हुई, जहां हाल ही में पश्चिम बंगाल के मालदा जिले के सुकदेपुर जैसे क्षेत्रों में सीमा बाड़ के निर्माण को लेकर असहमति की रिपोर्ट सामने आई।

## Delegations and Officials Present

### प्रस्तुत प्रतिनिधि और अधिकारी

- The **BSF delegation** was led by **Tarni Kumar, Deputy Inspector General, Sector Headquarters BSF Kolkata**, while the **BGB delegation** was led by **Colonel Mehedi Hasan Chowdhury, Sector Commander, Sector Headquarters BGB Khulna**.

बीएसएफ प्रतिनिधिमंडल का नेतृत्व तरनी कुमार, उप महानिरीक्षक, सेक्टर मुख्यालय बीएसएफ कोलकाता द्वारा किया गया, जबकि बीजीबी प्रतिनिधिमंडल का नेतृत्व कर्नल मेहदी हसन चौधरी, सेक्टर कमांडर, सेक्टर मुख्यालय बीजीबी खुलना द्वारा किया गया।

- The delegation also included **battalion commanders** and **staff officers** from both forces.

इस प्रतिनिधिमंडल में दोनों बलों के बटालियन कमांडर और स्टाफ अधिकारी भी शामिल थे।

## Commitment to Maintaining Border Peace

### सीमा शांति बनाए रखने की प्रतिबद्धता

- The **BSF South Bengal Frontier's public relations officer** said that these high-level meetings are a **testimony to the unbreakable partnership between India and**



## Bangladesh.

बीएसएफ साउथ बंगाल फ्रंटियर के जनसंपर्क अधिकारी ने कहा कि ये उच्च-स्तरीय बैठकें भारत और बांग्लादेश के बीच अटूट साझेदारी का प्रमाण हैं।

- Both forces have reaffirmed their commitment to maintain the sanctity of the international border and address shared concerns through open dialogue and cooperation.

दोनों बलों ने अंतरराष्ट्रीय सीमा की पवित्रता बनाए रखने और खुले संवाद और सहयोग के माध्यम से साझा चिंताओं को संबोधित करने की अपनी प्रतिबद्धता की पुनः पुष्टि की है।

## Previous Meeting in January 2024

### जनवरी 2024 की पिछली बैठक

- The recent interaction follows a January 10 meeting between the two forces, where Inspector-General of BSF's South Bengal Frontier Maninder P.S. Pawar and BGB's Regional Commander of the South West Region Brigadier-General Mohammad Humayun Kabir were present.

यह बातचीत 10 जनवरी को हुई पिछली बैठक के बाद हुई, जिसमें बीएसएफ साउथ बंगाल फ्रंटियर के महानिरीक्षक मनिंदर पी.एस. पवार और बीजीबी के दक्षिण-पश्चिम क्षेत्र के क्षेत्रीय कमांडर ब्रिगेडियर-जनरल मोहम्मद हुमायूं कबीर उपस्थित थे।

- Subjects like mutual cooperation and maintaining peace along the border were discussed in that meeting.
- उस बैठक में आपसी सहयोग और सीमा पर शांति बनाए रखने जैसे विषयों पर चर्चा हुई।

## Infiltration Bid Foiled by BSF

### बीएसएफ ने घुसपैठ की कोशिश नाकाम की

- On Tuesday, the BSF's South Bengal Frontier foiled multiple attempts of smuggling and infiltration at the border in districts like North 24 Parganas, Nadia, Murshidabad, and Malda.

मंगलवार को, बीएसएफ साउथ बंगाल फ्रंटियर ने उत्तर 24 परगना, नदिया, मुर्शिदाबाद, और मालदा जिलों में सीमा पर तस्करी और घुसपैठ की कई कोशिशों को नाकाम कर दिया।

- BSF personnel pushed back 13 illegal Bangladeshi intruders, seized 1,236 bottles of banned Phensedyl syrup, rescued 18 cattle, and apprehended three Bangladeshi cattle smugglers.

बीएसएफ के जवानों ने 13 अवैध बांग्लादेशी घुसपैठियों को खदेड़ दिया, 1,236 बोतलें प्रतिबंधित



फेंसिडिल सिरप जब्त कीं, 18 मवेशियों को बचाया, और तीन बांग्लादेशी मवेशी तस्करों को गिरफ्तार किया।

## SC stays byelection result for expelled Bihar MLC's seat

GS Paper II: Legislative Assembly

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday stayed the declaration of the result of a byelection held to fill the vacancy created by the expulsion of Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Sunil Kumar Singh from the Bihar Legislative Council following his remarks against Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. The result was scheduled to be declared on January 16.

A Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant partly heard the challenge raised by Mr. Singh, represented by senior advocate A.M. Singhvi, against his ouster.

The court said it would hear the respondents, including the Bihar Legislative Council, on January 16 before wrapping up the case for judgment.

The court, during a

hearing on an earlier date, had orally expressed disapproval of the comments made by the lawmaker.

### 'Will spell death knell'

On Wednesday, Mr. Singhvi submitted that an expulsion on the basis of a mere "turn of phrase" in the House would spell the death knell for parliamentary democracy.

"Robust democracy in and out of Parliament and the State Legislative Assemblies requires turns of phrases. It is not how I speak or how he speaks. Only vituperative abuse may lead to a permanent expulsion," Mr. Singhvi argued.

On July 26, 2024, Mr. Singh was expelled from the Bihar Legislative Council for unruly behaviour in the House. The motion for Mr. Singh's expulsion was passed by voice vote.

wrapping up the case for judgment.

अदालत ने कहा कि वह 16 जनवरी को बिहार विधान परिषद सहित प्रतिवादियों की सुनवाई के बाद निर्णय देगी।

- The court, during an earlier hearing, had orally expressed disapproval of the comments made by the lawmaker.

पिछली सुनवाई के दौरान अदालत ने विधायक द्वारा की गई टिप्पणियों पर मौखिक रूप से असहमति व्यक्त की थी।

### 'Will spell death knell'

"यह लोकतंत्र के लिए खतरा साबित होगा"

## SC stays byelection result for expelled Bihar MLC's seat

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने निष्कासित बिहार एमएलसी की सीट के उपचुनाव के परिणाम पर रोक लगाई

- The Supreme Court on Wednesday stayed the declaration of the result of a byelection held to fill the vacancy created by the expulsion of Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Sunil Kumar Singh from the Bihar Legislative Council.

बुधवार को सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने बिहार विधान परिषद से आरजेडी नेता सुनील कुमार सिंह के निष्कासन से उत्पन्न रिक्ति को भरने के लिए हुए उपचुनाव के परिणाम पर रोक लगा दी।

- The result was scheduled to be declared on January 16. इसका परिणाम 16 जनवरी को घोषित किया जाना था।

- A Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant partly heard the challenge raised by Mr. Singh, represented by senior advocate A.M. Singhvi, against his ouster.

न्यायमूर्ति सूर्य कांत की अध्यक्षता वाली पीठ ने वरिष्ठ अधिवक्ता ए.एम. सिंघवी द्वारा सुनील कुमार सिंह के निष्कासन के खिलाफ उठाई गई चुनौती पर आंशिक सुनवाई की।

- The court said it would hear the respondents, including the Bihar Legislative Council, on January 16 before



- On Wednesday, **Mr. Singhvi** submitted that an **expulsion on the basis of a mere 'turn of phrase'** in the House would **spell the death knell** for parliamentary democracy. बुधवार को श्री सिंघवी ने तर्क दिया कि यदि केवल एक कथन के आधार पर किसी सदस्य का निष्कासन किया जाता है, तो यह संसदीय लोकतंत्र के लिए खतरा साबित होगा।
- He argued that **robust democracy requires freedom of expression** both inside and outside **Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies**. उन्होंने कहा कि एक मजबूत लोकतंत्र में संसद और राज्य विधानसभाओं के भीतर और बाहर अभिव्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता आवश्यक है।
- He further argued that **only vituperative abuse** should lead to **permanent expulsion, not a mere turn of phrase**. उन्होंने आगे कहा कि केवल अशिष्ट भाषा का प्रयोग ही स्थायी निष्कासन का कारण होना चाहिए, न कि केवल कथन का तरीका।
- On **July 26, 2024**, **Sunil Kumar Singh** was expelled from the Bihar Legislative Council for **unruly behaviour in the House**. 26 जुलाई 2024 को सुनील कुमार सिंह को सदन में अशोभनीय आचरण के लिए बिहार विधान परिषद से निष्कासित कर दिया गया था।
- The **motion for his expulsion was passed by voice vote**. उनके निष्कासन का प्रस्ताव स्वर मत से पारित किया गया।

## Students detained in Tripura over Roman script for Kokborok

GS Paper I: A&C  
PCS

AGARTALA

About 12 members of the Twipra Students Federation (TSF) were detained on Wednesday for staging a protest at the entrance of the Tripura Assembly to press for their demand for the use of the Roman script for Kokborok in textbooks and for official work.

This has been a long-standing demand of tribal forums such as the TSF. A majority of the tribes in the State speak **Kokborok**, which has been recognised as the second State language after Bengali.

West Tripura Superintendent of Police Kiran Kumar K. said the students were detained for unauth-

**This has been a long-standing demand of tribal forums in the State such as TSF**

orised assembly in a restricted area. The detained protesters were taken to the police station at A.D. Nagar in a bus.

TSF president Manish **Debbarma** and its vice president **John Debbarma** criticised the "apathy" of the State government for not accepting a "legitimate demand". They also expressed dissatisfaction with the role of Ministers from the indigenous community in the State's coalition government.

## Students detained in Tripura over Roman script for Kokborok

### कोकबोरोक के लिए रोमन लिपि को लेकर त्रिपुरा में छात्रों को हिरासत में लिया गया

• About 12 members of the Twipra Students Federation (TSF) were detained on Wednesday for staging a protest at the entrance of the Tripura Assembly.

बुधवार को ट्विप्रा स्टूडेंट्स फेडरेशन (TSF) के लगभग 12 सदस्य त्रिपुरा विधानसभा के प्रवेश द्वार पर प्रदर्शन करने के कारण हिरासत में लिए गए।

• The protest was to demand the use of the Roman script for Kokborok in textbooks and for official work.

यह प्रदर्शन कोकबोरोक भाषा के लिए रोमन लिपि को पाठ्यपुस्तकों और आधिकारिक कार्यों में उपयोग करने की मांग के लिए किया गया था।



- This has been a **long-standing demand** of tribal forums like the TSF.  
यह TSF जैसे आदिवासी मंचों की पुरानी मांग रही है।
- A **majority of the tribes** in Tripura speak **Kokborok**, which is the **second State language** after Bengali.  
त्रिपुरा में ज्यादातर आदिवासी कोकबोरोक बोलते हैं, जो बांग्ला के बाद राज्य की दूसरी आधिकारिक भाषा है।
- **West Tripura Superintendent of Police (SP) Kiran Kumar K.** said that the students were detained for **unauthorised assembly in a restricted area**.  
पश्चिम त्रिपुरा के पुलिस अधीक्षक (एसपी) किरण कुमार के. ने कहा कि छात्रों को प्रतिबंधित क्षेत्र में बिना अनुमति सभा करने के लिए हिरासत में लिया गया।
- The **detained protesters** were taken to the **A.D. Nagar police station** in a bus.  
हिरासत में लिए गए प्रदर्शनकारियों को बस से ए.डी. नगर पुलिस स्टेशन ले जाया गया।
- **TSF president Manish Debbarma** and its vice president **John Debbarma** criticised the **State government** for its **“apathy”** towards the **legitimate demand** of using the **Roman script** for **Kokborok**.  
TSF के अध्यक्ष मनीष देबबर्मा और उपाध्यक्ष जॉन देबबर्मा ने राज्य सरकार पर “उदासीनता” का आरोप लगाया और कोकबोरोक के लिए रोमन लिपि की वाजिब मांग को स्वीकार न करने की आलोचना की।

## Submarine, 2 warships commissioned

**GS Paper III: Internal Security**

**Vinaya Deshpande Pandit**  
MUMBAI

In a first, three frontline platforms – *INS Nilgiri*, *INS Vaghsheer*, and *INS Surat* – were commissioned on the same day in the Navy on Wednesday.

Hailing the first tri-commissioning as a significant leap towards *Atmanirbhar Bharat*, Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated the naval platforms – two warships and a submarine – to the nation.

*INS Nilgiri* is the lead ship of Project 17A frigates, *INS Vaghsheer* is the sixth and the final submarine of Project 75 Kalvari class, and *INS Surat* is the fourth and final ship of Project 15B destroyers.

“We are becoming a major maritime power by taking inspiration from our rich naval history. *INS Nilgiri* is dedicated to the na-



**Major boost:** *INS Surat*, *INS Nilgiri*, and *INS Vaghsheer* being commissioned at an event in Mumbai on Wednesday. ANI

val empire of the Cholas. *INS Surat* is dedicated to India’s ancient connection to West Asia through Gujarat. I was there for the commissioning of the first Kalvari submarine. I am blessed to commission the sixth one – *INS Vaghsheer*,” the Prime Minister said at the event held at the Naval dockyard on Wednesday morning.

Outlining India’s vision as a global power, Mr. Mo-

di said, “India’s position is not expansionist, but development-oriented. We are recognised as a reliable and responsible partner globally, especially in the Global South.”

On the importance of *Atmanirbhar Bharat abhiyan* or indigenisation, he said the country’s dependence on other countries at the time of any tension should be minimum. “Today, there are 5,000-plus

equipment, which our defence personnel will not buy from other countries.” Of the 40 platforms commissioned in the Navy in the last few years, 39 were made in India, he said.

**‘Growing prowess’**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said the “historic commissioning showcases India’s growing prowess in the Indian Ocean region”.

Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh Tripathi, Chief of Defence Staff Anil Chauhan, Maharashtra Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan, Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, and Deputy Chief Ministers Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar were also present at the event.

**RED-LETTER DAY**  
» PAGE 12

- They also expressed **dissatisfaction** with the **role of Ministers** from the **indigenous community** in the State’s **coalition government**.

उन्होंने राज्य की गठबंधन सरकार में स्वदेशी समुदाय के मंत्रियों की

भूमिका पर भी असंतोष व्यक्त

किया। **Submarine, 2**

**Warships**

**Commissioned**

**पनडुब्बी और 2**

**युद्धपोत कमीशन किए**

**गए**

- For the **first time**, three

frontline platforms — *INS Nilgiri*, *INS Vaghsheer*, and *INS Surat* — were commissioned on the **same day** in the Navy on **Wednesday**.



पहली बार, तीन अग्रणी प्लेटफॉर्म – आईएनएस नीलगिरि, आईएनएस वाघशीर, और आईएनएस सूरत — को बुधवार को नौसेना में एक ही दिन कमीशन किया गया।

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** dedicated these platforms to the nation, marking a **significant step** towards **Atmanirbhar Bharat**.

प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने इन प्लेटफॉर्म्स को राष्ट्र को समर्पित किया, जो आत्मनिर्भर भारत की दिशा में एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम है।

- **INS Nilgiri** is the **lead ship** of **Project 17A frigates**, **INS Vaghsheer** is the **sixth and final submarine** of **Project 75 Kalvari class**, and **INS Surat** is the **fourth and final ship** of **Project 15B destroyers**.

आईएनएस नीलगिरि प्रोजेक्ट 17ए फ्रिगेट्स का प्रमुख जहाज है, आईएनएस वाघशीर प्रोजेक्ट 75 कलवरी क्लास की छठी और अंतिम पनडुब्बी है, और आईएनएस सूरत प्रोजेक्ट 15बी विध्वंसक का चौथा और अंतिम जहाज है।

- Prime Minister Modi said, "**INS Nilgiri is dedicated to the naval empire of the Cholas, and INS Surat represents Gujarat's ancient connection to West Asia.**"

प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने कहा, "आईएनएस नीलगिरि चोलों के नौसेना साम्राज्य को समर्पित है, और आईएनएस सूरत गुजरात के प्राचीन पश्चिम एशिया कनेक्शन का प्रतिनिधित्व करता है।"

- He recalled his participation in the commissioning of the **first Kalvari submarine** and expressed pride in commissioning the **sixth one — INS Vaghsheer**.

उन्होंने पहली कलवरी पनडुब्बी के कमीशनिंग में अपनी भागीदारी को याद किया और छठी पनडुब्बी – आईएनएस वाघशीर के कमीशनिंग पर गर्व व्यक्त किया।

- Speaking on India's **global vision**, Mr. Modi said, "**India's position is not expansionist, but development-oriented. We are seen as a reliable and responsible partner globally.**"

भारत के वैश्विक दृष्टिकोण पर बात करते हुए श्री मोदी ने कहा, "भारत का रुख विस्तारवादी नहीं बल्कि विकासोन्मुख है। हमें वैश्विक स्तर पर एक भरोसेमंद और जिम्मेदार भागीदार के रूप में देखा जाता है।"

- He stressed the importance of the **Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan**, saying that **India should reduce its dependence on other countries** during times of tension.

उन्होंने आत्मनिर्भर भारत अभियान के महत्व पर जोर देते हुए कहा कि भारत को तनाव के समय अन्य देशों पर अपनी निर्भरता कम करनी चाहिए।

- He mentioned that **over 5,000 defence equipment items** will no longer be procured from other countries.

उन्होंने बताया कि 5,000 से अधिक रक्षा उपकरणों को अब अन्य देशों से नहीं खरीदा जाएगा।

- Out of **40 platforms commissioned** in the Navy in recent years, **39 were made in India**, he said.

उन्होंने कहा कि हाल के वर्षों में नौसेना में कमीशन किए गए 40 प्लेटफॉर्म्स में से 39 भारत में बने हैं।



## ‘Growing Prowess’

### ‘बढ़ती ताकत’

- Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** highlighted that this **historic commissioning** demonstrates **India’s growing maritime power** in the **Indian Ocean region**.  
रक्षा मंत्री राजनाथ सिंह ने कहा कि यह ऐतिहासिक कमीशनिंग भारतीय महासागर क्षेत्र में भारत की बढ़ती समुद्री ताकत को दर्शाता है।
- Several dignitaries, including **Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh Tripathi**, **Chief of Defence Staff Anil Chauhan**, **Maharashtra Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan**, and **Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis**, attended the event.  
इस कार्यक्रम में नौसेना प्रमुख एडमिरल दिनेश त्रिपाठी, रक्षा प्रमुख अनिल चौहान, महाराष्ट्र के राज्यपाल सी.पी. राधाकृष्णन, और महाराष्ट्र के मुख्यमंत्री देवेन्द्र फडणवीस सहित कई गणमान्य व्यक्ति उपस्थित थे।

## Top court asks Kerala not to publish data on church denominations

### GS Paper II: Right to Religion: Denomination

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it was time to take a “very conscious call” about the extent to which judiciary ought to intervene in religious affairs even as it asked the Kerala government to not circulate or publish data sought by the court, about the population, churches, and assets of the warring **Orthodox Malankara and Jacobite** denominations in the State.

“When you are asking the Supreme Court to intervene in religious affairs, we have to tread cautiously, extremely carefully...

Today you [the two denominations] have come, tomorrow some other religious group will bring their fight to us... Should we intervene? The courts would ultimately have to take a very conscious call on this question,” Justice Surya Kant, heading a two-judge Bench, orally addressed the court’s concern to lawyers representing the two religious sections.

On December 17, the court had directed status quo in the dispute between the Jacobite and Orthodox Malankara denominations.

The court would be hearing the case in detail on two consecutive days – January 29 and 30.

## Top Court Asks Kerala Not to Publish Data on Church Denominations

### शीर्ष न्यायालय ने केरल को चर्च संप्रदायों पर डेटा प्रकाशित करने से रोका

- The **Supreme Court** on **Wednesday** said it was time to take a “**very conscious call**” on how much the judiciary should intervene in religious affairs.

**शीर्ष न्यायालय** ने **बुधवार** को कहा कि यह समय है जब हमें यह निर्णय लेना चाहिए कि न्यायपालिका को धार्मिक मामलों में कितनी हस्तक्षेप करना चाहिए।

- The court asked the **Kerala government** not to circulate or publish data related to the **population, churches, and assets** of the **Orthodox Malankara and Jacobite denominations**.



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न्यायालय ने केरल सरकार से कहा कि वह आबादी, चर्चों और संपत्तियों से संबंधित डेटा को प्रसारित या प्रकाशित न करे, जो आर्थोडॉक्स मलंकारा और जेकोबाइट संप्रदायों से संबंधित हैं।

- Justice **Surya Kant**, heading a two-judge Bench, expressed concerns about **judicial intervention** in religious disputes. He said, "Today you [the two denominations] have come, tomorrow some other religious group will bring their fight to us... Should we intervene?"

न्यायमूर्ति **सूर्यकांत**, जो दो न्यायधीशों की पीठ का नेतृत्व कर रहे थे, ने धार्मिक विवादों में न्यायिक हस्तक्षेप को लेकर चिंता जताई। उन्होंने कहा, "आज आप [दोनों संप्रदाय] आए हैं, कल कोई और धार्मिक समूह हमें अपना विवाद लाएगा... क्या हमें हस्तक्षेप करना चाहिए?"

- He emphasized that the **courts would have to take a very conscious call** on whether they should intervene in such matters.

उन्होंने यह जोर देते हुए कहा कि न्यायालयों को इस पर बहुत सोच-समझकर निर्णय लेना होगा कि उन्हें ऐसे मामलों में हस्तक्षेप करना चाहिए या नहीं।

- On **December 17**, the court had directed **status quo** in the dispute between the **Jacobite and Orthodox Malankara denominations**.

17 दिसंबर को न्यायालय ने जेकोबाइट और आर्थोडॉक्स मलंकारा संप्रदायों के बीच विवाद में स्थिति बनाए रखने का आदेश दिया था।

- The court will be hearing the case on **January 29 and 30**, 2024.

न्यायालय 29 और 30 जनवरी 2024 को इस मामले की सुनवाई करेगा।

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# Social justice and a lost chance by a Prime Minister

GS Paper II: Social Justice

At the first official state dinner of his presidency, on November 24, 2009, Barack Obama, the first non-white President of the United States, hosted Manmohan Singh, the first non-Hindu Prime Minister of India. In the oldest and the biggest democracies of the world, that era was a high noon of liberalism. A coalition of minorities appeared ascendant, in both countries. Though Manmohan Singh would not be counted as a political leader like Mr. Obama, he too represented a political process that was common to both India and the U.S. – the climax and then the crisis of liberalism, on the social, economic and international affairs fronts. Mr. Obama and Manmohan Singh understood each other better than they both would the politics of their own countries. Manmohan Singh had a keen sense of global developmental challenges – he championed the India-U.S. civil nuclear deal, economic liberalisation and also amended New Delhi's position in climate change negotiations. As a child of Partition and as a Nehruvian, Manmohan Singh understood the necessity of religious harmony. His presence, decisions and indecisions would transform Indian politics. It is essential to take note of it in order to understand the present-day politics of India.

## The 2004 vote

There were two paradoxes in Manmohan Singh's rise as Prime Minister in 2004, both of which speak to the vibrancy of Indian democracy. The anti-Sikh riots of 1984 marked a low point in Indian pluralism. Sikhs made up about 1.72% of India's population, and the fact that one of them could become the Prime Minister 20 years later, marked a high point. The majority Hindus did not find anything problematic.

The second paradox is that the vote in 2004 was one against the celebration of the market. Manmohan Singh who became Prime Minister, was a votary of the market. He would reluctantly follow a welfarist agenda dictated by democratic politics.

Now, to his presence, decisions and indecisions. The United Progressive Alliance-1 was a coalition of religious and linguistic minorities and subaltern social groups. But when it was reconstituted following the 2009 elections, subaltern representatives from the Hindi belt were left out. The Left was replaced with Trinamool Congress (TMC); the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam continued. Political power in India between 2004 and 2014 was controlled, along with Manmohan Singh, by Sonia Gandhi, Ahmed Patel, Pranab Mukherjee and A.K. Antony. The coalition elected two Presidents of India, Pratibha Patil and Pranab Mukherjee, and Hamid Ansari as Vice President of India. Religious and linguistic minorities were represented for all 10 years, but subaltern castes were pointedly expelled in 2009 by Congress managers. Nobody in the above list, save perhaps Sonia Gandhi, had any capacity to get an extra vote for the Congress in the Hindi heartland. In fact, the very optics of



Varghese K. George

As Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh's decisions and indecisions caused a rift between subaltern Hindus and Muslims in the Hindi heartland

the overwhelming presence of religious minorities and upper caste Hindus at the top turned out to be one of the causes of the shift by the Other Backward Classes (OBC) and Dalits in favour of the Bharatiya Janata Party in 2014. This has parallels with what would happen in the U.S. in 2016.

Manmohan Singh was indecisive on many issues, but there was one question – apart from the India-U.S. nuclear deal – that he put his foot down for. This was to veto the social justice agenda pushed by cabinet colleagues Arjun Singh and Meira Kumar, Minister of Human Resource Development and Social Justice Minister, respectively, in UPA-I. There cannot be a reasonable explanation for the surprise surge of the Congress in 2009 in the heartland – it won 21 of the 80 Lok Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh, for instance – without taking into account the OBC quota in higher educational institutions driven by Arjun Singh and OBC parties in UPA-I. The battle of wits between the two Singhs on the quota question is instructive of the imbalance between secularism and socialism justice that made the UPA's promise of progress short-lived. Manmohan Singh owned it.

## Singh vs Singh

Manmohan Singh resisted Arjun Singh's plans for expanding quotas. It all started with a Supreme Court judgment in 2005, which brought into dispute the power of the state to enforce the reservation policy in admissions to private educational institutions. Many States had quotas in unaided institutions, which were questionable after the Court decision. Arjun Singh championed it and Parliament amended the Constitution to insert a clause to Article 15, which specifically enabled reservations in "admission to educational institutions including private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided by the State, other than the minority educational institutions".

A new anti-reservation movement erupted in upper India while peninsular India remained calm. The then Human Resources Development Ministry under Arjun Singh drafted a Bill that proposed OBC quotas in all government institutions of higher education which already had Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe quotas; and for all three categories in private ones. The Manmohan Singh-led Prime Minister's Office instructed Arjun Singh to bifurcate the Bill – one for aided, and a second for unaided ones. Arjun Singh got both drafts ready. Late evening on a day before they were to be taken up by the Union Cabinet, Manmohan Singh instructed that the Bill for private ones be kept aside. Though the move for caste quotas in private institutions was halted, quota in government institutions of higher education rallied OBC communities in the heartland behind the Congress party in 2009.

Manmohan Singh and the technocratic, Delhi-based Congress managers interpreted the 2009 results as an endorsement of the employment guarantee scheme, or even the U.S.

nuclear deal. Arjun Singh was denied a berth in the new Council. Meira Kumar was restrained as Lok Sabha Speaker. Ms. Kumar had tried to implement an item in the National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP). It had said: "The UPA government is very sensitive to the issue of affirmative action, including reservations in the private sector. It will immediately initiate a national dialogue with all political parties, industry and other organizations to see how best the private sector can fulfill the aspirations of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe youth." Ms. Kumar convened a meeting of industry leaders to open a dialogue, inviting the ire of Manmohan Singh, who instructed her to cancel it. Nobody in the National Advisory Council, whose mandate was to implement the NCMP, said anything. Meanwhile, OBC MPs were pointing out in 2006 that not a single Governor in the country was from among their communities. On this question, Manmohan Singh remained silent – indecision.

## The parallel line

This hostility towards social justice politics was happening alongside a discussion on the welfare of Muslims, Dalits, and OBC Christians. The Court's Inamdar judgment on reservations in private educational institutions and the appointment of the Sachar Committee to study the condition of Muslims happened months apart in 2005, triggering fresh debates on communal and caste questions. The Congress, partly by intention, pitched the Muslims against subaltern Hindus, thinking that this could break the OBC-Muslim social coalition that had emaciated the party in the Hindi heartland. But the consequences were unintended. OBC/Dalit segments of the heartland became the most fertile ground for Hindutva subsequently, as they came to believe that non-BJP parties were trying to provide quotas for Muslims at their cost. It is not a coincidence that the badly drafted line by Manmohan Singh about minorities having the first claim over national resources continues to haunt the Congress.

In fairness, Manmohan Singh was following a traditional Congress line of ignoring the OBCs and focusing on the rest. Arjun Singh sensed the ground had shifted and that the OBCs counted. The other politician who sensed that by 2009 was Narendra Modi, who addressed subaltern Hindus. Arjun Singh crossed swords with two Congress Prime Ministers – once on secularism and then on social justice. In 1992, he resigned from the P.V. Narasimha Rao Government for its failure to protect the Babri Masjid. In 2009 he was denied a cabinet berth by Manmohan Singh. The Congress party included in its 2024 election manifesto a promise of OBC/SC/ST reservation in private educational institutions – an idea stalled by Manmohan Singh. Rahul Gandhi today wants to rebuild the Congress on the twin plank of secularism and social justice. Manmohan Singh had an opportunity.

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## Social justice and a lost chance by a Prime Minister सामाजिक न्याय और प्रधानमंत्री द्वारा खोया हुआ अवसर

At the First Official State Dinner of His Presidency

उनकी राष्ट्रपति पद की पहली आधिकारिक राज्य रात्रिभोज पर

- On November 24, 2009, **Barack Obama**, the first **non-white** President of the United States, hosted **Manmohan Singh**, the first **non-Hindu** Prime Minister of India. 24 नवम्बर 2009 को, **बराक ओबामा**, जो अमेरिका के पहले **गैर-श्वेत** राष्ट्रपति थे, ने **मनमोहन सिंह**, जो भारत के पहले **गैर-हिंदू** प्रधानमंत्री थे, को आमंत्रित किया।
- In the oldest and biggest democracies of the world, that era was a **high noon of liberalism**.  
दुनिया की सबसे पुरानी और सबसे बड़ी लोकतंत्रों में, वह युग **लिबरलिज़्म का उच्चतम बिंदु** था।
- A coalition of minorities appeared ascendant, in both countries.  
दोनों देशों में **अल्पसंख्यकों का गठबंधन** प्रगति की दिशा में था।
- Though Manmohan Singh would not be counted as a political leader like Mr. Obama, he too represented a political process that was common to both India and the U.S. — the climax and then the crisis of liberalism, on the **social, economic and international affairs** fronts. हालांकि मनमोहन सिंह को श्री ओबामा जैसे राजनीतिक नेता के रूप में नहीं गिना जाएगा, फिर भी वह एक ऐसे राजनीतिक प्रक्रिया का प्रतिनिधित्व करते थे जो भारत और अमेरिका दोनों में समान थी - **सामाजिक, आर्थिक और अंतर्राष्ट्रीय मामलों** में लिबरलिज़्म के उत्कर्ष और फिर उसके संकट का सामना।
- Manmohan Singh had a keen sense of **global developmental challenges** — he championed the **India-U.S. civil nuclear deal, economic liberalisation** and also amended New Delhi's position in **climate change negotiations**. मनमोहन सिंह को **वैश्विक विकासात्मक चुनौतियों** की गहरी समझ थी - उन्होंने **भारत-अमेरिका परमाणु समझौता, आर्थिक उदारीकरण** का समर्थन किया और साथ ही **जलवायु परिवर्तन वार्ता** में दिल्ली के रुख को बदला।
- As a child of Partition and as a **Nehruvian**, Manmohan Singh understood the necessity of **religious harmony**. **विभाजन** के समय के बच्चे और एक **नेहरूवादी** के रूप में, मनमोहन सिंह को **धार्मिक सद्भावना** की आवश्यकता का गहरा एहसास था।
- His presence, decisions, and indecisions would transform Indian politics.  
उनकी उपस्थिति, निर्णय और अनिर्णय भारतीय राजनीति को बदल देंगे।
- It is essential to take note of it in order to understand the present-day politics of India.  
इसे ध्यान में रखना आवश्यक है ताकि हम वर्तमान भारतीय राजनीति को समझ सकें।

The 2004 Vote

2004 का चुनाव



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- There were two paradoxes in **Manmohan Singh's rise as Prime Minister in 2004**, both of which speak to the **vibrancy** of Indian democracy.  
**मनमोहन सिंह के 2004 में प्रधानमंत्री बनने में दो विरोधाभास थे, जो भारतीय लोकतंत्र की जिन्दगी को दर्शाते हैं।**
- The **anti-Sikh riots of 1984** marked a low point in Indian pluralism. **Sikhs** made up about **1.72%** of India's population, and the fact that one of them could become the **Prime Minister** 20 years later, marked a high point.  
**1984 के सिख विरोधी दंगे भारतीय बहुलतावाद के एक निचले बिंदु को चिह्नित करते हैं। सिख भारत की जनसंख्या का लगभग 1.72% थे, और यह तथ्य कि उनमें से एक 20 साल बाद प्रधानमंत्री बन सकता था, एक उच्च बिंदु को दर्शाता है।**
- The **majority Hindus** did not find anything problematic.  
**बहुसंख्यक हिंदू को इसमें कुछ भी समस्याजनक नहीं लगा।**
- The second paradox is that the vote in **2004** was one against the celebration of the **market**.  
**दूसरा विरोधाभास यह है कि 2004 में हुआ मतदान बाजार के उत्सव के खिलाफ था।**
- Manmohan Singh, who became **Prime Minister**, was a votary of the **market**.  
**प्रधानमंत्री बने मनमोहन सिंह, बाजार के समर्थक थे।**
- He would reluctantly follow a **welfarist agenda** dictated by **democratic politics**.  
**वह लोकतांत्रिक राजनीति द्वारा निर्धारित कल्याणकारी एजेंडे का अनिच्छा से पालन करेंगे।**

### Presence, Decisions, and Indecisions

#### उपस्थिति, निर्णय और अनिर्णय

- The **United Progressive Alliance-1 (UPA-1)** was a coalition of **religious** and **linguistic minorities** and **subaltern social groups**. **यूनाइटेड प्रोग्रेसिव एलायंस-1 (UPA-1)** एक गठबंधन था जिसमें **धार्मिक और भाषाई अल्पसंख्यक और नीच सामाजिक समूह** शामिल थे।
- But when it was reconstituted following the **2009 elections**, subaltern representatives from the **Hindi belt** were left out.  
**लेकिन जब इसे 2009 के चुनावों के बाद पुनर्गठित किया गया, तो हिंदी बेल्ट से उपेक्षित प्रतिनिधि बाहर रह गए।**
- The **Left** was replaced with **Trinamool Congress (TMC)**; the **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam** continued.  
**बाएं को त्रिणमूल कांग्रेस (TMC) से बदला गया; द्रविड़ मुनेत्र काज़गम जारी रहा।**
- Political power in India between **2004 and 2014** was controlled, along with **Manmohan Singh**, by **Sonia Gandhi, Ahmed Patel, Pranab Mukherjee, and A.K. Antony**.  
**2004 और 2014 के बीच भारत में राजनीतिक शक्ति, मनमोहन सिंह के साथ, सोनिया गांधी, अहमद पटेल, प्रणब मुखर्जी, और ए. के. एंटनी के द्वारा नियंत्रित की गई।**
- The coalition elected two Presidents of India, **Pratibha Patil** and **Pranab Mukherjee**, and **Hamid Ansari** as Vice President of India.

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गठबंधन ने भारत के दो राष्ट्रपति, प्रणब मुखर्जी और प्रतिभा पाटिल, और हमिद अंसारी को भारत के उपराष्ट्रपति के रूप में चुना।

- Religious and linguistic minorities were represented for all **10 years**, but **subaltern castes** were pointedly expelled in **2009** by **Congress managers**.

धार्मिक और भाषाई अल्पसंख्यकों का प्रतिनिधित्व **10 वर्षों** तक किया गया, लेकिन **उपचारण जातियां 2009** में कांग्रेस प्रबंधकों द्वारा जानबूझकर बाहर कर दी गईं।

- Nobody in the above list, save perhaps **Sonia Gandhi**, had any capacity to get an extra vote for the Congress in the **Hindi heartland**.

ऊपर दी गई सूची में से किसी के पास, शायद **सोनिया गांधी** को छोड़कर, **हिंदी हार्टलैंड** में कांग्रेस के लिए अतिरिक्त वोट जुटाने की कोई क्षमता नहीं थी।

- In fact, the very optics of the overwhelming presence of **religious minorities** and **upper caste Hindus** at the top turned out to be one of the causes of the shift by the **Other Backward Classes (OBC)** and **Dalits** in favour of the **Bharatiya Janata Party** in **2014**.

वास्तव में, शीर्ष पर धार्मिक अल्पसंख्यकों और ऊपरी जाति हिंदुओं की प्रबल उपस्थिति का दूसरे **पिछड़े वर्गों (OBC)** और **दलितों** द्वारा **2014** में **भारतीय जनता पार्टी** के पक्ष में स्थानांतरित होने का एक कारण बन गया।

- This has parallels with what would happen in the **U.S. in 2016**.

इसका समानांतर **2016** में **अमेरिका** में होने वाली घटनाओं से है

### Manmohan Singh's Indecisiveness and Stance on Social Justice

#### मनमोहन सिंह का अनिर्णय और सामाजिक न्याय पर रुख

- Manmohan Singh was indecisive on many issues, but there was one question — apart from the **India-U.S. nuclear deal** — that he put his foot down for.

मनमोहन सिंह कई मुद्दों पर अनिर्णय के शिकार थे, लेकिन एक सवाल था – **भारत-अमेरिका परमाणु समझौते** के अलावा – जिस पर उन्होंने अपना रुख स्पष्ट किया।

- This was to veto the **social justice agenda** pushed by cabinet colleagues **Arjun Singh** and **Meira Kumar**, Minister of **Human Resource Development** and **Social Justice Minister**, respectively, in **UPA-1**.

यह था **सामाजिक न्याय के एजेंडे** को वीटो करना, जिसे उनके मंत्रिमंडलीय सहयोगियों **अर्जुन सिंह** और **मीरा कुमार**, जो क्रमशः **मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री** और **सामाजिक न्याय मंत्री** थे, ने **UPA-1** में बढ़ावा दिया था।

- There cannot be a reasonable explanation for the surprise surge of the **Congress** in **2009** in the heartland — it won **21** of the **80 Lok Sabha seats** in **Uttar Pradesh**, for instance — without taking into account the **OBC quota** in higher educational institutions driven by **Arjun Singh** and **OBC parties** in **UPA-1**.

**2009** में दिलचस्प परिणामों के लिए कोई तर्कसंगत स्पष्टीकरण नहीं हो सकता – उदाहरण के लिए, **उत्तर प्रदेश** में **80 लोकसभा सीटों** में से **21** जीतने वाली कांग्रेस — बिना उच्च शैक्षिक संस्थानों में **OBC कोटा** को ध्यान में रखे, जिसे **अर्जुन सिंह** और **OBC दलों** ने **UPA-1** में बढ़ावा दिया।



- The battle of wits between the two **Singhs** on the **quota question** is instructive of the imbalance between **secularism** and **socialism justice** that made the **UPA's promise of progress short-lived**.

कोटे के सवाल पर दोनों सिंघों के बीच का बुद्धिमत्ता की जंग धर्मनिरपेक्षता और सामाजिक न्याय के बीच असंतुलन को दर्शाती है, जिसने UPA की प्रगति का वादा अस्थायी बना दिया।

- Manmohan Singh owned it.  
मनमोहन सिंह ने इसे अपनाया।

## Singh vs Singh

### सिंह बनाम सिंह

- Manmohan Singh resisted **Arjun Singh's** plans for expanding quotas.  
मनमोहन सिंह ने अर्जुन सिंह की कोटे का विस्तार करने की योजनाओं का विरोध किया।
- It all started with a **Supreme Court judgment** in **2005**, which brought into dispute the power of the state to enforce the **reservation policy** in admissions to **private educational institutions**.  
यह सब एक सुप्रीम कोर्ट के फैसले के साथ शुरू हुआ, जो 2005 में आया, जिसमें राज्य की आरक्षण नीति को निजी शैक्षिक संस्थानों में प्रवेश में लागू करने की शक्ति पर विवाद उठाया गया था।
- Many States had **quotas** in unaided institutions, which were questionable after the Court decision.  
कई राज्यों में बिना सहायता प्राप्त संस्थानों में कोटा था, जो कोर्ट के फैसले के बाद संदिग्ध हो गए थे।
- Arjun Singh championed it and **Parliament amended the Constitution** to insert a clause to **Article 15**, which specifically enabled **reservations** in “admission to educational institutions including private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided by the State, other than the minority educational institutions”.  
अर्जुन सिंह ने इसका समर्थन किया और संसद ने संविधान में संशोधन किया ताकि अनुच्छेद 15 में एक प्रावधान जोड़ा जा सके, जो “शैक्षिक संस्थानों में प्रवेश में आरक्षण को सक्षम करता था, चाहे वह राज्य द्वारा सहायता प्राप्त हो या न हो, अल्पसंख्यक शैक्षिक संस्थानों को छोड़कर”।
- A new **anti-reservation movement** erupted in **upper India** while **peninsular India** remained calm.  
एक नई आरक्षण विरोधी आंदोलन उत्तरी भारत में फूटा, जबकि दक्षिणी भारत शांत रहा।
- The then **Human Resources Development Ministry** under **Arjun Singh** drafted a Bill that proposed **OBC quotas** in all government institutions of higher education which already had **Scheduled Caste** and **Scheduled Tribe quotas**; and for all three categories in private ones.  
उस समय के मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय ने अर्जुन सिंह के तहत एक विधेयक तैयार किया जिसमें सभी सरकारी उच्च शिक्षा संस्थानों में **OBC कोटा** का प्रस्ताव था, जिसमें पहले से ही अनुसूचित जाति और अनुसूचित जनजाति कोटा था; और निजी संस्थानों में तीनों श्रेणियों के लिए।
- The **Manmohan Singh-led Prime Minister's Office** instructed **Arjun Singh** to bifurcate the Bill — one for aided, and a second for unaided ones.



मनमोहन सिंह के नेतृत्व वाले प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय ने अर्जुन सिंह को विधेयक को विभाजित करने का निर्देश दिया – एक सहायता प्राप्त के लिए, और दूसरा बिना सहायता प्राप्त संस्थानों के लिए।

- Arjun Singh got both drafts ready. Late evening on a day before they were to be taken up by the **Union Cabinet**, Manmohan Singh instructed that the Bill for private ones be kept aside.

अर्जुन सिंह ने दोनों ड्राफ्ट तैयार किए। एक दिन पहले जब वे **केंद्रीय कैबिनेट** द्वारा लिए जाने थे, तो मनमोहन सिंह ने निर्देश दिया कि निजी संस्थानों के लिए विधेयक को अलग रखा जाए।

- Though the move for caste quotas in private institutions was halted, **quota in government institutions of higher education** rallied **OBC communities** in the heartland behind the **Congress party** in 2009.

हालांकि निजी संस्थानों में जाति कोटे की योजना को रोक दिया गया, फिर भी **सरकारी उच्च शिक्षा संस्थानों में कोटा** ने **OBC समुदायों** को 2009 में कांग्रेस पार्टी के पीछे दिली इलाके में एकजुट किया।

- Manmohan Singh and the **technocratic, Delhi-based Congress managers** interpreted the **2009 results** as an endorsement of the **employment guarantee scheme**, or even the **U.S. nuclear deal**.

मनमोहन सिंह और **प्रौद्योगिक-आधारित, दिल्ली स्थित कांग्रेस प्रबंधकों** ने 2009 के परिणामों को **रोजगार गारंटी योजना** या यहां तक कि **अमेरिका-परमाणु समझौते** के समर्थन के रूप में व्याख्यायित किया।

- **Arjun Singh** was denied a berth in the new **Council**.

अर्जुन सिंह को नई मंत्रिमंडल में स्थान से वंचित कर दिया गया।

- **Meira Kumar** was restrained as **Lok Sabha Speaker**.

मीरा कुमार को **लोकसभा अध्यक्ष** के रूप में संकोचित किया गया।

- Ms. Kumar had tried to implement an item in the **National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP)**.

श्रीमती कुमार ने **राष्ट्रीय सामान्य न्यूनतम कार्यक्रम (NCMP)** में एक बिंदु लागू करने की कोशिश की थी।

- It had said: “The **UPA government** is very sensitive to the issue of **affirmative action**, including reservations in the **private sector**.”

इसमें कहा गया था: “**UPA सरकार सकारात्मक कार्रवाई** के मुद्दे के प्रति बहुत संवेदनशील है, जिसमें **निजी क्षेत्र** में आरक्षण भी शामिल है।

- It will immediately initiate a **national dialogue** with all political parties, industry, and other organizations to see how best the private sector can fulfill the aspirations of **Scheduled Caste** and **Scheduled Tribe** youth.”

यह तुरंत सभी राजनीतिक दलों, उद्योग और अन्य संगठनों के साथ एक **राष्ट्रीय संवाद** शुरू करेगी यह देखने के लिए कि **अनुसूचित जाति** और **अनुसूचित जनजाति** के युवाओं की आकांक्षाओं को निजी क्षेत्र कैसे पूरा कर सकता है।



## Kumar's Attempt to Convene a Meeting and Manmohan Singh's Reaction

### कुमार की बैठक बुलाने की कोशिश और मनमोहन सिंह की प्रतिक्रिया

- **Kumar** convened a meeting of **industry leaders** to open a dialogue, inviting the ire of **Manmohan Singh**, who instructed her to cancel it.  
कुमार ने उद्योग नेताओं की एक बैठक बुलाने की कोशिश की, जिसके कारण **मनमोहन सिंह** ने उन्हें इसे रद्द करने का निर्देश दिया।
- Nobody in the **National Advisory Council**, whose mandate was to implement the **NCMP**, said anything.  
राष्ट्रीय सलाहकार परिषद में कोई भी नहीं बोला, जिसका कार्य **NCMP** को लागू करना था।
- Meanwhile, **OBC MPs** were pointing out in **2006** that not a single **Governor** in the country was from among their communities.  
इस बीच, **OBC सांसदों** ने **2006** में यह बताया कि देश में एक भी **राज्यपाल** उनके समुदायों से नहीं था।
- On this question, **Manmohan Singh** remained silent — **indecision**.  
इस सवाल पर, **मनमोहन सिंह** चुप रहे — **अनिर्णय**।

## The Parallel Line

### समांतर रेखा

- This hostility towards **social justice politics** was happening alongside a discussion on the welfare of **Muslims, Dalits, and OBC Christians**.  
सामाजिक न्याय की राजनीति के प्रति यह शत्रुता **मुसलमानों, दलितों और OBC ईसाइयों** की भलाई पर हो रही चर्चा के साथ थी।
- The **Court's Inamdar judgment** on reservations in private educational institutions and the **appointment of the Sachar Committee** to study the condition of **Muslims** happened months apart in **2005**, triggering fresh debates on **communal** and **caste questions**.  
कोर्ट का इनामदार फैसला निजी शैक्षिक संस्थानों में आरक्षण पर और सचर समिति की नियुक्ति ने **मुसलमानों** की स्थिति का अध्ययन करने के लिए **2005** में हुए, जिसने साम्प्रदायिक और जाति आधारित सवालों पर नए बहसों को जन्म दिया।
- The **Congress**, partly by intention, pitched the **Muslims** against **subaltern Hindus**, thinking that this could break the **OBC-Muslim social coalition** that had emaciated the party in the **Hindi heartland**.  
कांग्रेस, आंशिक रूप से इरादे से, ने **मुसलमानों** को उपयुक्त **हिन्दुओं** के खिलाफ खड़ा किया, यह सोचते हुए कि इससे **OBC-मुसलमान सामाजिक गठबंधन** टूट जाएगा, जो पार्टी को **हिंदी दिली इलाकों** में कमजोर कर चुका था।
- But the consequences were unintended. **OBC/Dalit segments** of the heartland became the most fertile ground for **Hindutva** subsequently, as they came to believe that **non-BJP parties** were trying to provide **quotas for Muslims** at their cost.  
लेकिन इसके परिणाम अप्रत्याशित थे। **OBC/दलित वर्ग** दिली इलाके में **हिंदुत्व** के लिए सबसे



उपजाऊ जमीन बन गए, क्योंकि उन्हें विश्वास हो गया कि गैर-BJP पार्टियाँ मुसलमानों के लिए कोटा देने की कोशिश कर रही थीं, जो उनके नुकसान पर था।

- It is not a coincidence that the badly drafted line by **Manmohan Singh** about **minorities having the first claim over national resources** continues to haunt the **Congress**.

यह कोई संयोग नहीं है कि **मनमोहन सिंह** द्वारा **नस्लीय अल्पसंख्यकों** के लिए **राष्ट्रीय संसाधनों पर पहले हक** का खंडन करने वाली badly तैयार की गई लाइन कांग्रेस के लिए परेशानी बनी हुई है।

- In fairness, **Manmohan Singh** was following a traditional **Congress line** of ignoring the **OBCs** and focusing on the rest.

निष्पक्षता में, **मनमोहन सिंह** पारंपरिक कांग्रेस लाइन का पालन कर रहे थे, जिसमें **OBCs** को नजरअंदाज कर बाकी पर ध्यान केंद्रित किया गया।

- **Arjun Singh** sensed the ground had shifted and that the **OBCs** counted.

**अर्जुन सिंह** ने महसूस किया कि जमीन बदल चुकी है और **OBCs** की अहमियत है।

- The other politician who sensed that by **2009** was **Narendra Modi**, who addressed **subaltern Hindus**.

एक और नेता जिन्होंने **2009** तक यह समझा, वह थे **नरेन्द्र मोदी**, जिन्होंने **उपयुक्त हिन्दुओं** को संबोधित किया।

- **Arjun Singh** crossed swords with two **Congress Prime Ministers** — once on **secularism** and then on **social justice**.

**अर्जुन सिंह** ने दो कांग्रेस **प्रधानमंत्रियों** से संघर्ष किया — एक बार **धर्मनिरपेक्षता** पर और फिर **सामाजिक न्याय** पर।

- In **1992**, he resigned from the **P.V. Narasimha Rao Government** for its failure to protect the **Babri Masjid**.

**1992** में, उन्होंने **P.V. नरसिंह राव सरकार** से इस्तीफा दिया क्योंकि सरकार **बाबरी मस्जिद** की सुरक्षा में विफल रही थी।

- In **2009**, he was denied a **cabinet berth** by **Manmohan Singh**.

**2009** में, उन्हें **मनमोहन सिंह** द्वारा **मंत्रिमंडल** में **स्थान** से वंचित कर दिया गया।

- The **Congress party** included in its **2024 election manifesto** a promise of **OBC/SC/ST reservation in private educational institutions** — an idea stilled by **Manmohan Singh**.

कांग्रेस पार्टी ने अपनी **2024 चुनावी घोषणा पत्र** में **OBC/SC/ST आरक्षण** का वादा किया, जो **मनमोहन सिंह** द्वारा रुका हुआ था।

- **Rahul Gandhi** today wants to rebuild the **Congress** on the twin plank of **secularism** and **social justice**.

आज **राहुल गांधी** कांग्रेस को **धर्मनिरपेक्षता** और **सामाजिक न्याय** के दोहरे आधार पर फिर से बनाना चाहते हैं।

- **Manmohan Singh** had an opportunity.

**मनमोहन सिंह** के पास एक अवसर था।



# The red flag as China's expansionist strategy rolls on

GS Paper II: India-China

In recent days, India has witnessed two significant incidents of Chinese aggression along the China-India border, highlighting vulnerabilities that not only threaten India's territorial integrity but also undermine its sovereignty. The Chinese government's announcement of the construction of a dam on the Yarlung Zangbo river (which is the Brahmaputra river), and the creation of two new counties in north-eastern Ladakh, have set alarm bells ringing.

India has strongly condemned these Chinese actions, asserting that they are illegal and a direct challenge to India's sovereignty. In response to China's ambitious hydropower project, India has expressed concern, noting that it is monitoring the situation and will take necessary measures to safeguard its national interests. These developments are particularly disturbing given the recent consensus on troop disengagement along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). These new moves further underscore the unpredictability of China's approach in the region.

## The transboundary water issue

India is not alone in facing the brunt of China's expansionist policies. Other South Asian countries such as Nepal and Bhutan have been subjected in a similar manner to Chinese territorial encroachments. Disputes over land boundaries persist between China and several of its South Asian neighbours, and China's unilateral actions with respect to transboundary rivers, particularly the Brahmaputra and Indus river systems, have the potential to jeopardise water security in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Pakistan. Despite these challenges, each country has opted to engage with China on a bilateral basis.

The proposed Chinese dam, with an annual capacity to generate 300 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity a year, is located on the lower reaches of the Yarlung Zangbo near the China-India



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India, as the dominant regional power in South Asia, should take the lead in shaping a collective response to China's aggressive actions

border. This massive infrastructure project presents significant challenges for downstream countries, particularly India and Bangladesh.

The construction of the dam is likely to reduce the amount of water and silt reaching downstream, which could have severe long-term consequences for agriculture, fisheries, and biodiversity in India and Bangladesh. Further, during the monsoon season or in times of geopolitical tensions, the uncontrolled release of water could result in devastating floods along the Indian border, which will be an issue of strategic vulnerability for India. In anticipation, India has accelerated plans to build its own hydropower projects and reservoirs, including an investment of \$1 billion to expedite the construction of 12 hydropower stations in Arunachal Pradesh.

## Border disputes, cartographic aggression

China's recent actions, including the creation of the two new counties, are a part of its ongoing strategy of cartographic aggression aimed at asserting control over disputed territories. This kind of tactic is intended to gain strategic leverage over its regional adversaries.

China's territorial disputes with India are multifaceted, with the most recent aggression occurring along the western front, specifically in Ladakh. Additionally, China continues to lay claim to Arunachal Pradesh, a State that is an inalienable part of India. Beyond India, China also asserts overlapping claims on territories in countries such as Nepal and Bhutan.

China's tactics in asserting territorial claims—such as renaming locations within Indian-controlled territories, establishing settlements in disputed areas, and incorporating contested regions into official maps—are becoming increasingly visible. For instance, in 2023, the Chinese government standardised 11 locations in Arunachal Pradesh to assert its ownership, following similar actions in 2021 and 2017.

However, international law does not recognise

territorial claims based solely on cartographic assertions. In various landmark cases, which include the ruling by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the Minquiers and Ecrehos dispute between the United Kingdom and France, maps were deemed insufficient evidence of sovereignty. The ICJ ruled that effective administrative control and sovereignty are crucial for determining ownership of contested territories. Therefore, China's use of cartographic aggression, while provocative, lacks legal validity under international law. Nevertheless, China's efforts to establish a physical presence in disputed territories, such as by building settlements, could complicate matters for India in the future.

## The South Asian response

While China has sought economic engagement with all South Asian nations, its territorial and water-related disputes with these countries continue to strain regional relations. Unlike the Southeast Asian nations, which have employed collective responsive measures through multilateral organisations such as the Mekong River Commission (MRC) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), South Asian countries, including India, have chosen to address their concerns with China on a bilateral basis. This approach has largely been shaped by the power asymmetry between China and its smaller neighbours.

India, as the dominant regional power in South Asia, should take the lead in fostering a collective response to China's actions. A unified approach, including regional forums, multilateral institutions, or enhanced diplomatic coordination would strengthen South Asia's position in addressing China's increasing influence and territorial ambitions. A comprehensive strategy involving diplomatic engagement and regional cooperation is crucial for India's sovereignty and regional security in the face of China's growing assertiveness.

## The red flag as China's expansionist strategy rolls on

## चीन की विस्तारवादी रणनीति के चलते लाल झंडा

### Recent Chinese Aggression and Its Impact on India

हालिया चीनी आक्रामकता और भारत पर इसके प्रभाव

- In recent days, **India** has witnessed two significant incidents of **Chinese aggression** along the **China-India border**, highlighting vulnerabilities that threaten India's **territorial integrity** and undermine its **sovereignty**.

हाल ही में, भारत ने चीन-भारत सीमा पर चीनी आक्रामकता के दो महत्वपूर्ण घटनाओं का सामना किया है, जो भारत की क्षेत्रीय अखंडता और संप्रभुता को खतरे में डालते हैं।

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- The **Chinese government's announcement** of the construction of a **dam** on the **Yarlung Zangbo river** (which is the **Brahmaputra river**), and the creation of **two new counties** in **north-eastern Ladakh**, have set alarm bells ringing.  
चीनी सरकार की घोषणा के तहत यारलुंग जांगबो नदी (जो कि ब्रह्मपुत्र नदी है) पर बांध बनाने और उत्तर-पूर्वी लद्दाख में दो नए जिलों के निर्माण से चेतावनी की घंटियां बज उठी हैं।
- **India** has strongly condemned these **Chinese actions**, asserting that they are **illegal** and a direct challenge to India's **sovereignty**.  
भारत ने इन चीनी कार्रवाइयों की कड़ी निंदा की है, यह कहते हुए कि ये अवैध हैं और भारत की संप्रभुता के खिलाफ सीधा चुनौती हैं।
- In response to **China's ambitious hydropower project**, **India** has expressed concern, noting that it is **monitoring the situation** and will take necessary measures to safeguard its **national interests**.  
चीन की महत्वाकांक्षी जलविद्युत परियोजना के जवाब में, भारत ने चिंता व्यक्त की है, यह कहते हुए कि वह स्थिति की निगरानी कर रहा है और अपने राष्ट्रीय हितों की रक्षा के लिए आवश्यक कदम उठाएगा।
- These developments are particularly disturbing given the recent consensus on **troop disengagement** along the **Line of Actual Control (LAC)**.  
ये घटनाएँ विशेष रूप से चिंताजनक हैं, क्योंकि हाल ही में लाइन ऑफ़ एक्चुअल कंट्रोल (LAC) के साथ सैन्य बलों के अलगाव पर सहमति बनी थी।
- These new moves further underscore the **unpredictability** of **China's approach** in the region.  
ये नए कदम चीन के दृष्टिकोण की अपूर्वता को और अधिक रेखांकित करते हैं।

### The Transboundary Water Issue

#### पारिसंवेदनशील जल मुद्दा

- **India** is not alone in facing the brunt of **China's expansionist policies**. Other **South Asian countries** such as **Nepal** and **Bhutan** have been subjected to similar **Chinese territorial encroachments**.  
भारत अकेला नहीं है जो चीन की विस्तारवादी नीतियों का सामना कर रहा है। अन्य दक्षिण एशियाई देश जैसे नेपाल और भूटान को भी समान चीनी क्षेत्रीय अतिक्रमण का सामना करना पड़ा है।
- Disputes over **land boundaries** persist between **China** and several of its **South Asian neighbours**, and **China's unilateral actions** with respect to **transboundary rivers**, particularly the **Brahmaputra** and **Indus river systems**, have the potential to jeopardise **water security** in **India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Pakistan**.  
भूमि सीमा पर विवाद चीन और इसके कई दक्षिण एशियाई पड़ोसियों के बीच बने हुए हैं, और चीन की एकतरफा कार्रवाइयाँ पारिसंवेदनशील नदियों के संदर्भ में, विशेष रूप से ब्रह्मपुत्र और Indus नदी प्रणालियाँ, जल सुरक्षा को भारत, नेपाल, बांग्लादेश, भूटान और पाकिस्तान में खतरे में डाल सकती हैं।



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- Despite these challenges, each country has opted to engage with **China** on a **bilateral basis**.

इन चुनौतियों के बावजूद, प्रत्येक देश ने चीन के साथ द्विपक्षीय आधार पर संलिप्त होने का विकल्प चुना है।

### Proposed Chinese Dam and Its Consequences

#### प्रस्तावित चीनी बांध और इसके परिणाम

- The proposed **Chinese dam**, with an annual capacity to generate **300 billion kilowatt-hours** of electricity a year, is located on the **lower reaches** of the **Yarlung Zangbo** near the **China-India border**.

प्रस्तावित चीनी बांध, जिसकी वार्षिक क्षमता 300 बिलियन किलोवाट-घंटे बिजली उत्पादन करने की है, चीन-भारत सीमा के पास यारलुंग जांगबो के निचले हिस्से में स्थित है।

- This massive infrastructure project presents significant challenges for **downstream countries**, particularly **India** and **Bangladesh**.

यह विशाल बुनियादी ढांचा परियोजना निचले प्रवाह वाले देशों, विशेष रूप से भारत और बांग्लादेश के लिए महत्वपूर्ण चुनौतियाँ पेश करता है।

- The construction of the **dam** is likely to reduce the amount of **water** and **silt** reaching downstream, which could have severe long-term consequences for **agriculture**, **fisheries**, and **biodiversity** in **India** and **Bangladesh**.

बांध के निर्माण से जल और कीचड़ की मात्रा में कमी आ सकती है, जो भारत और बांग्लादेश में कृषि, मछली पालन, और जैव विविधता पर गंभीर दीर्घकालिक परिणाम हो सकते हैं।

- Further, during the **monsoon season** or in times of **geopolitical tensions**, the **uncontrolled release of water** could result in devastating floods along the **Indian border**, which will be an issue of **strategic vulnerability** for **India**.

इसके अतिरिक्त, मानसून सत्र के दौरान या भूराजनीतिक तनावों के समय, जल की अनियंत्रित रिलीज भारत की सीमा पर विनाशकारी बाढ़ का कारण बन सकती है, जो भारत के लिए एक रणनीतिक कमजोरियों का मुद्दा होगा।

- In anticipation, **India** has accelerated plans to build its own **hydropower projects** and **reservoirs**, including an investment of **\$1 billion** to expedite the construction of **12 hydropower stations** in **Arunachal Pradesh**.

इसके दृष्टिगत, भारत ने अपनी जलविद्युत परियोजनाओं और जलाशयों के निर्माण की योजनाओं को तेज कर दिया है, जिसमें अरुणाचल प्रदेश में 12 जलविद्युत स्टेशन के निर्माण को शीघ्रता से पूरा करने के लिए 1 अरब डॉलर का निवेश शामिल है।

### Border Disputes, Cartographic Aggression

#### सीमाओं के विवाद, मानचित्र संबंधी आक्रामकता

- China's recent actions, including the creation of **two new counties**, are part of its ongoing strategy of **cartographic aggression** aimed at asserting control over **disputed territories**.

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चीन की हालिया कार्रवाइयाँ, जिनमें दो नए जिले बनाना शामिल है, इसकी चल रही मानचित्र संबंधी आक्रामकता की रणनीति का हिस्सा हैं, जिसका उद्देश्य विवादित क्षेत्रों पर नियंत्रण स्थापित करना है।

- This kind of tactic is intended to gain **strategic leverage** over its regional adversaries. इस प्रकार की रणनीति का उद्देश्य अपने क्षेत्रीय प्रतिद्वंद्वियों पर **रणनीतिक लाभ** प्राप्त करना है।
- China's **territorial disputes** with **India** are multifaceted, with the most recent aggression occurring along the **western front**, specifically in **Ladakh**.

भारत के साथ चीन के क्षेत्रीय विवाद जटिल हैं, जिनमें सबसे हालिया आक्रामकता पश्चिमी मोर्चे पर, विशेष रूप से लद्दाख में हुई है।

- Additionally, China continues to lay claim to **Arunachal Pradesh**, a **State** that is an **inalienable part of India**.

इसके अतिरिक्त, चीन अरुणाचल प्रदेश पर दावा करना जारी रखता है, जो भारत का अटूट हिस्सा है।

- Beyond **India**, China also asserts overlapping claims on territories in countries such as **Nepal** and **Bhutan**.

भारत के बाहर, चीन नेपाल और भूटान जैसे देशों में क्षेत्रों पर अवधारित दावे करता है।

- China's tactics in asserting territorial claims—such as **renaming locations** within **Indian-controlled territories**, establishing **settlements** in disputed areas, and incorporating contested regions into **official maps**—are becoming increasingly visible. चीन के क्षेत्रीय दावों को स्थापित करने की रणनीतियाँ, जैसे कि भारतीय-नियंत्रित क्षेत्रों में स्थानों का नाम बदलना, विवादित क्षेत्रों में बस्तियाँ बनाना, और विवादित क्षेत्रों को आधिकारिक मानचित्रों में शामिल करना, अब अधिक स्पष्ट होती जा रही हैं।

- For instance, in **2023**, the **Chinese government** standardised **11 locations** in **Arunachal Pradesh** to assert its ownership, following similar actions in **2021** and **2017**. उदाहरण के लिए, **2023** में, चीनी सरकार ने अरुणाचल प्रदेश में **11 स्थानों** को मानकीकरण किया ताकि अपने स्वामित्व का दावा कर सके, ऐसा ही कदम **2021** और **2017** में भी उठाया गया था।
- However, **international law** does not recognise **territorial claims** based solely on **cartographic assertions**.

हालांकि, अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून केवल मानचित्र संबंधी दावों पर आधारित क्षेत्रीय दावों को मान्यता नहीं देता है।

- In various landmark cases, including the ruling by the **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** on the **Minquiers and Ecrehos dispute** between the **United Kingdom** and **France**, maps were deemed insufficient evidence of sovereignty. विभिन्न ऐतिहासिक मामलों में, जिसमें अंतरराष्ट्रीय न्यायालय (ICJ) द्वारा यूनाइटेड किंगडम और फ्रांस के बीच मिनक्वियर्स और एक्रेहॉस विवाद पर फैसला शामिल है, मानचित्रों को संप्रभुता के प्रमाण के रूप में अपर्याप्त माना गया।
- The **ICJ** ruled that **effective administrative control** and **sovereignty** are crucial for determining ownership of contested territories.



ICJ ने यह निर्णय लिया कि प्रभावी प्रशासनिक नियंत्रण और संप्रभुता ही विवादित क्षेत्रों के स्वामित्व का निर्धारण करने के लिए महत्वपूर्ण हैं।

- Therefore, China's use of **cartographic aggression**, while provocative, lacks legal validity under **international law**.

इसलिए, चीन का मानचित्र संबंधी आक्रामकता का उपयोग, हालांकि उकसाने वाला है, अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून के तहत कानूनी वैधता से रहित है।

- Nevertheless, China's efforts to establish a **physical presence** in disputed territories, such as by building **settlements**, could complicate matters for **India** in the future.

फिर भी, चीन के विवादित क्षेत्रों में भौतिक उपस्थिति स्थापित करने के प्रयास, जैसे कि बस्तियाँ बनाना, भविष्य में भारत के लिए समस्याएँ उत्पन्न कर सकते हैं।

## The South Asian Response

### दक्षिण एशियाई प्रतिक्रिया

- While **China** has sought **economic engagement** with all **South Asian nations**, its **territorial** and **water-related disputes** with these countries continue to strain regional relations.

जबकि चीन ने सभी दक्षिण एशियाई देशों के साथ आर्थिक संबंध स्थापित करने की कोशिश की है, इसके साथ-साथ इन देशों के साथ क्षेत्रीय और जल संबंधित विवाद क्षेत्रीय संबंधों को तनावपूर्ण बनाए रखते हैं।

- Unlike the **Southeast Asian nations**, which have employed **collective responsive measures** through **multilateral organisations** such as the **Mekong River Commission (MRC)** and the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**, **South Asian countries**, including **India**, have chosen to address their concerns with **China** on a **bilateral basis**.

दक्षिण-पूर्व एशियाई देशों के विपरीत, जिन्होंने बहुपक्षीय संगठनों जैसे मेकोंग नदी आयोग (MRC) और दक्षिण-पूर्व एशियाई देशों के संघ (ASEAN) के माध्यम से सामूहिक प्रतिक्रियात्मक उपाय अपनाए हैं, दक्षिण एशियाई देशों, जिसमें भारत भी शामिल है, ने चीन से अपनी चिंताओं को द्विपक्षीय आधार पर हल करने का विकल्प चुना है।

- This approach has largely been shaped by the **power asymmetry** between **China** and its **smaller neighbours**.

इस दृष्टिकोण को मुख्य रूप से चीन और उसके छोटे पड़ोसियों के बीच शक्ति असंतुलन ने आकार दिया है।

- **India**, as the dominant **regional power** in **South Asia**, should take the lead in fostering a **collective response** to **China's actions**.

भारत, जो दक्षिण एशिया में प्रमुख क्षेत्रीय शक्ति है, को चीन की कार्रवाइयों का सामूहिक प्रतिक्रिया देने में अग्रणी भूमिका निभानी चाहिए।

- A **unified approach**, including regional forums, **multilateral institutions**, or enhanced **diplomatic coordination** would strengthen **South Asia's position** in addressing **China's increasing influence** and **territorial ambitions**.



एक एकीकृत दृष्टिकोण, जिसमें क्षेत्रीय मंच, बहुपक्षीय संस्थाएँ, या कूटनीतिक समन्वय को शामिल किया जाए, दक्षिण एशिया की स्थिति को चीन के बढ़ते प्रभाव और क्षेत्रीय महत्वाकांक्षाओं का सामना करने में मजबूत करेगा।

- A comprehensive strategy involving **diplomatic engagement** and **regional cooperation** is crucial for **India's sovereignty** and **regional security** in the face of **China's growing assertiveness**.

भारत की संप्रभुता और क्षेत्रीय सुरक्षा के लिए चीन की बढ़ती आक्रामकता के सामने कूटनीतिक जुड़ाव और क्षेत्रीय सहयोग को शामिल करने वाली एक समग्र रणनीति महत्वपूर्ण है।

GS Paper III: Disaster Management

## Burrow tragedy

India must learn from its mining disasters and enforce regulations

**W**ith four deaths so far, the coal mining tragedy in Assam's Dima Hasao district has revived a long-standing debate on the hazardous nature of rat-hole coal mining in India. As opposed to modern coal mining, which is mechanised, the 'rat-hole' points to the crude and antiquated technique of employing people, and even children, to burrow into the ground to scoop out the underground coal. Depending on the depths that they plumb, the odds are high that their pickaxes will often unleash a torrent of water from a hidden aquifer that can suddenly inundate the excavated tunnel – as it is suspected to have happened at Dima Hasao. Because such accidents have recurred over the decades, along with the attendant health and environmental hazards, this mode of mining was banned by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) in 2014. The use of proper geological surveys and appropriate machinery would have made the mine economically unviable. The Assam Chief Minister has stated that the mine appeared to be “prime facie... illegal” and one abandoned by the State's Mines and Minerals Department. If that is the case, it reflects poorly on the State administration that such mines can be exploited by unscrupulous elements with such ease, despite the ban. Surely, this is only a fraction of the unregulated mining that actually goes on.

The Supreme Court of India, in 2019, had asked whether it was possible for such mining to continue without the “connivance” of officials, when it was examining the rescue of 15 miners trapped in a rat-hole mine in the East Jaintia Hills in December 2018. A report submitted by a monitoring committee set up by the NGT observed that despite the ban, the demand for coal to power cement manufacturing and thermal power plants in the northeast had sustained and supported rat-hole coal mining. On the other hand, when convenient, State authorities have sought out and even felicitated rat-hole miners, some from Assam, as in 2023, when they were called in as a last resort after advanced machinery and the expertise of professional geologists and earth scientists had failed to rescue 41 construction workers trapped in the large, over-ground Silkiyara tunnel in Uttarkashi. The Dima Hasao operation too, like others, will end and the net success or failure of saving those trapped will induce a familiar amnesia that will be broken only by the next accident. Until decisive action to puncture the economics of rat-hole mining is taken, India is only burrowing the way to another tragedy.

## Burrow tragedy

### बरो त्रासदी

India must learn from its mining disasters and enforce regulations

भारत को अपनी खनन आपदाओं से सीख लेनी चाहिए और नियम लागू करने चाहिए

### Coal Mining Tragedy in Assam's Dima Hasao District

असम के दीमा हसाओ जिले में कोयला खनन त्रासदी

- With **four deaths** so far, the **coal mining tragedy** in Assam's **Dima Hasao district** has revived a long-standing debate on the hazardous nature of **rat-hole coal mining** in India.

अब तक चार मौतें हो चुकी हैं, असम के दीमा हसाओ जिले में हुई कोयला खनन त्रासदी ने भारत में रैट-होल कोयला खनन के खतरनाक स्वभाव पर लंबी बहस को फिर से जीवित कर दिया है।

- As opposed to **modern coal mining**, which is **mechanised**, the 'rat-hole' points to the crude and antiquated technique of employing people, and even children, to burrow into the ground to scoop out the underground coal.

आधुनिक कोयला खनन के विपरीत, जो यांत्रिक होता है, 'रैट-होल' वह कच्ची और प्राचीन तकनीक है जिसमें लोगों, और यहां तक कि बच्चों को, जमीन में खोदने के लिए नियुक्त किया जाता है ताकि भूमिगत कोयला निकाला जा सके।

- Depending on the **depths** that they plumb, the odds are high that their pickaxes will often unleash a torrent of **water** from a hidden **aquifer** that can suddenly inundate the excavated tunnel — as it is suspected to have happened at **Dima Hasao**.

जिस गहराई तक वे खोदते हैं, उसके आधार पर यह संभावना अधिक होती है कि



उनकी फावड़े अक्सर एक छिपे हुए जलमग्न स्रोत से पानी की बाढ़ को खोल सकते हैं, जो अचानक खोदी गई सुरंग को डुबो सकता है – जैसा कि दीमा हसाओ में होने का संदेह है।

- Because such accidents have recurred over the decades, along with the attendant **health and environmental hazards**, this mode of mining was banned by the **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** in **2014**.  
चूंकि इस तरह की दुर्घटनाएँ दशकों से होती रही हैं, साथ ही साथ **स्वास्थ्य और पर्यावरणीय खतरों** के साथ, इस प्रकार के खनन को **राष्ट्रीय हरित न्यायाधिकरण (NGT)** ने **2014** में प्रतिबंधित कर दिया था।
- The use of proper **geological surveys** and appropriate **machinery** would have made the mine economically unviable.  
उचित **भूतत्व सर्वेक्षण** और उपयुक्त **यांत्रिकी** का उपयोग करने से खदान को आर्थिक रूप से अव्यवस्थित बना दिया होता।
- The **Assam Chief Minister** has stated that the mine appeared to be “**prime facie... illegal**” and one abandoned by the State’s **Mines and Minerals Department**.  
**असम के मुख्यमंत्री** ने कहा कि खदान “**प्राइम फैसी... अवैध**” प्रतीत होती है और राज्य के **खनिज विभाग** द्वारा छोड़ी गई है।
- If that is the case, it reflects poorly on the **State administration** that such mines can be exploited by unscrupulous elements with such ease, despite the ban.  
यदि ऐसा है, तो यह **राज्य प्रशासन** पर बुरा असर डालता है कि इस प्रकार की खदानों का शोषण **दुष्ट तत्वों** द्वारा इतनी आसानी से किया जा सकता है, बावजूद इसके कि प्रतिबंध है।
- Surely, this is only a fraction of the **unregulated mining** that actually goes on.  
निःसंदेह, यह केवल **अविनियमित खनन** का एक अंश है जो वास्तव में चलता रहता है।

### Supreme Court Inquiry into Mining Practices

#### सुप्रीम कोर्ट की खनन प्रथाओं की जांच

- The **Supreme Court of India**, in **2019**, had asked whether it was possible for such mining to continue without the “**connivance**” of officials, when it was examining the rescue of **15 miners trapped** in a rat-hole mine in the **East Jaintia Hills** in **December 2018**.  
**भारत के सुप्रीम कोर्ट** ने **2019** में पूछा था कि क्या यह संभव है कि इस तरह के खनन के बिना अधिकारियों की “**सहयोग**” के चलने, जब वह **15 खनिकों को बचाने** की जांच कर रहा था जो **2018 दिसंबर** में **पूर्व जैंतिया पहाड़ियों** में **रैट-होल खदान** में फंसे हुए थे।
- A report submitted by a monitoring committee set up by the **NGT** observed that despite the ban, the demand for **coal** to power **cement manufacturing** and **thermal power plants** in the **northeast** had sustained and supported **rat-hole coal mining**.  
**NGT** द्वारा गठित एक निगरानी समिति की रिपोर्ट में यह पाया गया कि प्रतिबंध के बावजूद, **कोयले** की मांग ने **सीमेंट निर्माण** और **थर्मल पावर प्लांट्स** को बिजली देने के लिए **उत्तर-पूर्व में रैट-होल कोयला खनन** को बनाए रखा और समर्थन किया।
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- On the other hand, when convenient, **State authorities** have sought out and even felicitated **rat-hole miners**, some from **Assam**, as in **2023**, when they were called in as a last resort after advanced machinery and the expertise of professional **geologists** and **earth scientists** had failed to rescue **41 construction workers** trapped in the large, over-ground **Silkiyara tunnel** in **Uttarkashi**.

दूसरी ओर, जब सुविधाजनक होता है, तो राज्य प्राधिकरण ने रैट-होल खनिकों को खोजा और यहां तक कि असम के कुछ खनिकों को 2023 में सम्मानित किया, जब उन्हें एक अंतिम उपाय के रूप में बुलाया गया था, क्योंकि उन्नत यांत्रिकी और पेशेवर भूतत्व विज्ञानी और पृथ्वी वैज्ञानिकों के विशेषज्ञता के बावजूद 41 निर्माण श्रमिकों को बचाने में विफल रहे थे जो बड़े, ऊपर की जमीन पर स्थित सिल्कियारा सुरंग में उत्तरकाशी में फंसे हुए थे।

- The **Dima Hasao operation** too, like others, will end and the net success or failure of saving those trapped will induce a familiar **amnesia** that will be broken only by the next **accident**.

दीमा हसाओ ऑपरेशन भी, अन्य की तरह, समाप्त हो जाएगा और उन फंसे हुए लोगों को बचाने में सफलता या विफलता अमनेसिया का कारण बनेगी, जो केवल अगली दुर्घटना द्वारा टूटेगी।

- Until **decisive action** to puncture the economics of **rat-hole mining** is taken, India is only burrowing the way to another **tragedy**.

जब तक रैट-होल खनन के आर्थिक पहलुओं को समाप्त करने के लिए निर्णायक कदम नहीं उठाए जाते, भारत केवल एक और त्रासदी की ओर खोद रहा है।

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## Safety and piety

GS Paper III: Disaster Management

### Safety and piety

A sense of fairness must drive the capping of visitors to religious sites

Despite the hundreds of thousands who throng the Tirumala temple in Tirupati every year for the **Vaikunta Ekadasi celebrations**, stampedes at the world-renowned hill temple have been rare. However, the tragic incident on January 8 underscores the need to rethink crowd management strategies at religious pilgrimage sites. As an editorial in this daily on December 27, 2024, noted, **India has the highest number of religious stampedes globally**. According to National Crime Records Bureau data, between 1996 and 2022, over 3,000 lives were lost in stampedes at religious events nationwide. This statistic starkly highlights the need for systemic changes in the way large-scale gatherings are organised and managed. The Tirupati stampede, which resulted in six devotees passing away and injuries to over 40 others, was despite the extensive arrangements by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) and the Andhra Pradesh government. Elaborate crowd control mechanisms, such as a well-dispersed token distribution strategy and the deployment of over 3,000 police personnel and other staff and volunteers were in place for the 10-day **Vaikunta Dwara Darshan**. Nonetheless, what appears to be miscommunication at one of the centres in the city to handle a surge in devotees at a token distribution centre, seems to have triggered chaos and panic. The probe that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu announced would shed more light on where the lapse occurred. The tragedy unfolded just weeks after another stampede-like situation in Hyderabad. While the TTD has been making commendable efforts over the years to streamline operations – online booking systems and additional security personnel during peak periods – the scale and the spontaneity of human behaviour at such events demand innovative solutions.

One such idea could involve prioritising pilgrims who have never visited Tirupati over repeat visitors, thereby ensuring a more equitable **darshan**. VIP **darshans** too need a rethink. A robust database and a roster system could help regulate devotee flow and ensure fairness. Additionally, there is a need to consider the ecological impact on the Tirumala Hills, which are a part of the Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve. Growing anthropogenic pressures stemming from deforestation, urbanisation, and massive footfalls pose a significant threat to its biodiversity. Balancing the human need to connect with the divine with the imperative to preserve nature requires innovative and sustainable approaches. These could include capping the number of pilgrims every day, promoting virtual **darshan** experiences, and enforcing stricter conservation policies. A collaborative effort between religious and government authorities, environmental experts, and the public is essential to create a framework that prioritises safety, accessibility, and ecological preservation.

## सुरक्षा और धर्मपरायणता

A sense of fairness must drive the capping of visitors to religious sites

धार्मिक स्थलों पर आने वाले आगंतुकों की संख्या पर सीमा लगाने के लिए निष्पक्षता की भावना होनी चाहिए

### Tirupati Stampede Tragedy and Need for Improved Crowd Management

तिरुपति stampede त्रासदी और बेहतर भीड़ प्रबंधन की आवश्यकता

• Despite the hundreds of thousands who throng the **Tirumala temple in Tirupati** every year for the **Vaikunta Ekadasi** celebrations, stampedes at the world-renowned hill temple have been rare.

हर साल तिरुपति के तिरुमाला मंदिर में वैकुंठ एकादशी समारोह के लिए लाखों लोग जमा होते हैं, फिर भी इस विश्वप्रसिद्ध पहाड़ी मंदिर में stampede घटना दुर्लभ रही है।

• However, the tragic incident on **January 8** underscores the need to rethink **crowd management strategies** at religious pilgrimage sites.

हालांकि, 8 जनवरी को हुई त्रासदी ने धार्मिक तीर्थ स्थलों पर भीड़ प्रबंधन रणनीतियों को फिर से सोचे जाने की आवश्यकता को उजागर किया है।

• As an editorial in this daily on **December 27, 2024**, noted, India has the **highest number of religious stampedes globally**.

इस दैनिक में 27 दिसंबर 2024 को प्रकाशित संपादकीय में बताया गया कि भारत में दुनिया भर में धार्मिक stampedes की सबसे अधिक संख्या है।

• According to **National Crime Records Bureau data**, between **1996 and 2022**, over **3,000 lives** were lost in stampedes at **religious events nationwide**.

राष्ट्रीय अपराध रिकॉर्ड ब्यूरो के आंकड़ों के अनुसार, 1996 से 2022 के बीच 3,000 से अधिक जीवन धार्मिक आयोजनों में देश भर में stampedes में खो गए।

• This statistic starkly highlights the need for **systemic changes** in the way large-scale gatherings are organised and managed.

यह आंकड़ा बड़े पैमाने पर आयोजित और प्रबंधित होने वाली सभाओं के तरीके में संवेदनशील बदलावों की आवश्यकता को स्पष्ट रूप से उजागर करता है।

• The **Tirupati stampede**, which resulted in **six devotees passing away** and injuries to over **40 others**, was despite the extensive arrangements by the **Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD)** and the **Andhra Pradesh government**.

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तिरुपति stampede में छह भक्तों की मृत्यु और 40 अन्य लोगों के घायल होने के बावजूद, तिरुमाला तिरुपति देवस्थानम (TTD) और आंध्र प्रदेश सरकार द्वारा किए गए विस्तृत इंतजाम थे।

- Elaborate **crowd control mechanisms**, such as a well-dispersed **token distribution strategy** and the deployment of over **3,000 police personnel** and other staff and volunteers were in place for the **10-day Vaikunta Dwara Darshan**.

विस्तृत भीड़ नियंत्रण उपाय, जैसे कि एक अच्छी तरह से वितरित टोकन वितरण रणनीति और 3,000 से अधिक पुलिस कर्मियों और अन्य कर्मचारियों तथा स्वयंसेवकों की तैनाती 10 दिन के वैकुंठ द्वार दर्शन के लिए की गई थी।

- Nonetheless, what appears to be **miscommunication** at one of the centres in the city to handle a surge in devotees at a **token distribution centre**, seems to have triggered chaos and panic.

हालांकि, शहर के एक केंद्र पर गलत संचार ऐसा प्रतीत होता है, जहां टोकन वितरण केंद्र पर भक्तों की भीड़ संभालने में असफलता ने हंगामा और घबराहट पैदा कर दी।

- The probe that **Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu** announced would shed more light on where the lapse occurred.

मुख्यमंत्री एन. चंद्रबाबू नायडू द्वारा की गई जांच से यह स्पष्ट होगा कि गलती कहां हुई।

- The tragedy unfolded just weeks after another **stampede-like situation** in **Hyderabad**.

यह त्रासदी हैदराबाद में एक अन्य stampede जैसी स्थिति के कुछ ही सप्ताह बाद हुई।

- While the **TTD** has been making commendable efforts over the years to streamline operations — **online booking systems** and **additional security personnel** during peak periods — the scale and spontaneity of human behaviour at such events demand **innovative solutions**.

जबकि TTD वर्षों से ऑनलाइन बुकिंग सिस्टम और अतिरिक्त सुरक्षा कर्मियों के साथ संचालन को सुव्यवस्थित करने के लिए सराहनीय प्रयास कर रहा है – ऐसे आयोजनों में मानव व्यवहार के पैमाने और स्वाभाविकता को देखते हुए नवाचारी समाधान की आवश्यकता है।

- One such idea could involve prioritising **pilgrims who have never visited Tirupati** over **repeat visitors**, thereby ensuring a more equitable **darshan**.

एक ऐसा विचार यह हो सकता है कि उन तीर्थयात्रियों को प्राथमिकता दी जाए जो कभी तिरुपति नहीं आए और पुनः आने वाले भक्तों को छोड़कर, इस प्रकार समान और न्यायपूर्ण दर्शन सुनिश्चित किया जा सके।

- **VIP darshans** too need a rethink. A robust **database** and a **roster system** could help regulate devotee flow and ensure fairness.

VIP दर्शन पर भी पुनर्विचार की आवश्यकता है। एक मजबूत डेटाबेस और रजिस्ट्री प्रणाली भक्तों की भीड़ को नियंत्रित करने और न्याय सुनिश्चित करने में मदद कर सकती है।

- Additionally, there is a need to consider the **ecological impact** on the **Tirumala Hills**, which are a part of the **Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve**.

इसके अतिरिक्त, तिरुमाला पहाड़ियों पर पारिस्थितिकीय प्रभाव पर विचार करने की आवश्यकता है, जो सेशाचलम बायोस्फियर रिजर्व का हिस्सा हैं।

- Growing **anthropogenic pressures** stemming from **deforestation**, **urbanisation**, and **massive footfalls** pose a significant threat to its **biodiversity**.



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वनों की कटाई, शहरीकरण, और विशाल जनसमूहों के कारण बढ़ रहे मानवजनित दबाव इसके जैवविविधता के लिए महत्वपूर्ण खतरा पैदा करते हैं।

- Balancing the human need to connect with the divine with the imperative to preserve nature requires **innovative** and **sustainable approaches**.

प्रकृति के संरक्षण की आवश्यकता के साथ दिव्य से जुड़ने की मानव आवश्यकता को संतुलित करने के लिए नवाचारी और सतत दृष्टिकोण की आवश्यकता है।

- These could include capping the number of **pilgrims every day**, promoting **virtual darshan experiences**, and enforcing **stricter conservation policies**.

इनमें प्रत्येक दिन तीर्थयात्रियों की संख्या को सीमित करना, आभासी दर्शन अनुभवों को बढ़ावा देना, और कड़ी संरक्षण नीतियों को लागू करना शामिल हो सकता है।

- A **collaborative effort** between **religious and government authorities**, **environmental experts**, and the public is essential to create a framework that prioritises **safety, accessibility, and ecological preservation**.

धार्मिक और सरकारी अधिकारियों, पर्यावरण विशेषज्ञों, और जनता के बीच एक साझा प्रयास आवश्यक है, ताकि एक ऐसा ढांचा तैयार किया जा सके जो सुरक्षा, सुलभता, और पर्यावरणीय संरक्षण को प्राथमिकता दे।

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# OYO's new policy may be at the cost of rights

GS Paper II: Right to Privacy and Bodily Freedom

**P**ayal Kapadia's award-winning film *All We Imagine As Light* depicts the journey of a young couple, Anu and Shiaz, struggling to find a private space. They may be fictional, but their problem certainly is not. Across the country, young people in pre-marital relationships have long found it difficult to come by privacy. This issue is likely to be exacerbated by policies such as the one recently implemented by OYO.

Last week, OYO announced that unmarried couples would be disallowed from accessing its partner hotels. The hotels have been given the discretion to implement this policy in accordance with local sensibilities. Going forward, all couples will be required to present 'valid proof of relationship' while checking in. Explaining the reason for its move, OYO stated that civil society groups and citizens had requested it to institute this rule.

Initially, the policy will apply only to hotels in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, but reports suggest that OYO may expand its application to other cities. Beyond the practicalities of providing 'valid proof of relationship,' it is clear that OYO is encouraging partner hotels to discriminate against customers based on their marital status. The burning question, however, is whether those adversely affected by this policy may find legal redress either in the Constitution or otherwise.

In various decisions, the Supreme Court has recognised individuals' right to enter pre-marital relationships. In *Shafin Jahan vs Asokan K.M.* (2020), the court held that Article 21 of the Constitution includes the right of individuals to choose their partners 'whether within or outside marriage'. Similarly, in *Navtej Singh Johar vs Union of India* (2018), the court recognised the right of all individuals to physical, emotional, mental, and sexual companionship. Other decisions of the apex court have affirmed that the rights to privacy, dignity, and



**Spoorthi Cotha**

Advocate based in Bengaluru

Beyond the practicalities of providing 'valid proof of relationship,' it is clear that OYO is encouraging partner hotels to discriminate against customers based on their marital status

autonomy – emanating from Article 21 – mean that people have the freedom to engage in consensual, intimate, or sexual relationships and to cohabit with their partners if they choose. At their core, these decisions acknowledge the freedom to conduct oneself in a manner of one's choosing. For many unmarried couples, accessing hotel services is one way to exercise these rights. Individuals in pre-marital relationships apart, persons of different genders who are friends, colleagues, or cousins may also travel together and require OYO's services.

Under the constitutional scheme, fundamental rights enshrined in Part III of the Constitution are ordinarily enforceable against the State and its instrumentalities, not against non-State actors. In other words, citizens may seek constitutional remedies from courts when the State infringes upon their fundamental rights but not when a private party hinders their exercise. This is because constitutional rights are generally thought to apply "vertically" (i.e., against the State) and not "horizontally" (i.e., between private individuals or entities).

However, the Constitution contains three express provisions which depart from the traditional "vertical" model of rights: Article 15(2) stipulates that no citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth, or any of them, be prevented from accessing shops, public restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainment or using wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads, and places of public resort funded by the State or dedicated to public use; Article 17 forbids the practice of untouchability; and Article 23 prohibits human trafficking and forced labour. In *Kaushal Kishor vs State of Uttar Pradesh* (2023), the Supreme Court travelled beyond this schema of horizontal rights by holding that the right under Article 21 could be enforced even against private parties.

While Article 15(2) would prevent OYO from denying its services to customers based on caste, religion, or the other grounds listed, it may not readily constitute a bar against discrimination on the ground of marital status. Separately, the effect of the decision in the *Kaushal Kishor* case remains to be seen – commentators have criticised it for being unclear, and in the absence of coherent and consistent jurisprudence on this subject, it is uncertain whether unmarried individuals can enforce their rights under Article 21 against OYO.

Apart from constitutional rights and remedies, statutes may provide a model for the exercise of fundamental rights in transactions between private parties. While some enactments confer certain rights on women irrespective of marital status, the time may have come for lawmakers to enact an anti-discrimination law which protects individuals (regardless of their gender) against discrimination based on marital status, in the private sphere.

The full and free exercise of our rights as citizens depends not only on State (in) action but on private actors – be it as a member of the public, a family unit, a business undertaking, or a corporation – creating the conditions for their exercise. This applies not only in the context of individuals in pre-marital relationships who may seek commercial services but also more broadly, say, to people who may wish to rent homes, who apply for employment in private establishments, or who make offers to purchase land – but are denied access on the basis of their marital status, caste, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other attributes.

The tyranny of the majority is often nowhere as evident as in the private sphere. An act may not meet with social approval but the Constitution guarantees our right to do it anyway. The law – regardless of the form it takes – must protect this right.



## OYO's new policy may be at the cost of rights OYO की नई नीति अधिकारों की कीमत पर हो सकती है

### OYO's Policy on Unmarried Couples and Legal Implications

#### OYO की अविवाहित जोड़ों के लिए नीति और कानूनी प्रभाव

- Payal Kapadia's award-winning film **All We Imagine As Light** depicts the journey of a young couple, **Anu and Shiaz**, struggling to find a private space.  
पायल कपाड़िया की पुरस्कार विजेता फिल्म **ऑल वी इमेजिन ऐज़ लाइट** एक युवा जोड़े, **अणु और शियाज़**, के यात्रा को दर्शाती है, जो निजी स्थान पाने के लिए संघर्ष कर रहे हैं।
- They may be fictional, but their problem is certainly not. Across the country, young people in **pre-marital relationships** have long found it difficult to come by **privacy**.  
वे काल्पनिक हो सकते हैं, लेकिन उनकी समस्या निश्चित रूप से नहीं है। देश भर में, **प्रे-मैरिटल रिश्तों** में युवा लोग लंबे समय से **गोपनीयता** पाना मुश्किल पाते हैं।
- This issue is likely to be exacerbated by policies such as the one recently implemented by **OYO**.  
यह समस्या **OYO** द्वारा हाल ही में लागू की गई नीतियों से बढ़ने की संभावना है।
- Last week, **OYO announced** that **unmarried couples** would be disallowed from accessing its partner hotels.  
पिछले सप्ताह, **OYO ने घोषणा की कि अविवाहित जोड़े** को इसके साझेदार होटलों में प्रवेश नहीं मिलेगा।
- The hotels have been given the discretion to implement this policy in accordance with **local sensibilities**.  
होटलों को **स्थानीय संवेदनाओं** के अनुसार इस नीति को लागू करने का विवेकाधिकार दिया गया है।
- Going forward, all couples will be required to present 'valid **proof of relationship**' while checking in.  
आगे चलकर, सभी जोड़ों को चेक-इन करते समय '**संबंध का वैध प्रमाण**' प्रस्तुत करना आवश्यक होगा।
- Explaining the reason for its move, OYO stated that **civil society groups** and **citizens** had requested it to institute this rule.  
अपनी कार्रवाई का कारण बताते हुए, OYO ने कहा कि **सिविल सोसाइटी समूहों** और **नागरिकों** ने इसे यह नियम लागू करने का अनुरोध किया था।
- Initially, the policy will apply only to hotels in **Meerut, Uttar Pradesh**, but reports suggest that OYO may expand its application to other cities.  
प्रारंभ में, यह नीति केवल **मेरठ, उत्तर प्रदेश** के होटलों पर लागू होगी, लेकिन रिपोर्ट्स का कहना है कि OYO इसे अन्य शहरों में भी लागू कर सकता है।
- Beyond the practicalities of providing 'valid proof of relationship,' it is clear that OYO is encouraging partner hotels to **discriminate** against customers based on their **marital status**.



‘संबंध का वैध प्रमाण’ प्रदान करने की प्रैक्टिकलतियों से परे, यह स्पष्ट है कि OYO अपने साझीदार होटलों को ग्राहकों के वैवाहिक स्थिति के आधार पर भेदभाव करने के लिए प्रोत्साहित कर रहा है।

- The burning question, however, is whether those adversely affected by this policy may find **legal redress** either in the **Constitution** or otherwise.  
हालांकि, सबसे बड़ा सवाल यह है कि क्या इस नीति से प्रभावित लोग **कानूनी समाधान** संविधान या अन्य तरीके से पा सकते हैं।
- In various decisions, the **Supreme Court** has recognised individuals’ right to enter **pre-marital relationships**.

विभिन्न फैसलों में, **सुप्रीम कोर्ट** ने व्यक्तियों के **प्रे-मैरिटल रिश्तों** में प्रवेश करने के अधिकार को स्वीकार किया है।

- In **Shaffan Jahan vs Asokan K.M. (2020)**, the court held that **Article 21** of the **Constitution** includes the right of individuals to choose their partners ‘whether within or outside marriage’.

**शाफ़न जहान बनाम असोचन के.एम. (2020)** में, कोर्ट ने कहा कि **संविधान का अनुच्छेद 21** व्यक्तियों को उनके साझीदार चुनने का अधिकार देता है ‘चाहे विवाह के भीतर हो या बाहर’।

- Similarly, in **Navtej Singh Johar vs Union of India (2018)**, the court recognised the right of all individuals to **physical, emotional, mental, and sexual companionship**. इसी तरह, **नवतेज सिंह जोहर बनाम भारत संघ (2018)** में, कोर्ट ने सभी व्यक्तियों के **शारीरिक, भावनात्मक, मानसिक, और यौन साथ** का अधिकार स्वीकार किया।
- Other decisions of the apex court have affirmed that the rights to **privacy, dignity, and autonomy** — emanating from Article 21 — mean that people have the freedom to engage in **consensual, intimate, or sexual relationships** and to cohabit with their partners if they choose.

सुप्रीम कोर्ट के अन्य फैसलों ने यह पुष्टि की है कि **गोपनीयता, सम्मान, और स्वायत्तता** का अधिकार — जो अनुच्छेद 21 से निकलता है — इसका मतलब है कि लोगों को **सहमतिपूर्ण, अंतरंग, या यौन संबंध** में शामिल होने और यदि वे चाहें तो अपने साझीदारों के साथ सहवास करने की स्वतंत्रता है।

- At their core, these decisions acknowledge the **freedom to conduct oneself** in a manner of one’s choosing.  
इन फैसलों का मूल यह है कि वे **अपने तरीके से खुद को व्यवहार करने की स्वतंत्रता** को स्वीकार करते हैं।

- For many unmarried couples, accessing hotel services is one way to exercise these rights.

कई अविवाहित जोड़ों के लिए, होटल सेवाओं का उपयोग करना इन अधिकारों को लागू करने का एक तरीका है।

- Individuals in **pre-marital relationships** apart, persons of different genders who are friends, colleagues, or cousins may also travel together and require OYO’s services.

**प्रे-मैरिटल रिश्तों** में व्यक्तियों के अलावा, विभिन्न लिंगों के व्यक्ति जो मित्र, सहकर्मी या चचेरे



भाई-बहन हैं, वे भी एक साथ यात्रा कर सकते हैं और OYO की सेवाओं की आवश्यकता हो सकती है।

- Under the constitutional scheme, **fundamental rights** enshrined in **Part III of the Constitution** are ordinarily enforceable against the **State** and its instrumentalities, not against **non-State actors**.

संवैधानिक योजना के तहत, **संविधान के भाग III** में निहित **मूलभूत अधिकार** सामान्यतः **राज्य** और इसके उपकरणों के खिलाफ लागू किए जा सकते हैं, न कि **गैर-राज्य अभिनेताओं** के खिलाफ।

- In other words, citizens may seek constitutional remedies from courts when the **State infringes upon their fundamental rights** but not when a **private party** hinders their exercise.

दूसरे शब्दों में, नागरिक तब संविधानिक उपायों की मांग कर सकते हैं जब **राज्य उनके मूलभूत अधिकारों का उल्लंघन करता है**, लेकिन जब एक **निजी पक्ष** उनके उपयोग में बाधा डालता है तो नहीं।

- However, the **Constitution** contains three express provisions which depart from the traditional "**vertical**" model of rights:

हालांकि, **संविधान** में तीन स्पष्ट प्रावधान हैं जो पारंपरिक "**वर्टिकल**" अधिकारों के मॉडल से भिन्न हैं:

- **Article 15(2)** stipulates that no citizen shall, on grounds only of **religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth**, or any of them, be prevented from accessing **shops, public restaurants, hotels** and places of public entertainment or using **wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads**, and places of public resort funded by the **State** or dedicated to **public use**.

**अनुच्छेद 15(2)** यह stipulates करता है कि कोई नागरिक केवल **धर्म, जाति, लिंग, जन्म स्थान**, या इनमें से किसी कारण से **दुकानों, सार्वजनिक रेस्तरां, होटलों** और सार्वजनिक मनोरंजन स्थलों का उपयोग करने या **कुएं, तालाब, स्नान घाट, सड़कें**, और सार्वजनिक विश्राम स्थलों का उपयोग करने से वंचित नहीं किया जाएगा जो **राज्य** द्वारा वित्तपोषित या **सार्वजनिक उपयोग** के लिए समर्पित हों।

- **Article 17** forbids the practice of **untouchability**;

**अनुच्छेद 17** अस्पृश्यता के अभ्यास को प्रतिबंधित करता है;

- **Article 23** prohibits **human trafficking** and forced labor.

**अनुच्छेद 23** मानव तस्करी और जबरन श्रम को प्रतिबंधित करता है।

- In **Kaushal Kishor vs State of Uttar Pradesh (2023)**, the **Supreme Court** travelled beyond this schema of **horizontal rights** by holding that the right under **Article 21** could be enforced even against private parties.

**कौशल किशोर बनाम उत्तर प्रदेश राज्य (2023)** में, **सुप्रीम कोर्ट** ने **होरिजेंटल अधिकारों** के इस स्कीमा से आगे बढ़ते हुए यह कहा कि **अनुच्छेद 21** के तहत अधिकार को निजी पक्षों के खिलाफ भी लागू किया जा सकता है।

- While **Article 15(2)** would prevent OYO from denying its services to customers based on **caste, religion**, or other grounds listed, it may not readily constitute a bar against discrimination on the ground of **marital status**.



जबकि अनुच्छेद 15(2) OYO को जाति, धर्म या अन्य कारणों के आधार पर ग्राहकों को अपनी सेवाएं अस्वीकार करने से रोकता है, यह वैवाहिक स्थिति के आधार पर भेदभाव के खिलाफ तुरंत एक प्रतिबंध नहीं बन सकता।

- Separately, the effect of the decision in the **Kaushal Kishor** case remains to be seen. अलग से, कौशल किशोर केस में फैसले का प्रभाव देखना बाकी है।
- **Commentators** have criticised it for being unclear, and in the absence of coherent and consistent jurisprudence on this subject, it is uncertain whether unmarried individuals can enforce their rights under **Article 21** against OYO.

टिप्पणीकारों ने इसे अस्पष्ट बताया है, और इस विषय पर संगत और सुसंगत न्यायशास्त्र की कमी के कारण, यह अनिश्चित है कि क्या अविवाहित व्यक्ति अनुच्छेद 21 के तहत अपने अधिकारों को OYO के खिलाफ लागू कर सकते हैं।

- Apart from constitutional rights and remedies, **statutes** may provide a model for the exercise of fundamental rights in transactions between **private parties**.

संविधानिक अधिकारों और उपचारों के अलावा, कानून निजी पक्षों के बीच लेन-देन में मूलभूत अधिकारों के उपयोग के लिए एक मॉडल प्रदान कर सकते हैं।

- While some enactments confer certain rights on women irrespective of **marital status**, the time may have come for lawmakers to enact an **anti-discrimination law** which protects individuals (regardless of their gender) against **discrimination** based on **marital status**, in the **private sphere**.

जबकि कुछ कानून महिलाओं को वैवाहिक स्थिति के बावजूद कुछ अधिकार प्रदान करते हैं, समय आ सकता है जब कानून निर्माताओं को एक विरोधी भेदभाव कानून बनाना चाहिए जो व्यक्तियों को (उनके लिंग के बावजूद) वैवाहिक स्थिति के आधार पर भेदभाव से सुरक्षा प्रदान करता हो, निजी क्षेत्र में।

- The full and free exercise of our rights as citizens depends not only on **State (in)action** but on **private actors** — be it as a member of the public, a family unit, a business undertaking, or a corporation — creating the conditions for their exercise.

हमारे नागरिक अधिकारों का पूर्ण और स्वतंत्र उपयोग केवल राज्य (क्रियावान) कार्य पर नहीं, बल्कि निजी पक्षों पर निर्भर करता है — चाहे वह सार्वजनिक सदस्य, परिवार इकाई, व्यापारिक उपक्रम, या एक निगम हो — जो उनके प्रयोग के लिए परिस्थितियां उत्पन्न करता है।

- This applies not only in the context of individuals in **pre-marital relationships** who may seek commercial services but also more broadly, say, to people who may wish to **rent homes**, who apply for **employment** in private establishments, or who make offers to **purchase land** — but are denied access on the basis of their **marital status**, **caste**, **religion**, **sexual orientation**, **gender identity**, or other attributes.

यह केवल प्रे-मैरिटल रिश्तों में व्यक्तियों के संदर्भ में लागू नहीं होता जो वाणिज्यिक सेवाएं चाहते हैं, बल्कि यह और भी व्यापक रूप से लागू होता है, जैसे, लोग जो घर किराए पर लेना चाहते हैं, जो निजी संस्थानों में रोजगार के लिए आवेदन करते हैं, या जो भूमि खरीदने के प्रस्ताव करते हैं — लेकिन जिन्हें उनके वैवाहिक स्थिति, जाति, धर्म, यौन अभिविन्यास, लिंग पहचान या अन्य गुणों के आधार पर प्रवेश से वंचित किया जाता है।



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- The tyranny of the majority is often nowhere as evident as in the **private sphere**.  
बहुमत की तानाशाही अक्सर उतनी स्पष्ट नहीं होती जितनी कि निजी क्षेत्र में।
- An act may not meet with **social approval** but the Constitution guarantees our right to do it anyway.  
एक कार्य सामाजिक स्वीकृति प्राप्त नहीं कर सकता है, लेकिन संविधान हमें इसे करने का अधिकार प्रदान करता है।
- The law — regardless of the form it takes — must protect this right. कानून — चाहे वह किसी भी रूप में हो — को इस अधिकार की सुरक्षा करनी चाहिए।

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# Does 'blood money' have a legal standing?

What does 'blood money' mean? How does it figure in Islamic Sharia law? Do different Islamic nations have different rules with respect to determining the amount of money to be paid to the victim's family by the accused? What does 'plea bargaining' in India mean?

GS Paper I: Society

## EXPLAINER

R. Sai Venkatesh

### The story so far:

The death sentence awarded by a Yemen court to nurse Nimisha Priya from Kerala for murdering her business partner, and the subsequent debates and efforts surrounding her acquittal and repatriation, which involves monetary compensation paid to the victim's family, have brought the focus back on 'blood money' and its implications.

### What is 'blood money'?

'Blood money', or 'diyya', finds footing in the Islamic Sharia law, and is followed in countries that incorporate these laws in their legislation. Under the rule of 'diyya', a select quantity of a valuable asset, primarily monetary, has to be paid by the perpetrator of the crime to the victim, or the victim's family if the latter has died. The custom is practised predominantly in cases involving unintentional murder and culpable homicide. It is also invoked in murder cases wherein the victim's kin chooses not to retaliate through 'qisas' (a way of retribution under the Sharia). The end-goal, as the law says, is not to put a price tag on human life, but to alleviate the plight and suffering of the affected family and their potential loss of income. However, it is to be noted that even if the concerned parties reconcile through 'blood money', the community and the state will retain the right to impose a deterrent punishment, including penalties.

In its contemporary applications, 'blood money' is upheld in several Islamic countries with factors such as gender, religion and nationality of the victim coming into play. Islamic scholar-researcher Mohammad Hashim Kamali outlines several cases in his book *Crime and Punishment in Islamic Law: A Fresh Interpretation*. In Saudi Arabia, for instance, the traffic regulations specifically mandate payment of 'blood money' to heirs of the victims who die in road accidents. In addition, the perpetrator shall be liable to a prison term. The statutory legislation and the Sharia law stand in hand in such cases. While the police determine the guilty parties, a Sharia court fixes the amount of 'blood money' to be paid. As for accidents in workplaces, the rates are fixed by a special committee. In 2022, talks had surfaced that Saudi Arabia was on the course to amend its 'blood money' laws, proposing equal monetary payments for men, women, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. However, efforts towards this are yet to come to fruition.

In Iran too, a country where the practice is rigorously upheld, 'blood money' varies with respect to religion and gender. A woman's compensation is fixed at half of that of a man's. In 2019, the country's Supreme Court upheld a law that sought equalisation of 'blood money'. However, the country is yet to see its full-fledged implementation. India's neighbour Pakistan, too, provides a place for 'diyya' and 'qisas'. Through the Criminal Laws (Amendment) Ordinance, 1991, these provisions were brought into mainstream law. In Yemen, the country in question, the consensus for compensation can be arrived at by the parties, and there might be a judicial oversight over the fairness of the compensation.

### What's India's stand on 'diyya'?

Provisions for the grant or receiving of



Grave accidents: Prema Kumari, mother of Nimisha Priya who is on death row in Yemen for the alleged murder of a Yemeni national. THULASI KAKKAT

'blood money' do not find a place in India's formal legal system. However, the system does provide a way for the accused to negotiate with the prosecution through 'plea bargaining'.

Though the concept cannot be directly equated with 'blood money', the scheme lays out a procedure whereby the defendant agrees to plead guilty for a particular offence perpetrated by the accused in return for a concession from the prosecutor. The concessions can be offered on a charge or a sentence. In the former, the defendant may plead guilty for one of the several charges or a less severe charge in return for dismissal of other charges, and in the latter, for a reduced sentence than what is prescribed for the concerned offence.

Introduced into legal parlance through the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2005, which added Chapter XXI A to the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, plea bargaining comes with an array of limitations unlike 'blood money', which has a broader purview. For instance, plea bargaining can be taken up only for offences that are penalised with imprisonment of less than seven years. It cannot be invoked if the accused has been previously convicted for a similar offence. Besides, the provision is not available for crimes against women or children aged below 14; heinous crimes such as murder or rape; and offences involving socio-economic conditions, including civil rights. Moreover, the accused has to voluntarily come forward to plead guilty, and must not be coerced.

However, on the lines of 'blood money', plea bargaining may also allow

for the victim to receive compensation under clause Section 265E. Besides, much like the efforts in Islamic nations towards making 'blood money' more inclusive and egalitarian, discussions have been under way to make plea bargaining more refined.

Though its use has been minimal in India, experts have pointed out that owing to judicial delays and prolonged trials, accused persons, even if innocent, may be pushed to a situation to plead guilty under the plea bargaining clause.

**What are some historical practices which are similar to 'blood money'?** Striking similarities to 'diyya' can be found in the historical records of several other cultures across the globe.

In the ancient legal system of Ireland, the Brehon law (seventh century AD) provided for the system of 'Éraic' (body price) and 'Log nEnech' (honour price). The law shunned the notion of capital punishment for crimes, and allowed resolution of matters through amicable payment. In Éraic, the amount was determined by the severity of the offence, while in Log nEnech, the price varied depending upon the victim's social status.

'Galanas' was an early Welsh law wherein the compensation was determined according to the status of the victim. Under the ruling, 'blood fine' was always to be paid, especially in cases of murder, barring where the killing was justified or excused owing to circumstances, points out author Thomas Peter Ellis in the book *Welsh Tribal Law and Customs in the Middle Ages*.

'Wergeld', a concept that is said to have

been formalised in early medieval Germany, greatly resembles 'blood money'.

American legal professional Roscoe Pound's book, *The Ideal Element in Law* points out that, in fact, several medieval States had set their standards for an appropriate payment to the kin of victims in the event of homicide or grave crimes.

### Have there been other Indians who were pardoned with 'blood money'?

While Nimisha Priya's case is in the spotlight now, there have been several other instances involving Indian nationals where 'blood money' had been invoked.

As recently as in 2019, the death sentence of Arjunan Athimuthu, hailing from Thanjavur, in Kuwait was commuted to life imprisonment after his family provided ₹30 lakh in 'blood money'. Abdul Rahim, who was sentenced to death for the murder of a Saudi boy in 2006, was pardoned by the court after a 'blood money' of ₹34 crore was paid. However, he is yet to be released from prison. Ten Indians in the UAE were "forgiven" by the victim's family in 2017 after a 'blood money' of 200,000 dirhams was paid. In another case, 17 Indians who were on death row in the UAE for the murder of a Pakistani national in 2009, were pardoned after a 'blood money' of nearly ₹4 crore in value equalling dirhams was paid. The Indian consulate had even hired a law firm in the UAE to argue the case.

As for Nimisha, with Iran assuring India of taking up the case, it remains to be seen whether her death sentence would be commuted.

## THE GIST

'Blood money', or 'diyya', finds footing in the Islamic Sharia law. Under the rule of 'diyya', a select quantity of a valuable asset, primarily monetary, has to be paid by the perpetrator of the crime to the victim, or the victim's family if the latter has died.

Provisions for the grant or receiving of 'blood money' do not find a place in India's formal legal system. However, the system does provide a way for the accused to negotiate with the prosecution through 'plea bargaining'.

As recently as in 2019, the death sentence of Arjunan Athimuthu, hailing from Thanjavur, in Kuwait was commuted to life imprisonment after his family provided ₹30 lakh in 'blood money'. Abdul Rahim, who was sentenced to death in 2006, was pardoned by the court after a 'blood money' of ₹34 crore was paid.



## What is 'blood money'?

### ‘ब्लड मनी’ क्या है?

- ‘**Blood money**’ or ‘**diya**’ finds footing in **Islamic Sharia law**, and is followed in countries that incorporate these laws in their legislation.

‘ब्लड मनी’ या ‘दिया’ इस्लामिक शरिया कानून में पाया जाता है, और उन देशों में इसका पालन किया जाता है जो इन कानूनों को अपने विधायी प्रावधानों में शामिल करते हैं।

- Under the rule of ‘**diya**’, a select quantity of a valuable asset, primarily **monetary**, has to be paid by the perpetrator of the crime to the victim, or the victim’s family if the latter has died.

‘दिया’ के नियम के तहत, एक मूल्यवान संपत्ति की एक निर्धारित मात्रा, मुख्य रूप से **धन**, अपराधी द्वारा पीड़ित व्यक्ति या यदि वह मर चुका है तो पीड़ित के परिवार को चुकानी होती है।

- The custom is practiced predominantly in cases involving **unintentional murder and culpable homicide**.

यह परंपरा मुख्य रूप से **अनायास हत्या** और **दोषपूर्ण हत्या** के मामलों में प्रचलित है।

- It is also invoked in murder cases wherein the victim’s kin chooses not to retaliate through ‘**qisas**’ (a way of retribution under Sharia).

इसे हत्या के मामलों में भी लागू किया जाता है, जहां पीड़ित के परिजन ‘**क्रिसास**’ (शरिया के तहत प्रतिशोध का एक तरीका) के माध्यम से प्रतिशोध न लेने का विकल्प चुनते हैं।

- The end-goal, as the law says, is not to put a price tag on human life, but to alleviate the plight and suffering of the affected family and their potential loss of income.

जैसा कि कानून कहता है, इसका अंतिम उद्देश्य मानव जीवन पर मूल्य चिपकाना नहीं है, बल्कि प्रभावित परिवार की कठिनाइयों और कष्टों को कम करना है और उनकी संभावित आय के नुकसान को हल करना है।

- However, it is to be noted that even if the concerned parties reconcile through ‘**blood money**’, the community and the state will retain the right to impose a **deterrent punishment**, including penalties.

हालांकि, यह ध्यान रखना जरूरी है कि भले ही संबंधित पक्ष ‘**ब्लड मनी**’ के माध्यम से मेल-मिलाप कर लें, समुदाय और राज्य के पास **निवारक सजा** सहित दंड लागू करने का अधिकार रहेगा।

## Contemporary Applications of Blood Money in Islamic Countries

### इस्लामिक देशों में ब्लड मनी का समकालीन उपयोग

- In its contemporary applications, ‘**blood money**’ is upheld in several **Islamic countries** with factors such as **gender, religion, and nationality of the victim** coming into play. इसके समकालीन अनुप्रयोगों में, कई **इस्लामिक देशों** में ‘**ब्लड मनी**’ को मान्यता प्राप्त है, जिसमें लिंग, धर्म, और पीड़ित की **राष्ट्रीयता** जैसे कारक महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाते हैं।



- In **Saudi Arabia**, the traffic regulations specifically mandate payment of '**blood money**' to heirs of victims who die in **road accidents**.  
सऊदी अरब में, यातायात नियम विशेष रूप से '**ब्लड मनी**' का भुगतान उन पीड़ितों के उत्तराधिकारियों को अनिवार्य करते हैं, जो सड़क दुर्घटनाओं में मारे जाते हैं।
- In **Saudi Arabia**, the perpetrator is also liable to a **prison term**.  
सऊदी अरब में, अपराधी को जेल की सजा भी भुगतनी पड़ती है।
- The statutory legislation and **Sharia** work hand in hand in such cases.  
ऐसे मामलों में वैधानिक कानून और शरिया एक साथ काम करते हैं।
- While the police determine the guilty parties, a **Sharia court** fixes the amount of '**blood money**' to be paid.  
जबकि पुलिस दोषी पक्षों का निर्धारण करती है, एक शरिया अदालत भुगतान किए जाने वाले '**ब्लड मनी**' की राशि तय करती है।
- In **Iran**, 'blood money' varies with respect to **religion and gender**. A woman's compensation is fixed at half of that of a man's.  
ईरान में, '**ब्लड मनी**' धर्म और लिंग के अनुसार भिन्न होता है। एक महिला का मुआवजा एक पुरुष के मुआवजे का आधा तय किया जाता है।
- In **Pakistan**, provisions for '**diya**' and '**qisas**' were brought into mainstream law through the **Criminal Laws (Amendment) Ordinance, 1991**.  
पाकिस्तान में, 'दिया' और 'क़िसास' के प्रावधानों को क्रिमिनल लॉज (संशोधन) अध्यादेश, 1991 के माध्यम से मुख्यधारा के कानून में लाया गया।
- In **Yemen**, the consensus for compensation can be arrived at by the parties, and there might be a **judicial oversight** over the fairness of the compensation.  
यमेन में, मुआवजे के लिए समझौता पक्षों द्वारा किया जा सकता है, और मुआवजे की निष्पक्षता पर न्यायिक निगरानी हो सकती है।

## India's Stand on 'Diya'

### भारत का 'दिया' पर रुख

- Provisions for the grant or receiving of '**blood money**' do not find a place in **India's formal legal system**.  
'ब्लड मनी' के प्रावधान भारत के आधिकारिक कानूनी व्यवस्था में स्थान नहीं पाते हैं।
- However, India's system does provide a way for the accused to negotiate with the prosecution through '**plea bargaining**'.  
हालांकि, भारत की व्यवस्था '**प्ली बार्गेनिंग**' के माध्यम से आरोपी को अभियोजन पक्ष के साथ सौदेबाजी करने का तरीका प्रदान करती है।
- Though the concept cannot be directly equated with '**blood money**', the scheme lays out a procedure whereby the defendant agrees to plead guilty for a particular offence in return for a concession from the prosecutor.  
हालांकि, इस अवधारणा को सीधे '**ब्लड मनी**' से नहीं जोड़ा जा सकता, योजना एक प्रक्रिया प्रदान



करती है जिसके तहत आरोपी एक विशेष अपराध में दोषी स्वीकार करने के बदले अभियोजक से छूट प्राप्त करता है।

- **Plea bargaining** can allow the defendant to plead guilty for a lesser charge or receive a reduced sentence.

**प्ली बार्गेनिंग** आरोपी को एक हलके आरोप में दोषी स्वीकार करने या कम सजा प्राप्त करने की अनुमति दे सकती है।

- Introduced through the **Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2005**, plea bargaining is governed by **Chapter XXI A of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973**.

**क्रिमिनल लॉ (संशोधन) एक्ट, 2005** के माध्यम से पेश की गई, प्ली बार्गेनिंग दंड प्रक्रिया संहिता, 1973 के अध्याय **chapter XXI A** द्वारा शासित होती है।

- **Plea bargaining** can be invoked only for offences punishable with imprisonment of **less than seven years**.

**प्ली बार्गेनिंग** केवल उन अपराधों के लिए लागू की जा सकती है जो सात साल से कम की सजा के साथ दंडनीय हैं।

- The provision is not available for **crimes against women or children under 14 years of age, heinous crimes** such as **murder or rape**, and **socio-economic crimes**.

यह प्रावधान महिलाओं या बच्चों के खिलाफ अपराध, नृशंस अपराधों जैसे हत्या या बलात्कार, और सामाजिक-आर्थिक अपराधों के लिए उपलब्ध नहीं है।

- However, similar to **blood money**, **plea bargaining** may allow for the victim to receive compensation under **Section 265E**.

हालांकि, **ब्लड मनी** के समान, **प्ली बार्गेनिंग** पीड़ित को धारा **265E** के तहत मुआवजा प्राप्त करने की अनुमति दे सकती है।

- Discussions have been underway to refine the **plea bargaining** process, similar to efforts in Islamic nations towards making '**blood money**' more inclusive and egalitarian.

**प्ली बार्गेनिंग** प्रक्रिया को परिष्कृत करने के लिए चर्चाएं चल रही हैं, जैसे इस्लामिक देशों में '**ब्लड मनी**' को और अधिक समावेशी और समानतावादी बनाने की कोशिशें हो रही हैं।

## Historical practices similar to 'blood money'

### 'खून के पैसे' से मिलती-जुलती ऐतिहासिक प्रथाएँ

- In the ancient legal system of Ireland, the **Brehon law** (seventh century AD) provided for the system of '**Éraic**' (**body price**) and '**Log nEnech**' (**honour price**).
- प्राचीन आयरलैंड के कानूनी प्रणाली में, **ब्रेहोन कानून** (सातवीं शताब्दी ईस्वी) ने '**Éraic**' (शरीर की कीमत) और '**Log nEnech**' (सम्मान की कीमत) की व्यवस्था दी थी।
- '**Éraic**' determined the amount based on the severity of the offence, while '**Log nEnech**' varied depending upon the victim's social status.
- '**Éraic**' अपराध की गंभीरता के आधार पर राशि निर्धारित करता था, जबकि '**Log nEnech**' पीड़ित की सामाजिक स्थिति के आधार पर भिन्न होता था।



- In early Welsh law, '**Galanas**' compensated according to the status of the victim, and '**blood fine**' was always paid in cases of murder.
- प्रारंभिक वेल्श कानून में, '**Galanas**' पीड़ित की स्थिति के अनुसार मुआवजा देता था, और हत्या के मामलों में हमेशा '**खून का जुर्माना**' चुकाया जाता था।
- The German concept of '**Wergeld**' formalized the idea of 'blood money', particularly in the context of early medieval law.
- जर्मन अवधारणा '**Wergeld**' ने 'खून के पैसे' के विचार को औपचारिक रूप दिया, खासकर प्रारंभिक मध्यकालीन कानून के संदर्भ में।
- According to American legal professional **Roscoe Pound**, medieval States set standards for appropriate payments to the kin of victims in cases of homicide or grave crimes.
- अमेरिकी कानूनी पेशेवर **Roscoe Pound** के अनुसार, मध्यकालीन राज्यों ने हत्याओं या गंभीर अपराधों के मामलों में पीड़ितों के रिश्तेदारों को उपयुक्त भुगतान के लिए मानक तय किए थे।

## Have there been other Indians who were pardoned with 'blood money'?

क्या ऐसे अन्य भारतीय रहे हैं जिन्हें 'खून के पैसे' से माफी दी गई?

- In 2019, **Arjunan Athimuthu** from **Thanjavur** was granted life imprisonment instead of the death penalty after his family paid **₹30 lakh in 'blood money'** in Kuwait.
- 2019 में, **अर्जुनन अथिमुथु** (तंजावुर) को कुवैत में **₹30 लाख 'खून के पैसे'** चुकाने के बाद मृत्युदंड की बजाय जीवन कारावास दिया गया।
- **Abdul Rahim**, sentenced to death for murdering a Saudi boy in 2006, was pardoned after **₹34 crore** of 'blood money' was paid, but he is still in prison.
- **अब्दुल रहीम**, जो 2006 में एक सऊदी लड़के की हत्या के लिए मृत्युदंड का पात्र था, को **₹34 करोड़** के 'खून के पैसे' चुकाने के बाद माफ कर दिया गया, लेकिन वह अभी भी जेल में है।
- In 2017, 10 Indians in the **UAE** were pardoned after **200,000 dirhams** were paid as 'blood money'.
- 2017 में, **UAE** में 10 भारतीयों को **200,000 दिरहम 'खून के पैसे'** के रूप में चुकाने के बाद माफ कर दिया गया।
- In another case, **17 Indians** were pardoned after **₹4 crore** worth of 'blood money' was paid in the **UAE** for a 2009 murder.
- एक अन्य मामले में, **17 भारतीयों** को **₹4 करोड़** के 'खून के पैसे' चुकाने के बाद **UAE** में 2009 की हत्या के लिए माफ कर दिया गया।
- The Indian consulate hired a law firm in the UAE to argue the case of the 17 Indians.
- भारतीय दूतावास ने 17 भारतीयों के मामले की पैरवी करने के लिए UAE में एक कानून फर्म को नियुक्त किया था।
- As for **Nimisha Priya**, with **Iran** assuring India of taking up the case, it remains to be seen whether her death sentence will be commuted.



- निमिषा प्रिय के मामले में, जहां ईरान ने भारत को मामले को उठाने का आश्वासन दिया है, यह देखना बाकी है कि उसकी मृत्युदंड को बदला जाएगा या नहीं।

# Pannun case: panel seeks action against key person

Inquiry committee was set up on the basis of information given by U.S. Justice Department, which had charged former RAW agent Vikash Yadav with conspiring to kill pro-Khalistan activist in 2023

GS Paper III: Internal Security

NEW DELHI

A high-powered inquiry committee – formed over a year ago based on information provided by the United States to probe the role of organised criminal groups, terrorist organisations, and drug peddlers – submitted its report to the Union government recommending expeditious legal action against an “individual”, the Union Home Ministry said in a statement on Wednesday.

The Ministry did not identify the individual, but said the person’s “earlier criminal links and antecedents” came to notice during the panel’s inquiry.

Though the statement did not specify the details of the case, the United States Department of Justice in October 2024 charged Vikash Yadav, an Indian citizen and former Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) official, with directing a failed plot to murder the pro-Khalistan activist and Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) chief, Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, in

## Mystery person

The committee constituted to probe organised gangs “who undermined the security interests of both India and the U.S.” has recommended legal action against an unnamed individual



- MHA says “earlier criminal links and antecedents” of the individual came to notice during the enquiry

- In October 2024, the U.S. charged Indian national Vikash Yadav with directing a failed plot to murder pro-Khalistan activist Pannun (in photo)

- Yadav was arrested by the Delhi Police in an unrelated case and is currently on bail

- Indian citizen Nikhil Gupta was also extradited to the U.S from Czech Republic in June 2024 in connection with the case

New York in 2023. Mr. Pannun is a U.S. citizen designated a terrorist.

The identity of Mr. Yadav, who was only identified as ‘CC-1’ in U.S. court records, was disclosed in October 2024 when the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) put him on its “most wanted” list. Mr. Yadav was arrested by the Delhi Police Special Cell in December 2023 in an unrelated kidnapping and extortion case. He was granted interim bail by a Delhi court in March 2024, and regular bail a month later.

The court order identi-

fied him as an “ex-government employee”, indicating that he was no longer employed with the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). Mr. Yadav was on deputation to RAW when he was named by the U.S authorities in the foiled assassination plot.

R.K. Handoo, Mr. Yadav’s counsel, told *The Hindu* on Wednesday that his client continues to be on bail, and that the next hearing in the extortion case is expected in February.

The MHA said the inquiry panel was constituted in

November 2023 to probe the role of organised gangs “who undermined the security interests of both India and the U.S.”

“The enquiry committee conducted its own investigations, and also pursued leads provided by the U.S side. It received full cooperation from U.S. authorities and the two sides also exchanged visits. The committee further examined a number of officials from different agencies and also scrutinised relevant documents in this connection,” it said.

“After a long enquiry, the committee has submitted its report to the Government and recommended legal action against an individual, whose earlier criminal links and antecedents also came to notice during the enquiry,” MHA said adding that the committee has recommended that the legal action must be completed expeditiously.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) had said in November 2023 that the government would look into all relevant aspects of the matter.



## Pannun case: panel seeks action against key person

### पन्नून मामले में: पैनल ने मुख्य व्यक्ति के खिलाफ कार्रवाई की सिफारिश की

- A high-powered inquiry committee was formed over a year ago based on information provided by the **United States** to investigate organised criminal groups, terrorist organisations, and drug peddlers.

एक उच्च-स्तरीय जांच समिति एक साल पहले संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका द्वारा दी गई जानकारी के आधार पर संगठित आपराधिक समूहों, आतंकवादी संगठनों और मादक पदार्थों के तस्करों की जांच करने के लिए बनाई गई थी।

- The committee submitted its report to the **Union government** recommending legal action against an "individual," though the identity was not disclosed. समिति ने अपनी रिपोर्ट केंद्रीय सरकार को प्रस्तुत की, जिसमें एक "व्यक्ति" के खिलाफ कानूनी कार्रवाई की सिफारिश की गई, हालांकि उसकी पहचान का खुलासा नहीं किया गया।
- The individual's "earlier criminal links and antecedents" came to light during the inquiry. व्यक्ति के "पूर्व आपराधिक संबंध और पूर्ववर्ती" जांच के दौरान सामने आए।
- **Vikash Yadav**, a former **RAW** official, was charged by the **United States Department of Justice** in October 2024 for directing a failed plot to murder **Gurpatwant Singh Pannun**, a pro-Khalistan activist, in **New York** in 2023.

विकाश यादव, एक पूर्व RAW अधिकारी, को संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका न्याय विभाग ने अक्टूबर 2024 में गुरपतवंत सिंह पन्नून, एक कश्मीरी समर्थक कार्यकर्ता, की हत्या की नाकाम साजिश की योजना बनाने के लिए आरोपित किया था, जो 2023 में न्यूयॉर्क में हुई थी।

- Pannun is a **U.S. citizen** and has been designated as a terrorist by the U.S. पन्नून एक अमेरिकी नागरिक हैं और उन्हें संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका द्वारा आतंकवादी के रूप में नामित किया गया है।
- The identity of Yadav was disclosed in **October 2024**, when the **FBI** put him on its "most wanted" list. यादव की पहचान अक्टूबर 2024 में सार्वजनिक की गई थी, जब एफबीआई ने उन्हें अपनी "सबसे वांछित" सूची में डाला।
- Vikash Yadav was arrested by **Delhi Police Special Cell** in **December 2023** in an unrelated kidnapping and extortion case. दिल्ली पुलिस विशेष शाखा ने दिसंबर 2023 में उन्हें एक अप्रासंगिक अपहरण और फिरौती मामले में गिरफ्तार किया था।
- He was granted **interim bail** by a **Delhi court** in **March 2024**, and regular bail in **April 2024**. उन्हें मार्च 2024 में दिल्ली कोर्ट द्वारा अंतरिम जमानत दी गई, और अप्रैल 2024 में नियमित जमानत मिली।



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- The Ministry of **Home Affairs (MHA)** stated that the inquiry panel was constituted in **November 2023** to probe the role of gangs undermining the security interests of both **India** and the **U.S.**

गृह मंत्रालय (MHA) ने कहा कि जांच समिति का गठन नवंबर 2023 में किया गया था, ताकि भारत और संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका दोनों की सुरक्षा हितों को कमजोर करने वाले गैंग्स की भूमिका की जांच की जा सके।

- The committee cooperated with **U.S. authorities**, and the two sides exchanged visits during the inquiry.

समिति ने संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका अधिकारियों के साथ सहयोग किया, और जांच के दौरान दोनों पक्षों ने दौरे का आदान-प्रदान किया।

- After a long inquiry, the committee recommended that the legal action against the individual be completed **expeditiously**.

लंबी जांच के बाद, समिति ने सिफारिश की कि व्यक्ति के खिलाफ कानूनी कार्रवाई को जल्दी किया जाए।

- The Ministry of **External Affairs (MEA)** had said in **November 2023** that the government would examine all relevant aspects of the matter.

विदेश मंत्रालय (MEA) ने नवंबर 2023 में कहा था कि सरकार इस मामले के सभी संबंधित पहलुओं की जांच करेगी।

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## Three Indian nuclear entities no more on U.S. restrictions list

PCS  
Press Trust of India  
NEW DELHI

The United States on Wednesday removed restrictions on three Indian nuclear entities, over a week after National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan announced that Washington was finalising steps to “remove” hurdles for civil nuclear partnership between Indian and American firms.

The three entities are Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Indira Gandhi Atomic Research Centre (IGCAR) and the Indian Rare Earths (IRE), according to the U.S. Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS).

In an address at the IIT-Delhi last week, Mr. Sullivan said the U.S. will re-

move regulations that have prevented cooperation between Indian nuclear entities and American companies.

### Outgoing Biden team

The removal of the three key Indian entities is being seen as an attempt by the outgoing Biden administration to facilitate the implementation of the landmark India-U.S. civil nuclear pact that was sealed 16 years back.

The move comes five days ahead of Donald Trump's inauguration as the 47th President of the U.S. India and the U.S. signed a historic civil nuclear agreement in 2008. It was expected to pave the way for allowing the US to share civilian nuclear technology with India.

सूची से हटाई गई तीन संस्थाएँ हैं: भाभा एटॉमिक रिसर्च सेंटर (BARC), इंदिरा गांधी एटॉमिक रिसर्च सेंटर (IGCAR), और भारतीय रियर अर्थ्स (IRE)।

- U.S. Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) confirmed the removal.
- अमेरिका के उद्योग और सुरक्षा ब्यूरो (BIS) ने इस हटाने की पुष्टि की।
- Jake Sullivan, in an address at IIT Delhi, stated that the U.S. will remove regulations that have prevented cooperation between Indian nuclear entities and American companies.
- आईआईटी दिल्ली में एक संबोधन में, जेक सुलिवन ने कहा कि अमेरिका उन नियमों को हटा देगा जिन्होंने भारतीय परमाणु संस्थाओं और अमेरिकी कंपनियों के बीच सहयोग में रुकावट डाली थी।
- The removal of the three entities is seen as an attempt by the outgoing Biden administration to facilitate the implementation of the landmark India-U.S. civil nuclear pact, signed 16 years ago.

तीन संस्थाओं को हटाए जाने को बाइडन प्रशासन द्वारा भारत-अमेरिका नागरिक परमाणु समझौते को लागू करने में सहूलत देने का प्रयास माना जा रहा है, जो 16 साल पहले हस्ताक्षरित हुआ था।

## Three Indian nuclear entities no more on U.S. restrictions list

अमेरिका द्वारा तीन भारतीय परमाणु संस्थाओं को प्रतिबंधों की सूची से बाहर किया गया

The United States removed restrictions on three Indian nuclear entities.

संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका ने तीन भारतीय परमाणु संस्थाओं पर से प्रतिबंध हटा दिए।

- This decision came after National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan announced that Washington was finalizing steps to remove hurdles for civil nuclear partnership between Indian and American firms.

यह निर्णय नेशनल सिक्योरिटी एडवाइज़र जेक सुलिवन के घोषणा के बाद आया, जिसमें उन्होंने कहा कि वॉशिंगटन भारतीय और अमेरिकी कंपनियों के बीच नागरिक परमाणु साझेदारी में रुकावटों को हटाने के कदम अंतिम रूप से तैयार कर रहा था।

- The three entities removed from the list are Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Indira Gandhi Atomic Research Centre (IGCAR), and Indian Rare Earths (IRE).



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- This decision comes five days ahead of Donald Trump's inauguration as the 47th President of the U.S.  
यह निर्णय डोनाल्ड ट्रंप के अमेरिका के 47वें राष्ट्रपति के रूप में शपथ ग्रहण से पाँच दिन पहले आया है।
- India and the U.S. signed a historic civil nuclear agreement in 2008, which was expected to pave the way for sharing civilian nuclear technology between the two countries.  
भारत और अमेरिका ने 2008 में एक ऐतिहासिक नागरिक परमाणु समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर किए थे, जिससे दोनों देशों के बीच नागरिक परमाणु प्रौद्योगिकी साझा करने का मार्ग प्रशस्त होने की उम्मीद थी।

**Agasthyar's legacy to be the focus of Kashi Tamil Sangamam 3.0**

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# Agasthyar's legacy to be the focus of Kashi Tamil Sangamam 3.0

GS Paper I: A&C

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Announcing that the theme of the third edition of Kashi Tamil Sangamam will be the legacy and philosophy of Maharishi Agasthyar, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said here on Wednesday that the intellectual brilliance of Agasthyar was the bedrock of the Tamil language and literature as well as the shared values, knowledge traditions and heritage of the country.

The event, to be held at the Namo Ghat in Varanasi, will begin on February 15 and will conclude on February 24.

The Minister also inaugurated the registration process for the Sangamam, and said the Centre expected 1,200 delegates from Tamil Nadu this time. The Sangamam will be held against the backdrop of the Kumbh Mela, Mr. Pradhan said.

The Union Education Ministry is the key organizer of the event. A document on Agasthyar temples in Tamil Nadu and another one on Siddha medicine will be released during the event, Mr. Pradhan said.

The last date of registration for the event is Febru-

**The event, to be held at the Namo Ghat in Varanasi, will be held from Feb. 15 to 24**

ary 1. The participants will be selected after a Tamil quiz on February 2. The portal, [kashitamil.iitm.ac.in](http://kashitamil.iitm.ac.in), is hosted by the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras.

Responding to questions, Mr. Pradhan said the Centre had not used the Sangamam for any political purposes and the intention was cultural integration and upholding of the inseparable and timeless bonds between Tamil Nadu and Kashi.

The participants will be from five categories – students, teachers, and writers; farmers and artisans; professionals and small entrepreneurs; women from various sectors; and those involved in start-ups, innovation, edu-tech and research. “This year, an additional group of around 200 students of Tamil origin studying in various Central universities will be a part of this event to enliven the bond between Kashi and Tamil Nadu. Participation of youth in all categories will be encouraged this year,” Mr. Pradhan said.

## आगस्थ्य के योगदान पर काशी तमिल संगमम 3.0 का ध्यान केंद्रित होगा

• The theme of the third edition of **Kashi Tamil Sangamam** will focus on the **legacy and philosophy of Maharishi Agasthyar**.

काशी तमिल संगमम के तीसरे संस्करण का विषय महर्षि आगस्थ्य के योगदान और दर्शन पर आधारित होगा।

• **Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan** said that Agasthyar's intellectual brilliance was the bedrock of **Tamil language and literature**, as well as shared values, knowledge traditions, and heritage of the country.

केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्री धर्मेन्द्र प्रधान ने कहा कि आगस्थ्य की बौद्धिक क्षमता तमिल भाषा और साहित्य के साथ-साथ देश के साझा मूल्यों, ज्ञान परंपराओं और धरोहर की नींव है।

• The event will be held at **Namo Ghat in Varanasi**, starting on **February 15** and concluding on **February 24**.

यह कार्यक्रम वाराणसी के नमो घाट पर 15 फरवरी को शुरू होकर 24 फरवरी को समाप्त होगा।

• The registration process for the Sangamam was inaugurated by the Minister, and **1,200 delegates from Tamil Nadu** are expected to attend this time.

संगमम के लिए पंजीकरण प्रक्रिया मंत्री द्वारा शुरू की गई, और इस बार तमिलनाडु से 1,200 प्रतिनिधियों के आने की उम्मीद है।

• The event will take place against the backdrop of the **Kumbh Mela**.

यह कार्यक्रम कुम्भ मेला के पृष्ठभूमि में आयोजित होगा।

• The **Union Education Ministry** is the key organizer of the event.

केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्रालय इस कार्यक्रम का मुख्य आयोजक है।

• A document on **Agasthyar temples in Tamil Nadu** and another on **Siddha medicine** will be released during the event.

कार्यक्रम के दौरान तमिलनाडु में आगस्थ्य के मंदिरों और सिद्ध चिकित्सा पर एक दस्तावेज़ जारी किया जाएगा।

• The last date for registration is **February 1**, and participants will be selected after a **Tamil quiz on**



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## February 2.

पंजीकरण की आखिरी तिथि **1 फरवरी** है, और प्रतिभागियों का चयन **2 फरवरी** को आयोजित तमिल क्विज़ के बाद किया जाएगा।

- The registration portal, [kashitamil.iitm.ac.in](http://kashitamil.iitm.ac.in), is hosted by the **Indian Institute of Technology, Madras**.

पंजीकरण पोर्टल, [kashitamil.iitm.ac.in](http://kashitamil.iitm.ac.in), भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, मद्रास द्वारा होस्ट किया गया है।

- **Mr. Pradhan** emphasized that the Sangamam is not being used for political purposes, but for cultural integration and upholding the timeless bonds between **Tamil Nadu and Kashi**.

\*\*प्रधानमंत्री ने यह जोर दिया कि संगमम का उपयोग राजनीतिक उद्देश्यों के लिए नहीं किया जा रहा है, बल्कि सांस्कृतिक एकीकरण और तमिलनाडु और काशी के बीच शाश्वत संबंधों को बनाए रखने के लिए किया जा रहा है।

- Participants will be from five categories: **students, teachers, and writers; farmers and artisans; professionals and small entrepreneurs; women from various sectors; and those involved in start-ups, innovation, edu-tech, and research.**

प्रतिभागी पांच श्रेणियों से होंगे: छात्र, शिक्षक, और लेखक; किसान और शिल्पकार; पेशेवर और छोटे उद्यमी; विभिन्न क्षेत्रों की महिलाएं; और स्टार्ट-अप्स, नवाचार, एजु-टेक, और अनुसंधान में शामिल लोग।

- An additional group of around **200 students of Tamil origin** studying in various **Central universities** will participate this year to strengthen the bond between Kashi and Tamil Nadu.

इस वर्ष तमिल मूल के लगभग **200 छात्रों** को विभिन्न केंद्रीय विश्वविद्यालयों से जोड़ा जाएगा, जो काशी और तमिलनाडु के बीच संबंध को सशक्त करेंगे।

- Participation of **youth** in all categories will be particularly encouraged this year.

इस वर्ष सभी श्रेणियों में **युवाओं** की भागीदारी को विशेष रूप से प्रोत्साहित किया जाएगा।

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# In an attempt to address 'lack of diversity', INSA selects non-scientists too as its Fellows

PCS  
GS Paper III: S&T

Jac  
NEW DELHI

The annual list of Fellows announced by the 90-year-old Indian National Science Academy, among the country's most prestigious assembly of scientists, sticks out this year for its deviation from the academy's traditional practice. The list features a phalanx of famous Indians who are not professional scientists.

They include Sudha Murthy, Rajya Sabha member and former Chair of the Infosys Foundation; her spouse, N.R. Narayanamurthy; two of his Infosys co-founders, Nandan Nilekani and Krish Gopalakrishnan; and Rajendra Singh, water conservationist and founder of the Tarun Bharat Sangh.

"While the majority of our fellows are those asso-



The INSA introduced two new categories of fellows this year: 'Science in Translation' and 'Science in Society'. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ciated with the creation of science, we must have at least 20% of them associated with the consumption and the use of science to create opportunities," Ashutosh Sharma, President, INSA, told *The Hindu*.

The move to introduce new categories of Fellows was part of a larger thrust to address a "lack of diversity".

This included not only improving representation

of women and youth but also the various stakeholders who contributed to science in India, beyond traditional academic scientists, he added.

The presence of Ms. Murthy, Mr. Sharma explained, was in her capacity as a former chairperson of the Infosys Foundation, which funded scientific research.

He cited the inclusion of Mr. Gopalakrishnan, who

has invested in multiple streams of basic research.

"The people who show commitment towards funding basic science research must be recognised. If we want more private funding for R&D, we must bring these people in the fold as they are stakeholders of science," he said.

While several notable industrialists were now included, this would set the template of recognising future contributors in the areas of deep-tech and space entrepreneurs, Mr. Sharma added.

The demarcation between "scientist" and "non-scientist" in the past was so strict that Satish Dhawan, Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) from 1972 and 1984, was only elected as a "Honorary Fellow" in a special category along with Indira Gandhi, Jawaharlal

Nehru, and J.R.D. Tata.

To accommodate the non-scientist entrants, the INSA introduced two new categories of fellows this year: "Science in Translation" and "Science in Society".

For being eligible in the "Translation" category, the candidate should have demonstrated scientific leadership in "science-based innovation; industrial research and development; technology missions of national importance; and in the management of scientific institutions".

For the "Society" category, the candidate should have applied science to address energy, water and health issues, or should have done work to popularise science or used science to deliver on societal impact, says an explanatory note on the INSA website.

## In an attempt to address 'lack of diversity', INSA selects non-scientists too as its Fellows

'विविधता की कमी' को संबोधित करने के प्रयास में, INSA ने गैर-वैज्ञानिकों को भी अपने साथी के रूप में चुना

- The annual list of Fellows announced by the **90-year-old Indian National Science Academy (INSA)** stands out this year for its deviation from the academy's traditional practice.  
**90 वर्षीय भारतीय राष्ट्रीय विज्ञान अकादमी (INSA)** द्वारा घोषित फेलो की वार्षिक सूची इस वर्ष अपनी पारंपरिक प्रथा से हटकर दिखती है।
- The list features a group of famous Indians who are not professional scientists, including **Sudha Murthy, N.R. Narayanamurthy, Nandan Nilekani, Krish Gopalakrishnan, and Rajendra Singh.**



सूची में कुछ प्रसिद्ध भारतीय शामिल हैं जो पेशेवर वैज्ञानिक नहीं हैं, जिनमें सुधा मुरथी, एन.आर. नारायणमूर्ति, नंदन नीलेकणी, कृष्ण गोपालकृष्णन, और राजेंद्र सिंह शामिल हैं।

- **Sudha Murthy** is a **Rajya Sabha** member and former Chair of the **Infosys Foundation**. सुधा मुरथी राज्य सभा सदस्य और इंसोसिस फाउंडेशन की पूर्व अध्यक्ष हैं।

- **N.R. Narayanamurthy** and two of his **Infosys co-founders Nandan Nilekani** and **Krish Gopalakrishnan** are also included.

एन.आर. नारायणमूर्ति और उनके इंसोसिस सह-संस्थापक नंदन नीलेकणी और कृष्ण गोपालकृष्णन भी शामिल हैं।

- **Rajendra Singh**, a **water conservationist** and founder of **Tarun Bharat Sangh**, is also on the list.

राजेंद्र सिंह, एक जल संरक्षणकर्ता और तरुण भारत संघ के संस्थापक, भी सूची में हैं।

- **Ashutosh Sharma**, President of **INSA**, emphasized that at least **20% of the Fellows** should be involved in the **consumption and use of science to create opportunities**.

आशुतोष शर्मा, INSA के अध्यक्ष, ने यह जोर दिया कि कम से कम **20% फेलो को विज्ञान के उपयोग और उपभोग से अवसर उत्पन्न करने में शामिल होना चाहिए।**

- The move to introduce new categories of Fellows was part of a larger push to address the **lack of diversity**.

फेलो की नई श्रेणियों को पेश करने का कदम **विविधता की कमी** को संबोधित करने के एक बड़े प्रयास का हिस्सा था।

- This included improving **representation of women and youth**, as well as recognizing **various stakeholders** who contributed to science in India, beyond traditional academic scientists.

इसमें **महिलाओं और युवाओं का प्रतिनिधित्व बढ़ाने** के साथ-साथ **विभिन्न हितधारकों को पहचानने** की बात भी थी जिन्होंने पारंपरिक अकादमिक वैज्ञानिकों से परे भारत में विज्ञान में योगदान दिया।

- The presence of **Ms. Murthy** is significant as she was the former **chairperson of the Infosys Foundation**, which funded scientific research.

**Ms. Murthy** की उपस्थिति महत्वपूर्ण है क्योंकि वह **इंसोसिस फाउंडेशन** की पूर्व अध्यक्ष थीं, जिसने वैज्ञानिक अनुसंधान को वित्तपोषित किया।

- **Mr. Gopalakrishnan** has invested in **multiple streams of basic research**.

**Mr. Gopalakrishnan** ने **मूलभूत अनुसंधान की कई धाराओं में निवेश** किया है।

- The inclusion of such individuals is seen as a recognition of those who contribute to **funding basic science research**.

ऐसे व्यक्तियों का समावेश **मूलभूत विज्ञान अनुसंधान को वित्तपोषित करने वाले लोगों को पहचानने** के रूप में देखा जा रहा है।

- **Mr. Sharma** explained that if more **private funding for R&D** is desired, these people must be brought in as **stakeholders of science**.

**Mr. Sharma** ने समझाया कि अगर अधिक **निजी धनराशि अनुसंधान और विकास (R&D)** के लिए चाहिए, तो इन लोगों को **विज्ञान के हितधारकों** के रूप में लाना होगा।



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- The introduction of such categories is also seen as setting a **template for recognizing future contributors** in areas like **deep-tech** and **space entrepreneurs**.  
ऐसी श्रेणियों का परिचय गहरे तकनीकी और अंतरिक्ष उद्यमियों जैसे क्षेत्रों में भविष्य के योगदानकर्ताओं को पहचानने के लिए एक मॉडल के रूप में देखा जा रहा है।
- In the past, the distinction between “scientist” and “non-scientist” was so strict that even **Satish Dhawan**, Chairman of **ISRO**, was only made an **Honorary Fellow** in a special category.  
अतीत में, “वैज्ञानिक” और “गैर-वैज्ञानिक” के बीच अंतर इतना कठोर था कि **सतीश धवन**, **ISRO** के अध्यक्ष, को केवल एक विशेष श्रेणी में **मानद फेलो** बनाया गया था।
- This year, INSA introduced two new categories of Fellows: “**Science in Translation**” and “**Science in Society**”.  
इस वर्ष, INSA ने फेलो की दो नई श्रेणियाँ पेश की हैं: “**विज्ञान में अनुवाद**” और “**समाज में विज्ञान**”।
- To be eligible for the “**Translation**” category, the candidate should have demonstrated scientific leadership in **science-based innovation**, **industrial research**, **technology missions**, and **management of scientific institutions**.  
“**अनुवाद**” श्रेणी के लिए पात्र होने के लिए, उम्मीदवार को **विज्ञान-आधारित नवाचार**, **औद्योगिक अनुसंधान**, **प्रौद्योगिकी मिशन** और **वैज्ञानिक संस्थानों के प्रबंधन** में वैज्ञानिक नेतृत्व दिखाना चाहिए।
- For the “**Society**” category, the candidate should have applied science to address **energy**, **water**, and **health** issues, or popularized science or used science for **societal impact**.  
“**समाज**” श्रेणी के लिए, उम्मीदवार को **ऊर्जा**, **जल** और **स्वास्थ्य मुद्दों** को हल करने के लिए विज्ञान का उपयोग करना चाहिए, या विज्ञान का प्रचार करना चाहिए या समाज पर प्रभाव डालने के लिए इसका उपयोग करना चाहिए।

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# Singapore President honours Tarun Das

PCS

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**

NEW DELHI

President of Singapore Tharman Shanmugaratnam bestowed the highest honour of the city-state on Tarun Das, former director general of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

Mr. Das was bestowed the Honorary Citizen Award by the President who will start official leg of his India tour on Thursday.

The award is given for "outstanding contribution by a non-Singaporean to the country's growth and development," a press note released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of Singapore declared.

Mr. Das is the second Indian to receive the honour with the late Ratan Tata be-



Mr. Shanmugaratnam with Tarun Das (left).

ing the only other Indian recipient earlier

The Foreign Minister termed Mr. Das as "one of Singapore's strongest advocates in India" and recollected he led a delegation of Indian industrialists to Singapore in 1993 as part of India's "Look East" policy.

Mr. Shanmugaratnam is accompanied by a large business delegation.

(MoFA) द्वारा जारी प्रेस नोट में घोषित किया गया है।

- Mr. Das is the **second Indian** to receive the honour, with the **late Ratan Tata** being the only other Indian recipient earlier.

तरुण दास यह सम्मान प्राप्त करने वाले दूसरे भारतीय हैं, पहले स्व. रतन टाटा एकमात्र अन्य भारतीय प्राप्तकर्ता थे।

- The **Foreign Minister** termed Mr. Das as "**one of Singapore's strongest advocates in India**" and recollected he led a **delegation of Indian industrialists to Singapore in 1993** as part of India's "**Look East**" policy.

विदेश मंत्री ने श्री दास को "भारत में सिंगापुर के सबसे मजबूत समर्थकों में से एक" कहा और

## Singapore President honours Tarun Das

## सिंगापुर राष्ट्रपति ने तरुण दास को सम्मानित किया

- President of Singapore, Tharman Shanmugaratnam, bestowed the **highest honour of the city-state** on Tarun Das, former director general of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

सिंगापुर के राष्ट्रपति थर्मन शंमगुर्त्तनम ने कन्फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडियन इंडस्ट्री (CII) के पूर्व महानिदेशक तरुण दास को सिटी-स्टेट का सर्वोच्च सम्मान प्रदान किया।

- Mr. Das was bestowed the **Honorary Citizen Award** by the President, who will start the official leg of his **India tour on Thursday**.

उन्हें राष्ट्रपति द्वारा मानद नागरिक सम्मान प्रदान किया गया, जो अपनी भारत यात्रा का गुरुवार को आधिकारिक हिस्सा शुरू करेंगे।

- The award is given for "**outstanding contribution by a non-Singaporean to the country's growth and development**," a press note released by the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA)** of Singapore declared.

यह पुरस्कार "किसी गैर-सिंगापुरवासी द्वारा देश की वृद्धि और विकास में उत्कृष्ट योगदान" के लिए दिया जाता है, जैसा कि सिंगापुर के विदेश मंत्रालय



उन्होंने याद किया कि उन्होंने 1993 में भारतीय उद्योगपतियों का एक प्रतिनिधिमंडल सिंगापुर भेजा था, जो भारत की "लुक ईस्ट" नीति का हिस्सा था।

- Mr. Shanmugaratnam is accompanied by a large business delegation.

श्री शंभुगरत्नम के साथ एक बड़ा व्यापार प्रतिनिधिमंडल है।

## All We Imagine As Light scores a nomination at 2025 BAFTA Awards



PCS

AP

Payal Kapadia's *All We Imagine As Light* bagged a nomination for the Best Film Not in English Language at the 2025 BAFTA Film Awards. The Malayalam-Hindi movie is pitted against *Kneecap* (Ireland), *The Seed of the Sacred Fig* (Germany), *Emilia Perez* (France) and *I'm Still Here* (Brazil) in the category. AFP

*Perez* (France) and *I'm Still Here* (Brazil) in the category.

यह मलयालम-हिंदी फिल्म कनीकेप (आयरलैंड), दी सीड ऑफ द सेक्रेड फिग (जर्मनी), एमिलिया पेरेज़ (फ्रांस) और आई एम स्टिल हियर (ब्राजील) के खिलाफ इस श्रेणी में मुकाबला कर रही है।

## All We Imagine As Light scores a nomination at 2025 BAFTA Awards

### "ऑल वी इमेजिन ऐज़ लाइट" को 2025

### BAFTA अवार्ड्स में नामांकन मिला

- Payal Kapadia's *All We Imagine As Light* bagged a nomination for the Best Film Not in English Language at the 2025 BAFTA Film Awards.

पायल कपाड़िया की "ऑल वी इमेजिन ऐज़ लाइट" को 2025 BAFTA फिल्म पुरस्कारों में "बेस्ट फिल्म नॉट इन इंग्लिश लैंग्वेज" के लिए नामांकन प्राप्त हुआ।

- The Malayalam-Hindi movie is pitted against *Kneecap* (Ireland), *The Seed of the Sacred Fig* (Germany), *Emilia*

*Perez* (France) and *I'm Still Here* (Brazil) in the category.

यह मलयालम-हिंदी फिल्म कनीकेप (आयरलैंड), दी सीड ऑफ द सेक्रेड फिग (जर्मनी), एमिलिया पेरेज़ (फ्रांस) और आई एम स्टिल हियर (ब्राजील) के खिलाफ इस श्रेणी में मुकाबला कर रही है।

## Sheikh Hasina's niece Tulip Siddiq resigns as U.K. Treasury Minister



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AP

The niece of Bangladesh's former leader Sheikh Hasina, Labour Party MP Tulip Siddiq, resigned as Treasury Minister to prevent her family connections becoming a "distraction" for the work of the British government. She was hit by allegations of corruption and a lack of transparency regarding her use of properties in London. PTI

## Sheikh Hasina's niece Tulip Siddiq resigns as U.K. Treasury Minister

### शेख हसीना की भतीजी तूलिप सिद्दीकी ने यू.के. ट्रेजरी मंत्री के पद से इस्तीफा दिया

- The niece of Bangladesh's former leader Sheikh Hasina, Labour Party MP Tulip Siddiq, resigned as Treasury Minister to prevent her family connections becoming a "distraction" for the work of the British government.

\*\*बांग्लादेश की पूर्व नेता शेख हसीना की भतीजी, लेबर पार्टी की सांसद तूलिप सिद्दीकी, ट्रेजरी मंत्री के पद से इस्तीफा दिया ताकि उनके परिवारिक संबंध ब्रिटिश सरकार के काम में "विघ्न" न बनें।

- She was hit by allegations of corruption and a lack of transparency regarding her use of properties in



London.

उन्हें भ्रष्टाचार और लंदन में संपत्तियों के उपयोग को लेकर पारदर्शिता की कमी के आरोपों का सामना करना पड़ा।

## English author Neil Gaiman denies rape and assault accusations



PCS

AP

English writer Neil Gaiman denied accusations of rape and sexual assault, insisting he never had non-consensual sex with anyone. The science fantasy author of works such as *American Gods* and *Good Omens* hit back after the *New York Magazine* published an investigation into allegations which emerged six months ago. AFP

फैंटेसी लेखक ने न्यू यॉर्क मैगजीन द्वारा छह महीने पहले उठे आरोपों पर एक जांच प्रकाशित करने के बाद पलटवार किया।

## English author Neil Gaiman denies rape and assault accusations

अंग्रेज़ लेखक नील गैमैन ने बलात्कार और हमले के आरोपों को नकारा

- English writer Neil Gaiman denied accusations of **rape** and **sexual assault**, insisting he never had **non-consensual sex** with anyone. अंग्रेज़ लेखक नील गैमैन ने बलात्कार और यौन हमले के आरोपों को नकारा, यह कहते हुए कि उन्होंने कभी किसी के साथ असहमति वाला सेक्स नहीं किया।
- The **science fantasy author** of works such as **American Gods** and **Good Omens** hit back after **New York Magazine** published an investigation into allegations which emerged **six months ago**. अमेरिकन गॉड्स और गुड ओमेंस जैसी कृतियों के साइंस



# Iran acknowledges Israel's tampering of centrifuge platforms using explosives

GS Paper II: West Asia

Associated Press

DUBAI

Israel supplied Iran with centrifuge platforms containing explosives for its nuclear enrichment programme, a top Iranian official has acknowledged for the first time, underscoring the sophistication of sabotage programmes targeting the Islamic Republic.

The comments by Mohammad Javad Zarif, a former Foreign Minister who serves as Vice-President for strategic affairs for reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian, appear aimed at explaining to the country's disaffected public the challenges Iran's government faces under crushing Western sanctions over the programme. The comments also acknowledged details previously reported in Israel about a 2021 attack on Iran's underground Natanz nuclear enrichment facility.

The revelation, released this week, shows the danger still facing Iran after Israel struck the country twice during the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip — and threatens to directly target its nuclear sites as President-elect Donald Trump prepares to re-enter the White House next week.

Mr. Zarif made the remarks in an interview with a programme affiliated with the Institute for the Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works, a publicly funded organisation in Iran. Politicians from Iran's reformist camp, which seeks to change Iran's Shia theocra-



**High risk:** In July 2020, a mysterious explosion tore apart Natanz's advanced centrifuge assembly, which Iran blamed on Israel. AP

cy from within, often seek different media outlets to reach the public as Iranian state television is controlled by hard-liners.

Mr. Zarif, who helped Iran reach its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, discussed a sabotage attack launched by Israel's Mossad intelligence agency targeting pagers and radios used by the Lebanese Shiite militia Hezbollah in September. The two waves of attacks killed 42 people and wounded thousands more, setting the stage for Israel's invasion of Lebanon in October.

#### Cost of sanctions

"This is part of the damage of sanctions, that you are forced to receive (purchases) through multiple dealers instead of buying from a factory directly," Mr. Zarif said. "If the Zionist regime can infiltrate one of the dealers, then it can do anything and install anything."

He added: "For instance, our friends at the Atomic Energy Organization (of Iran) had purchased a platform for centrifuges in which (the

Israelis) had installed explosive material."

Mr. Zarif did not elaborate, and the interviewer did not press him on the issue.

However, it marked the first clear acknowledgment of the degree Mossad had infiltrated Iran's programme.

#### Mysterious blast

In July 2020, a mysterious explosion tore apart Natanz's advanced centrifuge assembly, which Iran blamed on Israel. In April 2021, another blast tore apart one of its underground enrichment halls.

A few months later, Israel's outgoing Mossad chief Yossi Cohen gave an interview to Israeli television in which he all but acknowledged his spies executed the two attacks. The show said a saboteur "made sure to supply to the Iranians the marble foundation on which the centrifuges are placed" that included "an enormous amount of explosives."

The attacks happened under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

previously reported in Israel about a 2021 attack on Iran's underground Natanz nuclear enrichment facility.

इन टिप्पणियों में इजराइल द्वारा पहले रिपोर्ट की गई जानकारी का भी स्वीकार किया गया है,

## Iran acknowledges Israel's tampering of centrifuge platforms using explosives

## ईरान ने इजराइल द्वारा सेंट्रीफ्यूज प्लेटफार्मों में विस्फोटक पदार्थ लगाने की बात मानी

• Israel supplied Iran with centrifuge platforms containing explosives for its nuclear enrichment programme, a top Iranian official has acknowledged for the first time, underscoring the sophistication of sabotage programmes targeting the Islamic Republic.

इजराइल ने ईरान को उसके परमाणु संवर्धन कार्यक्रम के लिए विस्फोटक पदार्थों से भरे सेंट्रीफ्यूज प्लेटफार्म प्रदान किए हैं, जिसे पहली बार एक शीर्ष ईरानी अधिकारी ने स्वीकार किया है, जो इस्लामी गणराज्य को निशाना बनाने वाले साजिश कार्यक्रमों की जटिलता को रेखांकित करता है।

• The comments by Mohammad Javad Zarif, a former Foreign Minister who serves as Vice-President for strategic affairs for reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian, appear aimed at explaining to the country's disaffected public the challenges Iran's government faces under crushing Western sanctions over the programme.

मोहम्मद जावेद ज़रीफ के बयान, जो पूर्व विदेश मंत्री हैं और सुधारवादी राष्ट्रपति मसूद पेज़ेशकियन के लिए स्ट्रेटिजिक अफेयर्स के उपाध्यक्ष हैं, इस बात को स्पष्ट करने के लिए प्रतीत होते हैं कि ईरान सरकार को इस कार्यक्रम के कारण पश्चिमी सख्त प्रतिबंधों के तहत जनता की नाखुशी का सामना करना पड़ रहा है।

• The comments also acknowledged details



जिसमें 2021 में हुए हमले का जिक्र है जो ईरान की भूमिगत नतान्ज़ परमाणु संवर्धन सुविधा पर हुआ था।

- The revelation, released this week, shows the **danger still facing Iran** after Israel struck the country twice during the **Israel-Hamas war** in the **Gaza Strip** — and threatens to directly target its nuclear sites as **President-elect Donald Trump** prepares to re-enter the **White House next week**.

इस सप्ताह जारी किए गए खुलासे से यह साफ होता है कि ईरान के लिए खतरा अभी भी बरकरार है क्योंकि इजराइल ने गाजा पट्टी में इजराइल-हमास युद्ध के दौरान ईरान पर दो बार हमला किया था – और यह धमकी देता है कि राष्ट्रपति-निर्वाचित डोनाल्ड ट्रंप अगले सप्ताह व्हाइट हाउस में फिर से प्रवेश करने के लिए तैयार हैं, इस बीच ईरान की परमाणु स्थलों को सीधे निशाना बनाने की धमकी दी जा रही है।

- Mr. Zarif made the remarks in an interview with a programme affiliated with the **Institute for the Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works**, a **publicly funded organisation** in Iran.

श्री ज़रीफ ने ये टिप्पणी इमाम खोमेनी के कार्यों की संकलन और प्रकाशन संस्थान से जुड़े एक कार्यक्रम में दी, जो ईरान में एक सार्वजनिक वित्तपोषित संस्था है।

- Politicians from Iran's **reformist camp**, which seeks to change Iran's **Shia theocracy** from within, often seek different media outlets to reach the public as **Iranian state television** is controlled by **hard-liners**.

ईरान के सुधारवादी शिविर के राजनेता, जो ईरान के शिया धर्मतंत्र को भीतर से बदलने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं, अक्सर अलग-अलग मीडिया आउटलेट्स का सहारा लेते हैं क्योंकि ईरानी राज्य टीवी कठोरपंथियों द्वारा नियंत्रित है।

- Mr. Zarif, who helped **Iran reach its 2015 nuclear deal** with world powers, discussed a sabotage attack launched by **Israel's Mossad intelligence agency** targeting **paggers and radios** used by the Lebanese **Shiite militia Hezbollah** in September.

श्री ज़रीफ, जिन्होंने 2015 में ईरान का परमाणु समझौता विश्व शक्तियों से कराया, ने एक साजिश हमले पर चर्चा की, जो इजराइल की मोसाद खुफिया एजेंसी ने लिबानानी शिया मिलिशिया हिज़बुल्लाह द्वारा उपयोग किए गए पेजर्स और रेडियो को निशाना बनाते हुए सितंबर में किया था।

- The two waves of attacks killed **42 people** and wounded **thousands more**, setting the stage for **Israel's invasion of Lebanon** in **October**.

हमलों की दो लहरों में 42 लोग मारे गए और हजारों लोग घायल हुए, जिसने इजराइल द्वारा अक्टूबर में लेबनान पर आक्रमण की नींव रखी।

- **"This is part of the damage of sanctions," Mr. Zarif said**, "that you are forced to receive (purchases) through multiple dealers instead of buying from a factory directly."

"यह प्रतिबंधों का एक हिस्सा है," श्री ज़रीफ ने कहा, "कि आपको (खरीदारी) सीधे फैक्ट्री से न खरीदकर कई डीलरों के माध्यम से प्राप्त करनी पड़ती है।"

- **"If the Zionist regime can infiltrate one of the dealers, then it can do anything and install anything."**



"अगर सियानी शासन किसी एक डीलर में घुसपैठ कर सकता है, तो वह कुछ भी कर सकता है और कुछ भी स्थापित कर सकता है।"

- He added: "For instance, our friends at the **Atomic Energy Organization (of Iran)** had purchased a platform for **centrifuges** in which (the Israelis) had installed **explosive material.**"

उन्होंने जोड़ा: "उदाहरण के लिए, हमारे मित्र **परमाणु ऊर्जा संगठन (ईरान)** में, जिन्होंने **सेंट्रीफ्यूज** के लिए एक प्लेटफार्म खरीदी थी, जिसमें (इजराइलियों) ने **विस्फोटक सामग्री** स्थापित की थी।"

- Mr. Zarif did not elaborate, and the interviewer did not press him on the issue. श्री ज़रीफ ने इस पर विस्तार से कुछ नहीं बताया, और साक्षात्कारकर्ता ने इस मुद्दे पर उनसे और सवाल नहीं किया।

- However, it marked the **first clear acknowledgment** of the degree **Mossad** had infiltrated Iran's programme.

हालांकि, यह **मोसाद** द्वारा ईरान के कार्यक्रम में घुसपैठ करने की **पहली स्पष्ट स्वीकृति** थी।

- In **July 2020**, a mysterious explosion tore apart **Natanz's advanced centrifuge assembly**, which **Iran blamed on Israel.**

**जुलाई 2020** में, एक रहस्यमयी विस्फोट ने **नतानज़ की उन्नत सेंट्रीफ्यूज असेंबली** को उड़ा दिया, जिसे ईरान ने **इजराइल पर आरोपित** किया।

- In **April 2021**, another blast tore apart one of its underground enrichment halls.

**अप्रैल 2021** में, एक और विस्फोट ने इसके एक भूमिगत संवर्धन कक्ष को उड़ा दिया।

- A few months later, Israel's outgoing **Mossad chief Yossi Cohen** gave an interview to **Israeli television** in which he all but acknowledged his spies executed the two attacks. कुछ महीनों बाद, इजराइल के बाहर जा रहे **मोसाद प्रमुख योसी कोहेन** ने **इजराइली टेलीविजन** को एक साक्षात्कार दिया, जिसमें उन्होंने लगभग स्वीकार किया कि उनके जासूसों ने दोनों हमलों को अंजाम दिया।

- The show said a saboteur "made sure to supply to the Iranians the **marble foundation** on which the **centrifuges** are placed" that included "an enormous amount of **explosives.**"

शो ने कहा कि एक **विध्वंसक** ने "यह सुनिश्चित किया कि ईरानियों को वह **संगमरमर की नींव** प्रदान की जाए जिस पर **सेंट्रीफ्यूज** रखे जाते हैं", जिसमें "विस्फोटकों की एक **विशाल मात्रा** शामिल थी।"

- The attacks happened under **Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.**

हमले **प्रधानमंत्री बेंजामिन नेतन्याहू** के तहत हुए थे।