

AS ITS CHANGING

- Typical Viewpoint 2025



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02.06.2025

₹5.23 LAKH CRORE SOUGHT UNTIL 2029-30

Rural beneficiaries in NREGS dip, Ministry seeks 12% higher outlay over next 5 yrs

RURAL JOBS SCHEME: BUDGET, DEMAND		
Year	Central release*	Families availing the scheme
2020-21	₹1,09,810 cr	7.55 cr
2021-22	₹96,812 cr	7.25 cr
2022-23	₹88,290 cr	6.18 cr
2023-24	₹88,217 cr	5.99 cr
2024-25	₹85,680 cr	5.79 cr

* Funds released by the Central Government; source: NREGA dashboard

EXPLAINED

E

Demand down, outlay up

THE DEMAND for work under the MGNREGS and its budget peaked during the Covid pandemic. Since then it has seen a steady decline. The higher projection by the ministry for the next five years reflects inflationary expectations on the material component side and rise in wages, which is also linked to inflation.

UEFA Champions League, 2025

- **PSG won** – French club – for the **first time** – defeating **Inter Milan** (Italy- last won 2010) – Score : 5 – 0
- PSG is the second French winner – Merseille were the first in 1993
- Coach :- Luise Enrique
- 2024 winner :- Real Madrid
- Previous name of Champions League :- European Cup until 1992
- Takes place :- Annually
- Most Champions League titles :-
 - 1) Real Madrid : 15
 - 2) AC Milan : 7
 - 3) Liverpool : 6
 - 4) Bayern Munich : 6
 - 5) Barcelona : 5

FIFA	vs	UEFA
Global governing body for football		UEFA is the continental body for European football

The international governing body for association football, futsal, and beach soccer.

H.Q. :- Zurich, Switzerland

Organises :-

FIFA World Cup (Men)

- 1) Brazil (5)
- 2) Germany (4)
- 3) Italy (4)
- 4) Argentina (3)
- 5) France (2)
- 6) Uruguay (2)
- 7) England (1)
- 8) Spain (1)

FIFA World Cup (Women)

FIFA Confederations Cup
(stopped in 2017)

FIFA Club World Cup

Award :-

FIFA Best Men's Player

FIFA Best Women's Player

While FIFA sets the overall rules and regulations for international football,

The governing body for European football

H.Q.:- Nyon, Switzerland

Organises :-

UEFA European Championship
(national)

UEFA Champions League (club, 1st tier)

UEFA Europa League (club, 2nd tier)

Award:-

Ballon d'Or (Men)

Ballon d'Or (Women)

UEFA has its own specific regulations for European competitions.

Copa America	Organized by	CONMEBOL
	Region	South America
	Highest Winner	1) Argentina 2) Uruguay 3) Brazil

04.06.2025

WHAT CAUSED THE MASSIVE ERUPTION OF ITALY'S MOUNT ETNA

- Italy's **Mount Etna**,



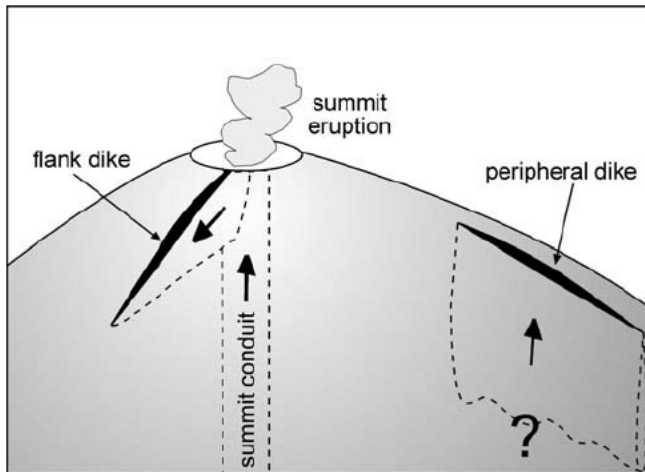
produced an explosive eruption on Monday morning,

sending → [a huge cloud of ash, smoke and rock fragments] → several kilometres into the sky.

- Although the eruption created a spectacular sight, it resulted in no reported injuries or damage and barely even disrupted flights in the region.

Where is Mount Etna? [eruptions (summit + flank)]

- Mount Etna, sometimes referred to simply as Etna, is an **active volcano** on the east coast of **Sicily, the largest island in the Mediterranean Sea**, lying just off the toe of the Italian “boot”.
 - Etna's **peak** is the **highest in Italy**, south of the Alps and
 - it is the **largest** of **Europe's active volcanoes**.
- Etna's summit has five craters, which are responsible for most of the volcano's eruptions. “Flank” eruptions also occur at the 300-odd vents of varying sizes along the slopes of the mountain.
- The volcano is in near-constant activity. Since 1600, at least 60 flank eruptions and many more summit eruptions have happened. In recent years, summit eruptions have occurred in 2006, 2007-08, on two occasions in 2012, in 2018, and 2021; flank eruptions have taken place in 2001, 2002-03, 2004-05, and 2008-09.
- **Etna** has been a **World Heritage Site** since 2013, and according to **UNESCO**, the volcano's eruptive history can be traced back 500,000 years. At least 2,700 years of this activity have been documented.



Flank eruptions	vs	Summit eruptions
Flank eruptions occur on the <u>sides</u> of a volcano, Flank eruptions often result from magma finding an <u>alternative path to the surface due to a blocked or compromised central vent.</u> Flank eruptions are commonly characterized by multiple aligned vents that radiate from the summit of the volcano Flank eruptions can be effusive (lava flows) or explosive, depending on the magma's viscosity and gas content. Flank eruptions can pose risks to communities and infrastructure located near the flanks, as they can produce lava flows and ash.		while summit eruptions happen at the volcano's peak, usually within a crater. Summit eruptions, on the other hand, are more direct, with magma <u>flowing through the central conduit.</u> Summit eruptions are the consequence of the extrusion of magma from a central reservoir through the summit conduit. can range from effusive (lava flows) to explosive (Strombolian or Plinian eruptions) while often spectacular, may pose less of a direct threat to populated areas

What kind of eruption did it have?

- Experts suggest that the **eruption began** with an increase in pressure inside the volcano **due to expanding gases**, which led to the collapse of the southeast crater, resulting in hot lava flows.

➤ **Strombolian eruption:-**

According to Italy's National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology (INGV) Etna Observatory, the volcano was witnessing a “Strombolian” eruption.

- This type of eruption is usually *characterised as*
 - discreet, moderately explosive bursts
 - which can eject chunks of rock and cinders
 - that can travel hundreds of metres into the air.
 - It *occurs due to* the **presence of gas in the magma chamber** within the volcano.
- When the gas bubbles reach the surface, they can burst suddenly, throwing material skywards. The process is **similar to letting gas out of a fizzy drink**.
 - The Strombolian eruption is *named after another Italian volcano called Stromboli*, which produces minor eruptions every 10 to 20 minutes.

- ◆ However, some volcanologists believe that Mount Etna did not experience a Strombolian eruption but rather a **Plinian eruption**, in which

hot gas, ash, and rock

can explode high enough

to reach the stratosphere.

- ◆ Given that the Monday eruption produced by Mount Etna threw material several kilometres into the sky, this set of volcanologists say it was a Plinian eruption.

Difference	India : ACTIVE	between Stron bolian and
Plinian eruption	BARREN ISLAND	

travel distance.

⇒ Scientists typically classify eruptions based on how explosive they are.

- **More explosive** eruptions tend to be **more dangerous**, as they can **cover a larger area** and **move faster**.

Most active volcanoes in the **world**

Name	Country	Brief
Kīlauea	Hawali, USA	This volcano has been continuously erupting since 1983, with recent episodes including lava flows and fountains. It is considered one of the most active volcanoes in the world.
Mount Etna	Italy	This volcano has a history of frequent eruptions and has recently been spewing ash and lava
Mount Merapi	Indonesia	is known for its frequent eruptions and has experienced recent activity including pyroclastic flows
Shiveluch Volcano	Russia	This volcano began erupting on April 11, 2023, with large ash clouds.
Fuego Volcano	Guatemala	This volcano is undergoing a sustained eruption episode
Sakurajima Volcano	Japan	The Japan Meteorological Agency has reported ongoing eruptive activity at Minamidake Crater

The only currently active volcano in India

(**also all of South Asia**) is Barren Island,

located in the **Andaman and Nicobar Islands** (roughly 135 kms north-east of Port Blair).

It is part of a volcanic arc formed by the **collision of the Indian and Burmese tectonic plates**.

Barren Island has a long history of eruptions, with its first recorded outbreak in 1787 (thereafter 10 times). The most recent eruption was in 2022 (2017, 2005-07, 1994-95, 1991). After 1852, dormant for nearly one and a half centuries.

(**UPSC asks tricky question here**...e.g. erupted in last decade, or last 2-3 decade, or in each decade etc; OR mentioning some century, would ask whether in that decade most number of eruption happened)

Unique ecosystem :-

Despite the harsh volcanic environment, Barren Island **overflows with life**. The island is a sanctuary for a variety of **flora and fauna, including some endemic species** that have adapted to the volcanic conditions.

However, an eruption in 1991 significantly impacted the island's ecology, and ongoing monitoring is crucial.

India experienced wettest May since 1901: IMD

CONSECUTIVE POSITIVE RAINFALL DEPARTURES OVER INDIA POST-MONSOON ONSET 2025

Date	Rainfall (%)	Date	Rainfall (%)
May 17	0	May 25	22
May 18	2	May 26	26
May 19	5	May 27	28
May 20	7	May 28	31
May 21	10	May 29	33
May 22	15	May 30	37
May 23	17	May 31	42
May 24	18		

Source : IMD

MAY AVERAGE MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE (IN °C)

Region Temperature	Recorded Temperature	Normal Temperature	Temperature Departure (%)
Central India	36.63	39.26	-2.63
South India	34.13	36.38	-2.25
Northwest India	35.96	36.55	-0.58
East & Northeast India	32.52	32.6	-0.35
All India	35.08	36.6	-1.52

05.06.2025

FIRST STEPS IN LADAKH

Centre's notifications go a long way towards addressing demands of people. Task ahead is to deepen representative democracy

Backdrop:-

Since 2019 and the bifurcation of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, the leaders from the Union Territory of Ladakh have demanded constitutional protections for land ownership, economic opportunities, preserving tribal cultures and languages, and a more representative government. Each of these clusters of demands is rooted in the unique historical and demographic profile of the region, and the promise – both explicit and implicit – at the time of

the abrogation of Article 370 was that they would be addressed. Earlier this week, a slew of notifications by the central government moved the needle significantly on many of the demands from Ladakh, especially around **domicile-based government jobs, protection and promotion of languages and quotas**. Welcome as they are, these orders should be followed in due course by measures that ensure a deepening of representative democracy in Ladakh and assuage some of the anxieties around land rights.

Reforms:-

Service @ <u>Domicile</u>	The Ladakh Civil Services Decentralisation and Recruitment (Amendment) Regulation introduces a domicile requirement for government jobs: To be eligible, a person must have resided in Ladakh for 15 years or appeared in Class X or Class XII examinations in the UT .
Service @ <u>Reservation</u>	The Union Territory of Ladakh Reservation (Amendment) Regulation has placed a cap of 85 per cent on reservation, excluding the EWS quota . This, in effect, provides nearly blanket reservation for local people (the UT has a 90 per cent Scheduled Tribe populations).
Official Language @ English, Hindi, Urdu, Bhoti and Purgi	The Centre has also recognised English, Hindi, Urdu, Bhoti and Purgi as official languages of the Union Territory, in addition to facilitating other mechanisms for promoting and protecting the region's culture and heritage. <u>Bhoti and Purgi are spoken by a majority of the population</u> , and their long-delayed recognition has been a demand for many years.

Importance of Ladakh:-

There is no gainsaying the fact that *the Centre and the armed forces have – and will continue to have – a deep interest and presence in Ladakh.*

Border	The UT borders both Pakistan and China and has been a military flashpoint with both countries – in <i>Kargil</i> with Pakistan in <i>1999</i> , and the <u>border clashes</u> with <i>China</i> from <i>2020 to 2024</i> .
Renewable Energy	In addition, vast swathes of land in the region are important for the country's renewable energy goals.

Issues to be addressed:-

These imperatives, however, cannot negate the underlying principles of democracy.

→ Inclusion in the 6th Schedule:-

The demand from many in Ladakh was the area's **inclusion in the Sixth Schedule** of the Constitution – *like parts of the North-east – which allows for significant autonomy.*

→ Land acquisition restriction:-

The Centre, on its part, has sought to provide protections through its orders. **But it does not seem to have engaged with the demand for restrictions on people from outside owning land.**

→ Strengthening of LAHDCs:-

Even more glaring in its absence is a *greater devolution of powers to the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDCs).*

- Currently, these local elected bodies have no legislative powers and few administrative ones.

Conclusion:-

Ladakh, like the rest of the erstwhile state of J&K, **deserves some form of representative government.**

As the Centre and the local leadership negotiate the next steps on the political architecture for the UT, giving its people a voice should be paramount.

Lee is new South Korea President, vows to revive democracy

South Korea's new liberal President **Lee Jae-myung** pledged on Wednesday to raise the country from what he described as the near destruction caused by a martial law attempt and revive a struggling economy facing global protectionism.

Lee's decisive victory in Tuesday's snap election stands to usher in a sea change in **Asia's** fourth-largest economy (**China** [Asia's → 45.9%, World's → 16.9%], **Japan** [10.3%, 3.80%], **India** (10.0%, 3.70%) , **South Korea** [4.57%, 1.69%], **Indonesia**), after backlash against a botched attempt at military rule brought down Yoon Suk Yeol just three years into his troubled presidency.

He faces what could be the most daunting set of challenges for a South Korean leader in nearly three decades, ranging from healing a country deeply scarred by the martial law attempt to tackling unpredictable protectionist moves by the *United States, a major trading partner and a security ally*.

"A Lee Jae-myung government **will be a pragmatic pro-market government**," he said after taking the oath of office at parliament.

"It is better to win without fighting than to win in a fight, and peace with no need to fight is the best security," he said, referring to his country's often violent ties with rival North Korea.

Lee was officially confirmed earlier as president by the National Election Commission and immediately assumed the **powers of the presidency and commander in chief**.

Quick Look:-

Challenges ahead :-

- Cleaning the mess at home
 - Addressing a slow economy
 - North Korea's nuclear threat
- what he described as the near destruction caused by a martial law attempt
and
revive a struggling economy facing global protectionism.
- diplomatic cornering to win through the means of upholding peace

- Committing to US alliance

INTENT TO CONDUCT CENSUS TO BE NOTIFIED MID-JUNE

Long wait ends, Census by March 2027, will include caste count too

The Census of 1931

The last caste census took place in 1931. This data will form the baseline for the count of members of various castes in the upcoming Census. This is the story of Census of 1931, how it was conducted, and what it found

Key Takeaways

35.05 cr

population of
(undivided)
India

185 cr

estimated
population of
the world

85

persons per
sq km density
of population

225

number of
dialects
in India

DENSITY OF POPULATION

LOWEST: Chagai (Baluchistan), less than 1 person per sq km

HIGHEST: South west coast, Cochin State, almost 800 persons per sq km

THREE BIGGEST CASTES IN MAJOR PROVINCES

BENGAL

Kaibartta	27.33 lakh
Namasudra	20.94 lakh
Rajbansi (Kshatriya)	18.06 lakh

BIHAR AND ORISSA

Goala (Ahir)	34.55 lakh
Brahman	21.01 lakh
Kurmi	14.52 lakh

BOMBAY

Kunbi (including Maratha)	64.34 lakh
Mahar (Holiya and Dhed)	14.38 lakh
Brahman	11.28 lakh

CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR

Mehra	13.07 lakh
Kunbi	12.81 lakh
Teli	10.22 lakh

MADRAS

Brahman	14.73 lakh
Pallan	8.57 lakh
Telaga	6.99 lakh

Census of India, 1931

VOL. I - INDIA

Part I - Report

J. H. HUTTON, C.I.E. (Ed.), F.A.S.S.,
Government Member of the Administrative Council of India



PUNJAB (INCLUDING DELHI)

Arain	13.34 lakh
Chamar	11.48 lakh
Chuhra	11.14 lakh

UNITED PROVINCES OF AGRA AND OUDH

Chamar	63.12 lakh
Brahman	45.55 lakh
Ahir	38.96 lakh

POPULATION OF MAJOR RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Hindu	23.91 cr
Muslim	7.76 cr
Buddhist	1.27 cr
Tribal*	82.80 lakh
Christian	62.97 lakh
Sikh	43.36 lakh
Jain	12.52 lakh

*Census included 'Tribal' under religious groups

07.06.2025

MPC's June meeting: In pursuit of growth

Muted inflation has provided RBI space to lower rates. Policy in coming months will hinge on how economy navigates global uncertainties

The June meeting of the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee contained many surprises. As against expectations of a 25 basis point cut in interest rates, the committee lowered the

benchmark repo rate by 50 basis points. This brings the cumulative cuts since February to 100 basis points. The repo rate now stands at 5.5 per cent. The rationale for doing so seems straightforward. As RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said, “It is imperative to continue to stimulate domestic private consumption and investment through policy levers to step up the growth momentum.” And muted inflation provides the central bank the space to lower interest rates to do so.

Inflation had edged lower to 3.16 per cent in April and is likely to stay subdued. A favourable monsoon bodes well for farm output and there are expectations of major commodities such as crude oil witnessing moderation. Forecasts by the RBI and most analysts do indicate softness in prices. As per the central bank’s latest forecast, retail inflation, as measured by the consumer price index, is expected to average 3.7 per cent in 2025-26 (3.15 per cent in the first half of the year and 4.15 per cent in the second half). This is lower than its earlier estimate of 4 per cent. Alongside the rate cut, the RBI has also unexpectedly cut the cash reserve ratio by 100 basis points to boost liquidity. As per the central bank, this measure could release primary liquidity of Rs 2.5 lakh crore by December 2025. This will aid in policy transmission.

However, at the same meeting, the RBI also unexpectedly announced a change in its policy stance from “accommodative” to “neutral”, after having shifted it only in the last meeting. In the April policy meeting, the RBI Governor had said that the “stance of monetary policy signals the intended direction of policy rates going forward”. This sudden decision is being viewed by some as signalling a pause in the rate cut cycle. In his comments, Malhotra did say that “monetary policy is left with very limited space to support growth”. And though *the central bank has retained its estimate of GDP growth for 2025-26 at 6.5 per cent*, there does remain considerable uncertainty over the growth momentum. In fact, it has noted that “spillovers emanating from protracted geopolitical tensions, and global trade and weather-related uncertainties, pose downside risks to growth”. Thus, taken together, the various announcements in the June meeting do suggest that the central bank will probably adopt a wait-and-watch approach over the coming months as it assesses the impact of the measures it has announced so far. Policy action in this period will depend on how the trajectory of growth and inflation evolves.

Quick Look:-

- Expectation was 25 basis point cut
- Has happened with 50 basis point cut
- Since February, 2025 → 100 basis point cut
- Now **Repo** stands at **5.5%**
- Cut CRR by 100 basis point
 - Now, **CRR → 3% → → →** this measure could release
primary liquidity of
Rs 2.5 lakh crore by December 2025

- **Objective :-** stimulate domestic private consumption and investment through policy levers → → to step up the growth momentum
- **Estimated growth rate** retained same → **6.5%**
- **Predictability:-** signalling a pause in the rate cut cycle
- **Positive expectation:-**
 - *Good monsoon → ample farm output*
 - *Crude oil price moderating trend*
- **Worries :-**
 - *protracted geopolitical tensions,*
 - *global trade @ tariff uncertainty*
 - *weather-related uncertainties*

Over last decade, India's extreme poverty rate falls to 5.3% from 27.1% as World Bank raises the bar

With the World Bank raising its threshold poverty line to \$3 a day (daily consumption of less than \$3) from the earlier \$2.15 a day, the extreme poverty rate for India declines sharply to 5.3 percent in 2022-23 from 27.1 percent in 2011-12. In absolute terms, people living in extreme poverty fell from 344.47 million (34.447 crore) to just 75.24 million (7.524 crore), latest data from the World Bank shows.

At \$2.15 daily consumption – the earlier poverty line based on 2017 prices – the share of Indians living in extreme poverty is 2.3 per cent, which is significantly lower than 16.2 per cent in 2011-12, according to the World Bank's estimates. The number of people living below the \$2.15-per-day poverty line is recorded at 33.66 million in 2022, down from 205.93 million in 2011.

Despite the World Bank revising its extreme poverty line to adjust for global inflation in 2021 prices, India seems to have fares well, with the poverty numbers holding good. At \$3 a day threshold, Indian's extreme poverty rate for 2022-23 rises from 2.3 per cent (at a poverty line of \$2.15 a day) to 5.3 per cent, the World Bank estimates.

Adjusting the earlier \$2.15 per-day line for domestic inflation from 2017 to 2021, according to sources, brings the threshold poverty line to roughly \$2.60 still lower in real terms than the new \$3 a day benchmark.

The share of Indians living below the revised **lower-middle-income category (LMIC)** poverty line of **\$4.20 per day** (from \$3.65 in 2017 prices) also *fell from 57.7 per cent in 2011-12 to 23.9 per cent in 2022-23*. In absolute numbers, people living under the revised LMIC poverty line dips from 732.48 million to 342.32 million (**34.232 crore**) in a period of 11 years.

The World Bank estimates **India's population** at 1438.07 million (**143.807 crores**) in 2023, using its World Development Indicators data-base and the official Household Consumption Expenditure Survey.

Based on the earlier LMIC line of \$3.65/ day, Indian's poverty rate falls from 61.8 per cent to 28.1 per cent, with around 401 million Indians living below the \$3.65/ day line in 2022.

Using the revised LMIC poverty line of \$4.20 per day in 2021 prices, Indian's poverty rate drops to 23.9 per cent from 28.1 per cent in 2022-23. This may seem counter-intuitive, but sources said this is because the new threshold is about 5 per cent lower for India than the inflation-adjusted equivalent of the earlier \$3.65 benchmark.

When adjusted for domestic inflation between 2017 and 2021, the previous \$3.65 line would be roughly \$4.40 in 2021 prices, making the revised \$4.40 line effectively a lower bar for India.

Poverty rates for 2023-24 will be released in October under its Poverty and Inequality Platform (PIP). Sources in the government said these numbers have not been arrived at internally too.

Under the \$3.65-per-day LMIC line (in 2017 prices), rural poverty fell from 69 per cent in 2011-12 to 32.5 per cent in 2022-23, while urban poverty dropped from 43.5 per cent to 17.2 per cent. The gap by education level was even starker 0 35.1 per cent of Indians over 16 without any schooling lived below the poverty line in 2022-23, compared to just 14.9 per cent among those with a post-secondary education.

According to the **World Bank's** multidimensional poverty index (**MPI**), *non-monetary poverty* in India *declined from 53.8 per cent in 2005-06 to 15.5 per cent in 2022-23*. The index comprises **six indicators**, namely *consumption or income, educational attainment, educational enrolment, drinking water, sanitation, and electricity*. The **NITI Aayog** has estimated that India's population *living in multidimensional poverty fell to 11.28 per cent in 2022-23 from 29.17 per cent in 2013-14*.

Data in the *Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES)* 2023-24 also indicates a *rise in monthly consumption in India*.

→ In 2011-12 prices,

- **rural average** monthly consumption spending per person increased to **Rs 2,079** in 2023-24 from Rs 1,430 in 2011-12, a *rise of 45.4 per cent*.
- **Urban average** monthly consumption expenditure increased by 38 per cent to **Rs 3,632** per cent from Rs 2,630.

Quick Look:-

Extreme Poverty (consumption based, monetary)

- *World Bank has raised its threshold poverty line to **\$3 a day** (daily consumption of less than \$3)*
 - Revised the **earlier \$2.15 a day**.
- At present, the extreme poverty rate for India **5.3%** in 2022-23
 - *Earlier 27.1% in 2011-12.*
 - In absolute terms → from 344.47 million (34.447 crore) to just **75.24 million (7.524 crore)**.

Lower-middle-income category (LMIC) (consumption based, monetary)

- poverty line of **\$4.20 per day**
 - Revised the **earlier \$3.65 in 2017 prices**.
- **Rate** → **23.9%** in 2022-23.
 - *Earlier 57.7% in 2011-12*
 - In absolute terms → from 732.48 million (73.248 crore) to 342.32 million (**34.232 crore**) in a period of 11 years.

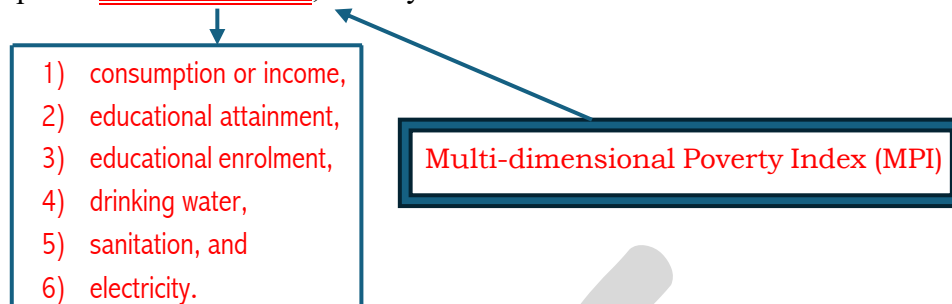
↔ The World Bank estimates **India's population** at 1438.07 million (**143.807 crores**) in 2023, using its

World Development Indicators data-base
and
the official Household Consumption Expenditure Survey.

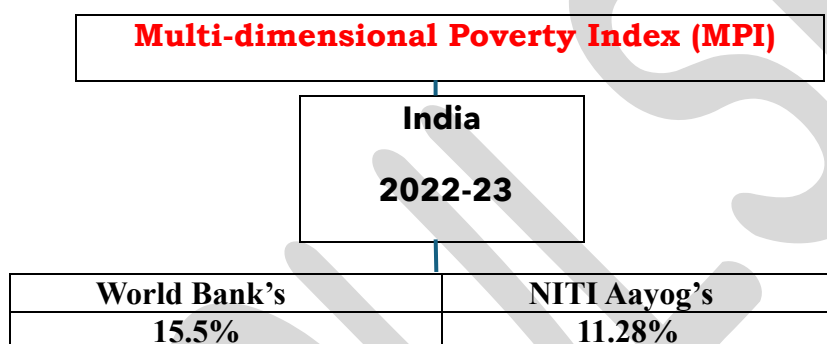
- According to the **World Bank's** multidimensional poverty index (**MPI**),
non-monetary poverty in India

declined from 53.8% in 2005-06 to **15.5%** in 2022-23.

- The index comprises **six indicators**, namely



- The **NITI Aayog** has estimated that India's population *living in multidimensional poverty* **fell to 11.28% in 2022-23** from 29.17 per cent in 2013-14.



NITI Aayog's Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI)

- **3 main indicators** viz.
- 1) **Health** (subclassified into 3) → weightage – $\frac{1}{6} + \frac{1}{12} + \frac{1}{12}$
 - 2) **Education** (subclassified into 2) → weightage – $\frac{1}{6} + \frac{1}{6}$
 - 3) **Standard of Living** (subclassified into 7) → weightage – $\frac{1}{21}$ each

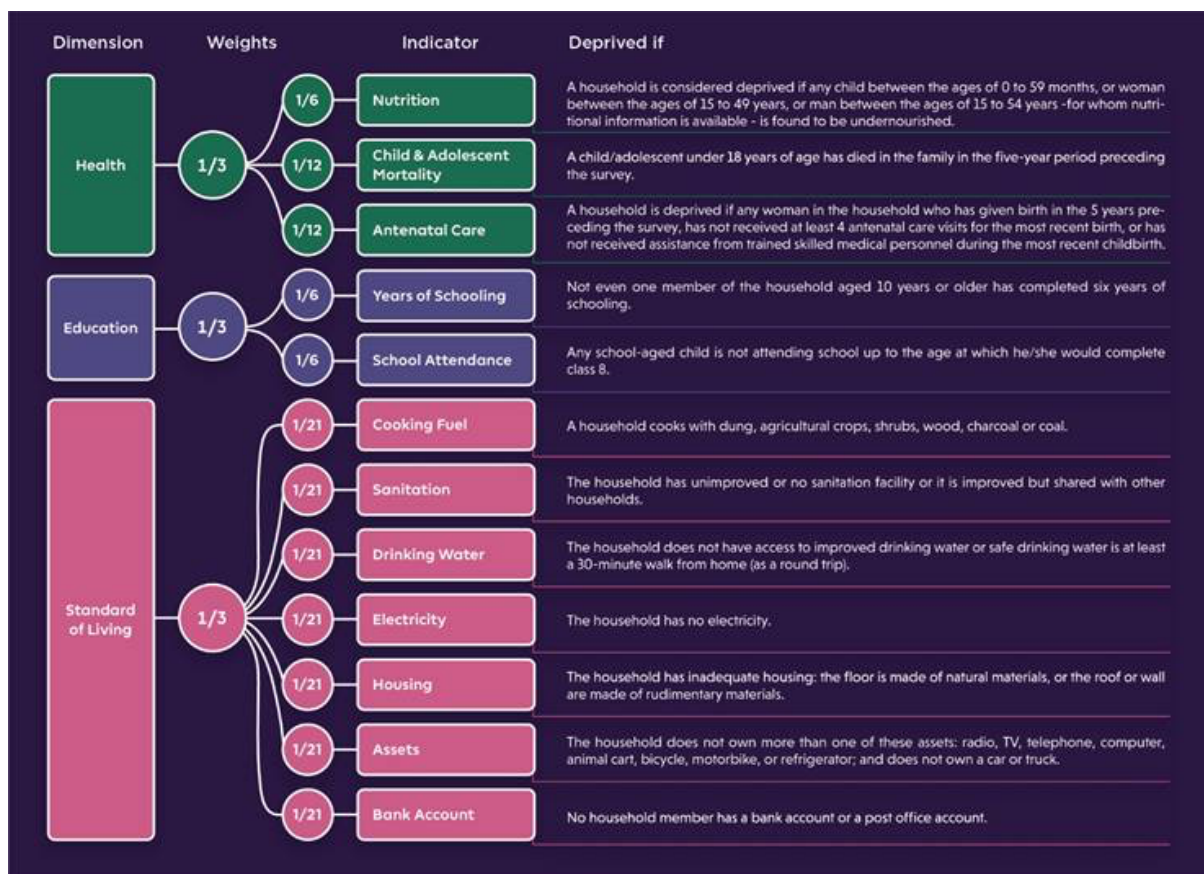


FIGURE 1: INDICATORS IN INDIA'S NATIONAL MPI

Data from MoSPI

Data in the *Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES)* 2023-24 also indicates a **rise in monthly consumption in India.** (published by MoSPI)

→ In 2011-12 prices,

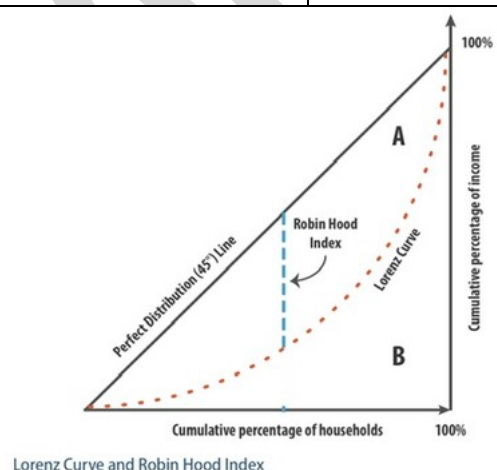
- **rural average** monthly consumption spending **per person** increased to **Rs 2,079** in 2023-24 from Rs 1,430 in 2011-12, a **rise of 45.4%**.
- **Urban average** monthly consumption expenditure increased **by 38%** to **Rs 3,632** per cent from Rs 2,630.

In percentage term :-Rural Consumption growth rate is higher than Urban

In Cumulative term :- Urban is higher than Rural

The Gini index and the Theil index are **both** statistical measures used to **quantify inequality** in various distributions, like income or wealth.

Gini index	Theil index
most widely cited measure of inequality; it measures the extent to which the distribution within an <u>economy</u> deviates from a perfectly equal distribution. The Gini index is a single number between 0 and 1, ~ with 0 representing perfect equality and ~ 1 representing perfect inequality. Measures the extent to which the distribution of income or consumption among individuals or households deviates from a perfectly equal distribution.	The Theil index, on the other hand, ~ is an information-theoretic measure that can be decomposed into within-group and between-group inequality components Provides a measure of inequality in a more detailed and nuanced form, often used in conjunction with the Gini index. The Theil index is less sensitive to population size compared to the Gini index.



Inequality Measurement

Graphical representation of inequality	Indices	Ratios
Lorenz curve It is one of the simplest representations of inequality. On the horizontal axis is the cumulative number of income recipients ranked from the poorest to the richest individual or household. The vertical axis displays the cumulative percentage of total income. The Lorenz curve reveals the percentage of income owned by x per cent of the population. It is usually shown in relation to a 45-degree line that represents perfect equality where each x percentile of the population receives the same x percentile of income. Thus the farther the Lorenz curve is in relation to the 45-degree line, the more unequal the distribution of income.	→ Gini index → Atkinson's inequality measure (or Atkinson's index) This is the most popular welfare-based measure of inequality. It presents the percentage of total income that a given society would have to forego in order to have more equal shares of income between its citizens. → Hoover index (also known as the Robin Hood index, Schutz index or Pietra ratio) It shows the proportion of all income which would have to be redistributed to achieve a state of perfect equality. → Theil index and General Entropy (GE) measures	→ Decile dispersion ratio (or inter-decile ratio) It is the ratio of the average income of the richest x per cent of the population to the average income of the poorest x per cent. It expresses the income (or income share) of the rich as a multiple of that of the poor. → Palma ratio It is the ratio of national income shares of the top 10 per cent of households to the bottom 40 per cent. → 20/20 ratio It compares the ratio of the average income of the richest 20 per cent of the population to the average income of the poorest 20 per cent of the population. Used by the United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report (called "income quintile ratio").

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For writing purpose (GS and Essay)

FIGURES OF HOPE

Release of new data clears the air on poverty in India, it should now lead to more policymaking

Poverty and inequality estimation in India have been subjects of considerable debate, especially in recent years with the economy experiencing several shocks. The great India poverty debate has, in fact, been marked by significant differences of opinion on the household survey data which forms the basis of estimation. The construction of the poverty lines, and on the trends over the decades. The debate has been particularly heated in the absence of data - the government did not release the consumption expenditure survey data for 2017-18 due to "data quality issues". This led to several studies trying to estimate poverty levels in India by drawing on alternate data sources such as the Periodic Labour Force Surveys and the CMIE data. Recently, the government has attempted to fill the data gap by conducting two rounds of household consumption expenditure surveys for 2022-23 and 2023-24. These surveys now allow for an examination of the trends in poverty over the past decade or so. The decline has been significant.

Extreme poverty in India is estimated to have declined from 27.1 per cent in 2011-12 to 5.3 per cent in 2022-23 as per the latest World Bank data reported in this paper. This steep decline has occurred even as the Bank has raised the threshold for measuring extreme poverty to \$3 a day from \$2.15 earlier. To put these figures in perspective – the number of people living in extreme poverty in India fell from 344.47 million to 75.24 million over this period. While there has been some concern over the comparability of the consumption expenditure surveys carried out in 2011-12 and 2022-23 due to changes in the manner in which the recent survey was carried out and its sampling design, this is a steep decline. Moreover, even considering the poverty line for lower-middle income countries of \$4.2 per day (revised upwards from \$3.65), the poverty ratio in India fell from 57.7 per cent in 2011-12 to 23.9 per cent in 2022-23. The decline appears to have continued in the year thereafter. Earlier, Niti Aayog had estimated that multidimensional poverty in India had also registered a steep decline – falling from 55.34 per cent in 2005-06 to 24.85 per cent in 2015-16 to 14.96 per cent in 2019-21. This estimate of poverty was based on 12 indicators and drew on data from the National Family Healthy Surveys.

Alongside the poverty estimates, the World Bank has also estimated that inequality in India, based on measures such as the Gini and Theil indices, did fall between 2011 and 2022. However, these estimates of inequality are based on the household consumption expenditure data, which typically tends to be lower than estimates based on household income. This is not just an academic exercise. The data from the latest rounds of the consumption expenditure surveys as well as the labour force surveys must serve as a valuable input for policy, informing the choices of policymakers.

THE TRAIN TO KASHMIR

Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link is an engineering marvel that connects the Kashmir Valley to the rest of the country by train; a gamechanger that can revolutionise trade, tourism, and the economy of J&K

VANDE BHARAT EXPRESS

SMVD KATRA* ←

→ SRINAGAR

FROM SMVD KATRA	AT SRINAGAR
8.10 am	11.10 am
2.55 pm	6 pm
FROM SRINAGAR	AT SMVD KATRA
8 am	11.05 am
2 pm	5.05 pm

* Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra station; train to be extended to Jammu Tawi later this year

FARE

Chair Car	₹715
Executive Class	₹1,320

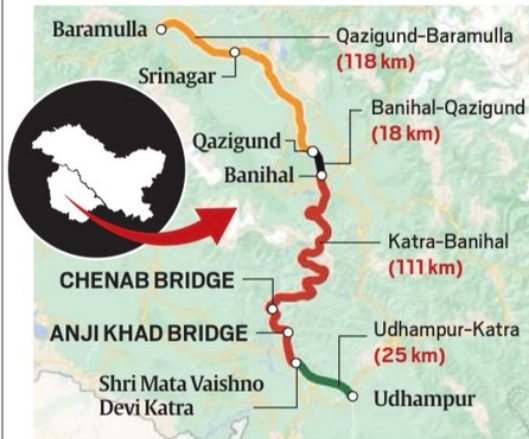


FEATURES

- ALL-YEAR service, will run even at minus 20 degrees Celsius. Snow-removal train will lead the Vande Bharat in severe winter.
- HEATED windshields, advanced heating systems, insulated toilets.
- SEISMIC DAMPERS to absorb tremors, offering safer, smoother journey in high seismic risk zone.

The Vande Bharat Express to Katra, Jammu, crosses Qazigund in Anantnag district on Friday. *PTI. (Inset) Vande Bharat loco pilots in their cabin at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra station, ahead of the arrival of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to flag off the train to Kashmir on Friday. ANI*

272 KM | 4 SECTIONS | 943 BRIDGES | 36 TUNNELS



	Udhampur-Katra	Katra-Banihal	Banihal-Qazigund	Qazigund-Baramulla
Route Length	25 km	111 km	18 km	118 km
Bridges	50	49	33	811
Total length	1,488 m	7,035 m	275 m	4,210 m
Highest	85 m	359 m	15.75 m	22 m
Longest	154 m	467 m	45.7 m	45 m
Tunnels*	10	25	1	0
Total length	11 km	97 km	11.21 km	0
Longest	3.15 km	12.77 km	11.21 km	—

*Main tunnel. Tunnels longer than 3 km have escape tunnels. Source: Indian Railways

ICONIC BRIDGES

- CHENAB BRIDGE (above), the highest railway arch bridge in the world, soars 359 metres above the Chenab riverbed, its central arch spanning 467 metres.
- 29,880 TONNES of structural steel went into its construction.
- BUILT TO WITHSTAND earthquake forces of Zone V and wind speeds up to 266 km/hr, and to last for 120 years.
- ANJI KHAD BRIDGE is India's first cable-stayed railway bridge.

A very long journey

Inception, the FIRST

(1897 → Jammu and Sialkot)

The first railway line in the **former princely state** of Jammu and Kashmir

was built by the British in **1897**

over a distance of **40-45 km**

between **Jammu and Sialkot** in the plains.

Pre-Independence

(In 1902 and 1905 → 2 proposed projects → neither project progressed)

In 1902 and 1905, a railway line was proposed between Rawalpindi and Srinagar along the course of the Jhelum, which would have connected the Kashmir Valley with the railway network of undivided India.

But Maharaja Pratap Singh of Jammu and Kashmir was in favour of a Jammu-Srinagar line via Reasi,

and neither project progressed.

Post -Independence	
1947-1975 (no network)	After Partition, Sialkot went to Pakistan , and Jammu was disconnected from the rail network of India.
1975 (Pathankot – Jammu)	Until the inauguration of the Pathankot-Jammu line in 1975, the railway station nearest to Jammu and Kashmir was Pathankot in Punjab.
1983 (Jammu – Udhampur)	In 1983, work began on a railway line between Jammu and Udhampur. <u>This 53-km line was supposed to be completed in five years,</u> but ultimately took 21 years.
1994 (extension of Jammu-Udhampur → to Srinagar → onward Baramulla)	With work still underway, the central government announced, in 1994, the extension of this line from Udhampur to Srinagar, and onward to Baramulla.
1994 (approval of USBRL project)	This was the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) Project, which was approved in March 1995 at an estimated cost of Rs 2,500 crore.
2002 (USBRL, a declared National Project)	In 2002, the USBRL was declared a national project, and sections of the line became operational over the years that followed.
2022 (USBRL – completed – 272km)	The USBRL is finally complete now - 272 km of tracks built at a cost of Rs 43,780 crore, passing through 36 tunnels and over 943 bridges, bringing Katra and Srinagar within 3 hours of each other.

An engineering feat

- The **Himalayas** are young, and

|
the geologically unstable **Shivalik Hills** and **Pir Panjal mountains**

|
lie in the seismically most active **Zones IV and V.**

The terrain is difficult and sees heavy snow in winter, and presented serious challenges in the construction of bridges and tunnels.

- Among the several firsts of this remarkable achievement of railway engineering are
 - ⇒ the **world's highest railway arch bridge**, its arch rising 359 metres above the bed of the Chenab in Reasi district;
 - ⇒ the **first cable-stayed bridge of the Railways** on the Anji Khad, also in Reasi district; and
 - ⇒ the **country's longest transport tunnel**, 12.77 km long, in Ramban district.

Development benefits

- Two Vande Bharat trains in each direction will cover the distance **between Katra and Srinagar in about three hours**, *halving the time taken by the road journey*.
- The trains will run even in deep winter, providing **round-the-year all-weather connectivity** to the Valley.
- The **train will be extended soon to Jammu Tawi**, *which will make it possible to roll into Srinagar directly from almost anywhere in the country*.
- The potential of the train in **revolutionising tourism in Jammu and Kashmir** has been repeatedly stressed.
- Over time, the USBRL is expected to have a **major impact on the economy** of the Union Territory, *facilitating hassle-free transport of goods such as apples, dry fruits, pashmina shawls, handicrafts etc.*, to other parts of the country in the **shortest possible time and at lower costs**. The cost of transporting items of daily use to the Valley from elsewhere in the country is also expected to go down significantly.

Quick Look:-

Chenab (Chandra Bhaga) river

The river Chenab (or Chandra Bhaga) is formed after the two streams the Chandra and the Bhaga merge with each other.

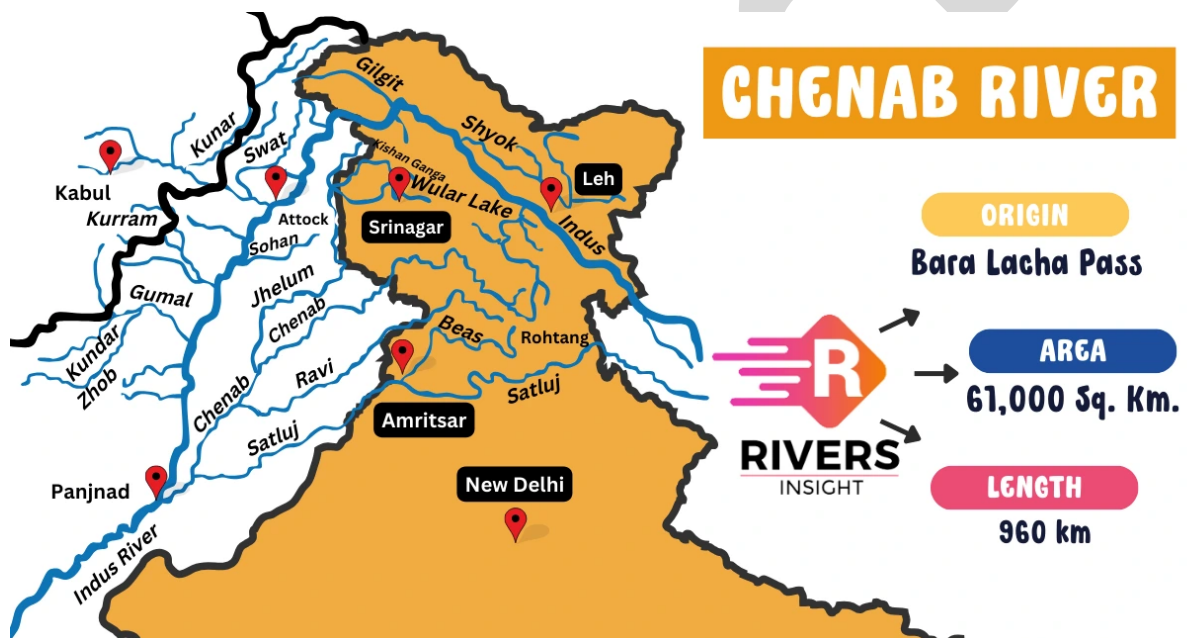
The Chandra and the Bhaga originate from the south-west and north-west faces of **Barelacha La pass** respectively in the Himalayan canton of Lahul and Spiti valley in **Himachal Pradesh**.

United stream called as Chenab or Chandra Bhaga @ **Himachal Pradesh**

Then enters J&K → flows between the steep cliffs of the Siwalik Range (south) and the Lesser Himalayas (north)

Turning southwest → then **enters Sialkot, Pakistan** → flows through Punjab province

After receiving **Jhelum river**, → the Chenab empties into the **Sutlej River**



08.06.2025

At Deonar dumping site, toxicology indicators four times safety limit: Study

- Even as the Deonar dumping ground, in Mumbai's eastern suburbs, *is among the areas earmarked for relocation of Dharavi residents*, a waste characterization study commissioned by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) shows that *the level of toxicology indicators at the landfill is up to four times the permissible limits prescribed by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).*

- The study analysed *the levels of*

Biochemical Oxygen Demand (**BOD**),
Chemical Oxygen Demand (**COD**), and
Total Dissolved Solids (**TDS**) –

all crucial indicators of environmental toxicology,
with higher levels indicating

increased toxins – in the waste and leachate (liquid leaching out of the waste piles)
at Deonar.

BOD	the amount of dissolved oxygen required by microorganisms to break down organic matter present in a water sample
COD	the amount of oxygen required to chemically oxidise organic matter
TDS	total concentration of all dissolved substances.

- According to the study,

'inert waste,' which includes

construction debris
and
non bio-degradable material,

→ comprises 30-50% of the waste.

→ This type of waste poses **challenges** → for **disposal and management** due to its → **low degradation rate.**

- The **leachate** contaminates the soil and water severely.

- The high BOD, COD and TDS levels indicate that **the whole area is contaminated, (making it unsuitable) for human habitation**, at present.
- **Any living organism**, be it micro-organisms, animals or plants **will not survive in such conditions**, → since the **process of nutrient uptake** → will affect organisms across the food chain → in a similar manner.

Remedy:-

- Saying that the level of contamination could be controlled by **increasing the green cover around the dumping ground.**

- The **green belt** uses specific trees

to absorb pollutants from soil,



EXPLAINED

E

**Worse
than
sewage**

THE HIGH levels of BOD, COD and TDS indicate that the water and soil at the dumping ground are even more contaminated than Mumbai's untreated sewage with a recorded BOD level of 100 mg/litre. A CPCB report had earlier said that Deonar is among the top 22 methane hotspots in the country.

09.06.2025

A PLACE IN THE FAMILY

In **recognising transgender couple as co-parents**, **Kerala HC** affirms constitutional values; reimagines parenthood

- In a reassuring affirmation of dignity and equality, the Kerala High Court has recognised a transgender couple from Kozhikode as the legal “parents” of their biological child. The transgender man who gave birth in 2023, and his partner, had sought recognition as co-parents without gender-binary labels so that their child's future – especially with regard to identification documents and school admission – is

not impeded. While the Court declined to read down the format mentioned in the Registration of Births and Deaths Rules, 1999, saying that this was a “rare and exceptional” case, it has directed authorities to issue a birth certificate that reflects the gender-neutral term instead of the conventional “father” and “mother”. *In its observation, the Court emphasised that in certain instances, “social justice adjudication” must take precedence over an “adversarial approach”.* In doing so, it broadened the legal imagination around family, gender, and parenthood.

- In August 2022, ***granting maternity leave*** to a central government employee who had *previously availed it for the care of her step-children*, a bench comprising Justice D Y Chandrachud and A S Bopanna had observed that ***“atypical” families are equally deserving of legal protections and social welfare benefits***. “The black letter of the law must not be relied upon to disadvantage families which are different from traditional ones,” they had held.
 - **The apex court’s refusal to extend civil union or joint adoption rights to LGBTQIA+ couples and its deferral of substantive rights to legislative reform - despite acknowledging queer love and lived discrimination - however, has come as a setback after years of progressive milestones**, such as the 2014 NALSA verdict recognising the rights of transgender persons and the 2018 Navtej Johar ruling that decriminalised same-sex relations.
 - ⇒ In such circumstances, the Kerala High Court’s verdict offers a template for affirming queer parenthood within the existing legal framework – and places the child at the centre of that empathetic recognition. It asserts that constitutional dignity cannot wait for political consensus.
 - Days after the Kerala HC verdict, the Madras High Court, *while ruling on a habeas corpus petition by a woman forcibly estranged from her lesbian partner, upheld her right to “find a family”*. “The concept of a ‘chosen family’ is now well-settled and acknowledged in LGBTQIA+ jurisprudence,” the division bench said.
 - In a country grappling with entrenched social prejudices, these affirmations of diversity reflect a welcome judicial sensitivity to the complexities and plurality of lived experience. They validate, with quiet strength, the right to belong – not as a privilege granted conditionally by tradition, but a truth that embraces every identity, even those that challenge convention.
-

Eye on strong export advantage, India not keen to dent Turkey trade ties with curbs

EXPLAINED **E** Amid calls for boycott

TURKEY'S SUPPORT for Pakistan, including supplies of drones, during Op Sindoor had led to India cancelling the security clearance for Turkish aviation firm Celebi — and tourism numbers to Turkey showing a sharp dip. But India holds the edge in bilateral trade: exports in FY25 totalled \$5.72 bn, driven by engineering exports, while imports stood at \$2.99 bn, mainly of fruits and nuts.

Operation Sindoor → Turkey's support to Pakistan (drone assistance) → India cancelled security clearance of **Turkish aviation firm Celebi**

India is having \$2.73 billion trade surplus

Export			Import			
Largely consists of industrial exports , such as			Largely limited to			
Engineering goods	Electronics	Organic and inorganic chemicals	Fruits	Nuts	Gold	Marble

Increase over the last 5 years

Petroleum export was also increase following Ukraine war but witnessed significant decline in FY 25

Maharashtra, Karnataka account for 51% of FDI in India in FY25

Maharashtra and Karnataka accounted for 51% of the foreign direct investment inflows in 2024-25, according to the Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade



\$19.6 BILLION: MAHARASHTRA ATTRACTED MAXIMUM FOREIGN INFLOWS AND ACCOUNTED FOR 31% OF THE COUNTRY'S TOTAL FDI DURING APRIL-MARCH 2024-25

\$6.62 billion overseas investments was received by Karnataka, the data showed

\$6 billion in foreign direct investment was received by Delhi

\$5.71 billion in FDI was received by Gujarat

\$3.68 billion was received by Tamil Nadu

\$3.14 billion was received by Haryana

\$3 billion was received by Telangana

■ Total FDI, which includes equity inflows, reinvested earnings and other capital, grew 14% to \$81.04 billion during the last financial year. It is the highest in the last three years. The same stood at \$71.3 billion in 2023-24.

2023-24	\$71.3 billion
2024-25	\$81.04 billion

According to experts, the main reason for the maximum inflows in Maharashtra and Karnataka is substantial improvement in infrastructure

Infrastructure has improved considerably and that is making them attractive destinations for FDI in India, an economist said

Source:
PTI/DPIIT

5 HOURS AND 29 MINUTES

Alcaraz wins all-Time great final

From two sets down, Spaniard scripts once-in-a-lifetime comeback to beat World No 1 Jannik Sinner in a Roland Garros marathon

11.06.2025

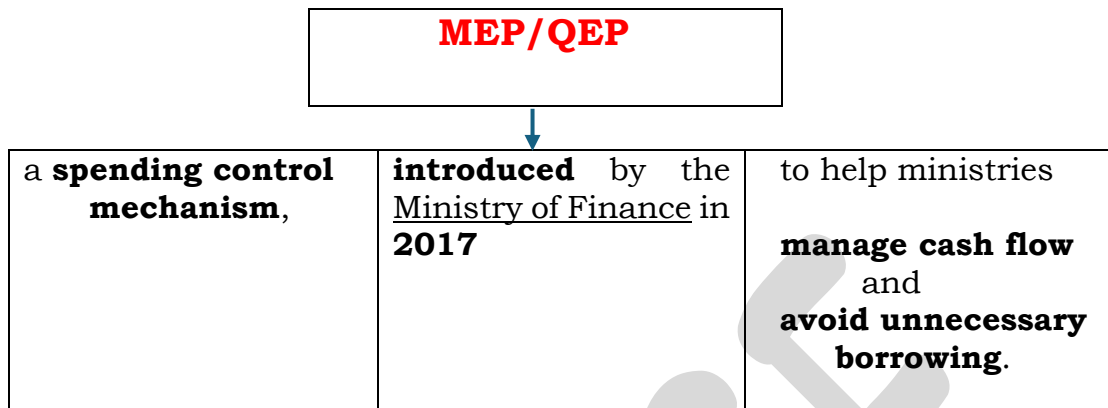
In a first, NREGS spend capped at 60% for first half of FY26

Govt brings rural job scheme under monthly/quarterly expenditure plan

- For the first time, the government has capped spending under the MGNREGS at 60% of its annual allocation for the first half of the financial year 2025-26.

→ Until now, there was no such spending limit on the rural jobs guarantee scheme which has operated as a demand driven programme.

- It is learnt that the MGNREGS will now be brought under the monthly/quarterly Expenditure Plan (MEP/QEP),



- *MGNREGS was outside its scope until now*, with the Rural Development Ministry arguing that the scheme's demand driven nature made fixed spending caps unworkable.
 - However, at the start of the 2025-26 FY, the Finance Ministry is learnt to have directed the MoRD to include the scheme under the MEP/QEP framework as well.
- It is learnt that the Ministry of Rural Development had submitted its MEP/QEP for MGNRES to the Budget Division of the Finance Ministry, and wanted to spend above 60% of the allocation in the first two quarters of 2025-26, to which the Finance Ministry did not agree.
 - On May 29, after several rounds of communication, **the Finance Ministry informed the MoRD that it could spend up to 60% of MGNREGS's annual outlay – Rs. 86,000 crore – in the first half of the financial year, “considering the urgent need of expenditure to be incurred during [the] first half.” This means that only Rs. 51,600 crore will be available for the scheme until September-end.**
- According to government sources, a significant portion of this year's allocation will go towards
 - ↓
 - clearing pending liabilities,**
 - ↓ *resulting in*
 - ↓
 - limiting the scope of generating the targeted number of person days**
(the total number of days of work performed by individuals under the scheme).

SINCE THE record-high during the pandemic and after normalcy was re-stored, the number of families employed under MGNREGS has steadily declined — 7.25 crore in 2021-22; 6.18 crore in 2022-23; 5.99 crore in 2023-24, and 5.79 crore in 2024-25. These figures do not include beneficiaries from West Bengal, where the scheme has been suspended since March 2022.

TRUMP UNCHECKED

In Los Angeles, the US President is escalating a crisis of his own making

Quick Pick:-

- The United States consists of 50 States and the District of Columbia.
 - The capital is Washington, District of Columbia (DC)
 - The District of Columbia is not a state, but rather the seat of the federal government.
- Los Angeles → 1/3rd population is born outside the country
- Located in the state of California
- 2nd most populous city of USA (1st New York, 3rd Chicago)
- In the historical past the LA also has witnessed with a series of protest, viz.

Year	Issue	Brief
2006	Immigration reform demonstrations	more than 500,000 people marched in LA alone.
1992	Acquitting four LAPD officers	violent unrest erupted after a jury acquitted four LAPD officers charged with using excessive force

		against Rodney King, an African American man.
1965	Watts Riots of 1965	were similarly rooted in longstanding, racism and poverty faced by African Americans.

Present Issue:-

Protest following **MASS IMMIGRATION RAIDS** → → brutal crackdowns on immigrant communities by Immigration and Customs Enforcement **(ICE).**

Donald Trump's Measures

Installing Military :-

- ☐ 2,000 California **National Guard** troops to the city.
- ☐ again authorized an additional 2,000 troops, along with 700 **Marines**

Invoked Title 10 - Federal Overreach :-

Trump invoked Title 10 of the US Code, which permits the President to federalise National Guard units if the country is invaded, if there is a “rebellion or danger of rebellion”, or if the President is “unable with the regular forces to execute the laws of the US”.

- There is, however, little evidence of such an emergency.
- By bypassing California's Governor Gavin Newsom, Trump's move constitutes an unprecedented federal overreach.
- Now, California has sued the Trump administration over what it calls the unlawful deployment of the National Guard.
- **Trump's claim — LA “has been invaded and occupied by illegal aliens and criminals”, and is being overwhelmed by “violent, insurrectionist mobs” — are not supported by facts.**

Los Angeles, In America's largest blue state where over one-third of the population is born outside the country, is no stranger to protest. During the 2006 immigration reform demonstrations, more than 500,000 people marched in LA alone. In 1992, violent unrest erupted after a jury acquitted four LAPD officers charged with using excessive force against Rodney King, an African American man. The Watts Riots of 1965 were similarly rooted in longstanding, racism and poverty faced by African Americans.

The city's residents have once again taken to the streets — this time in response to a wave of brutal crackdowns on immigrant communities by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). In response to the protests, President Donald Trump initially deployed 2,000 California National Guard troops to the city. On Monday, he authorized an additional 2,000 troops, along with 700 Marines mobilised by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth.

Trump invoked Title 10 of the US Code, which permits the President to federalise National Guard units if the country is invaded, if there is a “rebellion or danger of rebellion”, or if the President is “unable with the regular forces to execute the laws of the US”. There is, however, little evidence of such an emergency. By bypassing California's Governor Gavin Newsom, Trump's move constitutes an unprecedented federal overreach.

The friction between Trump and Newsom is well known — earlier this year, when California sought federal assistance during the devastating wildfires, the President turned it into a political standoff. Now, California has sued the Trump administration over what it calls the unlawful deployment of the National Guard.

Trump's claim — LA “has been invaded and occupied by illegal aliens and criminals”, and is being overwhelmed by “violent, insurrectionist mobs” — are not supported by facts.

The US is currently seeing the lowest levels of undocumented border crossings in decades, and violent crime has decreased nationwide, including in California and LA. To project himself as tough on immigration, Trump is escalating a crisis of his own making. ICE has reportedly been given a daily arrest quota of 3,000 — a figure with no clear justification. This is not the first time Trump has resorted to the National Guard: In 2020, he deployed troops against demonstrators during the George Floyd protests in Washington, DC. Now, Trump hasn't ruled out invoking the Insurrection Act, which would provide him unchecked emergency powers. The US President would do well to douse the fire instead of stoking it.

Why Axiom-4 matters

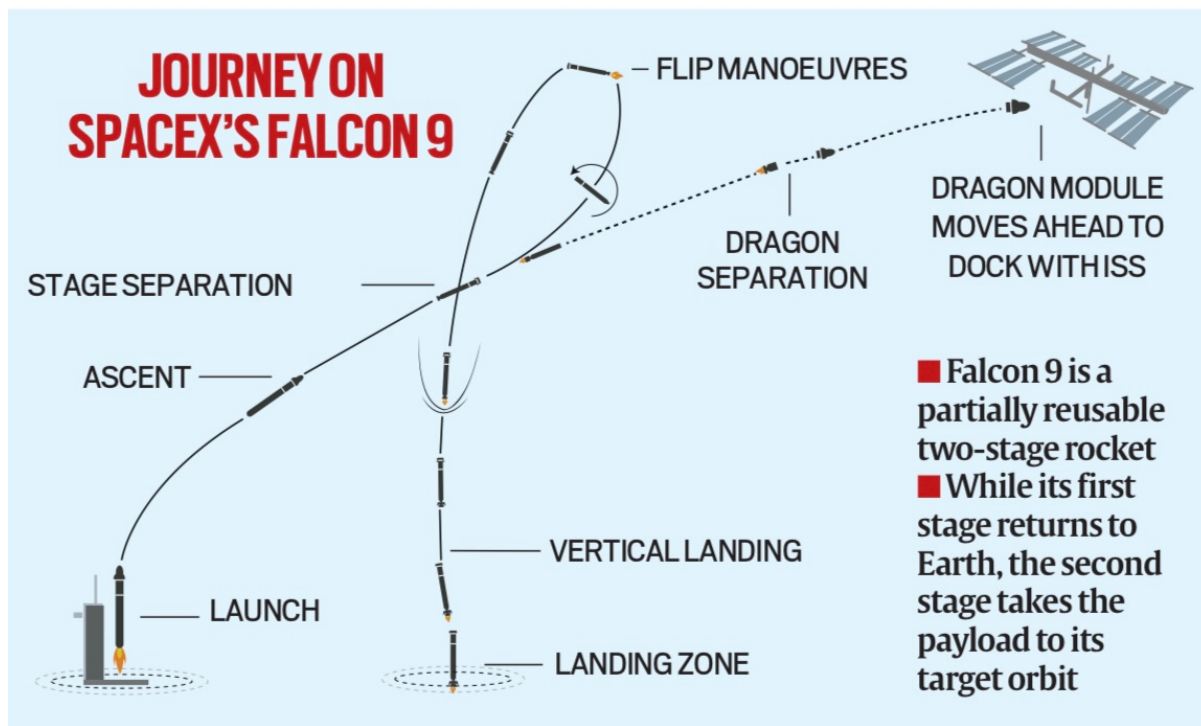
When the first Indian went to space, India's space program did not have the capability to make productive use of the experience. This will not be the case with Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla's space flight

WHAT ASTRONAUTS WILL DO

- More than 60 scientific studies and activities scheduled to take place aboard the ISS
- This will be the most research and science-related activities conducted on an Axiom Space mission aboard the ISS to date
- Thirty-one countries involved in these studies, including the US, India, Poland, Hungary, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Nigeria
- ISRO has designed 10 experiments. These include: growing crops in space; examining tardigrades in space; investigating muscle loss in astronauts in space; and analysing impact of gazing at computer screens in microgravity
- Astronauts will also engage in scientific outreach activities such as addressing students and people from the space industry

How astronauts reach International Space Station

It will take around 28 hours for Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla to reach the ISS from a launchpad in Florida. Here's a look at what his journey will entail



Good for Essay writing

Judiciary helps sustain India's democratic character: Justice Kant

ANANTHAKRISHNAN
NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

INDIA'S JUDICIARY "plays a unifying role in sustaining the diverse and democratic character of the nation, anchoring its people—at home and abroad—in shared constitutional values," Supreme Court judge Justice Surya Kant said on Sunday.

Speaking at an event organised by the Washington Telangana Association in Redmond, Washington, Justice Kant said that "as the interpreter and guardian of the Constitution," the judiciary "has upheld principles such as fraternity, equality, and human dignity, ensuring that the rule of law remains central to Indian democracy" and that "through

its reasoned decisions and moral authority, the judiciary not only resolves legal conflicts but also affirms a vision of justice that binds the nation together".

Addressing the gathering, which saw attendance from business and community leaders from Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Karnataka, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra etc., he said that "for the diaspora, this" role of the judiciary "becomes a source of pride and reassurance, affirming that the values they hold dear are not only protected but continually reaffirmed within India's constitutional order".

He said that "this sense of continuity is especially meaningful in the lives of NRIs, whose



Justice Surya Kant at an event organised by the Washington Telangana Association in Redmond, US.

ties to India often involve not just emotional and cultural bonds, but also legal and familial re-

sponsibilities".

Justice Kant stressed that "the Indian judiciary has played a crucial role in addressing the unique challenges faced by the diaspora—ranging from property and inheritance disputes to family law matters like custody and matrimonial issues".

Shared heritage and democratic values

Lauding the diaspora for its success and for promoting cultural heritage, he underscored that "this shared heritage is not only preserved through culture and community, but also through the enduring institutions that uphold our democratic values".

Justice Kant said, "While tradition keeps us rooted in who we are, it is the strength of India's constitutional framework that

safeguards the principles underpinning our identity—justice, fairness, and inclusivity. These values are not confined to ceremonies or symbols; they are actively lived and protected through the institutions that give them meaning. Among these, the judiciary stands out as a pillar that continues to reflect and reinforce the spirit of India, both within its borders and across the global Indian diaspora."

"As we reflect on what binds us together—across states, professions, and continents—it becomes clear that our strength lies in the values we carry and the institutions that uphold them. Whether through community associations abroad or constitutional guardians at home, the Indian identity remains resilient because it is both

lived and protected. It thrives in our languages and festivals, but also in our collective commitment to justice, dignity, and mutual respect. These are the ideals that shape not just who we are, but who we continue to become—no matter where we live," he further said.

Justice Kant said "the success of the Indian diaspora is not only measured in individual achievement — though that alone is remarkable. It is also reflected in the collective identity that communities have preserved and passed on across generations. Whether through temples, cultural centres, schools, or community events, the diaspora has cultivated a sense of belonging and solidarity, making the Indian identity one that thrives far beyond national borders".

12.06.2025

**Thought to be extinct, a rare sighting in Kashmir
revives hopes of the Eurasian otter's comeback**

The otter, which has been globally classified as 'near threatened' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), was spotted in the Lidder River in Srigufwara, south Kashmir.



Facts and Features:-

- ☐ The Eurasian otters grow up to 4 feet and weight around 10 kilograms.
- ☐ The otters can swim close to 10 kilometres / hour and remain submerged in water.
- ☐ They can go as deep as 20 meters underwater.
- ☐ Semi-aquatic mammals
- ☐ Carnivorous in nature (feeds on fish and other aquatic fauna)
- ☐ These mammals show heightened activity during mornings and evenings.
- ☐ Mainly found in Europe, northern Africa, Asia
- ☐ Found in India → South Kashmir

↔ The Eurasian otter, **known to be extremely territorial**, is also the most widely distributed otter species.

- **For three decades**, the Eurasian otter, once an integral part of Kashmir's aquatic ecosystem, **was thought to be extinct in the Valley.**
- However, a rare sighting of the **semi-aquatic mammal** has now been reported in south Kashmir.....(has seen on 3rd occasion this year)
- The otter, which has been **globally classified as 'near threatened'** by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (**IUCN**).
 - Found largely in **Europe, northern Africa and Asia**

- The Eurasian Otter, locally known as **Vuder**,

was an integral part of Kashmir's aquatic ecosystem
 and
was abundantly found in the water bodies.

- *Its presence was used to scare the children and keep them away from the water bodies.*
- The sudden decline in otters.

a **carnivorous mammal**

that **feeds on fish and other aquatic fauna,**

was **attributed to**

increased water pollution
 and
hunting of the mammal for its fur.

Implications:-

- Wildlife officials say the sighting of the mammal is encouraging and **could help restore Kashmir's aquatic ecology.**
- The sighting has also **sparked excitement among wildlife enthusiasts** in the Valley. "This is good news for people in general and experts in particular," said one wildlife expert.
- "These sightings over the last six months **indicate that the otter population may have increased;** now the need is to protect them."



The Eurasian otter had not been spotted in Kashmir for the last 25-30 years. *Photo courtesy: Wildlife Institute of India*

World Bank report underlines continued uncertainty but India's performance holds hopes of trade deals

India is "hopeful" that an agreement with the US will be reached before the 90-day pause on the Liberation Day tariffs ends in the second week of July

2020s – a phase of slowdown

Shocks:-

- Covid pandemic
- Russia-Ukraine conflict
- Increased trade barriers and heightened policy uncertainty (caused by Trump's Liberation Day tariff announcement)

Forecast:-

World Bank

- forecast for global growth this year to **2.3% in 2025** (latest Global Economic Prospects report by World Bank)
- To put this growth estimate in perspective, excluding periods of global recession, this is the “**weakest performance in 17 years**.”
- World Bank has also projected global growth to average just about **2.5% between 2020 and 2027** — this is the “slowest pace of any decade since the 1960s.”

IMF

- IMF also estimated global growth to slow to **2.8% in 2025**

Developing economies:-

- This group of countries has already seen a steady slowing in economic momentum — growth has come down sharply

from averaging **5.9% in the 2000s**

to **3.7% in the 2020s**.

- ↔ The report’s stark warning that “*many of the forces behind the great economic miracle of the last 50 years... have swung into reverse*” is worrying, particularly for developing economies

India:-

- World Bank :-
India to grow at **6.3%** in 2025-26,
with both investments and exports expected to remain subdued.
- IMF :-
which had in April pegged the country to grow at **6.2%**
in its World Economic Outlook.
- RBI:-
most recent projection of **6.5%**
- Expectations of a sharp uptick in the near term appear muted —
the World Bank has pegged growth to
average 6.6% over the following 2 years.

Global Economic Prospects report by World Bank

World Economic Outlook by IMF

How Sebi's new verified UPI IDs will safeguard investors from cyber frauds

The verified UPI handle will feature a unique and exclusive identifier, **"@valid"**, **combined with the name of the self-certified syndicate bank.**

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is set to introduce a structured unified payment interface (UPI) address mechanism for its registered intermediaries, to tackle the rising number of **unregistered entities in the stock market** that are misleading investors.

- The move is expected to **streamline the collection of funds by intermediaries from investors.**
- Through this process, **investors will be able to identify legitimate Sebi-registered market intermediaries** before making payments to them.

⇒ The Markets Regulator (SEBI) is *also developing a new tool called*

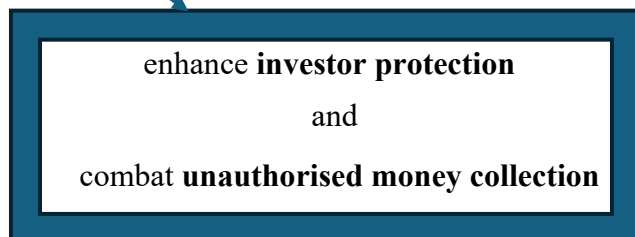
'SEBI Check' to verify

the veracity of UPI IDs
or
bank details of registered intermediaries.

⇒ The regulator has set an **October 1, 2025, deadline** to introduce both facilities.

What is the new verified UPI payment mechanism?

- With an aim to



in the **securities market**.

Role of NPCI

- ◆ *The validated UPI handle* will be exclusively allocated by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) **only for payment collection by Sebi-registered intermediaries**.
- ◆ The **NPCI** is the umbrella organisation,
set up with the guidance & support of **RBI** & Indian Banks' Association (**IBA**),
for operating retail payments and settlement systems in the country,
that owns and operates the UPI platform.
 - A mobile-based, 365x24x7 'fast payment' system,
 - **UPI** enables users to send and receive money **instantly** using a Virtual Payment Address (**VPA**) **set by the user itself**.
- Under the new mechanism, the **username** will be a readable name **chosen by the intermediary**, followed by a mandatory suffix that clearly identifies their category.
 - ▷ While the suffix would be **'.brk'** for a **stock broker**,
 - ▷ it would be **'.mf'** for a **mutual fund**.
- **For example**, for a registered broker ABC Ltd, having an account with XYZ bank, the exclusive UPI ID would be: **abc.brk@validXYZ**

- To ensure easy identification of legitimate transactions, investors will see a clear visual cue, a “**thumbs-up inside a green triangle**” icon, when making a payment to a registered intermediary through the new UPI handle.

What are the key benefits of the new UPI IDs?

The new framework is designed to proactively **curb such fraudulent activities** (misled investors by collecting funds without authorisation, often siphoning off these amounts for personal gain), enabling investors to easily identify legitimate Sebi-registered market intermediaries and make payments to them securely and efficiently.

Will the new UPI ID be mandatory for all intermediaries?

- The regulator has made it **mandatory** for all intermediaries to obtain the new UPI IDs.
 - The intermediaries are also required to make investors aware of the new handle and mandatorily offer it as one of the payment options to them.

Is it compulsory for investors to use the new UPI handle only?

- For investors, the use of a structured UPI handle will remain **optional**.
 - Investors can choose their *preferred mode of payment*, such as
 - ▷ **UPI**,
 - ▷ Immediate Payment Service (**IMPS**),
 - ▷ National Electronic Funds Transfer (**NEFT**),
 - ▷ Real Time Gross Settlement (**RTGS**), or
 - ▷ **cheques**.
- ◆ If an investor opts to use UPI for the payment to registered intermediaries, then they have to do so using only the new UPI IDs allotted to registered intermediaries.

What is the new ‘SEBI Check’ tool?

To provide an additional layer of security and help investors verify the authenticity of an entity before proceeding with any financial transaction, the Sebi is developing a functionality named ‘SEBI Check’.

- This will allow investors to **verify the authenticity of UPI IDs** *either by scanning a QR code or by entering the UPI ID manually.*
- The tool will also include a feature to *confirm the bank details such as bank account number and Indian Financial System Code (IFSC) of an intermediary.*

THE EMERGENCY 50 YEARS ON

Echoes from Courtroom No. 24: Verdict unseated PM, she struck back at nation

On June 12, 1975, the ruling by Justice Jagmohan Lal Sinha of Allahabad High Court set aside Indira Gandhi's 1971 election, triggering a chain of events that led to the imposition of Emergency



Drone warfare & India

Ukraine's Op Spider's Web and recent India-Pakistan hostilities during Op Sindoor underline how drones, especially cheaper ones sent out in swarms, pose significant challenges to traditional militaries

Drones, a brief history

- Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) **date back to World War II and in the Korean War**, where they were used to train anti-aircraft gunners and in specific offensive missions.
- Their **modern military usage** took off in the **1990s**, especially after the **Gulf War of 1991**.

Drones, turning point @ 2020

- The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict of 2020 (**between Armenia and Azerbaijan**) was a turning point in drone warfare;
 - ▷ Azerbaijan's use of **Turkish** Bayraktar TB2 and **Israeli** Harop drones
 - ▷ devastated Armenian defences,
 - ▷ decisively shifting the conflict's dynamics in favour of **Baku**.

Quick Pick:-

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

- is a long-standing dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the region,
- initially being an autonomous region within Azerbaijan.
- After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the region declared independence and tensions escalated into war
- which is internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan but is inhabited by an ethnic Armenian majority.
- The conflict has a history of armed clashes, including

First Karabakh War (1988-1994)	This conflict resulted in a ceasefire, with Armenian-backed forces controlling the disputed area and the surroundings
Second Karabakh War (2020)	Azerbaijan launched a military offensive,
Recent development (2023-24)	Azerbaijan regained control of the region, and Nagorno-Karabakh was formally dissolved.

Drones, thereafter

Since then, drones have featured in:

Yemen,	where Houthi rebels targeted Saudi oil infrastructure using drone swarms;
Gaza,	where both Israel and Hamas have used drones for surveillance and strikes; and
Ukraine,	where both Moscow and Kyiv have deployed commercial quadcopters (DJI drones), military drones (Bayraktar TB2, Orlan-10, Shahed-136), and loitering munitions.

Threat of swarms

- When one use **very cheap drones that civilians** barely weighing a kilo - like Pakistani did - **nothing much happens**. They're jammed easily.
- But swarm drone attacks can be carried out anywhere, and at any time.
 - "If someone moves a **truck full of drones near an airbase and launches them** (like in **Op Spider's Web** – **Ukrainian attack on Russian air bases – June, 2025**), **defending becomes very difficult**.

➤ India

- In countries like India, with porous borders and diverse populations, the threat is real" .
- Remedy :- the need for integration across the security establishment.

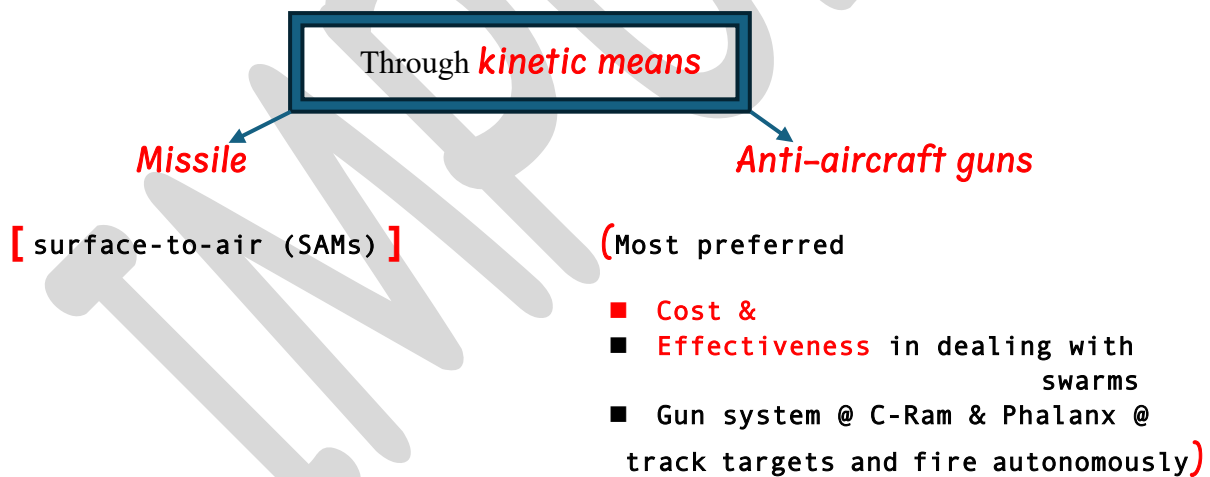
Countering drone threats

- 1) Detection :- Defence against drones begins with detection.

Modern systems employ a mix of

- ▷ AESA **radars**,
- ▷ electro-optical and infrared **sensors**,
- ▷ acoustic **detectors**, and
- ▷ **AI-powered systems**.

- 2) Neutralization:-



More cost-effective alternatives include:

Directed Energy Weapons (DEWs)	Lasers and microwave pulses that disable drones by damaging sensors or frying electronics
Electronic Warfare (EW)	Jamming GPS signals or communication links
Spoofing	Misleading drones about their location or issuing false commands
Cyber Attacks	Taking control of drones and crash them by exploiting software vulnerabilities ;
Interceptor drones & nets	For close-range neutralisation, protecting critical assets.

India's capabilities

Since 2020, India has ramped up its counter-drone infrastructure, deploying **a layered defence** *that blends*

- ▷ *indigenous technology,*
- ▷ *EW,* and
- ▷ *air defence systems.*

Key systems include:

Akashteer Air Defence Control System <i>BEL</i>	Developed by Bharat Electronics Ltd, it integrates with the Indian Air Force's integrated command network for real-time tracking.
Bhargavastra <i>Solar Defence and Aerospace Ltd's</i>	Solar Defence and Aerospace Ltd's fires 64 micro-rockets in salvos to eliminate drone swarms;
Anti-Drone System <i>DRDO</i>	It offers 360-degree radar coverage , with both → [jamming (soft skill) and laser (hard skill) capabilities.

	Drones can be <u>detected up to 4 km away</u> , and <u>neutralised within a 1 km radius</u> ; and
Indrajaal <i>Hyderabad start up</i>	An AI-powered grid from a Hyderabad startup that <u>combines jammers, spoofers, and intelligence to protect areas up to 4,000 sq km.</u> Already deployed at <u>naval sites in Gujarat and Karnataka.</u>

During the May 2025 swarm attacks,
the IAF activated its *Integrated Counter-UAS Grid*, alongside
conventional radar, guns, and missiles,
neutralising attempted strikes on 15 military bases and several urban targets.

A FEW NOTABLE SWARM DRONE SYSTEMS



IRAN

System: Shahed-136 (swarms)
Type: Loitering munition
Swarm Size: 10–50
Range: 2,000 km
Features: GPS-guided, low radar signature, low-cost



USA

System: LOCUST
Type: Micro UAV swarm
Swarm Size: 50–100
Range: 30–60 km
Features: AI coordination, launched from tubes



RUSSIA

System: Lancet & Shahed
Type: Loitering + fixed-wing
Swarm Size: 5–20
Range: 40–300 km
Features: Used in layered attacks with multiple decoys



CHINA

System: Drone Swarm (Airborne)
Type: Micro drones
Swarm Size: 100–200+
Range: 10–30 km
Features: Released from drones (see picture) or trucks, AI-powered

WHY SWARM DRONES MATTER

Asymmetry: They let low-tech actors hit high-value targets.

Low cost: They are cheap while being expensive to deter.

Saturation: They overwhelm even sophisticated defence systems.

Autonomy: Reduced reliance on GPS or real-time human control.

COUNTERMEASURES AGAINST DRONE SWARMS

KINETIC

System/Technology:

Phalanx CIWS, C-RAM

Description: Anti-aircraft guns with radar-guided targeting (used on land/sea).

ELECTRONIC WARFARE

System/Technology:

Jammers, GPS spoofers

Description: Disrupt drone communication and navigation systems. Widely used in Ukraine.

DIRECTED ENERGY

System/Technology:

High-Energy Lasers (HEL), microwave weapons

Description: Rapid-target engagement, low cost-per-shot. Israel's Iron Beam and American THOR in testing/deployment.

DRONE-ON-DRONE

System/Technology:

Interceptor drones

Description: Drones designed to chase and disable other drones. For example, US-made Foretem DroneHunter.

NET SYSTEMS

System/Technology:

SkyWall, DroneCatcher

Description: Launch nets to physically capture small drones. Effective only at short ranges.

13.06.2025

230 PASSENGERS, 12 CREW MEMBERS;
pilot had 8,200 hours of flying experience

MAYDAY DISTRESS CALL SOON AFTER
take-off at 1.39 pm; search on for black box

PRESIDENT, V-P, PM LEAD NATION IN
expressing grief, shock as condolences pour in

A-I plane with 242 crashes, 1 survivor

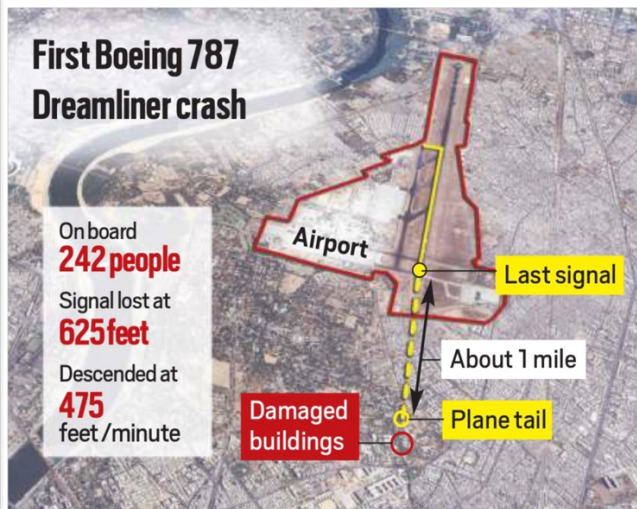
PAST INCIDENTS INVOLVING 787

JULY 2013: An empty Ethiopian Airlines 787 caught fire on the ground at Heathrow airport in an incident later linked to a short-circuit in an Emergency Locator Transmitter.

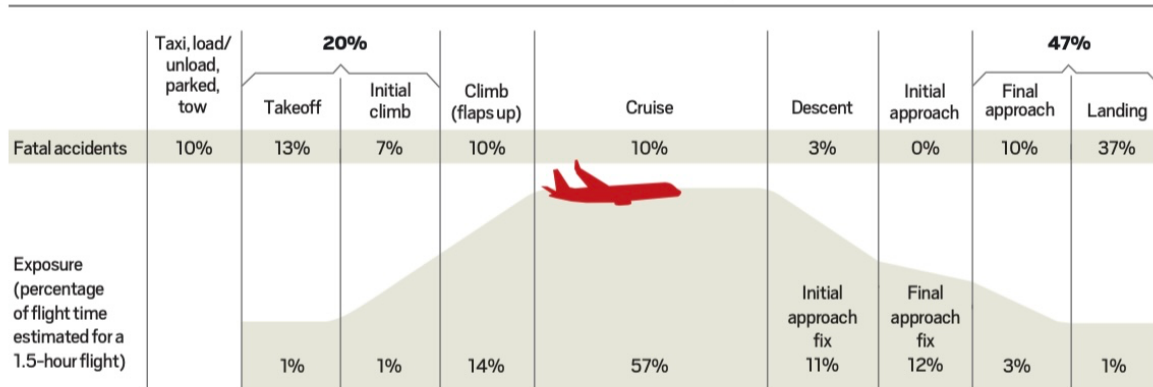
2013: Regulators temporarily grounded the global 787 fleet following the overheating of lithium batteries on two Japanese planes in Tokyo and Boston, resulting in design changes to better contain the risk of thermal runaway.

MARCH 2024: 50 were hurt when a 787 operated by LATAM Airlines dropped in mid-flight from Sydney to Auckland. Investigators focused on an involuntary forward movement in the pilot seat. — REUTERS

24 killed on ground



FATAL ACCIDENTS BY FLIGHT PHASE, 2015-2024



Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% because of numerical rounding; Credit: Boeing

US to join Bureau probe into world's first fatal crash of Boeing 787

Facts :-

- ◆ This is the **first crash of a Boeing 787 globally.**
- ◆ It is also the **first crash of a wide-body Indian airliner in four decades,** the **last** being the bombing of Air India Boeing 747 'Kanishka' in June **1985.**

Investigation:-

Will be investigated by the **Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB),** an attached office of the Ministry of Civil Aviation (**MoCA**).

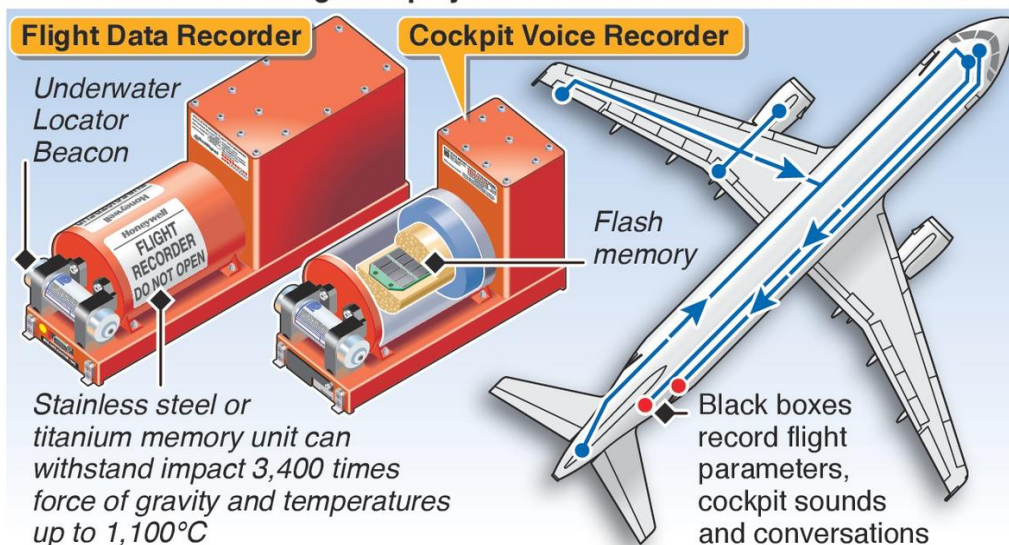
Ready Assistance:-

US National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)	Sending a team to assist the AAIB in the probe.
Boeing	In touch with Air India and stood ready to support.
UK's Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB)	will also have expert status as British citizens were on board
aircraft engine manufacturer GE	may help

Black Box – Small machine on aircraft which records details of each flight; used to piece together cause of plane crashes

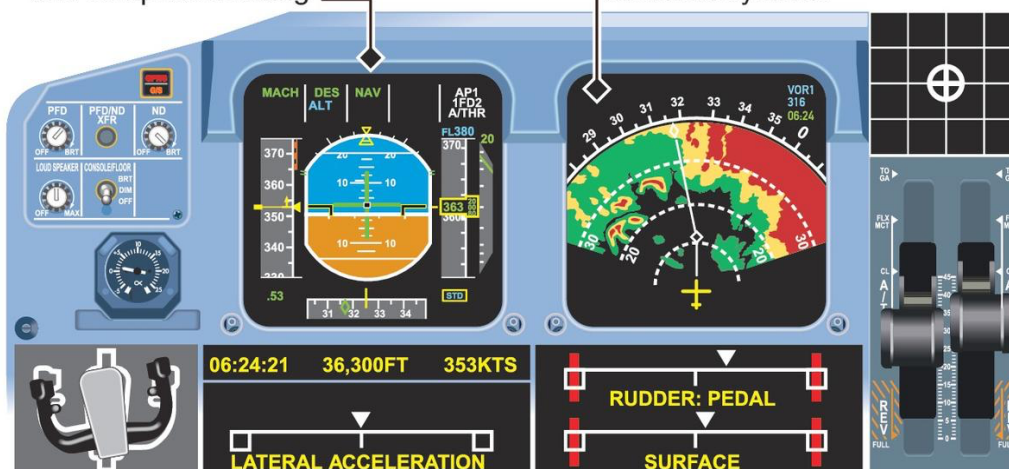
How black boxes reconstruct a crash

Information from an aircraft's flight data recorder and cockpit voice recorder – the so-called “black boxes” – is used to create an interactive animation of the flight displays in the final moments before a crash



Primary Flight Display: Shows “big-five” flight instruments – artificial horizon, airspeed in knots, altimeter in feet above sea level, vertical speed in feet per minute, and compass heading

Navigation Display: Weather radar, route plan and aircraft systems data such as fuel, engine power and state of electrical systems

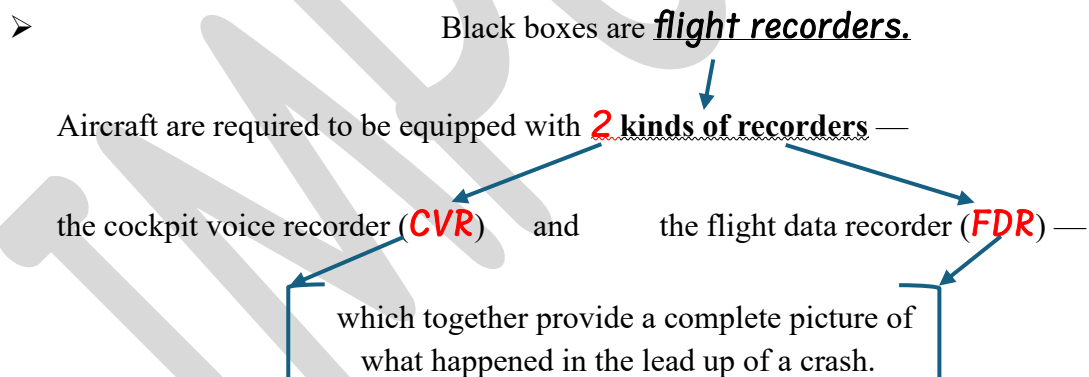


Sources: CAE Flightscape, Honeywell ED-55 Flight Data Recording System

© GRAPHIC NEWS



What is a black box?



The CVR records radio transmissions and other sounds in the cockpit, such as

conversations between the pilots and engine noises,

while the FDR records more than 80 different kinds of information, such as

altitude, air-speed, flight heading, vertical acceleration, pitch, roll,

	autopilot status, etc.
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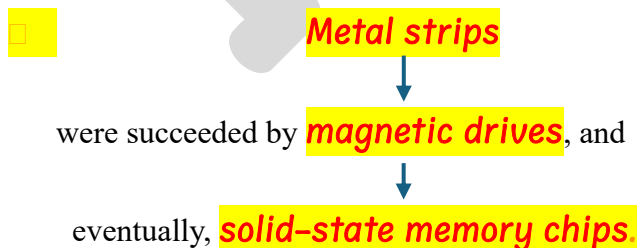
- These devices are *stored in a unit made of a strong substance, such as steel or titanium, and with insulation to protect against extreme heat, cold or water damage.*

They are generally placed near the tail of an aircraft, which is usually least affected by a crash.

- For crashes over water bodies, black boxes are equipped with beacons that send out ultrasound signals for 30 days, although this does not guarantee their discovery (as was the case during the Malaysian Airlines MH370 crash in 2014).

Why "black box"?

- Modern black boxes are actually orange in colour. *This makes them easier to identify in a wreckage, or spot in a body of water.*
- The term "black box" is the product of a **bygone era** *where data had to be recorded in photographic film.*
 - Recorders needed to be placed in a black box *to prevent any light from entering and damaging the film.*
 - *Although even the earliest black boxes in aircraft did not use film to record data — they used metal strips — the term "black box" has stuck.*



Why a majority of aviation accidents occur during take off & landing

Why this is the case

The simple answer:-

During these phases, aircraft **fly "low and slow"** leaving pilots with **very little time to course correct** if something goes wrong.

▪ **Cruising at 36,000 feet**

As one article by Business Insider put it: "When cruising at 36,000 feet, a pilot has the luxury of time and space to course correct. Even if both engines go out, the plane won't just fall out of the sky... the pilot (will have) **a little over eight minutes** to find a place to land. But if something goes wrong on the ground, that window shrinks considerably.

- Due to a number of factors, *the probability of something going wrong is also higher during the first and last phase of flight.*

Take off

- An aircraft is **much more likely to stall and lose lift while taking off than during stable flight.** And even if it does stall *while cruising at over 30,000 feet, the plane has a long way to fall to the ground, giving a pilot ample time to reclaim control.*
- Aircraft engines are also under the maximum stress during take off, *further increasing the chance of failures.*

Landing (most risky, pilot's skill matters)

- ♦ Landings, on the other hand, are the **most technically challenging aspect of flying**, requiring the *pilot to consider a host of variables, from wind speed to the weight of an aircraft, while making constant decisions regarding attitude and speed.* **Most crashes during landings (as well as in general) occur due to pilot error.**

- Aircraft are also more likely to encounter
 - ▷ bird strikes,
 - ▷ turbulence, and
 - ▷ unavoidable inclement weather at lower altitudes,

increasing the likelihood of accidents.

BOEING 787-8: AMONG THE MOST ADVANCED PASSENGER JETS

The Boeing 787 Dreamliner is one of the most advanced jets in service and has a generally strong safety record. The 787-8, involved in the crash, is the smallest of three variants

248
passenger capacity

13,530 km
range

2,500
787s sold,
including 47
to Air India



WRECKAGE OF AIR INDIA AI 171

TWIN-ENGINE: Two types of engine, supplied by GE Aerospace or Rolls-Royce. The engines on the crashed plane were supplied by GE.

2011 The year the first 787 entered service

2014 The year the aircraft involved in the accident was delivered

Source: Reuters, Boeing

20% GREATER fuel efficiency through the use of durable, lightweight composite materials and more electrical systems.

■ Size, range, efficiency made it ideal for opening new routes, bypassing hubs served by jumbos such as the Boeing 747 and Airbus A380 and helping drive both jets out of

production.

■ The 787 also pioneered a new way of building planes, outsourcing much of the structure and components and assembling the pieces in the US. But the shake-up led to problems in the supply chain and Boeing later acknowledged it had gone too far with outsourcing.

On airworthiness: UN's ICAO rated India above global average, US aviation regulator classed India as Category 1

- India as rated well above the global average *in terms of its operation and airworthiness* by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) when the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) *was last audited in November 2022*,
→ with the **overall Effective Implementation score** *being raised to 85.65% (2022)* → → from 69.95% in 2018,

indicating an improvement in the country's aviation safety ranking.

- The Effective Implementation of the **ICAO**,

an agency of the **United Nation**

responsible for **regulating and establishing standard for civil aviation globally**, includes various category (8) viz.

- 1) legislation,
- 2) organisation,
- 3) licensing,
- 4) operations,
- 5) airworthiness,
- 6) accident investigation,
- 7) air navigation services, and
- 8) aerodromes.

- As per the last audit, **India scored higher than the global average in each of the eight categories** that are covered under ICAO's Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP).

→ **Operation:-**

Higher than China, USA

India scored particularly higher than global average by the ICAO when it came to operations, with the global average at 72.28 per cent and India at 94.02 per cent. This was even higher than the likes of the US (86.51 per cent), and China (90 per cent), as per their 2024 audits.

→ **Airworthiness:-**

Higher than USA, China

India also scored higher than the US and China in terms of airworthiness: 97.06 per cent versus 89.13 per cent and 94.83 per cent, respectively.

- To be sure,
 - the agency has **different auditing schedules for different countries**, and
 - while **India's last** audit was in **2022**,
the audit for **US and China** were conducted in **2024**.

India is the **3rd largest domestic aviation market**

after the

1) US

2) China,

is also the **fastest-growing** major aviation market globally.

➤ The **category 1 status with the FAA**

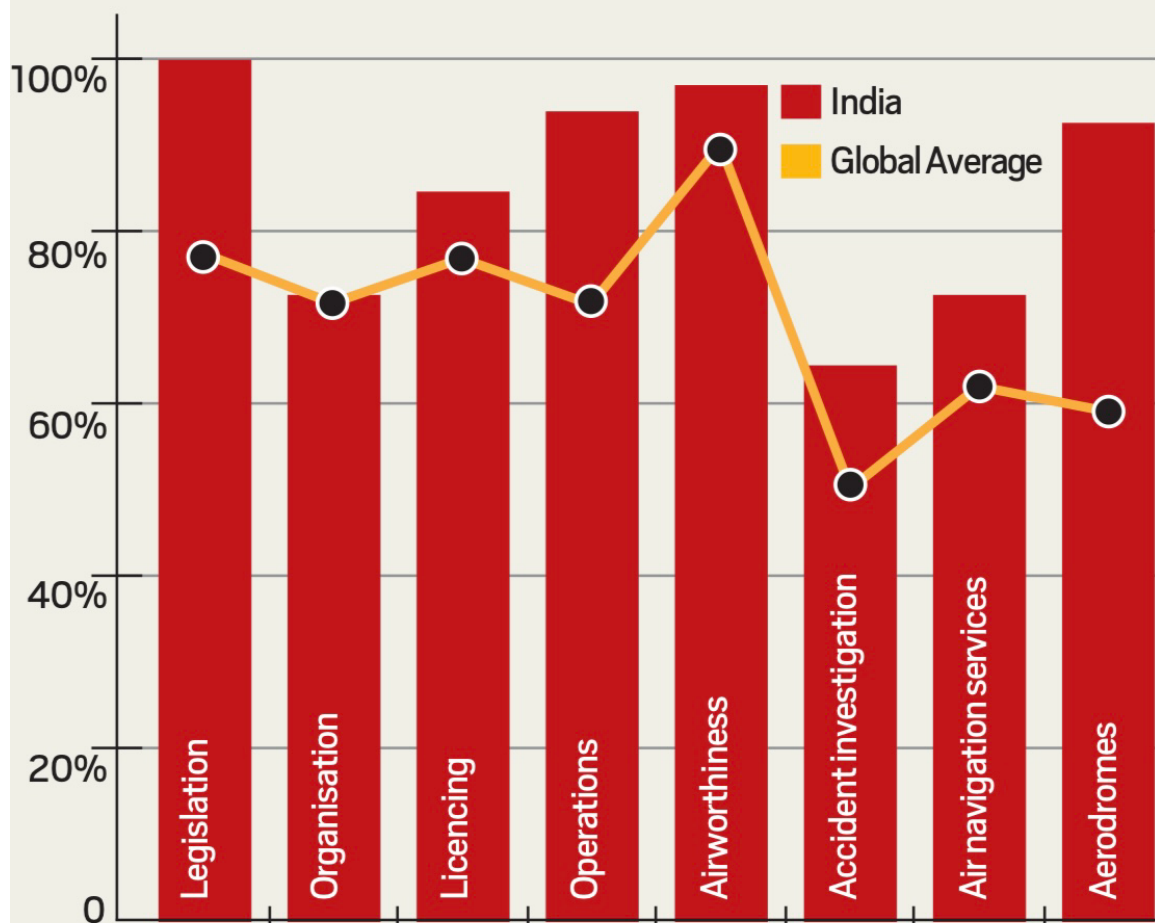
allows air carriers of that country to operate and expand their *services to destinations in the US and codeshare with American air carriers.*

FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) –

regulates **civil aviation** in the US and **surrounding international waters** –

comes under **United States Department of Transportation**

INDIA'S EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION SCORE



Source: International Civil Aviation Organization

WHY ANDHRA PRADESH & KARNATAKA ARE FIGHTING OVER MANGOES

A juicy mango

- **Totapuri**, also known as **Bangalore or Sandersha**, is a mango cultivar grown in the *bordering districts of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka*, and *Tamil Nadu*.

The longish mango with a distinct parrot-like beak (hence “Totapuri”)

is valued for its **juice and pulp**,
which make it a variety of choice to be **used in packaged mango drinks**.

- Food and beverage processors, including multinational companies, buy these mangoes directly from farmers.

Andhra's Chittoor district is home to several mango processing and pulp extraction companies that procure Tortapuri mangoes from local markets.

Behind the ban by Andhra

- Officials in Chittoor imposed the ban on Totapuri mangoes from neighbouring states out of concern for local farmers, since the **mangoes from Karnataka are much cheaper than the ones grown in Andhra this year.**

- “This year the state government has announced the price at **Rs 8 per kg** for Totapuri mangoes. Keeping in mind the low price and high supplies the government has agreed to provide an additional Rs 4 per kg to the farmers,” as per an **AP government** source told.

In **Karnataka**, however, the price for the same variety is only **Rs 5 to Rs 6 per kg**, the source claimed.

- “If we allow mangoes (from Karnataka) to reach the Andhra market, processors will prefer these mangoes over ones grown in the state. This will plunge Andhra farmers into distress.”

~ While the **Congress** is in power in **Karnataka**, the **Andhra Pradesh** government is headed by the **Telugu Desam Party (TDP)**, a key ally in the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance at the centre.

14.06.2025

Operation Rising Lion tests Khamenei, raises questions on regime

Israel offensive, unprecedented:-

Israel's *unprecedented attack on Iran's nuclear infrastructure, including its scientists, negotiators, missile bases and military leadership*, marks a dramatic escalation in the long-simmering conflict between these **two sworn enemies in the Middle East**, with far-reaching implications for regional stability.

- The irresistible force, Israel, is finally locked in a long-expected showdown with the immovable object, the Islamic Republic of Iran. *Unlike previous military exchanges, Israel insists that Operation Rising Lion is not a one off show of force.*
- Israel's military said about 200 aircraft on about 100 targets. *Its Mossad spy agency positioned explosive drones and precision weapons inside Iran ahead of time, and used them to target Iranian air defences and missile launchers near Tehran*, according to two security officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.
- Among the key sites Israel attacked was Iran's main nuclear enrichment facility in Natanz.
- Among those killed were **three of Iran's top military leaders**:
 - 1) one who oversaw the entire armed forces.
 - 2) One who led the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, and
 - 3) the head of the Guard's ballistic missile programme,

significant blows to its governing theocracy
that will complicate efforts to retaliate.

Iran's first response:-

Fired drones but intercepted duly by Israel

In its first response, Iran fired more than 100 drones at Israel which said the drones were being intercepted outside its airspace, and it was not immediately clear whether any got through.

US President Donald Trump

warned Iran to reach a deal on nuclear programme @ Oman or face being razed out.

urged Iran to reach a deal with the US on its nuclear programme, warning on his Truth Social platform that Israel's attacks "will only get worse".
.....*"Iran must make a deal, before there is nothing left, and save what was once known as the Iranian empire," he wrote.*

→ Iran cancelled US nuclear talks next round amid 'barbarous' Israeli attacks, to be scheduled in Oman on 15.06.2025

Israel's justification:-

Iran is an imminent threat - would build nuclear bombs.

Israeli leaders cast the attack as necessary to head off an imminent threat that Iran would build nuclear bombs, *though it remains unclear how close the country is to achieving that or whether Iran had actually been planning a strike.*
Iran maintains its nuclear programme is for civilian purposes only.

Israel's domestic consensus:-

Opposition's full support.

There is a broad consensus in the Israeli public that Iran is a major threat, and Israel's opposition leader, Yair Lapid, a staunch critic of Netanyahu, offered his "full support" for the mission against Iran.

Israel's message to the Iranian citizens:-

Fight is not with them but with the 46 years' brutal dictatorship

Netanyahu expressed hope the attacks would trigger the downfall of Iran's theocracy, saying his message to the Iranian people was that the fight was not with them, but with the "brutal dictatorship that has oppressed you for 46 years". *"I believe that the day of your liberation is near," he said.*

Responses from the globe:-

- Countries in the region condemned Israel's attack, while leaders around the globe called for immediate de-escalation from both sides.
- US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Israel took "unilateral action against Iran" and that it believed the **strikes were necessary for its self-defence.**
- In fact, many Arab states are as concerned as Israel about Iran's nuclear ambitions. Some would quietly welcome a successful Israeli or US rollback of Iran's nuclear programme, and several maintain significant military cooperation with Israel.

Response from Hezbollah

- The **Iran-backed Lebanese militant group Hezbollah** issued a statement that offered condolences and condemned the attack,
but did not threaten to join Iran in its retaliation.
- Hezbollah's latest war with Israel, which killed much of the group's senior leadership, ended with a US-brokered ceasefire in November, 2024.

For GS and Essay

STEP BACK FROM BRINK

Israel's attack on Iran threatens to turn the clock back and take the embattled region to a new dangerous edge

Israel's "PRE-EMPTIVE" attack on Iran, dubbed Operation Rising Lion, is an escalation that has taken a region under the shadow of a looming war to a precipice. Israel has bombed several nuclear power stations in Iran and killed at least six nuclear scientists, the head of the Revolutionary Guards, General Hossein Salami, and other senior military leaders. According to Iranian media, at least 78 people have been killed. Iran has retaliated with drone strikes, most of which have reportedly been intercepted. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio distanced Washington from the attack, while President Donald Trump, contradicting his administration, called the move "excellent" and warned of more strikes if Iran does not curb its nuclear programme. A detente in West Asia is now more remote than at any point since Hamas's October 7 terror attacks followed by the Benjamin Netanyahu government's violent reprisals that have widened the theatre of conflict.

Earlier this week, the International Atomic Energy Agency censured Iran for not complying with its non-proliferation commitments. Washington has also been trying to negotiate a fresh nuclear deal with Iran - Trump's first administration backed out of the 2015 JCPOA between Iran and the five Permanent Members of the UNSC, which Israel strongly opposed. Now, the escalation of hostilities by Tel Aviv has scuppered any chance of progress on that front. Israel's contention that military action against Iran - and a possible regime change - is the only route to stability in the region, or Trump's notion that force can carve a path to a "deal" lead to dead ends. They ignore Tehran's role in the broader region. While Iran's proxies are on the back foot, the country continues to be an energy supplier with a capable military. Even if successful, regime changes rarely lead to stability.

The escalation carries the danger of turning the clock back on the ceasefire between the US and the Houthis. It also makes the expansion of the Abraham Accords - one of Trump's most emphatic diplomatic successes in his first term - all but impossible. Trump's appeal to his MAGA base, in part, is about him being a "dealmaker" who can remove the US from global conflicts. Trump had urged Saudi Arabia and other Gulf nations to join the Accords and normalise ties with Israel last month. Israel's prolonged attacks on civilians in Gaza and the humanitarian crisis has caused make such a rapprochement all but impossible. India, with ties and stakes in the region, has urged both sides to avoid "escalatory steps". The task of diplomacy now is to provide an off-ramp to Tehran. The last thing the region needs is all-out war.

The network of pro-Iranian militant groups

◆ Areas where Iranian-backed armed groups operate





15.06.2025

SCO condemns Israel strikes, India distances itself: 'Not part of talks'

The **10-member bloc, currently chaired by China**, called Israel's "aggressive actions against civilian targets (in Iran), including energy and transport infrastructure, which have resulted in civilian casualties, **a gross violation of international law and the United Nations Charter**".

UN's Gaza Resolution:-

The MEA statement came a day after India abstained from a vote in the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on a draft resolution that demanded an "immediate, unconditional and permanent" ceasefire in Gaza.

UNGA	Introduced by	Abstained	Against	Favour
The 193-member UNGA voted overwhelmingly to adopt the resolution	Spain	India was among the 19 nations that abstained India Russia	while 12 nations voted against the resolution US (vetod) Israel	which got 149 votes in favour. China Pro-US UK Australia Japan

India's statement:-

On Friday, India had urged both Israel and Iran to avoid any “escalatory steps”,
and
to resolve issues through dialogue and diplomacy.

“India enjoys close and friendly relations with both the countries and stands ready to extend all possible support,” the MEA had said.

SCO's statement:-

In its statement, the SCO expressed “**serious concern** over the escalating tensions in the Middle East and **strongly condemn(ed)** the military strikes carried out by Israel on the territory of Iran.”

Quick Look:-

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization

- ☐ is a permanent **intergovernmental** international organization
- ☐ established on June 15, 2001
- ☐ in Shanghai (PRC) by the
 - 1) Republic of Kazakhstan,
 - 2) the People's Republic of China,
 - 3) the Kyrgyz Republic,
 - 4) the Russian Federation,
 - 5) the Republic of Tajikistan and
 - 6) the Republic of Uzbekistan.
- ☐ Its **predecessor** was the mechanism of the Shanghai Five.

The goals of the SCO are:

- to strengthen mutual trust, friendship and good-neighborliness between the Member States;
- to encourage the effective cooperation between the Member States in such spheres as politics, trade, economy, science and technology, culture, education, energy, transport, tourism, environmental protection, etc;
- to jointly ensure and maintain peace, security and stability in the region; and
- to promote a new democratic, fair and rational international political and economic international order.

⇒ **Internally**, the SCO adheres to the "Shanghai spirit", namely,

- ▷ mutual trust,
- ▷ mutual benefit,
- ▷ equality,
- ▷ consultation,
- ▷ respect for diversity of civilizations and
- ▷ pursuit of common development; and

⇒ **externally**, it upholds

- ▷ non-alignment,
- ▷ non-targeting at other countries or regions and
- ▷ the principle of openness.

Member states:-

- 1) India (2017)
- 2) Iran (2023)
- 3) Kazakhstan
- 4) China
- 5) the Kyrgyz Republic
- 6) Pakistan (2017)
- 7) Russia
- 8) Tajikistan
- 9) Uzbekistan
- 10) Belarus (2024)

Official language:-

- Russian
- Chinese

Secretariat's Headquarter:-

Beijing, China

Summit happens:-

Once in a year



Trade to inflation, how Iran-Israel conflict may affect India, markets

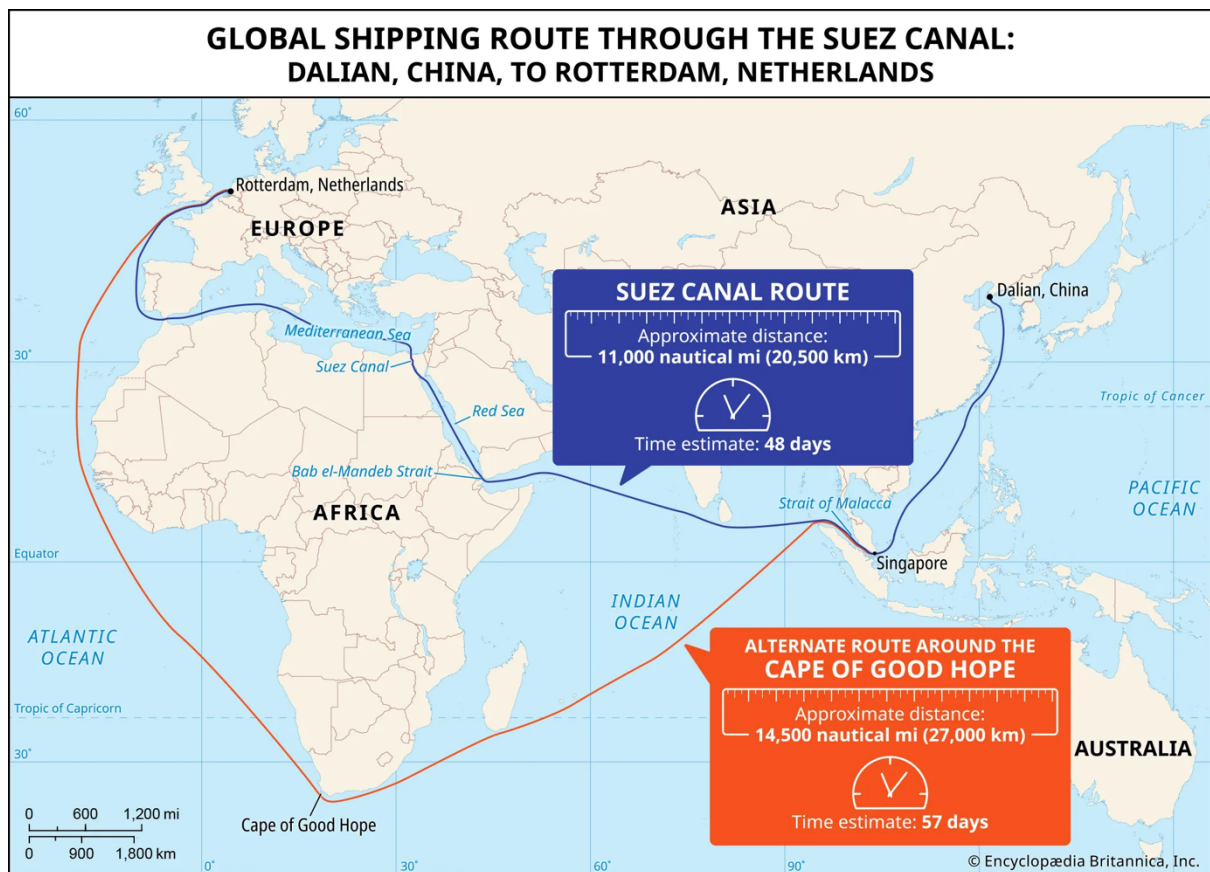
- Just as global shipping lines and traders had begun to breathe a sigh of relief from elevated freight rates, *with vessels returning to the crucial **Red Sea route** from the longer **Cape of Good Hope passage***, a direct conflict between two major West Asian powers has **reignited fears of surging oil prices and more trade disruptions**.
- Experts warn that Iran may respond by closing the strategic **Strait of Hormuz**
 - ▷ a key passage through which **20-25% of global oil supply transits**,
 - ▷ as well as a **critical corridor for LNG** (liquefied natural gas) shipments *from Qatar and the UAE.*

Qatar, notably, is among the top LNG suppliers to India.
- **Brent could rise above \$90 per barrel** before retreating to the \$60s by 2026 as supply recovers.

Rising freight rates, insurance premiums

Now, with trader's worst fears materialising, vessels may be forced to continue using the Cape of Good Hope route. This detour means sustained upward pressure on freight rates. **The Red Sea crisis had already caused a spike in shipping costs due to voyage duration increasing by 10-14 days.** Longer voyages also tightened vessel availability, exerting inflationary pressure on freight rates.

The crisis also hit LNG flows through the Suez Canal, which dropped to 4.15 million tonnes in 2024 – a sharp fall from 32.36 million tonnes in 2023 and 34.94 million tonnes in 2022, according to Kpler data. Meanwhile, LNG volumes via the Cape of Good Hope rose more than five-fold, from 11.76 million tonnes in 2022 to 59.37 million tonnes in 2024.

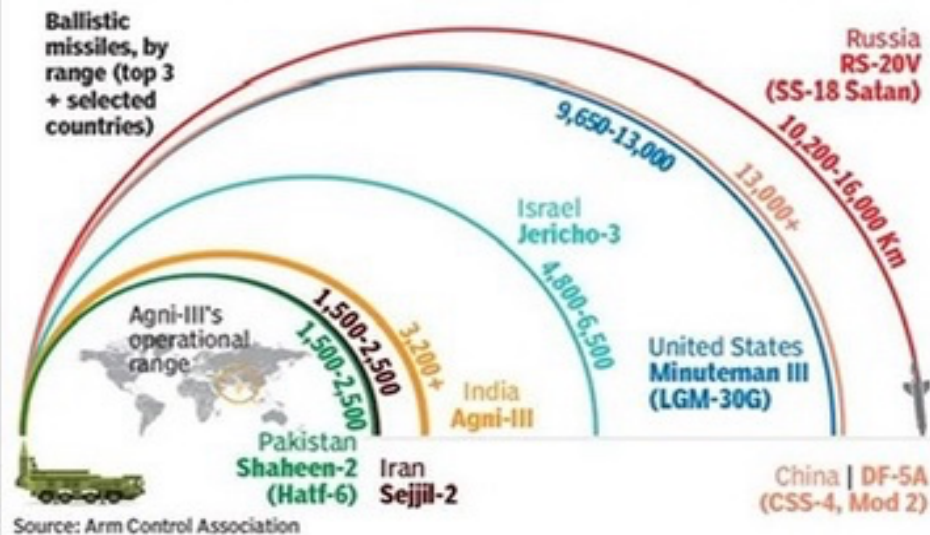


ICBM (range over 5,500 km)

Country	Brief
USA	A key player – significant arsenal
Russia	Possesses large number
China	Rapidly modernizing
France	Primarily utilizes on its nuclear submarine
India	Agni 5 (5,000-8,000km) Developing Agni 6
UK	Smaller but significant
North Korea	Believed to have – and deployed too
Israel	Maintains secrecy – but believed to have

Ballistic Powerhouses: How Far Can the World's Missiles Go?

As many as 31 countries possess ballistic missiles. But very few have intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM), which have a range of over 5,500km. India is developing the Agni VI with ICBM range



WTC Final: South Africa End 27-Year ICC Trophy Drought With Historic Chase Vs Australia At Lord's



I've been called a lot of names in my life. Some names hurt. Some of them I quite like. But the name I have been called the most is Temba. My grandmother named me Temba, because it means hope.

TEMBA BAVUMA, IN AN OCTOBER 2023 COMMERCIAL



South Africa's Mace of Good Hope

16.06.2025

WHY PUNJAB IS STRUGGLING TO DIVERSIFY FROM PADDY FARMING

- Despite Punjab government's efforts to diversify the state's crop mix, **the state is once again staring at a near-record area under paddy cultivation.**
- **Last year**, Punjab saw **an all-time high** of 32.44 lakh hectares **under paddy.** Current trends suggest the acreage this year will remain in the same ballpark.

Context

Roughly, 35-36 lakh hectares are under cultivation in Punjab during the kharif season (June to October). Last year, this figure was 35.2 lakh hectares.

The main crops during the kharif season are :-

Paddy (basmati and non-basmati)	paddy accounts for a vast majority of the kharif acreage – more than 92% last year. All other crops are deemed “alternatives” to paddy.
Cotton	
Maize	

certain Pulses

(like moong, urad and arhar)

Oilseeds

(like groundnut and sesame)

Sugarcane

(cane is cultivated all year round)

Problems lie with paddy:-

- ✂ Vulnerability to pest and disease attacks :- The problem is that growing the same crops year after year on the same land increases vulnerability to pest and disease attacks.
- ✂ Dependence on chemical fertilisers and pesticides :- Paddy cultivation specifically depletes soil nutrients, which increases dependence on chemical fertilisers and pesticides.
- ✂ Decline of groundwater :- Also, paddy guzzles water. Punjab's groundwater table has been declining by 0.5 meters per annum on an average, largely courtesy paddy.

Attempts at diversification

- ◆ Punjab, through various schemes and policies, has long tried to address the paddy monoculture problem. The state has **launched a pilot project**

to divert 12,000 hectares from paddy to maize,
and
increase area under cotton cultivation by 15%.

But even if these plans succeed,

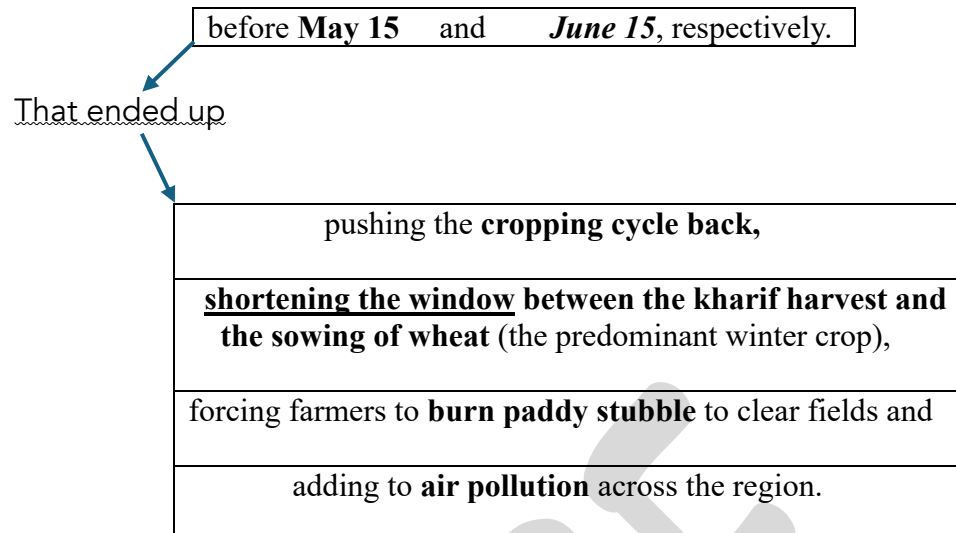
91% of the kharif cropped area would still be under paddy.

Previous attempts at diversification have also not yielded expected results.

- ◆ Notably, the state in **2009** enacted the

Punjab Preservation of Subsoil Water Act,

which barred
nursery-sowing and <i>transplanting of paddy</i>



Why paddy remains king

There are several reasons why Punjab cannot look past paddy.

- 1st) **Diversification to Maize not to cause any real difference** :- Plans such as the one to divert 12,000 hectares to maize simply are not ambitious enough to make any real difference, even if they succeed.
 - 2nd) **MSP issue** :- Guaranteed procurement at Minimum Support Price (MSP) makes paddy more attractive than alternatives like maize or pulses, which enjoy much weaker market support.
 - 3rd) **Decades of flawed policy**:- The current situation is the product of decades of flawed policy – making from the government, on actual are fundamentally aligned towards the cultivation of paddy.
 - It has provided **freebies like eight hours of free electricity** that farmers use to run irrigation pumps, and
 - **subsidies on fertilisers.**
-

CHOPPER SERVICES UNDER DGCA LENS

Helicopter flying out of Kedarnath crashes amid bad weather, 7 dead

- ✧ Bell 407 helicopter (**Canada** made)
 - ✧ **From Kedarnath en route to Guptakashi....crashed in Gaurikund**
 - ▷ Guptakashi (05:10 am) → Kedarnath (05:18 am)
 - ▷ Kedarnath (05:19 am) → crashed in Gaurikund (between 05:30-05:45 am)
 - ✧ Helicopter **took off around 50 minutes before its allotted time**, during conditions of poor visibility caused by clouds and fog.
 - ✧ Helicopter operator **Aryan Aviation Pvt. Ltd.**
 - ~ FIR against two managers under 105 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) and the Aircraft Act
 - ✧ Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (**AAIB**) will investigate.
-

EXPLAINED

E Why Cyprus matters

THE CHOICE of Cyprus as the PM's first overseas destination after Operation Sindoor has not gone unnoticed. The island country has a decades-old dispute with Turkey which backed Pakistan during the recent hostilities. Cyprus has also backed India on Kashmir and its stand against cross-border terrorism. It will be taking charge of the EU Council presidency at a time when India is looking to deepen ties with Europe.

PM reaches Cyprus, Turkey's rival & EU chair next year, to deepen ties



Former president
Nicolas Sarkozy

FRANCE

Graft: Sarkozy stripped of top medal

Paris: Former president Nicolas Sarkozy has been stripped of his Legion of Honour, France's highest distinction, after being convicted of corruption and influence peddling last year, according to a decree published in Sunday's Official Bulletin. The centre-right politician has been embroiled in legal battles since leaving office in 2012. Last year, France's highest court upheld his conviction for corruption and influence peddling, ordering him to wear an electronic tag for a year, a first for a former French head of state. Also last year, an appeals court confirmed a separate conviction for illegal campaign financing in his failed re-election bid in 2012. **AP**

18.06.2025

For GS and Essay

SHOW MUST GO ON

In ruling against stalling of Thug Life's release in Karnataka, SC underlines imperative to guard and extend free expression

On Tuesday, The Supreme Court down heavily on the “extra-judicial ban” on the Tamil film Thug Life in Karnataka – it underlined that any film that has received a CBFC certificate must be screened. The Mani Ratnam-directed movie opened on June 5 across India except in Karnataka, where its release was stalled following outrage over lead actor Kamal Haasan’s remark that Kannada was born from Tamil. The Supreme Court has rightly characterised such a “ban” as an infringement on the filmmakers’ constitutionally guaranteed right to freedom of speech and expression. It directed the state government to uphold the “rule of law” and ensure the film’s smooth release. It also criticized the Karnataka High Court for asking Haasan to apologise for his remark when hearing a petition filed by the film’s producers on June 3.

In a country where freedom of speech is all too frequently allowed to be circumscribed by noisy mobs and vigilante groups, the apex court’s intervention is a reminder that the protection of his fundamental right remains an ongoing challenge. With their unique hold on public imagination and immense reach, films are especially vulnerable to the contrived spectres of the “hurt sentiments” industry, whether or not the threat of a ban is held over them. For example, earlier this year, a controversy over the Malayalam film L2: Empuraan, regarding its depiction of the 2002 communal violence in Gujarat, led to the makers seeking “voluntary modification” – this after the film had already been cleared for public exhibition by the CBFC.

For states bound to uphold the rule of law to give in to mob sentiment and attempt to circumscribe the right to free speech and expression is a disturbing cave-in. The Supreme Court has had to step in earlier, too, in order to remind governments of their duty. In 2018, for example, the apex court stayed the notifications of the government of Gujarat and Rajasthan that prohibited the screening of the Hindi film Padmaavat, which had been targeted for allegedly distorting history. Again, in 2023, the Court stepped in to ensure the release of The Kerala Story in West Bengal, after the state government banned the film citing its polarising plot and the need to maintain law and order. In directing the release of Thug Life in Karnataka, the Supreme Court has underlined that upholding freedom of speech means protecting and extending the space for a diversity of views. As it pointed out, “It’s not just screening of a film, it’s much bigger than this.”

Quick Look:-

Fundamental Rights [Part III (Article 12-35)]

- 1) Right to equality (Article 14–18)
- 2) Right to freedom (Article 19–22)
- 3) Right against exploitation (Article 23–24)
- 4) Right to freedom of religion (Article 25–28)
- 5) Cultural and educational rights (Article 29–30)
- 6) Right to constitutional remedies (Article 32–35)

- ✂ Fundamental Rights are *Fundamental Law of the Land*.
- ✂ are enforceable in a court of law.
- ✂ they are absolute or immune from Constitutional amendment.
- ✂ In the case of

Kesavananda Bharati vs. State of Kerala (1973),

⇒ Fundamental Rights can be amended
by the Parliament,

however,

such amendment should not contravene
the basic structure of the Constitution

Freedom of Speech and Expression [Article 19(1)(a)] includes

Freedom of Press
Freedom of Commercial Speech
Right to Broadcast
Right to Information
Right to Criticize
Right to expression beyond national boundaries
Right not to speak or right to silence

Reasonable restriction under Article 19(2)

Sovereignty and integrity of India:	Restrictions can be imposed to protect the nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
Security of the State:	The government can limit speech that poses a threat to the security of the country.
Friendly relations with foreign states:	Restrictions can be applied to prevent speech that could damage India's relationships with other nations.
Public order:	Speech that disrupts public order or incites violence can be restricted.
Decency or morality:	Restrictions can be imposed to maintain public morality and decency
Contempt of court:	Speech that undermines the authority or dignity of the judiciary can be restricted.
Defamation:	False and defamatory statements that harm someone's reputation can be restricted.
Incitement to an offense:	Speech that encourages or provokes the commission of a crime can be restricted.

19.06.2025

35-MINUTE PHONE CONVERSATION, FIRST SINCE OPERATION SINDOOR

Modi reminds Trump no trade talk or US role in Sindoor pause, declines his invite

US President repeats claim: 'I stopped the war'



'I love Pakistan. I think Modi is a fantastic man'



Trump hosts Munir amid talk of US looking at Pak airspace use

EXPLAINED

E First pushback by Delhi

TRUMP HAD been claiming credit for brokering a ceasefire between India and Pakistan. By letting him know that US mediation never came up during the conflict, Modi has called out the US President's narrative. He also declined an invitation to US, aware that the Pak Army chief is there.

HOW INDIA-ARMENIA ALLIANCE IS PAYING OFF **AMID IRAN-ISRAEL CRISIS**



- Amid escalating hostilities between Iran and Israel, the Indian Embassy in Tehran on Tuesday helped at least 110 stranded students leave the country, facilitating their passage into Armenia through the **Nurduz-Agarak border crossing**.
- A special flight carrying evacuees from Yerevan (capital) will land in New Delhi in the early hours of Thursday.

Challenge of evacuation

With Iranian airspace shut down indefinitely, evacuations from the country will have to be facilitated through its land borders. *This is an issue for India, which shares rather tenuous relations with a few of Iran's neighbours.*

Route – not possible anyway		Route – may be possible	Route – Chosen
Pakistan, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan		Turkmenistan, Iraq, Armenia	Armenia @ Nurduz-Agarak crossing
Pakistan route:-	Pakistan remains India's primary geopolitical rival, with whom it only recently had a military conflagration. As such, <u>the border between Iran and Pakistan in Baloch remains shut for Indian evacuees.</u>	This leaves three countries through which Indians can theoretically be evacuated – Turkmenistan, Iraq, and Armenia.	The Iran-Armenia border is thus the most viable option for Indian evacuees, especially since Tehran and the Nurduz-Agarak crossing, some 730km apart, are well connected by a major highway.
Turkey and Azerbaijan:-	As are Iran's border with Turkey and Azerbaijan, <u>both of whom professed overt support for Islamabad during Operation Sindoor.</u> <u>New Delhi's</u>	<u>Turkmenistan</u> Iran's border with Turkmenistan is <u>sparsely populated, especially on the Iranian side,</u> meaning there are significant logistical	

	<i>relations with Istanbul and Baku have taken a nosedive in recent weeks.</i>	challenges facilitating evacuations through this frontier.	
Afghanistan:-	On the other hand, India does not have official ties with the Taliban-ruled Afghanistan (to Iran's east) at all.	<u>Iraq</u> The border with Iraq, on the other hand, <i>lies directly in the line of fire between Iran and Israel.</i> While it remains open at the moment, most of Iraq's airports are shut due to the conflict.	

Basis of Delhi-Yerevan ties

- *It is in this context that years of Indian diplomatic efforts vis-à-vis Armenia are now paying dividends.* The present relationship is a product of a few *crucial geopolitical considerations.*

Azerbaijan—Armenia conflict,
primarily over the
Nagorno-Karabakh enclave.

Azerbaijan Camp	Armenian Camp
Turkey Pakistan	India

India : biggest military supplier to Armenia

a \$250 million deal in 2022 saw India supplying Armenia with **PINAKA multi-barrel rocket launchers, Akash-1S air defense system,** and other armaments.

Armenia : strong support

- (i) Armenia has publicly endorsed India's position on resolving the **Kashmir issue on a bilateral basis** (with Pakistan), and
- (ii) supports **India's** aspiration for a **permanent seat in the UN Security Council.**

Strategic Location of Armenia :-

- ⊃ Located in the **southern Caucasus**,
- ⊃ Armenia is a crucial cog of the **International North-South Transport Corridor**,

⊃ which aims → → to connect → → **India**
to

Europe

↓
through
Armenia and Iran.

- Developing this route will help New Delhi establish itself as a major player in the region.

20.06.2025

For GS and Essay

Topic :- Gender equality is on the right direction in India

Class XII board exam data for 2024 show science is no longer a boys' club

In a country aspiring to be a global leader in the knowledge economy, this is welcome news. Drawing on the scientific potential of half its population is not just desirable, it is essential.

- Data on 2024 Class XII board exams, released by the Ministry of Education, tell a story of quiet persistence: For the first time in a decade, more girls — 28.14 lakh — cleared the board exams in the science stream than in humanities — 27.24 lakh. These figures mark a powerful shift in academic and social dynamics. As an analysis of numbers from 25 school boards between 2010 and 2023 by this newspaper in September 2024 showed, only 38.2 per cent of students clearing science in 2010 were girls. By 2023, that number had climbed to 45.5 per cent, setting the stage for the 2024 breakthrough. The reversal of the long-standing gender tilt toward humanities is an affirmation that science — once seen as a male preserve — is being actively pursued by female students across the country. In a country aspiring to be a global leader in the knowledge economy, this is welcome news: Drawing on the scientific potential of half its population is not just desirable, it is essential.
- State-level results underscore the national picture. In Tamil Nadu, girls achieved a formidable 96.35 per cent science pass rate in 2024; in Jharkhand, Bihar and Odisha, girls outperformed boys. This reshaping of ambition and possibility has been facilitated by growing parental encouragement and good-faith policy interventions such as the Vigyan Jyoti scholarship schemes for girls from disadvantaged backgrounds, and the CBSE's Udaan initiative, that helps underprivileged girls prepare for engineering and medical entrance exams through mentoring and financial aid. What happens when more girls enter higher education in STEM? According to the All India Survey on Higher Education 2021-22, women now make up 52.1 per cent of all students in science disciplines across undergraduate, postgraduate, MPhil, and PhD levels. At the undergraduate level, they constitute a little over 51 per cent of the total enrolment. In medicine, women are at par with men; in engineering and technology — fields where they have traditionally been a sliver — their representation has risen considerably. These numbers point to a future workforce that is likely to be more diverse, representative, and arguably, more innovative.
- The promise of these numbers, however, will continue to come up against the shadow of unequal realities unless it is met with deeper investment in infrastructure, mentorship

networks, employment opportunities and safe spaces to learn and to linger in. Girls from rural areas and low-income households still face immense barriers that cap their ambitions: Lack of resources; unavailability of laboratories and equipment; a private study space, or simply, the right to stay in school. If this moment is to make room for long-term change, it must ensure that STEM dreams that have gotten off the block are not stalled midway.

Learn how to choose topic for UPSC and read to what extent :-

In the newspaper the news is with headline

RBI relaxes norms for financing of project loans

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday rationalised the guidelines for financing project loans undertaken by banks and non-banking financial companies.

The new norms will come into effect from October 1, 2025.

In the final norms, the RBI has reduced the standard asset provisioning requirement to 1 per cent for projects that are under construction. In the draft guidelines, issued in May last year, the RBI had asked lenders to maintain a general provision of 5 per cent of the funded outstanding on exposure to projects under implementation at various stages.

(the above mentioned are just for comprehension for self, except the role of RBI... to be picked up is here beneath)

Project Finance

- ▷ refers to the method of funding a project
- ▷ in which the revenues to be generated by the funded project
- ▷ serve as the primary security for the loan, and also as a source of repayment.

Prelims	Mains
▪ What is Project Finance? ▪ Characteristics ▪ Whether the NBFCs can undertake financing project loans? ▪ What is the regulatory authority of such kind of financing?	RBI has also been facilitating the economy through the various taken measures to boost up the growth trajectory by its easing policy stance especially in the infra sector.

Suggestion :- Don't overstress yourself with the irrelevant things.

21.06.2025

UK MPs approve assisted dying bill in landmark vote, send proposal to House of Lords

The proposal, called the **Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill**, *allows terminally ill people to request medical help to end their life if certain conditions are met.*

➡ Members of the UK Parliament have voted to support a bill that would legalise assisted dying in **England and Wales.**

~ The bill **passed by a narrow majority of 23**, with 314 MPs in favour and 291 against, now moves to the House of Lords for further debate and possible changes.

What the bill says

The bill would allow assisted dying under strict conditions. A person would be eligible if they:

- 1) Are aged 18 or older and live in England or Wales
- 2) Have been registered with a General Practitioner for at least 12 months
- 3) Have a terminal illness and are expected **to die within six months**
- 4) Have the **mental capacity** to make the decision
- 5) Make two formal declarations of their wish to die, witnessed and signed
- 6) Are assessed by two independent doctors at least seven days apart

✂ If the request is approved, there would be a **14-day waiting period** before the person could go ahead.

⇒ A doctor would prepare the substance, but **the person would need to take it themselves.**

✂ It would be a **criminal offence to pressure or force someone** into requesting assisted dying, with a penalty of **up to 14 years in prison.**

Public reaction:-

Outside Parliament,
demonstrators gathered in large numbers.

Favour	Against
Supporters wore clothes reading “Campaign for Dignity in Dying,”	while opponents carried banners warning against what they called the creation of a “National Suicide Service”.

Lens view:-

- Advocates argue the bill would stop people from having to travel abroad for an assisted death, which is currently legal in Switzerland.
- They say wealthier patients have that option, while others risk legal consequences for helping a loved one.

Global context:-

Difference between

Assisted Suicide	Euthanasia
A doctor would prepare the substance, but the person would need to take it themselves.	Doctor directly ending patient's life

- The UK would join several other countries if the bill becomes law.
- Assisted suicide is currently legal in jurisdictions such as
 - Switzerland
 - some US states.
- Euthanasia, which involves a doctor directly ending a patient's life, is legal under strict conditions in the
 - Netherlands
(first to implement - 2002)
 - Canada
 - Colombia
 - Belgium
 - Luxembourg
 - New Zealand
 - Spain
 - Australia

BOTH

Quick Take:-

Section 132 of the BSA, 2023 deals with – the confidentiality of communications between an advocate and client.

In news because

- Recently two senior counsels were served with summons by the Directorate of Enforcement (ED).
- Both summons concern legal advice given to M/s Care Health Insurance regarding Employee Stock Ownership Plans issued to Rashmi Saluja, the former chair of Religare Enterprises.

Consequence

ED has issued a Circular for the guidance of the field formations that **no summons shall be issued to any Advocate** in violation of Section 132 of the Bhartiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023

A Discussion : The ED's (non-investigative) powers

- Of particular concern is the fact that the summons has been issued by the ED, which enforces the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002.
- PMLA proceedings require the existence of a “**predicate” offence, such as, say, extortion, cheating, etc.** Only then can the proceeds of such a crime be brought within its reach.
- In July **2022**, a three-judge bench of the Supreme Court in *Vijay Madanlal Choudhary vs Union of India* famously recognised this rule.
 - ~ However, they also found the ED's powers of arrest, search and seizure, and the PMLA's inversion of the typical due-process principle “innocent until proven guilty” to be constitutional.
- Central to the Court's reasoning was the idea that the **PMLA is a regulatory and not a penal law**, that the ED's powers to issue summons are towards an “inquiry” and not an “investigation”.

- ~ Thus, the **ED (don't have police power)** is not comparable to the police forces entrusted with the responsibility to investigate crimes.

✧ The ambit of the PMLA has been widened through notifications issued in May 2023, which now *classify professionals — such as chartered accountants and company secretaries carrying out certain types of financial transactions on behalf of their clients — as reporting entities.*

About ED

- Comes under **Dept. of Revenue, MoF, Gol**
- The Directorate of Enforcement is a multi-disciplinary organization
→ mandated with investigation of offence of **money laundering and violations of foreign exchange laws.**
- The statutory functions of the Directorate include enforcement of following Acts:

The Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA)	The Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA)	The Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018 (FEOA)
It is a criminal law enacted to prevent money laundering and to provide for confiscation of property derived from, or involved in, money-laundering and for matters connected	It is a civil law enacted to consolidate and amend the laws relating to facilitate external trade and payments and to promote the orderly development and maintenance of	This civil law was enacted to deter economic offenders from evading the process of Indian law by remaining outside the jurisdiction of Indian courts.

therewith or incidental thereto.	foreign exchange market in India.	
ED has been given the responsibility to enforce the provisions of the PMLA by conducting investigation to trace the assets derived from proceeds of crime, to provisionally attach the property and to ensure prosecution of the offenders and confiscation of the property by the Special court.	ED has been given the responsibility to conduct investigation into suspected contraventions of foreign exchange laws and regulations, to adjudicate and impose penalties on those adjudged to have contravened the law.	It is a law whereby Directorate is mandated to attach the properties of the fugitive economic offenders who have escaped from the India warranting arrest and provide for the confiscation of their properties to the Central Government.

Pak's Iran balancing act

Amid the Iran-Israel conflict, Islamabad is playing a delicate, deliberate balancing act informed by a complicated bilateral relationship with Tehran, need for American patronage, and anxieties about India

- Islamabad has extended strong rhetorical support to Tehran amid the ongoing Iran-Israel conflict, calling Israel's actions a "violation of all the rules of civilised behaviour... and international humanitarian law".
- Yet it has stopped short of making any tangible military commitments to Iran.
 - Earlier this week, when a top Iranian general claimed on television that Pakistan had promised to extend its nuclear deterrent to Iran,
 - Pak Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar issued a swift denial, saying "there (had) been no such statement" from Islamabad's side.

The Pak-Iran relationship

- The relationship between two Islamic republics can be best described as fraternal and strategic albeit with perennially simmering mutual suspicion and hostility.
- Iran was the first country to recognise Pakistan in 1947, and
 - ~ the Shah's regime extended military and diplomatic assistance to Pakistan during the 1965 and 1971 wars.
- But beyond the oft-emphasised veneer of Islamic brotherhood lie a number of friction points, which have surfaced frequently in the years after the Iranian Revolution of 1979.

□ Border irritant @ Baloch heartland

- The 900-km Iran-Pakistan border runs through the Baloch heartland,

with the Pak province of <u>Balochistan</u> on one side	and	the Iranian province of <u>Sistan-Baluchistan</u> on the other.
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Each side accuses the other of providing safe haven to separatist groups.

There have been **at least 15 border clashes** – most often after Iran has struck alleged terrorist targets across the border – in the past decade alone, most recently in January 2024.

□ **Afghanistan with historical odds**

Iran and Pakistan have historically been at odds over Afghanistan (80-90% Sunni). Like India (15% Shia), Shia-majority (90-95%) Iran supported the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance forces in the late 1990s, out of concerns stemming from a strongly anti-Shia group ruling a neighbour with which it shares a 921-km-border. **Notwithstanding the current strain in ties, Pakistan (85-90% Sunni) has historically patronised the Taliban (Sunni group).**

Quick Look:-

Shia majority	India	Sunni majority
Iran Iraq Azerbaijan Baharin	85-90% – Sunni 10-15% – Shia	Afghanistan Pakistan Bangladesh Saudi Arabia Turkey Egypt Nigeria Indonesia

➤ **Anti-Taliban Northern Alliance →**

About

- It was a military alliance that fought against the Taliban in Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001
- This alliance of Afghan groups opposed the Taliban regime and controlled a limited portion of northern Afghanistan, particularly in Badakhshan province.

International Support:

- The Northern Alliance received support from various countries, including Iran, Russia, Tajikistan, and India, who saw the Taliban as a threat.

US Involvement:

- The US, after the 9/11 attacks, also allied with the Northern Alliance and provided significant military support, which ultimately led to the collapse of the Taliban regime in 2001

Pakistan's Role:

- Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) played a significant role in backing the Taliban, providing them with training, weapons, and operational support.

□ **Saudi Arabia : funding Sunni Madrasas**

Pakistan's relationship with Saudi Arabia, which funds and sustains several networks of Sunni madrasas in the country, **has often come at the expense of its potential ties with Iran.**

- This is notable given that Sunni **sectarian groups in Pakistan**, often nurtured in these madrasas, have long **persecuted the country's Shia minority.**

The American angle

- Iran's post-Revolution rupture with the US and Pakistan's continuing reliance on American support has further complicated the Islamabad-Tehran relationship.
 - This is at the heart of Islamabad's current balancing act.
- Pakistan is a **rentier economy**, reliant on foreign aid.
 - During the **Cold War**, even as **India** chose to remain **non-aligned**,
 - **Pakistan** under Gen Ayub Khan joined the **Western bloc**, positioning itself as a bulwark against communist expansion in South Asia.
- This enshrined a certain reliance on the US that has persisted over the decades (although the relationship has seen its fair share of ups and downs, depending on Washington's interest in the region).
- Post the September 11, 2001 terror attacks in the US, Pakistan acted as a springboard for US action against Taliban in Afghanistan.
 - Islamabad was the welcome recipient of an enormous amount of American material and military support during this time – whose dividends it continues to reap even today.
- But NATO's pullout from Kabul in 2021, and **Washington** shifting from its Afghanistan-centric "War on Terror" to more **China-centric Indo-Pacific objectives** removed the default reason for US-Pakistan cooperation.
 - During his term, former US President Joe Biden neither spoke to nor met any senior Pak leader.

22.06.2025

Critical Analysis : India's declining poverty

(Pg . No :- 15-23 @ this edition dated 07.06.2025)

Pg. No :- 239-243@ previous edition dated 29.05.2025)

Eleven years: a data-based critique

CONSUMPTION: The Hard Data

- Expenditure is a proxy for income and borrowing. The persons in the bottom 10% have an expenditure of Rs 50-100 / day. Ask yourself, with Rs 50-100 a day, what kind of food can a person consume? What kind of dwelling can a person have? What kind of medical care or medicines can the person afford?

- 10% of the population is not an insignificant number: it is 14 crore people. If they were a separate country, it will be ranked 10th in the world in terms of population.
 - Yet, the NITI Aayog and the government claim that the 'poor' are only 5% or less of the total population. The claim is cruel and dishonest.
- The most relevant comparator is the ratio of the per capita expenditure of the top 5% and the bottom 5%.
 - 12 years ago it was approximately 12 times;
 - in 2023-24 it is still approximately 7.5 times.

Farmers & Food: Dismal Data

▪ Loaned farmer

- Government has claimed that agricultural growth is robust, but is the farmer's life robust?
- Data from NABARD (2021-22) showed that nearly 55% of agricultural households are burdened with debt.

- The average outstanding loan per household is **Rs 91,231.**

According to a Lok Sabha reply on February 3, 2025, 13.08 crore farmers owed Rs 27,67,346 crore to commercial banks; 3.34 crore farmers owed Rs 2,65,419 crore to co-operative banks and 2.31 crore farmers owed Rs 3,19,881 crore to regional rural banks.

(Quick pick here → 1) Commercial 2) Co-operative 3) RRBs)

▪ PM Kisan flaws

- The PM Kisan scheme is riddled with holes.
- The **peak** enrollment was 10.47 crore in April-July 2022. It **declined** to 8.1 crore in 2023 (15th installment) and government claimed it had **risen** to 9.8 crore in February 2025 (19th installment). The gyrations are inexplicable.
 - Unjustifiably, tenant farmers are not eligible.

▪ Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) structural flaws

- The crop insurance scheme was refined and re-introduced by the UPA government.
 - Private insurers were allowed and the government directed the insurance companies to run the scheme on a 'no profit, no loss' basis.

- On the other hand, the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), implemented by the NDA, has become an extortionate scheme:
 - the claims paid as a proportion of gross premiums collected has declined from 87% in 2019-20 to 56 % in 2023-24.

(Quick pick here

- 1) UPA crop insurance :- no profit, no loss basis
- 2) NDA govt :- claims paid as a proportion of gross premiums collected has been declining)

▪ MGNREGS's fund crunch

- The critical social security scheme MGNREGS – has received a **stagnant allocation** in the **last three years**.
- Over 1.5 crore **active job cards** have been **deleted**.
- The **average number of days of works is 51** as against the promised 100 days.
- Instead of being a demand-driven scheme, it has become a **fund-starved scheme**.

▪ Food matters

- The **5 kg free grain /person** to 80 crore persons **leaves out 10 crore eligible citizens**.
- Despite free rations and the mid-day meal scheme,
 - **stunting** among children is **35.5%** and
 - **wasting** among children is **19.3%**.
- In the **Global Hunger Index**, India ranks **105 out of 127 countries**.

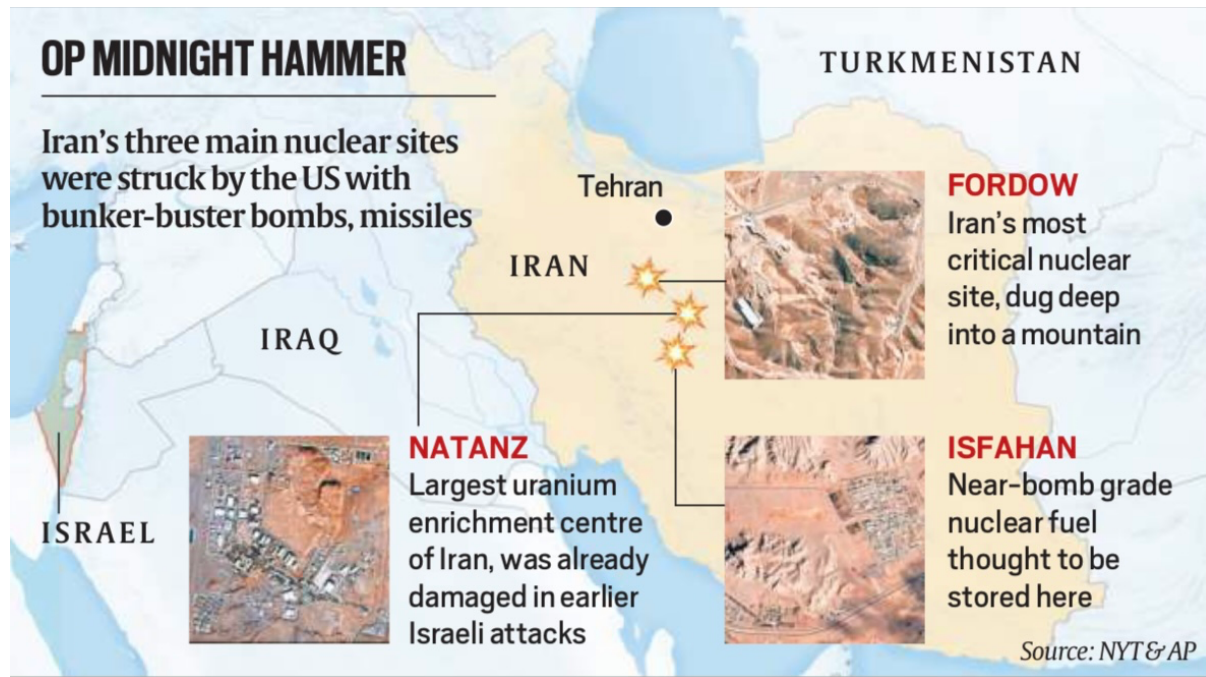
23.06.2025

FULLY OBLITERATED IRAN'S
key nuclear sites, says Trump

FORDOW, NATANZ, ISFAHAN HIT,
B-2 bombers drop 'bunker busters'

U.S. CROSSED RED LINE: IRAN;
Tehran to decide on Hormuz closure

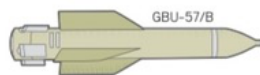
US enters war, bombs Iran n-sites



HOW FORDOW WAS TARGETED

THE B-2 PLANE CAN OPERATE AT UP TO 50,000 feet

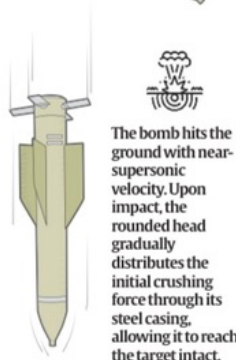
which is 10,000 feet higher than the maximum for typical commercial airliners. As it approaches its target at about 500 miles per hour, a door at the belly opens to drop the bomb, the GBU-57.



The bomb weighs as much as a school bus, and has been used in combat for the first time.



After deployment, it uses GPS to reach the target.



The bomb hits the ground with near-supersonic velocity. Upon impact, the rounded head gradually distributes the initial crushing force through its steel casing, allowing it to reach the target intact.

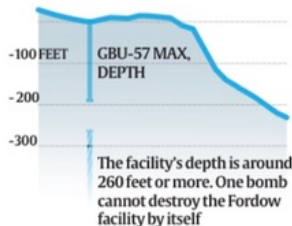
Sources: Defense Science Board Task Force (bomb capabilities), Whiteman Air Force Base (aircraft capabilities)/The NYT



Rescue workers and firefighters at the site of an Iranian missile strike in Tel Aviv on Sunday. Hours after the US strikes, Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard said it launched a barrage of 40 missiles at Israel. AP

CROSS-SECTION OF THE MOUNTAIN RANGE THAT ENCASES FORDOW

The peak of the mountain is 3,150 feet above sea level



Sources: Congressional Research Service (bomb capabilities); Center for Strategic and International Studies, Institute for Science and International Security (minimum depth of facility)/The New York Times

FORDOW NUCLEAR SITE

Deep inside a mountain, Fordow is said to contain close to 3,000 sophisticated centrifuges in two enrichment halls.



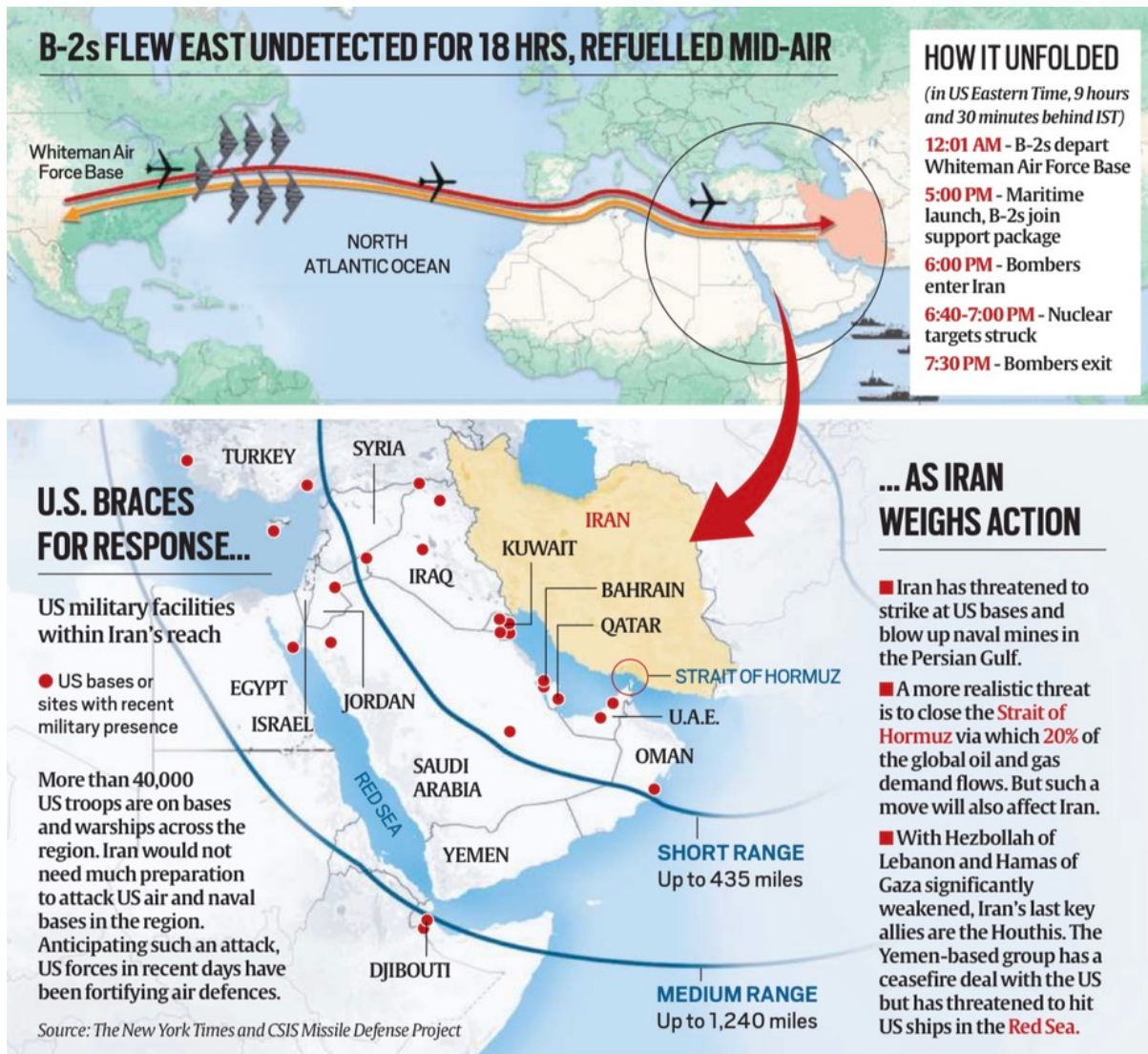
Sources: Nuclear Threat Initiative; Google Earth (terrain)/The NYT

2 | US STRIKES IRAN

WORLD HOLDS ITS BREATH
over fears of wider war, UNSC set to meet

ALL EYES ON STRAIT OF HORMUZ,
Iran considers closing key shipping lane

IN U.S., QUESTIONS RAISED
over Trump authority to launch strikes



May resemble later to the Iraq's WMD-US sequence

➤ Iran's NO to accusation:-

Iran has long maintained that its nuclear programme was peaceful

➤ US intel's confirmation:-

US intelligence agencies have assessed that Tehran is not actively pursuing a bomb.

□ Trump and Israel's presumption and attack :-

However, Trump and Israeli leaders have argued that Iran could quickly assemble a nuclear weapon.

Only US military possesses Bunker-Buster bombs

- ⇒ Israel has significantly degraded Iran's air defences and offensive missile capabilities and damaged its nuclear enrichment facilities.
- ⇒ But only the US military has the bunker-buster bombs –
 - the 30,000-pound precision-guided GBU-57 A/B Massive Ordnance Penetrator bomb,
 - believed to be able to penetrate about 200 feet below the surface before exploding –
 - that officials believe offered the best chance of destroying sites deep underground and the planes to drop them.

When a nuclear site is attacked

Even if the three sites in Iran had nuclear weapons, there was no risk of them blowing up under an attack, like a bomb would. The threat of a radiation leak is a more real possibility, although the IAEA so far believes there's no cause for worry

Short brief

- The United States attacked three key nuclear installations in Iran - **Fordow, Isfahan** and **Natanz** - on Sunday morning, with President Donald Trump claiming that all the three facilities had been "completely and totally obliterated." The US attacks follow a series of missile strikes by Israel last week, also targeting Iran's nuclear installations, most notably Natanz.
- All the three facilities targeted on Sunday are key uranium enrichment sites that house the infrastructure to convert natural uranium into highly enriched uranium (HEU) that is needed to make a nuclear bomb.

Journey of Enrichment -- from U-238 to U-235

- ⇒ Enrichment differs because of number variation factors of Neutrons
(U-238 – 146, U-235 – 143)

This difference in neutron number makes	U-235 fissile (capable of sustaining a nuclear chain reaction)
	U-238 non-fissile (though it can be converted to a fissile material in a breeder reactor)

Enrichment
is the process of increasing the concentration of Uranium-235 (U235) in a sample of natural uranium, which is primarily - more than 99% - Uranium-238 (U238).

It is only U-235 that is fissile , the kind of material that can undergo nuclear chain reaction to produce large amounts of energy.	Electricity 3-5%	An enrichment of 3-5% is sufficient for producing electricity in nuclear power stations,
	Nuclear weapons 90% or more	but for making nuclear weapons, highly enriched uranium, with concentrations of 90% or more of U235, is required.

No fear of nuclear disaster @ nuclear radiation leak

[IAEA and Iran both confirmed]

- The attacks by Israel and the United States have led to fears of a potential nuclear disaster, in the form of a nuclear explosion, or large-scale nuclear radiation leaks.
- However, an explosion is not expected under these circumstances, and no major radiation leak has been detected so far.
- The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the global nuclear watchdog, said it had not seen any increase in 'off-site radiation levels' following Sunday's attacks.
 - Iran has also said that there was no risk to public health because of the attacks.

Nuclear weapons are not traditional bombs

A nuclear bomb is very different from the traditional explosives and chemicals used in warfare.

Traditional bombs	Explosive	Nuclear bombs	Non-explosive
use a variety of chemicals that are generally designed ○ to explode on impact, like when they hit a target. ○ These chemical explosives can go off in other circumstances as well, like when they are exposed to heat or friction. ○ These are explosive in themselves, and can get triggered and cause damage even when they are not used in the way they are designed to. ○ Specifically, these chemical explosives can explode when they are struck by other weapons, or in cases of fire.		Nuclear material is not explosive. A pack of uranium would not explode on being burnt or hit by other weapons.	
		A nuclear bomb causes damage not by exploding the way traditional bombs do, but by releasing very high amounts of energy in a very short span of time. This large amount of energy sets off a series of processes that cause widespread damage.	
		Nuclear weapons are designed to detonate mid-air, not on impact.	
		They release a massive amount of energy in a few milliseconds, which heats up the surrounding air to millions of degree Celsius, leading to the formation of what are known as blast waves, an expanding bubble of extremely hot air. Most of the damage is caused by these blast waves.	
		A nuclear explosion also releases electromagnetic radiation of different kinds, and these too are extremely harmful, causing deaths and injuries, and often inducing genetic deformities that can even affect future generations.	

	The release of energy from a nuclear device is the result of completion of the chain reaction in the fissile material. The initiation of the chain reaction requires a very precise set of processes to be followed in very precise conditions. These precise conditions cannot be met accidentally, or when the fissile material is under some kind of stress, like when it is struck by a missile or a bomb.
--	--

That is why the Israeli, or the American, strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities don't result in a risk of a nuclear explosion. The sites, and the infrastructure they contained, could have been damaged, but there is no likelihood of a nuclear explosion.

The radiation leak risk

This is a more realistic possibility. These are risks of both chemical and radiological leaks.

Radioactive Substance storage	Nuclear facilities, <i>by their very nature</i>, store a lot of radioactive substances, <i>particularly uranium in different forms</i>, including in gaseous state like uranium hexafluoride (UF₆), and uranium dust. Radioactive substances are unstable and release radiation over time. Some of these radiations, like gamma rays, are extremely harmful. ○ They can penetrate the skin, damage cells and DNA, and can result in inter-generational health impacts.
Storing and	These radioactive substances are stored and handled in carefully designed containers in any nuclear facility.

handling	These facilities are constructed with several layers of safety mechanisms that try to minimise the risk of any leak of radioactive material in the outer environment or in sources of food and water.
Probability in Iran	An attack on such nuclear facilities, like the one carried out by Israel or the US in Iran, can damage or disrupt these mechanisms that ensure safe storage and handling.

Historical leaks

Ukraine (erstwhile USSR)	Chernobyl - 1986
Japan	Fukushima - 2011
Ukraine	Zaporizhzhia - recent

➤ Two of the biggest instances of radiological leaks are the accidents that happened in **Chernobyl in 1986** and **Fukushima in 2011**.

- ◆ In both these cases, radioactive substances escaped into the atmosphere as a result of accidents, posing a major threat to human beings and others.
- ◆ Both these sites had to be depopulated.

➤ A more recent threat was seen at the **Zaporizhzhia** nuclear power plant in Ukraine,

- ◆ which has often been caught in gunfight between Russian and Ukrainian forces.
- ◆ The Zaporizhzhia plant is the **largest in Europe**, and has come under direct attack several times during the conflict, with the buildings absorbing hours of shelling.
- ◆ Thankfully, it continues to operate safely.

25.06.2025

TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2025, NEW DELHI, LATE CITY, 20 PAGES

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AL UDEID BASE ATTACKED BY SHORT-RANGE,
medium-range ballistic missiles, no casualties: US

MATCHED NUMBER OF BOMBS DROPPED
by US, mighty and successful response: Iran

IRAN INFORMED U.S. VIA DIPLOMATIC
channels before missile attack, says report

War widens: Iran hits US base in Qatar

Iran – missed the line :-

- ◆ Iran would do better if blocked the Strait of Hormuz, instead of this callous bombing.
 - ▷ Provided oil disruption thereof would send the cold to the importing countries to be rippled in the larger consequences in terms of surging inflation.
- ◆ Be on practicability → at present the world order is socio-economic in nature → → throwing and dropping the bombs here and there without inflicting reasonable resource damages is of no use, rather it's a childish act in the domain of too complex international system.

Netanyahu's – chances of rejuvenation

- ◆ Brief:-
Aged 75 – hardcore Right wing politician – Likud party – presently continuing coalition government with the support of far more Rights – election @ 2026
- ◆ Hardliner in foreign affairs :-
 - 1) Palestine issue
 - 2) lobbying for the international community to take stronger action against Iran's alleged nuclear weapons program, which he described as the greatest threat to Israeli security and world peace.
- ◆ Domestically embroiled with:-
 - 1) Hamas' attack (Oct 7, 2023)
 - 2) A corruption trial
 - 3) A history of divisive rule

✧ Broken Netanyahu

Surprised Hamas attack that created a national emergency and caused his public support to plummet, Netanyahu seemed a shell shocked shadow of himself, looked diminished and downtrodden.

✧ Phoenix Netanyahu

Has the chance to salvage his sagging political fortunes and reshape a legacy like a phoenix, find one lifeline domestically as many Israelis are attuned to Netanyahu's campaign against Iran's nuclear program.

Criticism around:-

- ⇒ A **warmonger** responsible for tens of thousands of deaths in Gaza and elsewhere in the Middle East and still continuing bearing two years already.
- ⇒ **Internationally**, he faces an **arrest warrant** for charges of **war crimes in Gaza**.
- ⇒ **Widely reviled across the Arab world.**
 - ~ expressed pessimistic views regarding a series of popular uprisings and revolutions in the Arab world in 2011 that were collectively referred to as the Arab Spring, predicting that new Arab leaders would be more hostile to Israel than their predecessors.



Qatar condemns attack, Bahrain suspends flights in its airspace

India set to ramp up oil imports from Russia, Africa, US and Latin America

25.06.2025

TRUMP DECLARED CEASEFIRE

Fragile truce in West Asia: Iran and Israel trade strikes, charges

Fighting so long they don't know what the f*** they're doing: US President



WHITE HOUSE SAYS INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT WAS 'FLAT OUT WRONG'

US strikes failed to destroy Iran's nuclear sites: Intelligence report

Indira's Emergency : 1975



MARCH 1971: Indira is re-elected.

APRIL 1973: A N Ray is appointed CJI, superseding the three senior-most SC justices.



APRIL: Bihar student leaders invite JP to lead struggle against state govt.



JUNE 12, 1975: Allahabad High Court's Justice Jagmohanlal Sinha disbars Indira as MP; Janata Front wins Gujarat Assembly elections.



JUNE 25: JP calls Indira to step down; President signs Emergency Proclamation.



JUNE 30: MISA is amended: it is no longer necessary to disclose to an arrested person the reasons for their arrest.

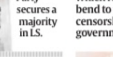


NOVEMBER 7: SC upholds Indira's election from Rae Bareilly LS seat.

JANUARY 1976: Parliament postpones LS elections for a year.



APRIL 19: Police open fire in Turkman Gate in Delhi as mobs resist Sanjay Gandhi's slum clearance and mass sterilisation drives.



OCTOBER-NOVEMBER: The 42nd Amendment is passed.

NOVEMBER 5: LS passes resolution extending its term by a year.



JANUARY 1, 1977: Biju Patnaik sends proposal to Indira for a settlement with Opposition.

MARCH 16-20: LS elections are held; Indira loses in Rae Bareilly; Janata Party secures a majority in LS.



↑ The blank editorial from the June 28, 1975, edition of *The Indian Express*, which refused to bend to pre-censorship by the government.

A BRIEF TIMELINE
Events leading up to the Emergency, and how it unfolded

JANUARY 1974: Students in Gujarat agitate to remove Congress Chief Minister Chimanbhai Patel; the govt is forced to resign in March.

MAY 8: George Fernandes calls a countrywide railway strike.

NOVEMBER: Indira-JP talks on removal of Bihar CM break down.

JUNE 24: SC grants only a partial stay in Indira's disbarment petition.

JUNE 26: JP, Morarji Desai, A B Vajpayee, Chandra Shekhar, others arrested; the press is censored around the country.

JULY 4: RSS, Anand Marg, Jamaat-e-Islami, and Naxalites banned.

AUGUST 5: India's election law is amended to make sure SC reinstates Indira as MP.

JANUARY 31: Karunanidhi's government in Tamil Nadu is dismissed.

MARCH: Janata govt in Gujarat is toppled; Charan Singh is freed.

APRIL 28: SC rules that the right to move courts on fundamental rights will be suspended during an Emergency.

JUNE 10: George Fernandes is arrested.

DECEMBER 4: Charan Singh, Biju Patnaik meet Indira's MoS, Home Affairs, to work out an agreement with the govt.

JANUARY 18: Indira announces LS elections in March; Morarji Desai is freed.

JANUARY 20: Janata Party formed.

MARCH 21: Emergency is lifted.

MARCH 24: Morarji becomes Prime Minister.

FROM COOMI KAPOOR'S 'THE EMERGENCY'

PROVISIONS THAT WERE WEAPONISED BY THE GOVT OF THE EMERGENCY

AS IT READ IN 1975, Article 352 of the Constitution allowed the President, on the advice of the Council of Ministers headed by the PM, to declare an Emergency if the security of India or any part of the country was threatened by "war or external aggression or internal disturbance".

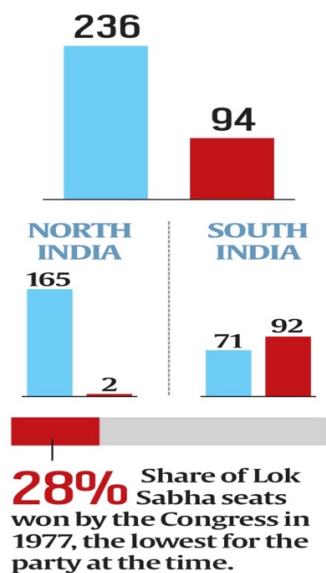
THE EMERGENCY OF 1975 was declared on the grounds of "internal disturbance". In its press note, the government said certain persons were inciting the police and armed forces to not discharge their duties — an apparent reference to JP's call to the police to not follow orders that were "immoral".

ARTICLE 358 FREES THE STATE of all limitations imposed by Article 19 ("Right to freedom") as soon as an Emergency is imposed. Article 359 empowers the President to suspend the right of people to move court for the enforcement of their rights during an Emergency.

How Indira used the Constitution to subvert democracy

CONGRESS, BEFORE & AFTER EMERGENCY

■ 1971 Lok Sabha election
■ 1977 Lok Sabha election



JANATA PARTY AND LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

1977 POLLS

SEATS CONTESTED	SEATS WON
405	295

VOTE SHARE



1980 POLLS

SEATS CONTESTED	SEATS WON
433	31

VOTE SHARE



Source: Election Commission

26.06.2025

**AN INDIAN RETURNS TO SPACE AFTER 41 YEARS:
'TIRANGA ON MY SHOULDER, ALL OF YOU WITH ME'**

'WHAT A RIDE'

Dragon with Shukla,
3 others to dock with
ISS at 4.30 pm today

Total crew members :- 4

- 1) India
- 2) Hungary
- 3) USA
- 4) Poland

reference :- Pg no 38-39 of this edition



A Falcon 9 rocket carrying the Axiom-4 crew lifts off from Kennedy Space Center Launch Complex 39A, on a mission to the International Space Station, in Cape Canaveral, Florida, on Wednesday. *Reuters*

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

SECOND VOYAGER

Shubhanshu Shukla's experience will provide critical inputs to the country's space missions, especially Gaganyaan **PAGE 10**

EXPLAINED

E A boost for private players

THE AXIOM-4 mission is part of NASA's ongoing efforts to encourage private players to undertake commercial missions to transport humans and cargo to the International Space Station and lower earth orbits in order to focus more on space science research and interplanetary explorations.

30.06.2025

SCO Reminder

India can't rely on multilateral forums to fight battle against terror. It needs to rethink its regional policy, to east and west

- India's refusal Last week to sign the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) joint statement has brought to the fore the big gap between the forum's declared commitment to combatting terrorism and its traditional blind eye to Pakistan-sponsored violent extremism in India. While the outrage in Delhi is understandable, *it is a timely reminder that India can't rely on multilateral forums to fight its battles against terrorism.* The 2025 SCO Defence Ministers' meeting in Qingdao, China omitted any reference to the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam from the proposed joint statement. *The Indian Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh, insisted that the joint statement explicitly mention the Pahalgam attack as an illustration of the ongoing threat of terrorism in the region. However, Pakistan apparently blocked the proposal. Compounding India's frustration was the inclusion in the joint statement of references to militant activities in Balochistan.* By including Balochistan in the statement while omitting the **Pahalgam attack**, the SCO ministerial meeting skewed the outcome in favour of Pakistan's narrative.
- An episode of this kind is quite common in multilateral gatherings, where each country has a veto over the wording of the final declarations. *But the SCO outcome is a timely reminder to Delhi not to romanticise the forum as an instrument to promote a multipolar world.* **The forum is dominated by China** and Beijing is unlikely to do anything other than protect the interests of **its all-weather ally, Pakistan**. Nor can India expect Russia to restore the balance in favour of India. As it gets drawn into a deeper strategic dependence on China, **Moscow has no incentive to stand up for Delhi against Beijing**. As China rises to be a great power, its protective cover over Pakistan has only become stronger. The recent trilateral meeting that Beijing convened with Pakistani and Bangladeshi officials in Kunming is a sign of things to come. Beijing has the resources and political will to expand its South Asian protectorate to include Bangladesh.

Key points of the above two bullets:-

- 2025 SCO Defence Ministers' meeting in China
- Rajnath Singh's refusal to sign the joint statement

⇒ Reason :- **Non-inclusion of Pahalgam terror attack**

- Pakistan got the mentioning of Militant activities in the Balochistan
- The forum is dominated by China
- Pakistan being the all-weather ally of China is having China's backing and support
- Moscow is getting drawn into a deeper strategic dependence on China, **Moscow has no incentive to stand up for Delhi against Beijing.**

India has to get rid of illusions

- To cope with the new dynamic, **Delhi should discard two illusions that have gripped its regional policy.**
- ⇒ **One**, that it can diplomatically **isolate** Islamabad in regional and global forums.
 - ⇒ **Second** is the notion that it can **unilaterally** set the terms of engagement with Bangladesh.

Read Pakistan and Bangladesh rightly with the changing dynamics

Pakistan	Bangladesh
To be sure, <i>Pakistan</i> has become far weaker than India on several counts, <i>especially</i> in the <i>economic domain</i>. • Yet Islamabad retains significant capacity to trip up India as its recent outreach to the US and • its deepening partnership with China have shown.	Since the change of government in Dhaka last August, • Bangladesh has shown that it <u>can cause acute discomfort to Delhi by aligning with forces hostile to India.</u>

Addressing the challenge

✂ If Delhi is locked in conflicts with its two large South Asian neighbours, **Beijing will take advantage**. Delhi can't simply demand that all its friends and partners automatically back India in its disputes with Islamabad and Dhaka.

◆ The answer to this regional challenge is twofold.

- ▷ For one, Delhi must stop deluding itself that it has the luxury of ignoring the current regimes in Islamabad and Dhaka.

To the west,	to the east,
it needs to revive channels of communication with Islamabad and Rawalpindi;	it needs to stop talking down to Dhaka.

- ▷ India's tricky situation with Pakistan and Bangladesh is also being turned into a dangerous strategic trap by the politics of religious polarisation within.

Conclusion

If Delhi does not reverse course, it may be setting itself up for failures in the neighbourhood.

Reference : SCO - Pg. No:- 71-72

E. The Yunus remark

INDIA'S MOVES to place port restrictions on movement of Bangladeshi goods, through April, May and June, have followed remarks by Dhaka's chief advisor Muhammad Yunus who, while visiting Beijing in March, sought "extension of the Chinese economy" and said North-East India was "landlocked" and Bangladesh was the "only guardian of the ocean for all this region".