

AS ITS CHANGING

Typical Viewpoint 2025



IMPULSE

1/1B, HAZRA ROAD, KOLKATA - 700026

CALL +919903582403

Contents	Page No.
September	September
1) India - China	1) 3
2) Fertilisers : India	2) 4
3) Cotton imports : India	3) 5-6
4) Tariff issue	4) 7
5) SCO Summit : Tinajin	5) 7-9
6) Cancer : India	6) 10-14
7) Jarosite : Kutch village : Mars mission	7) 15-18
8) Floods : Punjab	8) 19-21
9) Economy concept	9) 22
10) Earthquake : Afk	10) 23
11) Landslide : Sudan	11) 24
12) Mental health	12) 24
13) Tariff issue	13) 25
14) GST 2.0	14) 26-28
15) US visa : Foreign studies	15) 29
16) Umar Khalid : Bail : Delhi HC	16) 29-32
17) Spyware Graphite	17) 33-34
18) Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups	18) 35-40
19) Moon : Colour	19) 40-43
20) Japan : PM resigns	20) 43-45
21) SIR	21) 46
22) French Open	22) 46
23) Gen Z protest : Nepal	23) 47-51
24) SIR	24) 52-53
25) VPrz Election : Radhakrishnan	25) 53-54
26) Gen Z	26) 55
27) Fully literate state : H.P	27) 56-57
28) Israel attacks Qatar	28) 57-59
29) Charlie Kirk : assassination	29) 59-61
30) Brazil : Bolsonaro : convicted	30) 62-63
31) Gen Z	31) 64
32) J&K : PSA : MLA arrest	32) 64-65
33) Investment : Virtuous, Vicious	33) 66
34) Yazidis	34) 67-68
35) Israel - Palestine : two-state solution	35) 68-70
36) Tariff issue : India	36) 71-72
37) Scarborough Shoal : China vs Phillipines	37) 72-76
38) Waqf Act : amended : SC stay	38) 77-81
39) Army radars	39) 82
40) Delhi riot : chargesheet : conviction	40) 83-85
41) Gag order : Adani : defamation case : Delhi court	41) 85-88
42) France : anti-Austerity protest	42) 88
43) Fed policy vs Trump	43) 89-94
44) Kurmi agitation	44) 95-96
45) Tariff issue : H-1B visa fees : Trump	45) 97-99
46) Saudi-Pakistan defence pact	46) 99-100
47) GDP : Real vs Nominal	47) 101-105
48) GST 2.0	48) 106
49) Caste-based signs : UP govt : HC order	49) 107-110
50) Afk teen flew to Delhi in aircraft's wheel :survived	50) 110-112
51) Paracetamol : Autism : Trump's clamp down	51) 112-115
52) Ladakh : boiling	52) 115-120
53) Ragasa : Super Typhoon : Hong Kong	53) 121-125
54) Trump : UN	54) 125-126

55) Ladakh : boiling	55) 127-128
56) FDI : India : highest since May, 2021	56) 129-131
57) Israel on Gaza	57) 131
58) Ladakh : boiling	58) 132
59) Tariff issue	59) 132-133
60) MiG 21 : Goodbye	60) 134-135
61) T.N stampede : Vijay rally	61) 135
62) Asia Cup : India won	62) 136
63) Ladakh : boiling : NSA	63) 136-140
64) Loudspeaker norms : NPR, 2000	64) 140-144

01.09.2025

MODI: AFTER DISENGAGEMENT,
atmosphere of stability, peace in place

XI: DANCING OF DRAGON AND
elephant right choice for both

INDIA, CHINA TIES SHOULD NOT
be seen through 3rd country lens: MEA

'Partners, not rivals': India & China



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Chinese President Xi Jinping during the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit in Tianjin, China, on Sunday. PTI

Behind talks table, how border tensions cooled down over a year

BORDER MILESTONES

OCTOBER 2024: Border patrol deal restores pre-2020 rights in sensitive areas like Depsang Plains and Demchok.

JUNE 2025: At Defence Ministers' meeting, India seeks "structured road-map" for better border management.

AUGUST 2025: 24th round of boundary talks held with Chinese FM Wang Yi's visit; focus on easing tensions, boosting economic ties and addressing India's concerns over Chinese export curbs. Both pledge to maintain 'peace and tranquility' along the LAC.

The scramble for fertilisers

A good monsoon has meant farmers planting more *kharif* crops, pushing up fertiliser demand. This, and a supply shortfall due to lower domestic production and imports, has resulted in long queues at outlets

TABLE 1 SALE OF MAJOR FERTILISER PRODUCTS

	2023-24	2024-25	Apr-Jul 2024	Apr-Jul 2025	%Growth
Urea	357.80	387.74	108.86	124.28	14.2
DAP	108.12	92.81	29.44	25.68	-12.8
NPKS	110.73	142.14	39.34	50.03	27.2
SSP	45.44	49.28	15.55	20.01	28.7
MOP	16.45	22.02	4.94	7.05	42.8

Source: The Fertiliser Association of India.



A farmer sprays pesticides on his crops at Yamuna floodplains, New Delhi. Archive

TABLE 2(A) IMPORT OF UREA

	2023-24	2024-25	Apr-Jun 2024	Apr-Jun 2025
China	21.48	1.04	0	0.02
Oman	19.26	29.56	6.28	2.81
Russia	15.93	9.24	3.41	1.91
Qatar	4.18	9.79	0.97	1.30
UAE	7.48	5.01	0.44	0.31
S Arabia	3.41	5.98	0.29	0.60
TOTAL*	80.06	69.10	12.10	7.75

TABLE 2(B) IMPORT OF DAP

	2023-24	2024-25	Apr-Jun 2024	Apr-Jun 2025
China	22.87	8.43	2.11	0
S Arabia	15.86	18.96	5.34	5.50
Morocco	10.49	10.26	1.65	1.68
Russia	3.41	2.69	0.33	0.66
Jordan	1.74	2.38	0.91	0.56
TOTAL*	55.96	45.60	11.78	9.41

Figures in Lakh tonnes *Includes other countries, Source: Department of Commerce.

India has shown flexibility on cotton imports. It's for US to reciprocate

There's a loser in all this, though — the Indian cotton farmer

➤ India has allowed **cotton imports at zero duty till December 31, 2025.**

- The “temporary” exemption from the **earlier chargeable 11% tariff** comes amid **domestic production** of the fibre *falling* to an estimated 311.4 lakh bales (lb) in 2024-25 (October-September), *from* 336.5 lb in the previous marketing year and the **all-time-high** of 398 lb of **2013-14**.
 - But it's not just lower output — compounded by a 2.6% dip in the area sown this kharif season — that may have prompted the Narendra Modi government's decision.
 - No less significant is the signal it sends out to the United States that has seen the value of its cotton exports slide from \$8.82 billion in 2022 to \$4.96 billion in 2024, largely because of reduced purchases by China (from \$2.79 billion to \$1.47 billion). With China further slashing imports to a mere \$150.4 million in January-June 2025, it means a huge loss of market.
- No wonder the US wants other countries to buy more. **Vietnam, Pakistan, Turkey** and **India** have all done that. India alone has imported \$181.5 million worth of US cotton in January-June, as against \$86.9 million during the first half of 2024.
- The duty removal is likely to give an added boost to that.
 - The US Department of Agriculture has, indeed, welcomed the move.
 - It sees this as not only increasing US cotton bookings, but also helping Indian textile exporters access cheaper and contamination-free fibre.
 - Nearly 95 per cent of imported US cotton, the agency claims, is processed and re-exported as yarn, fabric and apparel.

- But it is the optics, more than anything else, in the context of a low moment for Delhi-Washington ties, that’s encouraging. Not reviving the stalled trade talks is in neither side’s interest.
- By making cotton imports duty-free, augmenting availability of fibre for its textile industry, India has shown willingness and flexibility to negotiate. It’s for the US now to reciprocate, by scrapping the unreasonable and irrational 25 per cent Russian oil import “penalty” on India.

➤ There’s a loser in all this, though.

- The Indian cotton farmer has been deprived of any new cropping technology after genetically modified Bt hybrids, which drove up average lint yields from 302 kg to 566 kg per hectare between 2002-03 and 2013-14.
 - Since then, yields have dropped to sub-450 kg levels, even as cotton has become susceptible to so-called secondary pests such as **pink bollworm** and **whitefly** in addition to **boll rot fungal pathogens**.
 - The results of non-investment in breeding research and development are evident from record imports of 39 lb projected for 2024-25.
 - ◆ This double-whammy situation, of technology denial alongside import inundation, has been witnessed even in mustard and soyabean. The Indian farmer can — and should be enabled to — compete, but not with hands tied.
-

02.09.2025

XI CALLS FOR 'GLOBAL GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE', TARGETS 'HEGEMONISM, POWER POLITICS'

Tianjin troika, Hello Trump

Double standards on terror unacceptable... sovereignty, territorial integrity are key: PM

The shift: SCO skips Pahalgam 2 months ago, now 'strongly condemns'

Topic : Mains (GS)

SCO summit: India should not overestimate possibilities with China and underestimate those with US

India-China-Russia warmth masks gaps and contradictions while Delhi-Washington chill overshadows reality of shared interests.

✧ India's delicate diplomatic manoeuvre to accelerate the normalisation of relations with China — under the shadow of a trade crisis with the US — should not be misinterpreted at home and misunderstood abroad as a rupture in India's ties with America.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's hour-long meeting with Chinese leader Xi Jinping in Tianjin on the margins of the

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit did not, and it could not have, overcome the structural challenges that have hobbled bilateral ties between the two Asian giants for seven decades.

- Nor do the current contretemps with the Trump Administration over Russian oil purchases imply a breakdown in the strategic partnership with the US that Delhi and Washington have painstakingly built over the last three decades.
- ✧ It is unfortunate that the rhetoric surrounding India's engagement with China — “partners not rivals”, Asian solidarity, Global South, strategic autonomy — continues to mask the persistent gap between Delhi's aspiration for good relations with Beijing and the historic inability to achieve it.
 - Similarly, the noisy public argumentation between Delhi and Washington often overshadows the reality of shared interests with America.
 - In a persistent paradox, Delhi's foreign policy elite has tended to overestimate the possibilities with China and underestimate those with the US.
 - The breathless TV coverage in India of Modi's meeting with Xi suggests that not much has changed.
 - ▷ Living next to China, India needs not only peaceful coexistence but also good neighbourly relations.
 - ▷ But the effort to build such a relationship in the 1950s collapsed in the war of 1962.
 - ▷ A renewed attempt in the late 1980s unravelled over the last decade.
 - ▷ Military clashes in 2013, 2014, 2017, and 2020 exposed China's growing assertiveness on the disputed border.
 - ▷ A recurring annual trade deficit of around \$100 billion underscores the massive imbalance in China's favour.
 - ▷ Beijing's all-weather partnership with Pakistan — most recently underlined by its military assistance to Rawalpindi in May — has been a constant feature of India's strategic environment for six decades.

- None of these issues has or will melt away because Modi had a “good meeting” with Xi.
 - ▷ The PM is right to seek a peaceful border, an early resolution of the boundary dispute, and a more balanced trade relationship. But these will take time.
 - ▷ Meanwhile, Delhi made it clear in Modi’s statement to the SCO that India would not dilute its longstanding positions to placate Xi:
 - It continues to oppose China’s Belt and Road Initiative,
 - maintains reservations about the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, and
 - rejects Beijing’s reluctance to confront Pakistan’s sponsorship of cross-border terrorism.
 - ✧ Unlike China, the US is not sitting on Indian territory.
 - It is also the largest destination for Indian exports and a natural partner in science and technology.
 - India cannot realise its ambition of a multipolar Asia without American cooperation; equally, Washington cannot build a stable Asian and global order without India.
 - Yet the focus today is on trade disputes.
 - ▷ Here, too, the situation is different from China: India runs a surplus of \$40 billion in goods trade with the US. This is an eminently negotiable issue.
 - ▷ But the Trump Administration’s public pressure campaign — especially on Delhi’s Russian oil purchases — has made it difficult to pursue quiet, constructive talks.
 - ◆ Much as India has remained open to patient negotiation with China on far tougher issues, Delhi has done well to keep the door open for dialogue with Washington. Watch this space.
-

What India's cancer map shows

A recent study has identified key trends in the incidence of cancer in India. These include a higher incidence of the malady among women, rise in oral cancer cases, and high disease burden in the Northeast

HIGHEST AVERAGE ANNUAL INCIDENCE

MEN		WOMEN	
Registry	Incidence rate*	Registry	Incidence rate*
Aizawl	260	Aizawl	215
Khasi Hills	240	Mizoram	180
Papum Pare	215	Kamrup Urban	175
Kamrup Urban	215	Papum Pare	160
Mizoram	200	Hyderabad	155

**Per 100,000 population (approx)*

- Estimated 15.6 lakh cases, 8.74 lakh deaths in 2024
- Lifetime risk of cancer 11%
- Breast cancer highest in southern metro cities

COMMON CANCER SITES

Incidence rate per 1,00,000 population

BREAST

Hyderabad	54.0
Bangalore	46.7
Chennai	45.4
GBN*	44.1
Alappuzha	42.2

CERVICAL

Aizawl	27.1
Mizoram	22.6
Pampure	21.3
Pasighat	18.1
Tamil Nadu	16.6

LUNG CANCER (Female)

Aizawl	33.7
Mizoram	24.8
Imphal West	17.0
Manipur	11.8
Pasighat	9.6

LUNG CANCER (Male)

Srinagar	39.5
Aizawl	35.9
Kannur	35.4
Malabar	32.5
Mizoram	27.8

ORAL CANCER (Female)

East Khasi Hills	13.6
Cachar	13.0
Meghalaya	12.7
Kamrup Urban	10.5
Bhopal	10.3

ORAL CANCER (Male)

Ahmedabad Urban	33.6
Bhopal	30.4
East Khasi Hills	27.0
Cachar	25.9
Kamrup Urban	24.9

PROSTATE CANCER

Srinagar	12.7
Delhi	12.7
GBN*	11.7
Thiruvananthapuram	11.1
Alappuzha	10.8

*Gautam Buddha Nagar

Source: National Cancer Registry Programme Investigator Group, 'Cancer Incidence and Mortality Across 43 Cancer Registries in India', Jama Network Open, August 20; Data from 2015-19; 2020 data was not considered because all health systems, including registries, were affected due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mapping CANCER: First step towards making data on disease more robust

They could enable more effective and targeted interventions against the disease

✧ According to Global Cancer Care Observatory Data,

- **India has the 3rd -highest number of cases of the disease.**

- The country's ratio of *cancer mortalities to malignancy incidences* was **64.47%** in 2022, **the highest among the top 10 countries** *in terms of the burden of the dreaded disease.*

➤ Cancer has been a part of the country's national healthcare programmes *for at least five decades.*

➤ The Indian Council of Medical Research's (**ICMR**)

Cancer Registry programme → *began in the early 1980s.*

➤ Yet, cancer care in India remains a complex and evolving landscape.

➤ *Targeted interventions have often been hobbled by the lack of a comprehensive cancer map.*

▷ An analysis of 43 cancer registries across the country by national investigators — they comprise researchers from premier medical institutions — could plug some of the gap.

– It provides crucial data on the types of cancer in the country and the vulnerabilities of different sections of people, gender-wise and regionally.

✧ **Women** accounted for a **higher proportion of the cases (51%)** in the registries.

This goes against the global trend.

The discrepancy should alert policymakers to a challenge long underlined by cancer specialists.

Cancer detection among woman is early, so the number of cases is high but the fatality is less than the men.

Women	Men
Breast and cervical cancers, which together account for more than 40% of cases among women, are easier to detect and have <u>better treatment outcomes</u> — <u>that's why cancer cases among women are likely to be reported more</u>, and they have a lower proportion of deaths due to the disease.	In contrast, oral, lung, and gastric cancer are detected at a relatively later stage in the country. Oncologists believe that a significant number of such cases still fall off the radar.

- ◆ The study of cancer registries has important clues for the country's cancer screening programmes. For instance,

Highest Burden	it flags the high burden of the disease, especially oral cancer, in several parts of the country's North-east .
Highest Lifetime Risk	was found to be in Mizoram — 21% for men and nearly 19% for women, far higher than the national rate of 11%.
National rate :- 11%	

- Such disaggregated data could help policymakers frame region-specific awareness initiatives and detection programmes — targeting oral cancer in parts of the Northeast and Ahmedabad and Bhopal, for instance.

✧ The ICMR registries capture

less than 20 % of the country's population.

- Unlike in the case of infectious diseases — tuberculosis, for example — healthcare providers are not legally mandated to provide cancer-related data to the government.

Mandated Cancer data providing	
YES	NO
17 states do have rules that require hospitals and doctors to provide such information.	But some of the more populous states, including Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Bihar, do not make such demands of their healthcare sector.

Way ahead:

- ✧ The latest cancer registry study should spur the Centre and state governments to make data more robust.
 - This could, in turn, foster
 - better understanding of common preventable causes,
 - improve the utilisation of resources and
 - make government programmes more effective,ultimately improving the cancer survival rate in the country.
-

Why a remote **Kutch village** could end up as a test bed for **Mars mission**

Researchers confirm the presence of **jarosite**,
a yellow, iron-rich sulphate mineral,
similar to what was discovered on Mars a couple of
decades ago

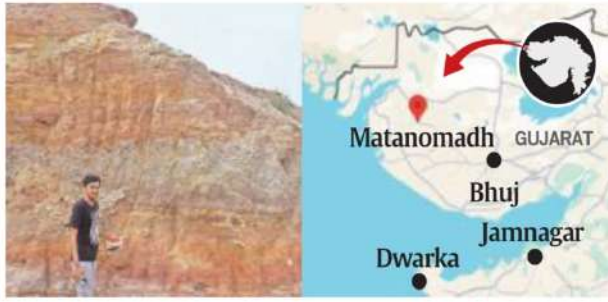
❑ **Matanomadh :**

- a thinly populated village nearly 100 km west of Bhuj town in Gujarat's Kutch district.
- Surrounded by thorny shrubs, the terrain is harsh and unforgiving, unfit for cultivation or large human settlements.
- Yet, this village might end up as a potential test bed for the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) ahead of its **Mangalyaan-2 mission to Mars.**

❑ **A potential ground for experiment :**

- The dating of this mineral, **found in a few rock structures** in Matanomadh, suggests that there was a similar geological occurrence on both the planets millions of years ago.
 - The conditions in the Kutch village **resembled the environmental and chemical conditions thought to exist on Mars**, and could offer an excellent test bed for the study of the red planet's surface, mineralogy and biochemistry.
 - The Matanomadh site could thus **offer field-analogue missions for Mars**, where **rover motion, instrument testing, drilling, and geochemistry experiments** could be performed.

MINERAL MAY HOLD CLUE



■ According to researchers, jarosite discovered in the village in 2016 is around 55 million years old

■ This suggests a similar geological occurrence on both Earth and Mars millions of years ago

□ Matanomadh : not the only site



Kutch Village (Gujrat)	Ladakh
While the Kutch village is expected to offer insights into the geology and mineral composition of Mars,	the Ladakh site could offer a test bed for experiments on the environmental conditions of Mars.

Around the same time, its presence was confirmed along **Kerala's Varkala cliffs**.

Matanomadh better suited for Martian studies is its relative remoteness.

In contrast, the site in Kerala, near the **Varkala beach**, is among the state's most visited tourist

ISRO has been trying to simulate the living conditions and environment of Mars and Moon in a desolate high-altitude village in Ladakh through its

HOPE

(Himalayan Outpost for Planetary Exploration) mission.

❑ Jarosite deposits : Global

- Mexico,
- Canada,
- Japan,
- Spain, and
- Utah and California in the US.

✍ Mars : Presence of Water

↳ On Earth,

jarosite is formed
||
when some minerals rich in
oxygen,
iron,
sulphur and
potassium
||
react in the presence of water.

- The discovery of jarosite on Mars was one of the strongest pieces of evidence of the presence of water on the planet at some point of time.

What is jarosite?

It is a yellow-coloured iron-rich sulphate mineral, similar to those discovered on Mars in 2004, during NASA's Opportunity mission to Mars.

Traces of jarosite were first detected at the Meridiani Planum landing site on Mars. The mineral was later detected at several other places on the red planet.

On Earth, it is formed when some minerals containing oxygen, iron, sulphur and potassium interact in the right quantities in the presence of water.

Why is its discovery important?

Scientists can get a feel of what the Mars surface could be like, and what to expect on its surface. It can offer clues to evolution of chemicals and minerals on the red planet.

Scientists can use the site to carry out mineralogy and biochemistry experiments similar to those planned for Mars.



Jarosite is a yellow-coloured iron-rich sulphate mineral, similar to those discovered on Mars a couple of decades ago.

Image: Special Arrangement

Topic : Mains (GS)

Punjab needs immediate relief and rehabilitation. But floods also pose a bigger challenge

Punjab's farmers, the backbone of the nation's food security, deserve more than token sympathy

Situational glimpse:

- Punjab is facing one of its worst floods in decades, with over three lakh acres under water, 29 lives lost, dams flowing above the danger mark, and rains showing no signs of abating.
- Until late August, the state was basking in a bountiful monsoon, buoyed by the promise of a rich paddy harvest.
 - Then, almost overnight, came the deluge. **The border belt of Majha, adjoining Pakistan, has been the worst hit.**
 - **The swollen Ravi**, which flows from the *Himalaya* into *Punjab* before winding its way into *Pakistan*, has ravaged hundreds of villages in the border districts.
 - ▷ Such was the ferocity of the river that two floodgates of the Madhopur barrage built in the 19th century gave way, taking one life, with 40 others barely escaping death.
 - **Sutlej, Beas and Ghaggar** too are in spate; dams receiving water from Himachal Pradesh have been overflowing.
 - Last week, the **Ranjit Sagar and Pong dams** breached the danger level. Now, the **Bhakra dam** stands perilously close to spilling over.

Is this flood : Natural or man made?

- The question is: Could this tragedy have been averted, especially when Punjab had faced floods in 2019 and 2023 as well?
 - ↳ **Delayed preparedness meeting:**
 - The annual flood-preparedness meeting, **usually held in February**, was *delayed to June this year*.

- ▷ In February, the ruling Aam Aadmi Party seemed much too preoccupied with the Delhi Assembly elections; few MLAs were even in the state.
 - ▷ June brought the Ludhiana bypolls.
- Spar between BBMB and Haryana Govt:
 - Much of May was spent sparring with the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) and the Haryana government over releasing excess water to the neighbouring state.
- Accusation against BBMB:
 - Punjab's irrigation minister has been pointing accusing fingers at the BBMB for failing to release water earlier.
- Expert's view:
 - Experts point to chronic inefficiencies of the floods and irrigation department.

Addressing solutions :

- For now, the **immediate priority is relief and rehabilitation**.
 - Civil society has stepped in, sending food and medicines.
- But a bigger challenge looms:
Of compensation for farmers and the rebuilding of lives.
- Chief Minister Bhagwant Maan has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, asking for the release of Rs 60,000 crore, calling it “Punjab’s funds withheld by the Centre” in this hour of crisis.
 - Silence from the top brass in Delhi has only deepened resentments of those who point out that there hasn't been a message of solidarity from the highest echelons.
 - A silver lining is villagers sending aid and Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini promising support from neighbouring Haryana.

✍ It is high time the Union government, too, reaches out. **Punjab's farmers, the backbone of the nation's food security, deserve more than token sympathy when fields are under water and futures are on the verge of being washed away.**

Prlm's Demand :

Why does Punjab keep flooding?

Mix of facts:

1) Geographical features

- A low-lying floodplains → 3 major rivers :- **Sutlej, Beas, Ravi**
- Widespread heavy rainfall in catchment areas viz. Himachal Pradesh and J&K.
- Local heavy rains, especially in **Malwa region** has augmented the urban waterlogging
- Massive river inflow

2) Excessive rainfall

3) Dam management issues

- Dams (Bhakra, Pong, Thein) are not built for flood control
- Sudden large scale releases trigger downstream flooding
 - ▷ Releases were required to prevent dam failure, but that worsened the flood.

4) Weak infrastructure

5) Excessive sand mining weakens riverbanks and embankments

- Embankments breach easily under high pressure, resulted in floodwater spread.
 - ▷ Cities like Ludhiana and Jalandhar suffer severe urban waterlogging

6) Governance mismanagement and communication gap

- Power and irrigation has been priorities over flood control
- Lack of real-time coordination between the different concerned agencies.
- Late warning for evacuation
- Block of natural drainage due to unplanned urban development

India's 10-yr benchmark bond yield rising despite RBI's rate cuts: Here's why

'RBI'S HAWKISH STANCE LEADS TO SPIKE'



The central bank has slashed the repo rate by 100 bps so far this year. *File*

RBI's HAWKISH stance on inflation and concerns over higher govt borrowing due to proposed tax reforms are responsible for rise in yields

BOND YIELDS typically fall when interest rates are cut, but the market's reaction has been different this time. When bond yields rise, it usually indicates falling bond prices, reflecting selling pressure

AREA OF QUAKE AFFECTED BY HEAVY RAIN, MAKING RESCUE HARDER

Afghanistan quake kills 812, injures 2,800

EASTERN PROVINCES AFFECTED



EXPLAINED

E

Funding cuts obstruct crisis response

THE SHRINKING of funding for Afghanistan, led by US aid cuts, was hampering the disaster response on Monday. The country has been badly affected since US President Donald Trump in January began funding cuts to its humanitarian arm USAID. But even before that, funding was shrinking due to competing emergencies in other regions, as well as frustration from donor governments over the Taliban's policies towards women, especially restrictions on the work of Afghan female NGO staff. Aid has shrunk to \$767 million this year, down from \$3.8 billion in 2022.

03.09.2025

ROUGH TERRAIN HAMPERS RESCUE AND RELIEF EFFORTS

Earthquake shakes devastated Afghan region again as death toll tops 1,400

Sudan landslide kills more than 1,000 people, wipes out entire village in Darfur



Over one billion people living with mental health conditions globally: WHO

CAUSE FOR CONCERN

- In 2021, 14% of the global population was estimated to be living with a mental disorder, as per the report
- Anxiety and depressive disorders together account for more than two-thirds of all mental conditions
- Between 2011 and 2021, the number of people with mental disorders increased faster than the global population



- Younger adults (20–29 yrs) have seen the largest increase (1.8%) in prevalence since 2011
- Males more commonly have attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, autism spectrum, idiopathic disorder of intellectual development
- Females more often experience anxiety, depressive, eating disorders
- In 2021, 57 million people had dementia

04.09.2025

FLANKED BY PUTIN AND KIM, CHINESE PRESIDENT SAYS COUNTRY FEARS NO TYRANNY

Xi parades firepower, says world faces peace or war; Trump sees a conspiracy

EXPLAINED

E

Events highlight China's regional aspirations

CHINA IS beset with serious domestic problems — stark economic and gender inequalities, to name two — and a tense standoff with Taiwan, the self-governing island that Beijing claims as its own. But Xi has tried to position China as a leader of countries that feel disadvantaged by the post-World War II order. Jeff Kingston, a professor of Asian studies at Temple University Japan, told AP that the Washington consensus has unraveled, and Xi is rallying support for an alternative. But some analysts also caution against reading too much into Russia-China-North Korea ties. China remains deeply wary of growing North Korean nuclear power, and has long sought to temper its support — even agreeing at times to sanctions — to try to influence Pyongyang's pursuit of weapons.

COUNCIL CHAIRED BY SITHARAMAN APPROVES NEXT-GEN REFORMS

GST 2.0 unveiled: Two-slab structure cleared, new rates will come into effect September 22

GST reform lightens load on common man

The GST Council on Wednesday approved a two-tier rate structure of 5 and 18 per cent, which will be implemented from September 22. The marathon 56th meeting of the GST Council lasted for 10.5 hours, in which the Centre and states thrashed out key tax proposals.

Here are some of the key items for which GST rates were revised:

DAILY ESSENTIALS	FROM	TO
Hair Oil, Shampoo, Toothpaste, Toilet Soap Bar, Tooth Brushes, Shaving Cream	18%	5%
Butter, Ghee, Cheese & Dairy Spreads	12%	5%
Pre-packaged Namkeens, Bhujia & Mixtures	12%	5%
Utensils	12%	5%
Feeding Bottles, Napkins for Babies & Clinical Diapers	12%	5%
Sewing Machines & Parts	12%	5%

HEALTHCARE SECTOR	FROM	TO
Individual Health & Life Insurance	18%	Nil
Thermometer	18%	5%
Medical Grade Oxygen	12%	5%
All Diagnostic Kits & Reagents	12%	5%
Glucometer & Test Strips	12%	5%
Corrective Spectacles	12%	5%

EDUCATION	FROM	TO
Maps, Charts & Globes	12%	Nil
Pencils, Sharpeners, Crayons & Pastels	12%	Nil
Exercise Books & Notebooks	12%	Nil
Eraser	5%	Nil

AUTOMOBILES	FROM	TO
Petrol & Petrol Hybrid, LPG, CNG Cars (not exceeding 1200 cc & 4000mm)	28%	18%
Diesel & Diesel Hybrid Cars (not exceeding 1500 cc & 4000mm)	28%	18%
3 Wheeled Vehicles	28%	18%
Motor Cycles (350 cc & below)	28%	18%
Motor Vehicles for transport of goods	28%	18%

FARMERS & AGRICULTURE	FROM	TO
Tractor Tyres & Parts	18%	5%
Tractors	12%	5%
Specified Bio-Pesticides, Micro-Nutrients	12%	5%
Drip Irrigation System & Sprinklers	12%	5%
Agricultural, Horticultural or Forestry Machines for Soil Preparation, Cultivation, Harvesting & Threshing	12%	5%

ELECTRONIC APPLIANCES	FROM	TO
Air Conditioners	28%	18%
Television (above 32") (including LED & LCD TVs)	28%	18%
Monitors & Projectors	28%	18%
Dish Washing Machines	28%	18%

Source: CRIC

Topic : GS (Mains)

Prlm: Highlighted only

Welcome GST 2.0

GST Council pushing ahead with rate rationalisation will ease taxpayer burden and have revenue implications for Centre and states

❑ Just a few weeks after Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke about ushering in the next generation of GST reforms in his Independence-Day speech at the Red Fort, the GST Council, in its 56th meeting, has moved towards restructuring the indirect tax regime. The current structure, characterised by a multiplicity of rates, will give way to a broad **two-slab structure of 5% and 18%**, and a special de-merit rate of **40% for sin and luxury goods**.

❑ Reducing the number of slabs is a welcome step as it will help

- **reduce the complexity of the tax system,**
- **shrink spaces for discretion and**
- **bring down classification issues.**

❑ Lowering the tax rates will make goods and services more affordable, providing a fillip to demand.

This boost to consumption comes at a time of acute uncertainty on the external front with the imposition of 50 per cent tariffs by US President Donald Trump.

Concerns over the possibility of household consumption being deferred

until clarity over the new tax rates emerges have been addressed with the Council recommending that the new rates will be effective from September 22. **This reduction in the indirect tax rates follows cuts in personal income taxes announced in the Union Budget 2025-26.**

Lowering tax rate effect

Good and services more affordable

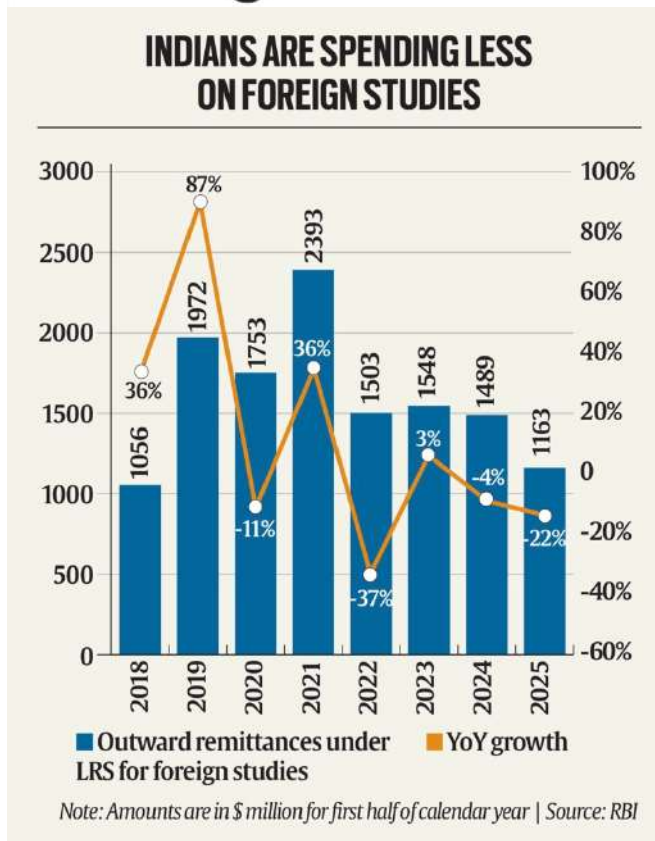
Fillip to demand

Boost consumption

- ❑ The GST rates have been slashed across a plethora of goods and services. For instance, items of daily consumption such as hair oil, shampoo, toothpaste etc will now be taxed at 5 per cent, down from 18 per cent. White goods such as air conditioners and television sets will also be taxed at 18 per cent, down from 28 per cent. The tax incidence has also been lowered for cars and two-wheelers (up to 350 cc engine). The rate rationalisation exercise has also addressed some of the more contentious items such as insurance and cement — while cement will now be taxed at 18 per cent, down from 28 per cent, life and health insurance policies are now exempt. Steps have been taken to correct the inverted duty structure in segments such as manmade textiles and fertilisers. Alongside, the Council has also taken steps to ease the compliance burden, such as simplifying the registration scheme for small firms.
 - ❑ Bringing down the tax rates will lower the weighted averaged GST rate. The tax rate had already fallen to 11.6 per cent by September 2019, from 14.4 per cent in 2017 — well below the 15.3 per cent revenue neutral rate recommended by the Subramanian committee. Thus, the revenue stream for both the Centre and states will be impacted, though there are expectations of the rate rationalisation exercise translating to higher consumption and improved compliance. As reported in this paper, the government has estimated the net revenue implication to be around Rs 48,000 crore (on the base of 2023-24). Greater clarity will emerge in the coming months.
-

OUTWARD REMITTANCES IN JAN-JUN 2025 UNDER THE LRS DOWN 22% FROM LAST YEAR

Amid US visa troubles, Indians' spending on foreign studies hits seven-year low



Denying bail to Umar Khalid and others, **Delhi HC** deviates from SC's bail jurisprudence

The SC has previously held that the **state could not oppose bail on the grounds of a crime's seriousness** if it could not guarantee a **speedy trial, 'irrespective of the nature of the crime'**

Backdrop:

❑ The **foundational principle of criminal law** is the **presumption of innocence** — **innocent until proven guilty**.

- But what happens when the very process designed to ascertain guilt becomes the punishment itself? *This paradox is starkly*

illustrated in the recent Delhi High Court verdict concerning Umar Khalid and other accused in the Delhi riots cases.

Insights and Criticism:

❑ On September 2, the High Court dismissed their appeals and denied them bail in a 133-page judgment.

➤ The Court firmly justified its position by stating that the **right to protest is not “absolute” and must operate within a reasonable framework.**

- While this legal principle is debatable, **a more profound injustice lies in the procedural aftermath.**
- The court denied bail to all the accused, who have now spent nearly five years in prison without the commencement of a trial.

❑ Adding insult to injury, the High Court rationalised the glacial pace of the judicial process by remarking that “**the pace of the trial will progress naturally** and **a hurried trial would be detrimental to the rights of both the parties.**”

➤ What is this “natural pace” that comfortably accommodates a five-year pre-trial incarceration?

- This stands in contrast to other cases where convicted criminals, including those found guilty of heinous crimes like rape, are routinely granted parole.
- Does a conviction now afford more liberty than being an under-trial?

❑ In their judgment, Justice Shailender Kaur and Justice Navin Chawla rejected the principle that prolonged imprisonment without trial is a ground for bail.

➤ For all the accused, the court detailed their specific, active roles in the “conspiracy”.

- This prima facie evidence, it concluded, creates an “arduous task” to balance individual liberty against the state’s duty to protect the integrity of the nation.

❑ In Paragraph 133, the High Court refers to the speeches given by Umar Khalid in Amravati, calling for protests against the Citizenship Amendment Bill.

- It is strange that the High Court was convinced by the arguments pressed by the prosecution that giving such speeches caused violent riots and garnered international attention.

“Similarly, Appellant Umar Khalid also delivered speeches in Amravati on 17.02.2020, urging protests on 24.02.2020, which coincided with the State visit of the President of the USA, which is alleged by the prosecution to have deliberately been timed to cause violent riots on 23/24.02.2020 to garner international attention. The above role, as assigned by the prosecution to the Appellants, cannot be lightly brushed aside,” the order noted.

Supreme Court’s precedents:

❑ The Supreme Court, in the last few years, has restructured bail jurisprudence in respect to special statutes like UAPA, POCA, PMLA, etc.

- Under the Constitution, there’s a right to a speedy trial.

- There have been enough cases in which the Supreme Court has reiterated that even in special statutes, bail has to be the rule, not the exception.

❑ For instance, in *Javed Gulam Nabi Shaikh vs State of Maharashtra* (2024), the SC held that the state could not oppose bail on the grounds of a crime’s seriousness if it could not guarantee a speedy trial, “irrespective of the nature of the crime”.

- This principle was expanded in *Sheikh Javed Iqbal vs State of Uttar Pradesh* (2024), where it was stated that restrictive statutory provisions could not override the power of

constitutional courts to **grant bail when Article 21 was infringed.**

➤ In *Jalaluddin Khan vs Union of India* (2024), it was held that **when a case for bail is made out**, courts must grant it without hesitation.

➤ The Court emphasised that while the prosecution's allegations may be serious, the **judicial duty** is to consider bail in **strict accordance with the law.**

Delhi HC : Deviated from Natural Justice @ Speedy Trial:

❑ However, the Delhi High Court's order deviates from this line with respect to a speedy trial.

➤ That **prolonged incarceration itself constitutes a punishment** should have been a paramount consideration, given that the accused had already spent nearly five years in prison without a trial.

Way Forward:

- The matter will now be appealed before the Supreme Court, which will have the opportunity to rectify this judicial oversight.
 - It is imperative that the apex court, as the guardian of constitutional rights and precedent, reaffirms the core tenets of its own jurisprudence.
 - Its intervention is crucial to uphold the sanctity of the right to a speedy trial and prevent the erosion of a fundamental pillar of India's criminal justice system.
-

US immigration agency ICE gets access to spyware 'graphite': What is it?

The move will give the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) access to the company's powerful hacking software — known as Graphite — which can hack mobile phones and encrypted messaging applications.

In News

- ✓ The **Trump administration has unfrozen** a stalled Biden-era contract with **Paragon Solutions**, a **spyware company** founded in **Israel**, whose products have been allegedly used to facilitate the **surveillance of activists and journalists in Europe.**
- ✓ The move will give the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) access to the company's **powerful hacking software** — known as Graphite — **which can hack mobile phones and encrypted messaging applications.**

The spyware

- Graphite is designed to gain remote access to a mobile phone and essentially take control of it.

Feature
<i>access mobile user's photos,</i>
<i>read their messages,</i>
<i>track their whereabouts</i>
<i>monitor encrypted messages sent on platforms such as WhatsApp and Signal.</i>
<i>enables the phone to be used as a listening device by manipulating its recorder</i>

- The company behind Graphite is **Paragon Solutions**, which was co-founded by former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak.

- In late 2024, AE Industrial Partners, a Florida-based investment group, acquired the company for \$900 million, according to a report by Bloomberg.
 - ▷ AE also owns cyber-intelligence company REDLattice, which has several former CIA officials on its management board.

Allegations of hacking

❑ Paragon's claiming :

Paragon Solutions claims

- ▷ it sells its products to only governments and law enforcement agencies for the purposes of fighting serious crime.
- ▷ also claims that it has a zero-tolerance policy for governments that use the technology to target members of civil society.

❑ Meta's accusation @ Italy

However, Paragon Solutions **was forced to terminate its contract with Italy** this February after Meta Platforms, which owns WhatsApp, said that

- ▷ the company's spyware was used to **target 90 people in two dozen countries**, *including journalists and several pro-immigration activists*, in 2024.

Concern

- ✓ Experts worry that the spying tool would help ICE expand its crackdown on **undocumented immigrants**.
 - The agency has repeatedly been accused by civil and human rights groups of violating people's due process rights.
 - "Spyware like Paragon's Graphite poses a **profound threat to free speech and privacy**... The quiet lifting of the stop work order also raises the troubling prospect that parts of the executive branch are acting without adherence to the government's own vetting requirements."

05.09.2025

Who are **PVTGs
(particularly vulnerable tribal groups),
which the govt wants to be counted separately in
the upcoming Census?**

This category was created based on the recommendations of the **Dhebar Commission (1960-61)** — led by former Member of Parliament U N Dhebar — which had **investigated the various issues faced by STs, and in consultation with state governments.**

Backdrop

- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) wrote to the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India (RGI) last month, requesting them to consider enumerating particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs) separately in the upcoming Census.
- Requested the RGI to capture
 - ✓ the number of PVTG households, individuals, and
 - ✓ their distinctive demographic, cultural and socio-economic features.
- The ministry said that such information would help in the better implementation of targeted schemes for PVTGs, such as the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyay Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN).

What are particularly vulnerable tribal groups?

- ❑ PVTGs are a **sub-category of Scheduled Tribes (STs)**, which show either
 - **a declining or stagnant population,**
 - **geographical isolation,**
 - **use of pre-agrarian practices (such as hunting and gathering),**
 - **economic backwardness, and**
 - **relatively low literacy.**

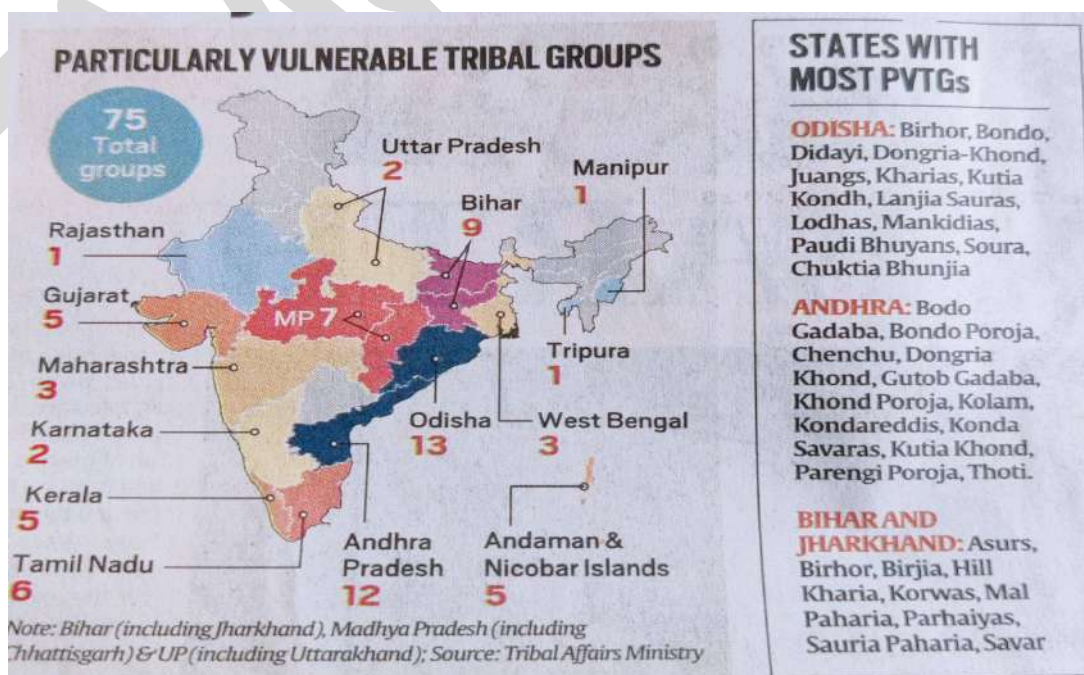
- ❑ This category was created based on the **recommendations of the Dhebar Commission (1960-61)** — led by **former Member of Parliament U N Dhebar** — which had investigated the various issues faced by STs, and in consultation with state governments.

➤ The Commission identified the

- **disparity** in socio-economic and living conditions between different tribal groups, and
- said that some tribal groups were more **vulnerable than others**.

PVTGS : GROUPS

Total (at present)	75
Initially	52
5 th Five Year Plan	
2006	23
added	



Identification Criteria

➤ Over the years, the criteria for identifying PVTGs **have been questioned, especially the marker of geographical isolation.**

▷ Before conducting a separate enumeration, **the government should revisit the inclusion criteria** for PVTGs based on which groups have improved or worsened over the years.

Has a **separate** enumeration of PVTGs taken place before?

- ◆ **No.** PVTGs have never been enumerated separately in any census.
- ◆ **Counted as a sub-category under ST's**
- ◆ There are **state-specific** lists of STs.

✍ The MoTA told Lok Sabha in December 2016 that **out of 75 PVTGs in the country, 40 have been scheduled as 'single entry'.**

▷ This means that they are explicitly listed in the notified list of STs under **Article 342** of the Constitution.

Is there an estimate for the number of PVTGs?

➤ In November 2023, the government rolled out the Rs 24,104 crore

PM JANMAN scheme

with an aim to improve

the socio-economic status,

health,

education,

livelihoods and

amenities

for PVTGs in more than 200 districts

➤ To implement the scheme,

the MoTA ,	along with <u>state governments</u> ,
collected habitation level data in a survey	
to estimate the PVTG population.	

➤ This exercise also involved

the **identification of**
infrastructure gaps
in PVTG habitations.

➤ As per the survey, there were an estimated
47.5 lakh PVTGs across India.

Population wise	
1) Madhya Pradesh	13.22 lakh
2) Maharashtra	6.7 lakhs
3) Andhra Pradesh	5.18 lakhs

Group wise	
1) Odisha	13
2) Andhra Pradesh	12
3) Bihar	9

- As per the 2011 Census, 13 PVTGs, who were enumerated as part of the **40 single-entry** STs, had a population of less than 1,000.

13 PVTGs → population **less than 1,000**

These include	
Andaman and Nicobar Islands,	Jarawas Onges Sentinelese Shompens
Uttarakhand	Raji
Tamil Nadu	Kota
Odisha	Birhor
Madhya Pradesh	Kamar
Bihar	Savar Birhor Birjia Korwa Parhaiya

Fewest	Sentinelese	15
	A&N	
Highest	Baiga community	4,14,526
	Madhya Pradesh	

--	--	--

- Government officials said that having an exact number along with demographic data would plug major gaps in the implementation of government schemes, especially in health and education initiatives. It will also help in understanding if PVTG classification criteria are still relevant, according to officials.

08.09.2025



MOON TURNS BLOOD RED. WHY?

The Blood Moon illuminates Kolkata during a lunar eclipse on Sunday. As the earth is placed between the sun and the moon, only some sunlight, filtered from the earth's atmosphere, reaches the moon. When sunlight collides with the molecules suspended in the air, blue light scatters away easily, and only the red light reaches the moon, making it look red. *Partha Paul*

Why Earth's Atmosphere Creates the Red Color

- **Rayleigh Scattering:** As sunlight enters Earth's atmosphere, air molecules and particles scatter the light. Blue light, with its shorter wavelength, is scattered much more effectively than red light, which has a longer wavelength.
- **Refraction of Light:** While blue light is scattered away, the longer, redder wavelengths of light are bent (refracted) around the Earth and are channeled towards the Moon.
- **A "Red Filter":** Essentially, Earth's atmosphere acts like a reddish filter, projecting all the world's sunsets onto the Moon during an eclipse, according to NASA.

Factors Influencing the Redness

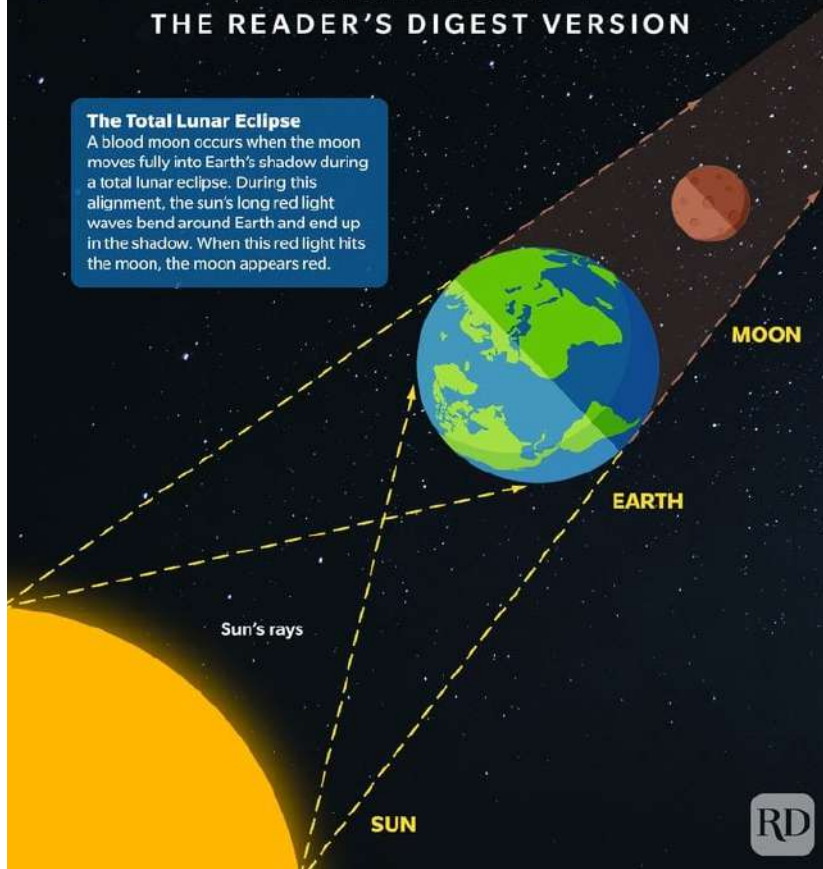
- **Atmospheric Conditions:** The more dust, clouds, or pollution in Earth's atmosphere at the time of the eclipse, the redder the Moon will appear.
- **Lunar Eclipses:** A red moon, also known as a "blood moon," is a phenomenon of a total lunar eclipse, where Earth positions itself directly between the Sun and Moon, casting its shadow onto the lunar surface

Here's Why the Moon Turns Red

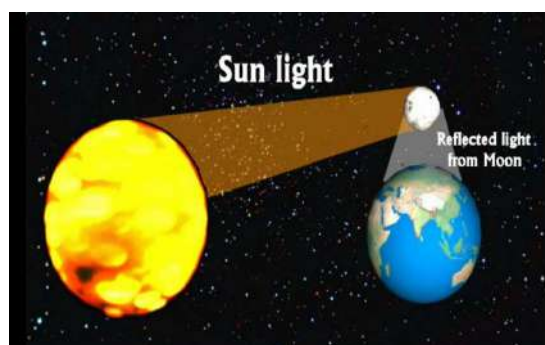
THE READER'S DIGEST VERSION

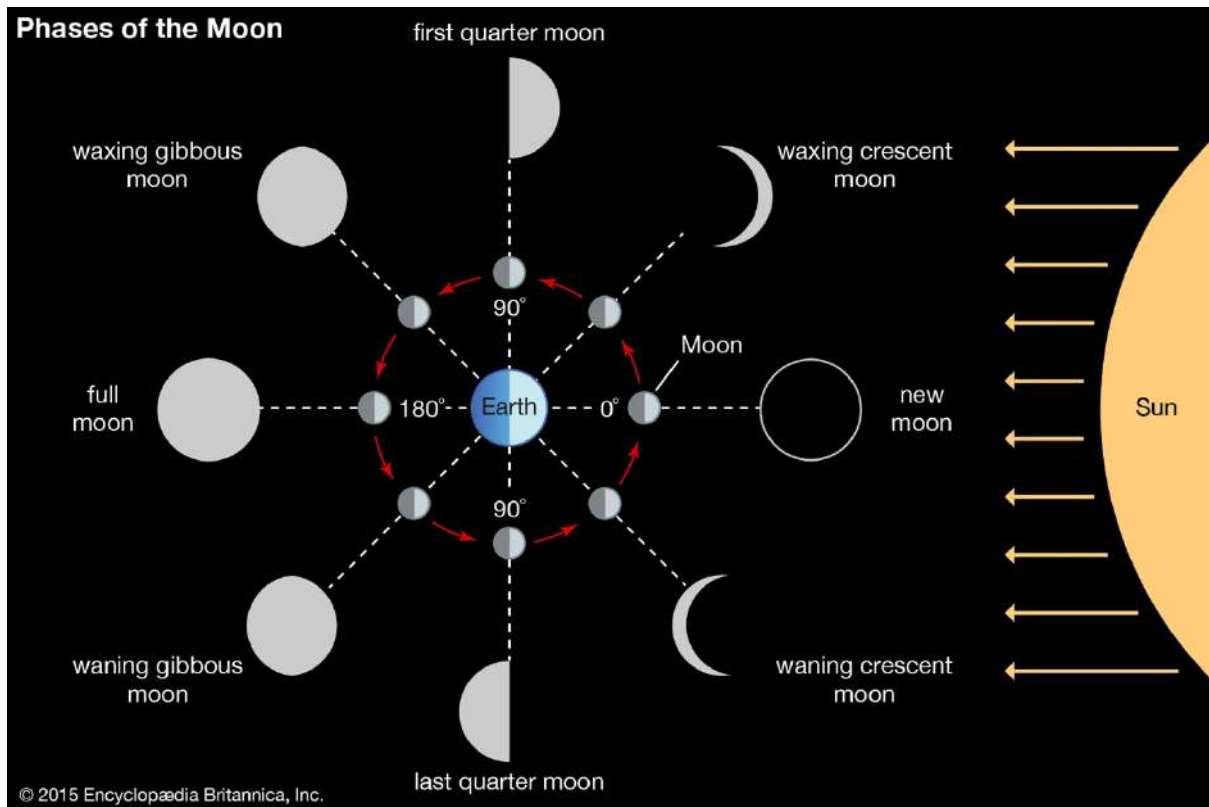
The Total Lunar Eclipse

A blood moon occurs when the moon moves fully into Earth's shadow during a total lunar eclipse. During this alignment, the sun's long red light waves bend around Earth and end up in the shadow. When this red light hits the moon, the moon appears red.



The moon doesn't emit any light of its own. The light from the sun's rays bounce off of the moon and reach the Earth in a matter of 1.25 seconds. This is how we get moonlight.





RULING COALITION LOST PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY IN JULY POLLS

Ishiba quits as PM after historic poll defeat, links it to US trade agreement

Overview :

The **resignation**, while sudden, is the culmination of a much longer crisis in Japan – one that has been simmering since the assassination of former PM Shinzo Abe in 2022

- **exposed corruption,**
- **church links** and
- **fissures in the ruling party,**

EXPLAINED



Youth move away from old parties

THE JULY election results exposed a deepening fissure altering Japan's politics. Analysts say Shigeru Ishiba's party has an aging voter base and hence have become detached from the younger, urban voters. While traditional opposition parties also have a similar base, the biggest gains were made by new stridently far-right nationalist parties that drew the youth. Ishiba's centrist stance had also alienated his conservative supporters to vote for the far-right.

and since then has only deepened with

- ▷ **scandals,**
- ▷ **voter disillusionment** and
- ▷ **rising economic strain.**

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)

Ishiba's turmoil :

▷ **Inflation :**

- Throughout his tenure, Ishiba has struggled to win voter support amid persistent inflation, which **has remained above 2% for the past 3 years.**

▷ **Finance scandal:**

- His government has also been dogged by lingering reputational damage from a **political finance scandal.**

▷ **Rice shortage:**

- An ongoing rice shortage that many believe has been caused by **longstanding government policies that curb production.**

▷ **US tariff:**

- Ishiba's government has also had to manage increasingly tense relations with the US since President Trump's re-election. Japan and the US took months to negotiate a trade deal that left Japanese exports with a **15% across** – the board tariff.
- Even after the agreement was reached, central details remain unresolved including a pledge to invest \$55 billion in the US economy.

A TIMELINE OF THE CRISIS

July 2022: Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is assassinated, exposing the ruling party's ties to the Unification Church. Public anger over the connections sparks scrutiny of the LDP.

Late 2022 to 2023: A series of political finance and kickback scandals hit the LDP. Dozens of lawmakers implicated.

October 2024: Snap election called by then-PM Fumio Kishida results in heavy losses for LDP. Party loses lower house majority, forced into coalition with Komeito. Kishida resigns soon after.

November 2024: Shigeru Ishiba elected LDP leader and becomes prime minister, pledging to clean up politics and restore stability.

Early 2025: Inflation and rising food prices fuel voter dissatisfaction. Ishiba struggles to impose discipline in party ranks.

July 2025: Ruling coalition loses upper house majority in election. LDP no longer controls either chamber. Calls mount for Ishiba to step down.

September 2025: Ishiba clinches a trade deal with the US, securing investments in exchange for tariff cuts. Then, hours later, he resigns.

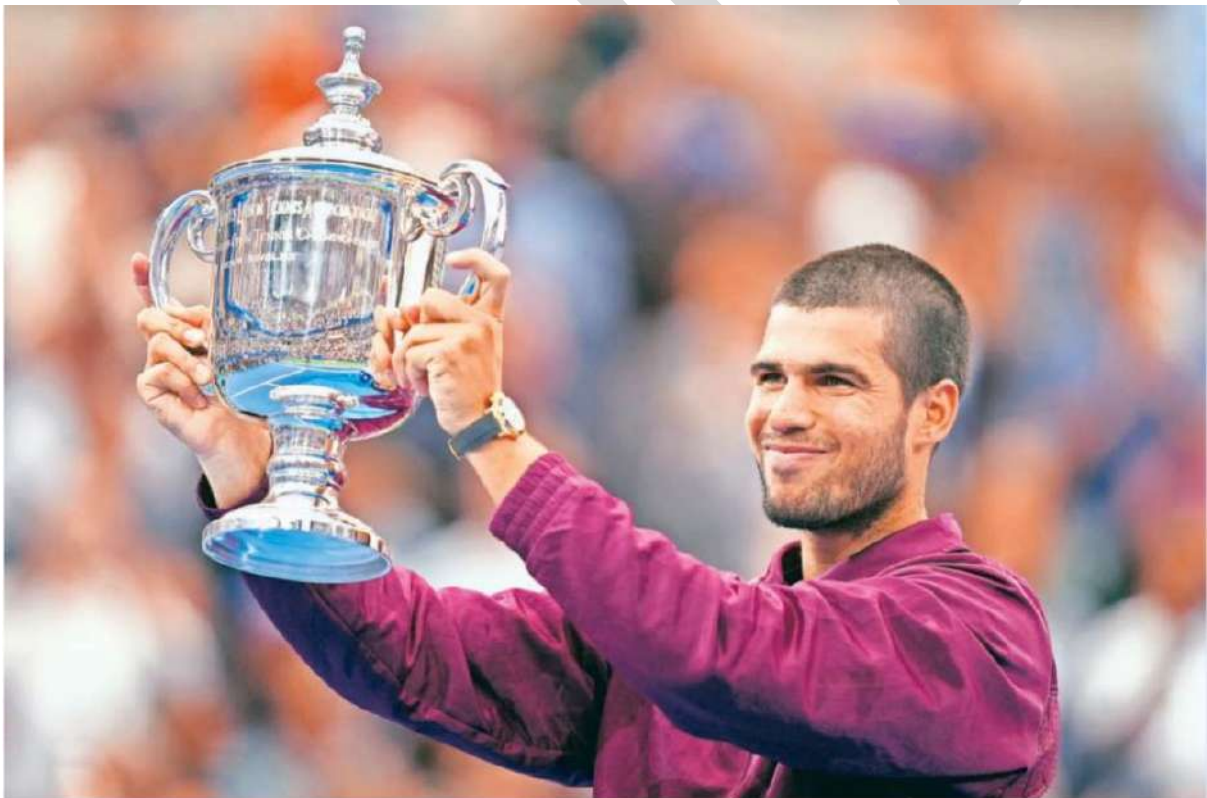


09.09.2025

'SHALL BE TREATED AS THE 12TH DOCUMENT'

Accept Aadhaar as identity proof in Bihar SIR, Supreme Court tells EC

No citizenship proof but top court raises the bar for exclusion by EC



Carlos Alcaraz lifted his second Grand Slam title of the year after winning the French Open earlier. *Reuters*

19 killed in 'Gen Z protests' against Nepal govt ban on social media sites, corruption

10.09.2025

EX-PM KHANAL'S WIFE DIES OF INJURIES HELICOPTERS FERRY LEADERS TO SAFETY

Gen Z's coup in Kathmandu: Leaders picked out, assaulted; Army moves in



GEN Z PROTESTS ROCK KATHMANDU: SYMBOLS OF POWER SET ABLAZE

Fire and fury: Nepal erupts

EXPLAINED GLOBAL

Why is Kathmandu burning?

A day after 19 young protesters were killed in firing by police in Kathmandu, Nepal's capital was engulfed in flames, and the country appeared to have no government left. PM K P Sharma Oli resigned, and President Ram Chandra Poudel was at an undisclosed location under the protection of the Army

A DESPERATE ECONOMIC SITUATION

OVER 20% of Nepal's 30 mn people live in poverty.

THE RICHEST 10% earn three times income of the poorest 40%, underscoring stark economic divides.

UNEMPLOYMENT among those aged 15–24 was over 22% in 2022–23.

2 MILLION people from Nepal work abroad in sectors like construction and agriculture, including in India.

\$11 BILLION, the amount they sent as remittance in 2024, accounted for 26% of the country's economy.

- NYT AND REUTERS

POLITICAL INSTABILITY IN NEPAL

K P Sharma Oli became PM on July 15, 2024, and resigned on Tuesday. Nepal has had 14 governments since 2008, not one of which has completed a full five-year term.

UNTIL 1951, Nepal was ruled by monarchs from various dynasties, including the Ranas, who had a system of hereditary PMs. The Ranas were ousted in 1951, and a parliamentary democracy was established.

IN 1961, King Mahendra banned political parties and returned to a centralised system of government known as "Panchayat", which consolidated his power.

IN 1990, some parties launched a campaign, popularly known as the "People's Movement", to restore multi-party democracy. King Birendra lifted the ban on political parties and ended the "Panchayat" system.

IN 1996, the Maoists launched a violent bid to replace the royal parliamentary system with a people's republic. More than 17,000 people were killed in the decade-long civil war that followed.

IN 2008, the monarchy was abolished, and Nepal became a federal democratic republic. The Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' became PM in August that year.

IN 2015, Nepal adopted a new constitution. Oli became PM for the first time in October that year, but had to leave the post in 2016. He became PM again in 2018, 2021, and 2024.

REUTERS

A HISTORY OF INSTABILITY

Nepal has had 14 govts since 2008. Not one has finished a full 5-yr term

AUG 2008-MAY 2009

PM: Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'

Coalition: CPN-Maoist Centre, CPN-UML and others

MAY 2009-FEB 2011

PM: Madhav Kumar Nepal

Coalition: CPN-UML, Nepali Congress, Madhesi parties and others

FEB 2011-AUG 2011

PM: Jhala Nath Khanal

Coalition: CPN-UML, CPN-Maoist Centre

AUG 2011-MAR 2013

Prime Minister: Baburam Bhattarai

Coalition: CPN-Maoist Centre, Madhesi parties, and others

MAR 2013-FEB 2014

Interim govt: Khil Raj Regmi (Chief Justice)

FEB 2014-OCT 2015

PM: Sushil Koirala

Coalition: Nepali Congress, CPN-UML

OCT 2015-AUG 2016

PM: K P Sharma Oli

Coalition: CPN-UML, CPN-Maoist Centre

AUG 2016-JUN 2017

Prime Minister: Prachanda

Coalition: CPN-Maoist Centre, Nepali Congress

JUN 2017-FEB 2018

PM: Sher Bahadur Deuba

Coalition: Nepali Congress, CPN-Maoist Centre, and others

FEB 2018-MAY 2021

PM: Oli

Coalition: Communist Party of Nepal (merger of UML, Maoist Centre)

JUL 2021-DEC 2022

PM: Deuba

Coalition: Nepali Congress, CPN-Maoist Centre, others

DEC 2022-MAR 2024

Prime Minister: Prachanda

Coalition: CPN-Maoist Centre, CPN-UML, others

MAR 2024-JUL 2024

PM: Prachanda

Coalition: CPN-Maoist Centre, Nepali Congress, others

JULY 2024-NOW

PM: Oli,

Coalition: CPN-UML, Nepali Congress

CAPITAL BURNS

■ SC building, Singha Durbar, President's Office, PM's residence at Baluwatar

■ Ex-PM Jhala Nath Khanal's house in Dallu. His wife died

■ Ex-PM Sher Bahadur Deuba's house at Budhanilkantha. He, his wife were injured

■ Ex-PM Baburam Bhattarai's house, Tokha

■ Ex-finance minister Ramsaran Mahat's house at Kapan

■ Office of Kantipur Publications, Nepal's largest media house

■ Police posts at Lubhu, Kalimati, Gaushala

■ Hilton Hotel & a school

Topic : GS (Mains)

Quake in Nepal

Pent-up discontent has pushed the country's youth to take to the streets. New Delhi should keep a close eye on how the situation unravels

Backdrop

The message from Nepal, where Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli resigned on Tuesday amid the worst unrest in years, is clear: Ignore the youth at your peril. The social media ban by a fossilised leadership out of touch with realities in a young country was a trigger. *Nepal's youth were frustrated with crumbling health and education systems, and disillusioned by entrenched corruption and nepotism.* That their anger erupted after the ban on 26 platforms, including Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, X, and YouTube, reflects a deeper churn in the Himalayan nation. The government's brutal response, which left at least 19 dead and more than 200 injured, has only fuelled the rage of the youth. Protesters, who defied curfew orders, torched the homes of ministers and senior politicians, including that of the ousted PM.

The "Gen Z" demonstrations should be seen against the backdrop of Nepal's fraught political landscape.

Corruption:

As this newspaper reported, almost every senior political leader in the country faces some form of corruption charge. They include Oli and five former prime ministers — Sher Bahadur Deuba, Prachanda, Madhav Nepal, Baburam Bhattarai, and Khil Raj Regmi.

Misgovernance @ Nepotism @ unemployment

The misgovernance has led to nationwide discontent. On social media, terms such as "Nepo Babies" and "Nepo Kids" have been trending, as the lavish lifestyles of political family scions are contrasted with the economic hardships of ordinary citizens, especially the youth, who have faced unemployment and low wages.

Inequality, compounded by climate vulnerabilities and natural disasters, has driven many young Nepalis to leave the country. According to a World Bank report, ***82 per cent of the workforce remains in informal employment***, far above global and regional averages.

Concentrated Power

Meanwhile, power has continued to circulate among the same ageing, colluding leaders through shifting alliances of convenience in what has become a cartelisation of politics. Disenchantment has grown to such an extent that protests, earlier this year, demanded a return to the monarchy, abolished in 2008 after a decade-long civil war. The recycling of political leadership also shines a light on a disturbing reality — the youth lacked a meaningful political channel to voice their grievances. It's no surprise that they took to the streets.

Recent Youth-led movements:

This is not the first time in the recent past that youth-led movements have toppled regimes in India's neighbourhood.

➤ Bangladesh

Last year in Bangladesh, anti-quota protests snowballed into a full-fledged anti-government uprising that ended Sheikh Hasina's 15-year rule.

➤ Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, in 2022, corruption and economic mismanagement that led to soaring inflation and acute food and fuel shortages sparked a revolt that brought down the Rajapaksa family.

India's Policy towards:

India should continue to monitor the situation in its neighbourhood and remain vigilant. In the wake of the turmoil in Nepal, New Delhi should keep a close watch on how the political situation in the country unravels. It should be alert to a Bangladesh-like regime change and be ready to safeguard India's interests amid the flux.

Topic : GS (Mains)

Bihar's SIR and the 12th document

Supreme Court order on Aadhaar being a valid document for inclusion in Bihar's electoral roll is a welcome step. Election Commission must heed its spirit.

The Election Commission of India's (EC) Form 6, through which citizens apply to have their name included in the Electoral Roll, asks for applicants' Aadhaar details "for the purpose of authentication of entries". The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the voters' list in Bihar excluded arguably the most ubiquitous proof of identity in India from the list of 11 documents for inclusion into the final electoral roll. This discrepancy was not a mere oversight — it symbolised what appeared to be a fundamental shift in one of the country's most important, independent and respected institutions. On Monday, the Supreme Court bench comprising Justices Surya Kant and Joymala Bagchi ordered that the EC include Aadhaar in the list. The directive has corrected an approach, which, by all accounts, was becoming exclusionary. Moving forward, the EC must respect the spirit of the verdict as much as its letter.

In addition to its independence, the EC's credibility has been built, over decades, on the back of a simple and powerful idea: No citizen — rich or poor, in a high-rise in a big city or in a barely-accessible village in the Himalayas — will be denied the right to vote. In practice, this idea requires a robust process and periodic revisions to ensure accurate electoral rolls, which ensure the inclusion of every citizen and, as a corollary, the exclusion of non-citizens. Unfortunately, in the rushed SIR in Bihar, the focus seemed to be on the corollary rather than the fundamental principle. In the past — for example, before the 2007 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections — such exercises were conducted through door-to-door verification of voters and over longer periods. The onus of "proving" voters' eligibility was not on the elector but the EC. The SIR, in effect, sought to reverse that burden. By mandating the inclusion of Aadhaar — a biometrically verified document that arguably forms the basis for India's welfare architecture — the Court has eased that burden, while also making it clear that Aadhaar is not a proof of citizenship, just as many other documents in the list of 11 were not.

It shouldn't have taken a court order for the EC to include the 12th document in Bihar's SIR. As early as July, the SC had suggested that Aadhaar be included in the list of accepted documents for the exercise. The EC has said that the SIR will be conducted across states. With the exception of recent events, the Commission has had few blemishes on its record. Moving forward, it should live up to that record — a nudge from the judiciary.

Radhakrishnan is new V-P, Opp falls short of own tally amid invalid votes, cross-vote fears

- Radhakrishnan traces his **political lineage to the RSS**, and has had a long and varied experience in public life subsequently — as the **BJP's Tamil Nadu chief**, as a **two-term Lok Sabha MP from Coimbatore**, as **governor of Jharkhand and Maharashtra** most recently.
- In all these roles, he has earned a **reputation of being the affable consensus-builder**, and for an ability to make friends across the political divides fluently.
- As Vice President, Radhakrishnan will need to carry with him these qualities, and particularly the learnings from his tenure in the Raj Bhawan, also an office circumscribed by the demands and constraints of constitutional propriety.

✍ Taken oath on 12th September, 2025

Radhakrishnan takes oath as 15th V-P, tells Opp he will ensure 'fair justice'

Says his uncle was Cong MP, grandfather Communist: 'Know how it is being in Opp'

Close Contests

This is the second narrowest margin of victory (152 votes)
in terms of number of votes in Vice-Presidential election

1997: Krishna Kant, the
consensus candidate of the
Congress and the then ruling
United Front, defeated Surjit
Singh Barnala, who was
fielded by the BJP and its
allies.

Winning Margin:
168 votes

2002: NDA nominee Bhairon
Singh Shekhawat defeated
Opposition candidate
Sushilkumar Shinde.

Winning Margin:
149 votes

2017: M Venkaiah Naidu
defeated Gopalkrishna
Gandhi.

Winning Margin:
272 votes

2022: Jagdeep Dhankhar,
whose sudden and surprise
resignation as V-P citing
health reasons on the first day
of the Monsoon Session of
Parliament in July,
necessitated the election, had
won against Margaret Alva.

Winning Margin:
346 votes

2007 & 2012:

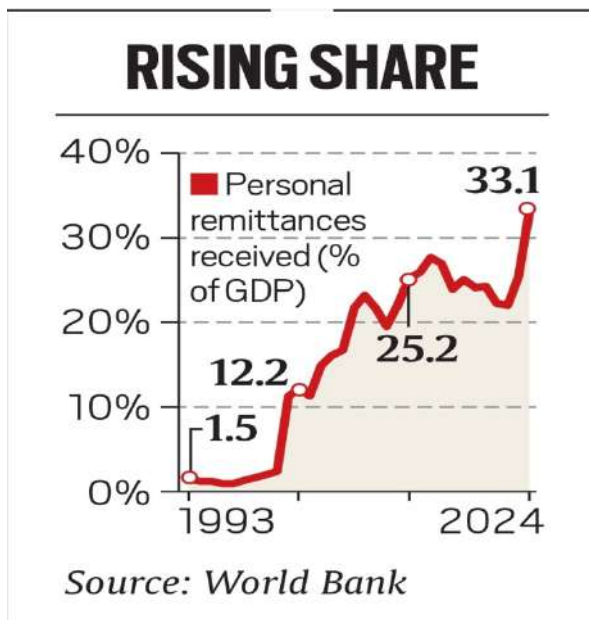
Hamid Ansari won in 2007 and 2012 by a margin
of **233** and **252** votes, respectively

11.09.2025

FORMER DY-PM AMONG THOSE RELEASED

13,000 prisoners escape from jails in Nepal amid violent protests, clashes

Anger, remittance economy, tourism, I-T: Why social media ban was trigger



Himachal declared 'fully literate': what does this mean?

To become fully literate,

- states/UTs have to identify
 - ▷ those who are not literate, and
 - ▷ provide them with basic reading, writing, and math education
 - so that they can clear the FLNAT

OTHER ADULT LITERACY SCHEMES

ULLAS is latest of govt initiatives to promote adult literacy from 1950s onward

■ In 1960s-70s, the Centre and several states ran programs targeting literacy among farmers and women.

■ The National Literacy Mission, which ran from 1988 to 2009, also targeted this age bracket.

■ The National Adult Education Programme was launched in 1978 to eliminate illiteracy in 15-35 group.

■ 'Saakshar Bharat' (Literate India) mission ran from 2009-18. Meant for ages 15 and above, it also focused on functional literacy and numeracy.

Reference in detail :- July (2025) Pg.No : 2-8

CENSUS BASICS

THE POPULATION CENSUS has been conducted since 1872;

2027 CENSUS will be the 16th such exercise, and the eighth since Independence.

A RANGE OF DATA, including data on housing conditions, amenities and assets, demography, religion, language, literacy and education, economic activity, migration, fertility, etc., are collected along with the headcount of individuals at the village, town, and ward levels.

₹14,618.95cr

BUDGET has been sought by the Office of the Registrar General of India (RGI), which is under the Ministry of Home Affairs, for the conduct of Census 2027, according to sources.

34 lakh enumerators and field functionaries will be involved in conducting the Census. The enumerators will use their own smartphones for collecting data. In SECC 2011, dedicated tablets were used.



INDIA'S POPULATION was 1.21 billion as of March 1, 2011. It is now estimated to have become the most populous nation in the world.

Topic : GS (Mains)

Israel's attack on Qatar shows Netanyahu has little regard for international opinion or domestic dissent

His overriding objective appears to be the continuation of the Gaza war and its expansion to new fronts

Israel's strikes inside Qatar, which have drawn global criticism, deal a hammer blow to any realistic prospect of ending the war in Gaza soon. **The operation in Doha targeted Hamas's negotiating team**, which had convened to discuss the latest US ceasefire proposal, **President Donald Trump's "last warning"**.

Hamas has confirmed six deaths, but it has also said that the group's leadership has survived. The attack is a sign that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is doubling down on eliminating Hamas completely, instead of focusing on a negotiated settlement that can ensure the return of the remaining Israeli hostages. Immediately after the strike, The Hostages and Missing Families Forum in Israel said they are worried about the price the hostages may have to pay.

Trump has voiced his unhappiness and insisted that Netanyahu has acted unilaterally. Qatar, after all, is no ordinary country: A tiny but wealthy Gulf state, it is a key US ally and hosts the largest American military base in the Middle East. The Qatari government condemned the attack as a “clear breach of the rules and principles of international law.”

- Netanyahu, however, has defended it as a targeted move on Hamas's political leadership, in retaliation for the recent Jerusalem shooting that killed six people and an assault on an Israeli army camp in Gaza that left four soldiers dead.

Article 2(4) of the **UN Charter explicitly prohibits the use of force against the “territorial integrity or political independence” of another state.** And without UNSC authorisation, Israel's actions appear to constitute **a violation of sovereignty and an act of aggression under international law.**

- But over the past two years, Israel has shown little regard for the rules, executing strikes against multiple nations like Iran, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Iraq that almost certainly violate international law, at will.

The latest attack comes against the backdrop of three simultaneous developments.

- ❑ **First**, the planned offensive of the IDF to seize what it claims is Hamas's last remaining stronghold in Gaza, where thousands continue to endure hunger.
- ❑ **Second**, the mounting protests inside Israel demanding an end to the war and a deal to immediately secure the release of the remaining hostages.

❑ Third, the opening of the UN General Assembly this week, where major Western nations, like the UK, France, Australia, Belgium, and Canada, are expected to follow through on their pledge to recognise the State of Palestine.

✍ If Israel's strike on Qatar signals anything, it is that the Netanyahu government has little regard for either international opinion or domestic dissent. Its overriding objective appears to be the continuation of the war and its expansion to new fronts.

12.09.2025

Topic : GS (Mains)

Killing of Charlie Kirk: **Divided States of America**

Assassination of Kirk frames a grim crisis. It will take mature leadership on both sides of the political divide to tide over it.

The assassination of 31-year-old Charlie Kirk — **Donald Trump's ally and a person with a vast and growing following among conservative youth in the US** — is an inflexion point. It marks a rupture, an attack on America's body politic, the consequences of which will be felt over the coming weeks and months. At the same time, Kirk's murder by a sniper on a university campus **is part of a broader story of a shrinking of the middle ground and space for dialogue, and the increasing coarseness, even abuse, in public conversations.** Kirk's death can lead the US further down this dangerous path. It will take mature

leadership and statesmanship on both sides of the political divide to prevent such a spiralling, and bring people together.

Kirk was one of the moving forces behind Turning Point USA, a conservative youth organisation, which he co-founded in 2012. His popularity on campus and social media is arguably a backlash against the threat, real and imagined, of “cancel culture” in the American university. Part of Kirk’s appeal was that he wasn’t merely an armchair warrior putting out reels and TikToks. Rather, he engaged with his detractors on campus, through tours that covered much of the country. His ideas were controversial and divisive. To many, he seemed to target the weak with his rhetorical flourish. The pathology of the current moment in America, in its most extreme form, is symbolised by his murder. Because in a country known to be the strongest champion of the democratic right to free speech, words must be met with words, not violence.

Since the January 6 Capitol Hill attack in 2021, there has been a growing sense of chaos, a seeming acceptance of violence among sections of US society and polity.

- ✓ Before Kirk’s murder, the killing of Ukrainian refugee, Iryna Zarutka, on a metro train in North Carolina, reportedly by a mentally ill assailant, invited a political reaction from President Donald Trump.

– In Zarutka’s death, he said Democrats “have blood on their hands”.

- ✓ After Kirk’s assassination, Trump blamed the “radical left” for “demonising” those who disagree with their point of view.
- ✓ On social media, many posted about Kirk’s support of guns after his death. Others have expressed fears of copycat crimes.

✍ A divided society cannot heal overnight. But there is a way forward through conversation and, more importantly, listening. For that to happen, the US needs its current leadership on both sides of the aisle to step up and for a new one that is up to the challenge in the long run to emerge.

13.09.2025

Topic : Mains (GS and Essay)

America's obsession with guns

Charlie Kirk, who was shot dead, was a gun rights advocate. There are more guns than there are people in the United States. As other countries took steps on gun control, the US actively loosened rules. Why?

➤ A comprehensive global study published in 2018 reported

➤ more than **1.2 guns per capita in the US,**

➤ more than **double that in war-torn Yemen,**

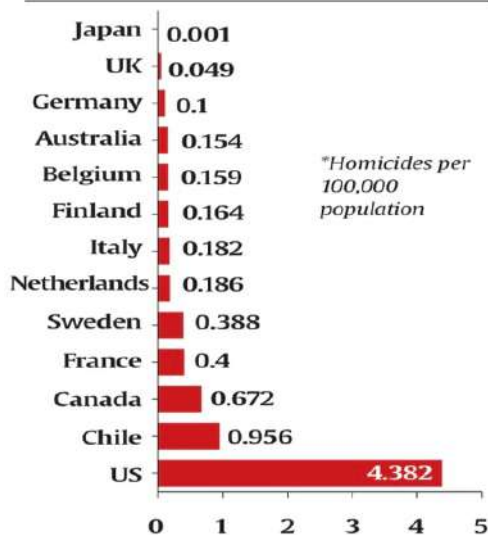
the next country on the list.

➤ The US is home to less than **5% of the world's population,**

➤ but Americans **hold more than 45% of all civilian-owned guns** on the planet.

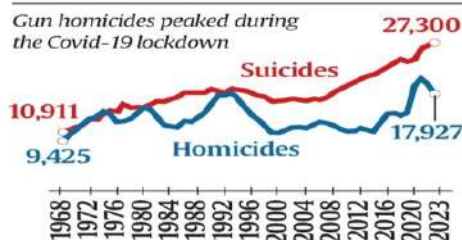
➤ US → → **25% of the global economy**

GUN HOMICIDE RATES* IN SELECT COUNTRIES



Data compiled by Everytown Research and Policy from multiple sources; published in 2022.

GUN SUICIDES & GUN HOMICIDES IN THE US



THERE WERE 46,728 GUN DEATHS IN THE US IN 2023

79% of all homicides in US were by firearm

58% of all gun deaths were suicides

11 MIN

There were 128 gun deaths daily, amounting to one every 11 minutes

Source: US Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. Data from 2023.

Brazil's Supreme Court finds Jair **Bolsonaro** guilty of **coup charges**

*Jair Bolsonaro who governed Brazil between 2019 and 2022
was found guilty on five counts by
three members of a five-justice panel.*

Conviction

- ✓ 27 years and 3 months in prison
- ✓ This conviction is not final.
 - ▷ Bolsonaro's attorneys will further go for filing motions for clarifications,
 - ▷ then will try to appeal both the conviction and sentence before full Supreme Court of 11 justices...
 - ▷anyway during this time he would be remained under the house arrest.

Donald Trump reacts

- US President Donald Trump came out in strong defense of former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro.
- Trump said he was shocked and disappointed by the decision.

Charges against

- Bolsonaro is accused of attempting to illegally hang onto power after his 2022 electoral defeat to current President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.
- Prosecutors charged him with a total of five charges. They include
 - attempting to stage a coup,
 - being part of an armed criminal organization,
 - attempted violent abolition of the democratic rule of law,
 - as well as being implicated in violence and
 - posing a serious threat to the state's assets and listed heritage.
- Bolsonaro denied any wrongdoing.

Bolsonaro : at a glance

- ✓ is a former Army captain
 - who never hid his admiration for the military dictatorship that killed hundreds of Brazilians between 1964 and 1985.
- ✓ Bolsonaro's presidency was marked by
 - intense scepticism about the pandemic and vaccines and
 - his embrace of informal mining and land-clearing for cattle grazing,
 - ▷ pushing deforestation rates in the Amazon rainforest to record highs.
- ✓ As he faced a **close re-election campaign against Lula in 2022 – an election that Lula went on to win** – Bolsonaro's comments took on an increasingly messianic quality, raising concerns about his willingness to accept the results.

Reaction : within Brazil

- The trial has been followed by a divided society,
 - with people backing the process against the former president, while others still support him.
- Some have taken to the streets to back the far-right leader, who had been previously banned from running for office until 2030 in a separate case.

Trump's Witch Hunt" : Possible more US Tariffs

- Bolsonaro, who has been described as the '**Trump of the Tropics**' has gained the support of the US President.
 - Trump, who termed Bolsonaro's trial a "witch hunt," had also imposed a 50% tariff on Brazilian goods.
 - Observers think the US might announce new sanction now.
-

PARLIAMENT DISSOLVED

Nepal gets its 1st woman PM, Sushila Karki

India welcomes new interim govt,
says hope it brings peace and stability

Topic : GS (Mains) – Kashmir issue

AN OUTRAGEOUS ARREST

Using **Public Safety Act** to jail an MLA threatens to turn
black the clock on democratic promise in Kashmir

The 2024 assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir promised a new beginning. The first election after the abrogation of Article 370 signalled the return of the political process to the erstwhile state and raised hopes that the people would once again speak and be heard through their elected representatives. The optimism of that moment was not unmixed, however, it carried an underlying apprehension: After all, the Lieutenant-Governor, an appointee of the Centre, continues to hold vast powers, raising concerns over the circumscribing of the elected chief minister's room for manoeuvre. The arrest of the sole Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA, Mehraj Malik, this week under the draconian Public Safety Act (PSA) underlines those fears and raises spectres of the clock being turned back in Kashmir.

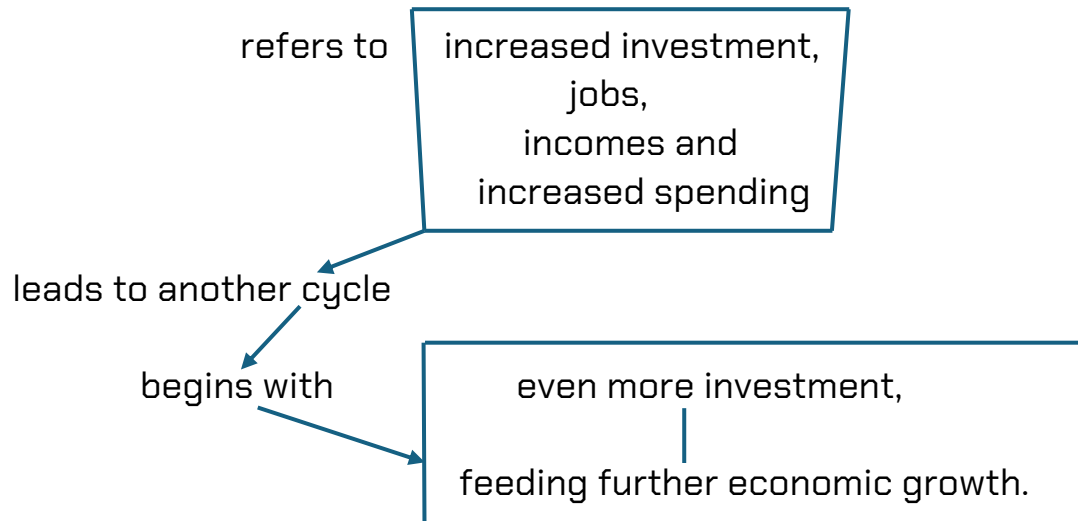
Malik has been charged with “disturbing public order” by the police, which reports to the L-G’s office, not the Omar Abdullah government. **The Doda MLA is known to be outspoken in demanding public services and agitating for them, using social media to amplify his voice. Before his arrest, a video emerged of Malik arguing with and allegedly abusing Doda’s Deputy Commissioner over**

the shifting of a health sub-centre. In arresting him, however, the J&K authorities show a wilful ignorance of the basics of democratic governance. An MLA, any elected representative, wears many hats. They are not just lawmakers – they must, in different circumstances, be advocates for their constituents and even, on their behalf, become “activists”. This is part of the negotiation and thrust and parry of democratic politics and in a society governed by the rule of law, the space for it must be expanded and protected. Using preventive detention under the PSA to jail an elected representative who is doing his job speaks of grave state over-reach.

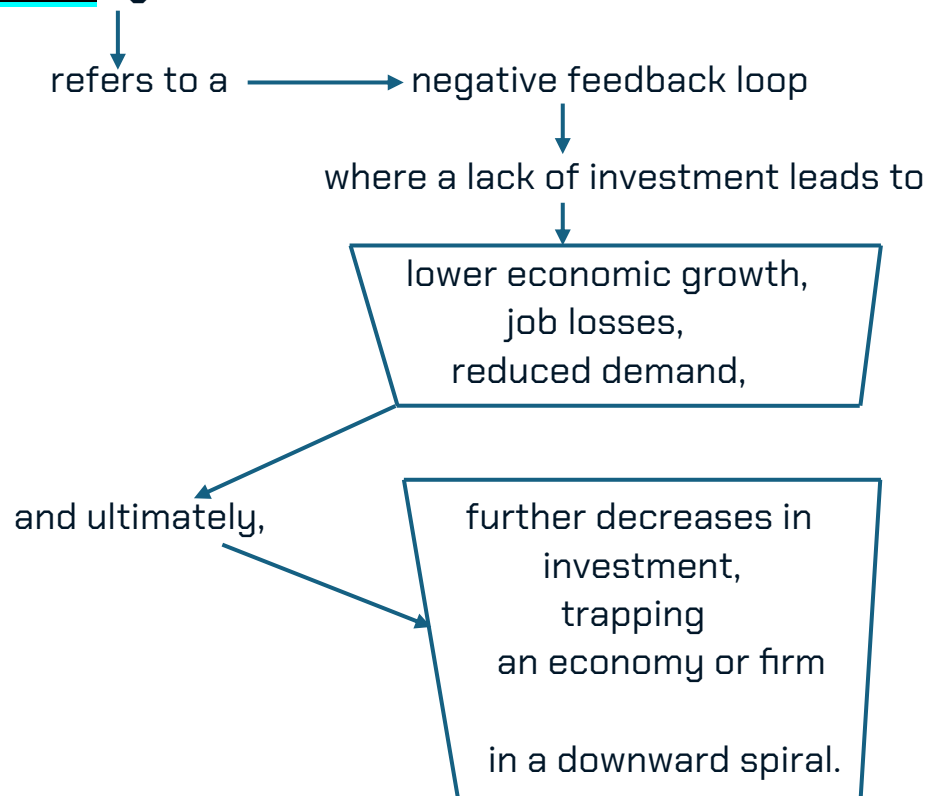
Malik is the first sitting MLA in J&K’s history to be jailed under the PSA.

- His arrest sends a chilling message to the political class and broader society in Kashmir on the limits on the freedom of expression and the space allowed to the political opposition.
 - The arrest also raises a fundamental question: Who speaks for the “public” for whose purported “safety” the MLA has been jailed?
 - ▷ Almost the entire political class in the Valley, including Omar Abdullah, has condemned Malik’s arrest, even though Malik has been a loud critic of the National Conference and the state government.
 - ▷ There have also been several protests in Doda over his detention.
- ✍ The record turnout in the 2024 polls showed people’s faith in democratic processes in Kashmir. Those hard-won gains must not be jeopardised by a strong-armed state.
-

◆ A "**virtuous** cycle of investment"



◆ A "**vicious** cycle of investment"



14.09.2025

SYSTEMATIC ATTACK BY ISIS **EXTREMISTS IN 2014**, WHICH THE **UN** CALLED A **GENOCIDE**, KILLED THOUSANDS OF **YAZIDIS**

Iraq's Yazidis rediscover lost history through photos found in a museum archive

In News

Archeologists studying ancient civilizations in **northern Iraq during the 1930s** also befriended the **nearby Yazidi community**, documenting their daily lives in photographs that were rediscovered after the Islamic State militant group devastated the tiny religious minority.

ISIS Attack @ 2014

- ✓ The **systematic attacks**, which the United Nations called a **genocide**, killed thousands of Yazidis and sent thousands more into **exile or sexual slavery**.
- ✓ It also **destroyed much of their built heritage and cultural history**, *and the small community has since become splintered around the world.*

Sinjar – the ancestral homeland

- ✓ The city of Sinjar is the ancestral homeland of the Yazidis **near the Syrian border, remotest corner of north-west Iraq.**
- ✓ It has been eight years since IS was defeated in Iraq.
 - ▷ But as of April 2024, only 43% of the more than 300,000 people displaced from Sinjar had returned, according to the International Migration Organization.
 - ▷ *Some fear that if Yazidis don't return, the community may lose its identity.*

Yazidis : in brief

- An **isolated minority**, the Yazidis have been persecuted for centuries.
 - Many Muslim sects consider them **infidels** :
 - ⊃ many Iraqis falsely see them as **worshippers of Satan**.
 - They speak **Kurdish** and
 - ⊃ their traditions are amalgamated , borrowing from **Christianity, Islam and the ancient Persian religion of Zoroastrianism**.
-

UN backs declaration on two-state solution for Israel and Palestinians

The declaration runs seven pages and came out of an international conference at the UN in July, hosted by Saudi Arabia and France

➤ The UNGA voted overwhelmingly to support a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict and urge Israel to commit to a Palestinian state, which Prime Minister Netanyahu vehemently opposes.

➤ The UNGA voted strongly in favour of a declaration calling for “**tangible, timebound, and irreversible steps**” towards a two-state solution between Israel and the Palestinians.

➤ The declaration runs seven pages and

came out

of an international conference at the UN in July,

hosted by Saudi Arabia and France,

on implementing a two-state solution.

- The **193-member** world body approved a nonbinding resolution endorsing the “**New York Declaration**”, which sets out a phased plan to end the nearly 80-year conflict.
- It also calls for “**collective action** to end the war in Gaza, to achieve a just, peaceful and lasting settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on the effective implementation of the two-state solution.”
- “In the context of ending the war in Gaza, Hamas must end its rule in Gaza and hand over its weapons to the Palestinian Authority, with international engagement and support, in line with the objective of a sovereign and independent Palestinian State,” the declaration states.

Voting : Favour and Against

- ❑ The resolution endorsing the text passed with

– **142 votes in favour,**

India votes on favour.

– **10 against**

“Make no mistake,
this resolution is a gift to Hamas.”

– *US official*

**United States
and
Israel**

did not attend the meeting.

Joining Israel and the United States in

opposing the resolution were :-

Argentina, Hungary, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau,
Papua New Guinea, Paraguay and Tonga.

– **12 countries abstained.**

E

 Israel's objection

ISRAEL HAS objected to the UN resolution on two-state solution, calling it biased and harmful. Israel believes that formation of a Palestinian state would give legitimacy to Hamas whose charter calls for the destruction of the state of Israel. It is also expanding Jewish settlements in the occupied territories and a two-state solution will stop the project.

Tariff Jolt and India

U.S. IMPORTS OF TEXTILES AND APPAREL

(in billion US\$)

	YTD June 2024	YTD June 2025	YTD % Change
World	49.31	51.44	4.31
China	11.14	9.34	-16.15
Vietnam	7.20	8.54	18.6
India	4.79	5.36	11.74
Bangladesh	3.51	4.36	24.34
Indonesia	2.22	2.60	17.32
Cambodia	1.96	2.41	23.23

Source: US Dept of Commerce

- ❑ In the first half of this year, and just weeks before the 25% reciprocal US tariffs kicked-in on August 7,
 - India managed a 12% growth in shipments of **textiles and apparels** to the US.

- ✍ This was, however, **far lower than the export growth** clocked by competitors

- ▷ Vietnam,
- ▷ Bangladesh,
- ▷ Indonesia and
- ▷ Cambodia.

- ❑ The impact of the tariffs could be broad-based,

as the US accounts for	
20% of India's merchandise exports and	slightly less than 2% of its overall GDP.

✧ Product categories that are likely to be hit the hardest by high US tariffs include

- textiles and apparel,
- gems and jewellery,
- shrimps,
- machinery and mechanical appliances,
- some metals (steel, aluminium, copper),
- organic chemicals,
- agriculture and processed foods,
- leather and footwear,
- handicrafts, furniture, and carpets.

The US accounts for **48% of revenue** for **India's shrimp exporters**,

which means that the marine exports sector would also see a sharp decline in volumes.

15.09.2025

What is the **Scarborough Shoal** and what is **China** planning there?

Backdrop:

China vs Philippines

- ✧ China's coast guard said it had taken "control measures" in intercepting Philippine vessels at the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea, site of years of standoffs between the two countries.

WHAT'S THE SHOAL'S SIGNIFICANCE?

- ✧ Named after a British ship grounded on the atoll nearly three centuries ago, the Scarborough Shoal is one of Asia's most contested maritime features and a flashpoint for diplomatic flare-ups over

sovereignty and fishing rights.

- ✧ Located 200 km (124 miles) off the **Philippines** and inside its **exclusive economic zone**,

the shoal is coveted for its

bountiful fish stocks and **a stunning turquoise lagoon**

that provides *safe haven for vessels during storms*.

- ✧

Name	
Beijing	Huangyan Island
Manila	Panatang Shoal, or Bajo de Masinloc.

✧ Strategic for China

- ✓ Its position is strategic for Beijing,
 - **sitting in the middle of the South China Sea** and
 - near shipping lanes carrying more than \$3 trillion of annual commerce.
 - Activities there are closely watched by the United States and other major powers.

- ✓ Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea Scarborough Shoal has long been a flashpoint in the dispute between Beijing and Manila over sovereignty and fishing access.
- ✓ China claims almost the entire South China Sea via a "nine-dash line" on its maps, which cuts into parts of the Exclusive Economic Zones of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

WHAT IS CHINA PLANNING?

- China has approved creation of a nature reserve at Scarborough Shoal that **it says is to preserve a 3,524-hectare (8,708-acre) coral reef ecosystem**. It would cover the entire northeastern side of the triangle-shaped atoll, with close proximity to the sole entrance for larger vessels.
 - The announcement drew a strong reaction from the Philippines, which for years has accused China of activities that damage coral and marine life, including clam harvesting.
 - The Philippines is exploring the possibility of further international arbitration over environmental issues.
 - Beijing has made similar accusations against Manila.
- China may face scepticism and international concern about its underlying motives. There have long been expectations China might one day build a manmade island on Scarborough Shoal, as it has on seven submerged reefs in the Spratly Islands, some equipped with radar, runways and missile systems.
- U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio called the plan "destabilising" and "coercive" and said the United States stood with the Philippines.

WHO DOES IT BELONG TO?

- The Philippines and China lay claim to the Scarborough Shoal but **sovereignty has never been established** and it is **effectively under Beijing's control**.
 - *Filipino boats operate there but, are dwarfed by China's presence.*
- **China seized the shoal in 2012** *after a standoff with the Philippines* and **has since maintained a deployment there of coast guard and fishing trawlers**.
 - Manila has said some of the trawlers at the shoal and other disputed areas of the South China Sea are operated by Chinese maritime militia, which Beijing has never acknowledged.
- A landmark ruling on various South China Sea issues by the

Permanent Court of Arbitration in 2016

favoured Manila

but establishing sovereignty over Scarborough Shoal was not within its scope.

The ruling said

Beijing's blockade there violated international law
as it was a traditional fishing ground for several countries,
including China, the Philippines and Vietnam.

WHAT'S THE RISK OF CONFLICT?

- Tensions have simmered for a while at the shoal and multiple incidents *in recent years have caused diplomatic rows, but none escalated into armed conflict.*
 - The incidents have included the use of water cannon, boat-ramming and what the Philippines considers dangerously-close manoeuvres by China's coast guard, and

- jets shadowing Philippine aircraft over the shoal.
- Both sides accuse each other of provocations and trespassing.

➤ **Standing up to Beijing might score points for Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. at home and abroad, but his coast guard is under-equipped and no match for China's armada.**

- Deployment of combat vessels could be a red line neither side wants to cross.

➤ **A deterrent might be the United States**, which has taken its defence alliance with the Philippines to a new level under Marcos. Any kind of military response by China would increase the stakes considerably.

- The **Philippines and United States** have a 1951 **Mutual Defence Treaty** under which Washington would defend its ally in the event of attack, a commitment U.S. defence chiefs reinforce often. Marcos successfully lobbied for more specificity in the treaty, which now covers attacks "anywhere in the South China Sea".



16.09.2025

SC on **amended Waqf Act**: What has been stayed, what remains

While refusing to put a blanket stay on the entire amended Waqf law, the SC temporarily put on hold certain provisions.

Backdrop

- ❑ The Supreme Court on Monday (September 15) passed an interim order staying the operation of several provisions of the new Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, passed by Parliament in April.

SC's interim order

- ❑ While refusing to put a blanket stay on the entire law, a Bench comprising Chief Justice of India BR Gavai and AG Masih **temporarily put on hold provisions** that

gave district collectors wide-ranging powers over Waqf properties	and	mandated a five-year period of practising Islam to create a Waqf.
--	------------	--

- ❑ The court also **capped the number of non-Muslims who can be appointed to the Central Waqf Council and State Waqf Boards.**
- ❑ The order came in response to a batch of nearly 65 petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the new law.

- ◆ The stay will remain in place till the petitions are conclusively decided.

What is a waqf?

- ✧ Waqf is the **property** → → given in the name of **God** → → for **religious and charitable purposes.**

- ✧ In legal terms, permanent dedication by a person professing Islam, of any movable or immovable property for any purpose recognised by the Muslim law as pious, religious or charitable.

- ✧ A waqf can be formed → → through a deed or instrument,

or

a property can be deemed waqf → → → if it has been used for religious or charitable purposes for a long period of time.

- ✧ The property is managed by a designated individual known as “mutawalli”,



who acts as a supervisor



to ensure that the income generated from the property is used for the intended purpose,

such as the

- ▷ upkeep of a mosque.
- ▷ running a madrasa, or
- ▷ supporting the poor.

- ✧ A person creating the waqf cannot take back the property and the waqf would be a continuing entity.

- ✧ A non-Muslim can also create a waqf but the individual must profess Islam and the objective of creating the waqf has to be Islamic.

Challenge to the Waqf Act : Art 26

- ✧ Earlier this year, a host of petitioners challenged the law, arguing that it interfered with the fundamental right of the Muslim community to manage its own religious affairs, guaranteed under Article 26 of the Constitution.

- The petitioners include a wide array of political leaders and organisations, such as AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi, TMC

MP Mahua Moitra, RJD MP Manoj Kumar Jha, the YSR Congress Party, and the Communist Party of India.

What the Supreme Court has stayed

The court's interim order provides relief on some of the most significant changes brought by the 2025 Act.

Powers of the District Collector:

- The petitioners had challenged **Section 3C** of the amended Waqf Act, which empowered a district collector (or a designated officer) to inquire whether a property claimed as Waqf is actually government property.
- A key point of contention was a provision in this section which stated that the moment an inquiry began, the property would immediately cease to be treated as Waqf, even before a final decision was made. The Supreme Court stayed this specific provision. This means that a property will retain its status as a Waqf property while any such inquiry is pending.
- The court also stayed the **subsequent parts of Section 3C**, which allowed the designated officer, upon concluding the inquiry, to directly order corrections in revenue and Waqf board records.
- The Bench observed that entrusting a revenue officer with the determination of property titles was prima facie arbitrary and not in line with the principle of separation of powers.
 - However, to balance interests, the court directed that while Waqfs will not be dispossessed, no third-party rights can be created on such disputed properties until the matter is finally decided by a Waqf Tribunal.

Inclusion of non-Muslims in Waqf boards:

- One of the primary arguments of the petitioners was that the **new law allowed for a non-Muslim majority in Waqf boards and the Central Waqf Council,** which they argued was a violation of their right to manage their own religious affairs.

- While the Centre argued that the number of non-Muslims would be limited, the Supreme Court, **to avoid ambiguity**, issued a specific direction.

- It ordered that the

Central Waqf Council,	which has 22 members,	shall not consist of more than 4 non-Muslim members.
------------------------------	--------------------------	---

Similarly, it directed that

State Waqf Boards,	with 11 members,	shall not have more than 3 non-Muslim members.
---------------------------	---------------------	--

The ‘practising Islam for 5 years’ rule:

- The **2025 Act** amended the very definition of ‘Waqf’, stating that it could only be created by a “**person showing or demonstrating that he is practising Islam for at least five years**”. The petitioners *argued this was discriminatory and arbitrary*.
- The Supreme Court has stayed this provision, **but with a condition**.
 - The stay will remain in effect **until the government frames rules and provides a clear mechanism** for determining how a person’s religious practice over five years is to be ascertained.

What the court did not stay

The Supreme Court refused the petitioners’ prayer to stay the entire Act. Significantly, **it did not stay two other major changes**.

Doing away with ‘Waqf by use’:

- The petitioners had strongly opposed the omission of the concept of “Waqf by use”.
- **This long-standing principle meant that land used for Muslim religious or charitable purposes for a long time**

could be deemed to be a Waqf even if it was not formally registered as such.

- The government had argued that this concept was being misused to encroach upon government lands.
- The court, in its order, did not find a prima facie case to stay the prospective abolition of this concept.

Applicability of the Limitation Act:

- The **1995 Waqf Act** had specifically **excluded** the application of the **Limitation Act**, which allowed Waqfs to act against encroachments on their properties without any time limit.
 - The **2025 law removed this exemption**, meaning legal claims against encroachment must be made within a specific period.
 - ⊃ The court did not stay this provision, observing that its application removes a discrimination that existed earlier.
 - ◆ The court clarified that its observations are prima facie for the purpose of deciding the interim stay and would not prevent the parties from making detailed arguments on the validity of the law during subsequent hearings.
-

18.09.2025

Upgrading Army radars

Radars are the eyes of modern air defence systems. Learning from the experience of Op Sindoor, the Army is acquiring upgraded radar systems to tackle swarms of low-cost drones with small radar signatures

WHAT ARMY IS PROCURING

The Army is procuring both surveillance and fire control radars.

SURVEILLANCE: Scans airspace; not attached to any weapons system

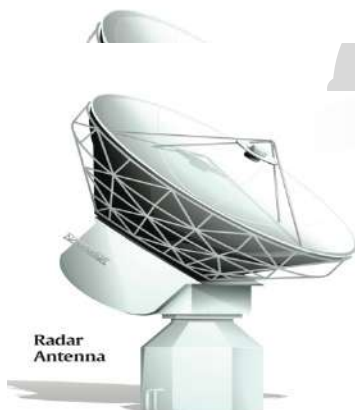
FIRE CONTROL: Used for control and targeting by weapons system

RADARS BEING PROCURED INCLUDE:

LLLWR(I) AND LLLWR(E) which are upgraded mobile surveillance radars specifically used to identify and track small, low-flying aerial threats, and

ADFCR-DD which is a mobile fire control radar that is specifically used to target small drones.

Representational image



Topic : Mains (GS)

In Delhi riots case, fabrication of evidence and witness statements by Delhi Police dent credibility of justice system

With a cloud over the investigations, a modicum of closure for the victims will remain elusive. The Delhi Police must be held accountable for its shortcomings.

- ❑ Five years after more than **50 people were killed** in one of the worst communal riots in the national capital, the wheels of justice appear to be moving slowly.
 - As of August 2025, of the **695 cases of rioting, arson, and unlawful assembly filed by Delhi Police**, verdicts have been pronounced only in 116, with 97 acquittals.
 - In themselves, these figures paint a **dismal picture of investigative and prosecutorial failures and judicial delays**.
 - They are, unfortunately, only a prologue to a more disturbing story. An investigation by this newspaper has found that in at least **93 of the 97 acquittals**, courts pointed out procedural lapses and, in some cases, outright fabrication of evidence and witness statements by the Delhi Police. Judges have pulled up investigating officers for “padding evidence”, preparing false statements to “belatedly solve the case”, and “dictating” witness statements.

- Both in themselves and as part of a broader pattern in the Delhi riots cases, the actions of the police dent the credibility of the justice system.
- ❑ During the Delhi riots, questions were raised about the police's lack of action. At times, the conduct of its personnel invited even more serious allegations.
 - *Last year, for instance, **the Delhi High Court accused the police of being “driven by a bigoted mindset”** after no action was taken against policemen who were seen in videos beating up a young man during the riots. In times when tension between communities runs high, the police must not be seen as doing anything that shows it as **prejudiced** — anything less also threatens to violate the fundamental promise of the Constitution and the rule of law.*
 - The Delhi Police was not always faithful to that principle during the riots in the city. As Additional Sessions Judge Parveen Singh pointed out while acquitting six people, there has been “a serious trampling of the rights of the accused... Such instances lead to serious erosion of the faith of the people in the investigating process and the rule of law.”
 - That none of the officers have **faced criminal action for lying to the court** points to the lack of enforcement of **anti-perjury laws**, and a broader lack of accountability where it is needed most — among those meant to uphold the law.
- ❑ The **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act** has been deployed in several of the riots cases.
 - The Act's stringent provisions relax the burden of proof and make bail for the accused extremely difficult.
 - In some cases, the police and prosecution have sought, questionably, to link the Delhi riots with the 2020 protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), and even equated the latter with terrorism.

- At the same time, the poor conviction rate in the fraction of cases in which a verdict has been pronounced is a marker of the deficiencies and inefficiencies of the criminal justice system as a whole. With a cloud over the investigations, a modicum of closure for the victims will remain elusive.

✍ The Delhi Police must be held accountable for its shortcomings. It must course correct.

19.09.2025

Prior restraint: How gag order in Adani case flies in face of what SC has ruled

In a defamation case, truth and fair comment on issues of public interest are lawful defences. Therefore, hearing the respondent becomes crucial as only the journalist can offer these defences.

Backdrop

- ❑ The **blanket gag order** by a Delhi court on September 6 against journalist Paranjay Guha Thakurta and other journalists and entities, restraining them from publishing alleged defamatory content on Adani Enterprises Limited (AEL), **flies in the face of the threshold set by the top court.**
- ❑ On Thursday (September 18), a district court set aside the September 6 order following a challenge by four journalists, Ravi Nair, Abir Dasgupta, Ayaskanta Das and Ayush Joshi. Another district judge, hearing a separate appeal filed by Guha Thakurta, has now posted the matter to September 22.

Constitutional mandate:

- ❑ This “prior restraint”, which prevents publication before a full trial can determine whether the content is actually defamatory, has been held as an unconstitutional restriction on the fundamental right guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution.

Art 19(1)(a)
Freedom of
speech and expression

- ❑ Restrictions on free speech have to be found under Article 19(2) of the Constitution which

Art 19 (2) lists out the “reasonable restrictions” that include	✓ interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India, ✓ the security of the State, ✓ friendly relations with foreign States, ✓ public order, decency or morality or ✓ in relation to contempt of court, ✓ defamation, and ✓ incitement to an offence.
---	--

- ❑ Legislations that impose a prior restraint on speech usually have a heavy burden to show that the reason for such restraint can be found under Article 19(2).
- ❑ In a defamation case, truth and fair comment on issues of public interest are lawful defences. Therefore, hearing the respondent becomes crucial as only the journalist can offer these defences.

SC's Prescription

- ❑ The Supreme Court's prescription for granting pre-trial interim injunctions in defamation cases against journalists is the **Bonnard standard**, established in the 1891 English case *Bonnard vs Perryman*.

- It states that a **court can grant an injunction**

only when it is **satisfied that**
the **defendant may not be able to justify the defamation,**
and
not merely when it suspects defamation.

- ❑ In a **2024 decision**,

the Supreme Court reiterated the Bonnard principle
while overturning an *ex parte ad interim* injunction
that had ordered

Bloomberg to take down an article about Zee Entertainment.

**Bloomberg
vs
Zee Entertainment**

- The SC, in the *Bloomberg* decision, had also **established a high threshold for granting *ex parte* injunctions in free speech cases**, criticising the trial court for granting such orders without proper justification.
 - The Court underlined that such orders must be granted **only when not granting them would cause "greater injustice" than granting them.**
 - "In essence, the grant of a pre-trial injunction against the publication of an article may have severe ramifications on the right to freedom of speech of the author and the public's right to know. An injunction, particularly *ex parte*, should not be granted without establishing that the content sought to be restricted is 'malicious' or 'palpably false'. Granting interim

injunctions, before the trial commences, in a cavalier manner results in the stifling of public debate. In other words, courts should not grant ex parte injunctions except in exceptional cases where the defence advanced by the respondent would undoubtedly fail at trial,” the top court had said in the *Bloomberg* case.



ANTI-AUSTERITY PROTESTS IN FRANCE

A protester holds a labour union flag during a demonstration in Nantes on Thursday. *Reuters*

■ Hundreds of thousands took part in anti-austerity protests across France, urging President Emmanuel Macron and PM Sebastien Lecornu to scrap looming budget cuts.

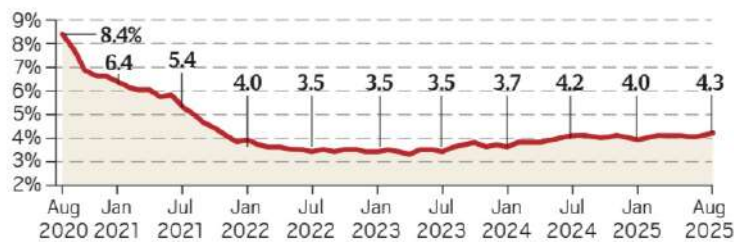
■ Teachers, pharmacists and hospital staff were among those who went on strike, while teens blocked schools. Protests took place in Lyon, Nice, Marseille, Nantes, etc.

■ Protesters are calling for the previous govt's fiscal plans to be scrapped, more spending on public services, higher taxes on the wealthy, and for the reversal of a pension rule.

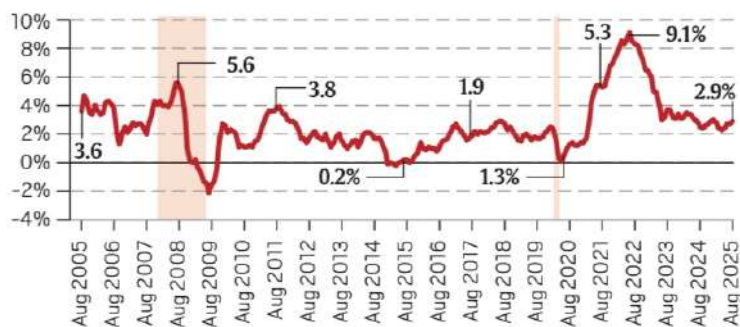
Fed's dual mandate conundrum

Political pressures aside, the US Fed faces a difficult predicament with inflation and unemployment rising at the same time. Put simply, it cannot address one problem without making the other worse

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE: TRENDING UP SINCE JANUARY



CONSUMER PRICE INDEX: ALSO TRENDING UP SINCE JANUARY



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

ECONOMICS MADE EASY MONETARY POLICY

Monetary policy refers to the supply of money and the cost of credit (read interest rates) in an economy.

■ When a central bank wants to boost economic activity, it makes it cheaper for people to borrow money by reducing interest rates. When it wants to rein in inflation, it makes borrowing more costly.

■ The rates, in turn, influence global stock markets: lower rates imply more money flowing into markets and as a result, indices going up.

■ The Fed independently sets the United States's monetary policy. In India, it is set by the RBI.

■ Changes in US monetary policy have global ramifications: the Fed's rates determine the rate at which anyone in the world can lend to the US government, considered to be the least risky loan and the second safest bet to buying gold.

❑ On Wednesday (September 17), the Federal Reserve, the central bank for the United States, announced its latest monetary policy review.

❑ Monetary policy essentially refers to the supply of money and the cost of credit (read interest rate) in an economy.

❑ When it comes to the US Fed, policy changes have **wide ramifications not just for the US economy** (which by itself is around 25% of the global economy) **but also for the rest of the world.**

○ That's because the interest rates set by the US Fed affect the rate at which anyone in the world can lend to the US government.

**US economy
25% of global economy**

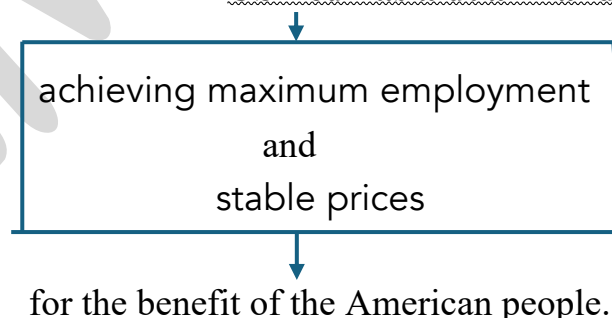
- Lending to the US government is considered to be the least risky loan, and the second safest bet to buying gold.

Trump and Co, accusation against Fed :

- ❑ Trump and his closest economic advisors have been levelling a variety of criticisms at Powell and the Fed, ranging from the Fed having a **political bias** against the Trump administration to the Fed becoming all **too powerful** in determining the economic destiny of Americans to the Fed becoming inefficient.
- ❑ Last month, Trump fired **Lisa Cook**, one of the governors in the Fed's Board of Governors via a post on social media, though court quickly ruled against it.
- ❑ On Monday, the Senate confirmed the appointment of **Stephen Miran**, a close Trump ally, the man said to be responsible for Trump's tariff policies.

Challenges in front of Fed:

- ❑ Politics aside, the US economy is going through a phase which would challenge the US Fed regardless of who is heading it.
 - That's because the US Fed has a dual mandate:



- ❑ Typically, at any point in time, only one of these goals is a matter of concern for the Fed. That's because



high inflation happens when growth is surging and lots of new jobs are getting created.

On occasions when growth is faltering and unemployment is rising, inflation is also quite low.

❑ *But since the start of the year,*

growth has been faltering,

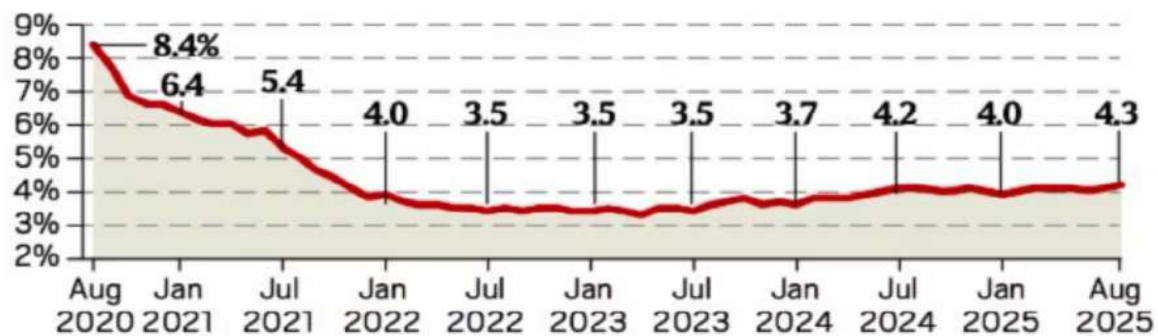
unemployment has been rising even as inflation is starting to trend up

(See charts).

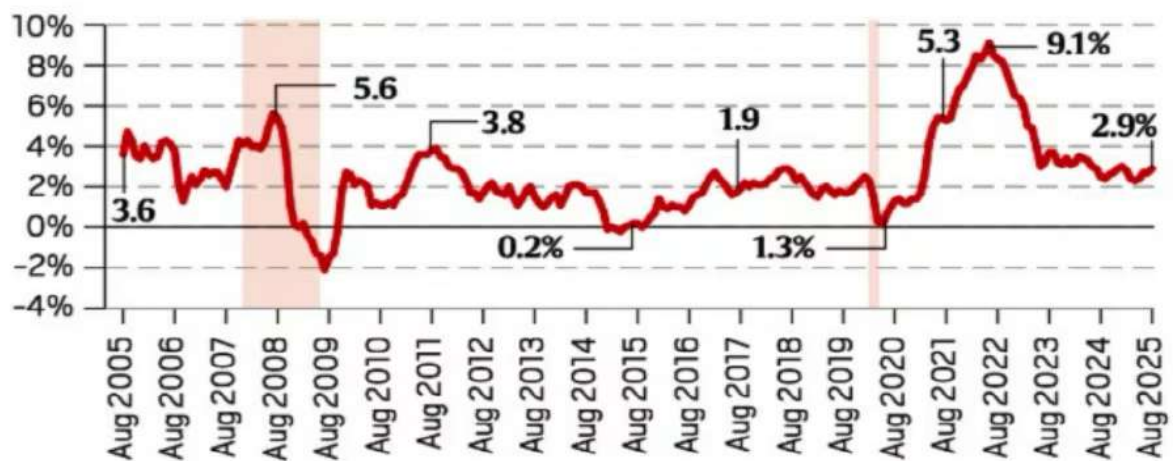
✍ This means whatever the Fed does to boost growth — say cut interest rates — can fuel inflation.

✍ Alternatively, if it raises interest rates or keeps them at high levels to contain inflation, economic growth will get choked and employment will suffer.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE: TRENDING UP SINCE JANUARY



CONSUMER PRICE INDEX: ALSO TRENDING UP SINCE JANUARY



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Know for you :

Key questions:

Thanks to the complexities, despite the rate cut, there are many questions that linger.

Why did the Fed cut interest rates?

On the face of it, the rate cut has happened because the Fed is concerned about unemployment trending up but the fact is that, at 4.3%, it is still low enough to not trigger a rate cut.

Then why did the Fed cut rates?

Powell says the **US is in a “low firing, low hiring” phase**. That is, few people are being fired from jobs but fewer still are being recruited. And his worry is that this situation can very quickly worsen substantially if firings increase.

Summary :- **Fear of sharply higher layoffs and rising unemployment.**

What about inflation?

It continues to inch up since April when it was trending down before it. **Wouldn't an interest rate cut risk spiking inflation?**

Powell said that people should see this rate cut as a “**risk management cut**”

In other words, the Fed is trying to balance both the goals in a manner that neither becomes an overwhelming problem.

What lies ahead?

So what lies ahead? Would the Fed cut more in the remaining two meetings of the year in October and December? **Would it continue to cut in 2026?**

✍ **No matter what the Fed does or doesn't do, the situation is such that there are risks either way.**

What about Trump's ‘interference’?

✧ **In any economy, governments are the biggest borrowers.**

– And like any borrower, **they want lower interest rates.**

✧ A mark of **faltering economy** is that → → **the fiscal policymakers (government) intervenes in the functioning of the monetary policymakers (the central bank).**

– With Trump openly asking for a rate cut and berating the Fed chair, the fear the world over is that the US will lose the key attribute that makes it the most trusted financial system in the world: The Independence of the Fed.

⇒ After all, it is the world's faith that the Fed is free to conduct monetary policy without political intervention that makes everyone trust the US dollar.

✧ Powell on Wednesday reiterated that the Fed remains independent.

Upshot

- ✓ It is said that no man can serve two masters. At present the Fed finds itself in a similar predicament: It cannot do justice to its dual mandate thanks to both inflation and unemployment worsening at the same time.
 - ✓ A large part of this problem is an artificial one: Trump's tariffs and immigration policies have raised prices on the one hand and curtailed labor supply on the other. There is little that the US Fed could do about either.
 - ◆ In the months ahead, the US Fed may undergo substantive changes, with calls for an independent inquiry into its functioning, even as the US goes for mid-term polls in 2026
-

20.09.2025

KURMI agitation

Kurmi : Info

Language : **Kurmali**

mainly a peasant community found in	▪ the Chota Nagpur plateau areas of West Bengal [Jhargram, Bankura, Paschim Medinipur, Purulia] ▪ Jharkhand ▪ parts of Odisha.
Several members of the community also live in Assam and North Bengal ,	having migrated from the Chota Nagpur plateau.
They were classified as STs in the 1931 Census by the British	but were excluded from the list in 1950 ,
	depriving them of benefits.
In 2004 , the Jharkhand government recommended that the community be added to the ST list rather than be categorised as Other Backward Classes (OBCs).	

- ✓ For the fourth time in as many years, Kurmis in West Bengal have revived their agitation for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status, placing the Trinamool Congress (TMC) government in a spot of bother ahead of the festival season.
- ✓ The protest comes even after the Calcutta High Court on September 18 declared the protest programme of the Kurmis as “illegal and unconstitutional”. However, Kurmi leaders, so far, have maintained they will hold a “peaceful” agitation. The court’s ruling had come following a petition by the Purulia Chamber of Trade and Commerce.

- ✓ The Kurmis had organised protests in both 2022 and 2023 over their demand for ST status and **inclusion of their language, Kurmali, in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.**

Political equation therewith:

↳ Kurmi vote bank:

- With an estimated **population of about 50 lakh** in the state, Kurmis claim to hold sway in about **30 Assembly seats in Jhargram, Purulia, and Bankura**, making them indispensable in the political calculations.

↳ Adivasi communities – Reservation issue:

- For the incumbent TMC government, this is a politically tricky matter as engaging in dialogue with the Kurmis will spark protests from Adivasi communities that will oppose Kurmis getting a share of reservation benefits from their quota pie.
 - This is why the TMC has adopted a **wait-and-watch approach** and is not keen on making public statements at the moment.
-

21.09.2025

SEPT 21 DEADLINE SETS OFF PANIC | TECH FIRMS WILL LOVE IT: TRUMP | \$1-MN GOLD CARD ANNOUNCED

After 50% tariff, \$100,000 annual fee for H-1B visa: Trump's latest hits skilled Indian labour in US



“Is that person valuable enough (for the employer to pay) \$100,000 a year to the government... That's the point of immigration: hire Americans, make sure people coming in are the top, top people. The President is crystal clear. Valuable people only for America. Stop the nonsense.”

HOWARD LUTNICK, US Commerce Secretary, alongside President Donald Trump at Oval Office

EMPLOYERS WITH MOST H-1B STAFF

OVERALL (FY25)

Amazon	10,044
TCS	5,505
Microsoft	5,189
Meta	5,123
Apple	4,202
Google	4,181
Cognizant	2,493
JP Morgan	2,440
Walmart	2,390
Deloitte	2,353

INDIAN FIRMS (FY24)

Infosys	8,137
TCS	7,566
HCL America	2,952
LTIMindtree	2,136
Wipro	1,636
Tech Mahindra Americas	1,199
L&T Technology Services	351

Source: US DHS, US Citizenship and Immigration Services data

INDIANS DOMINATE H-1B VISA APPROVALS

Country of Birth	FY23		FY24	
	H-1B visas approved	Share (%)	H-1B visas approved	Share (%)
India	279,386	72.3	283,397	71
China	45,344	11.7	46,680	11.7
Philippines	4,619	1.2	5,248	1.3
Canada	3,852	1	4,222	1.1
South Korea	3,603	<1	3,983	1
TOTAL	386,318		399,395	

Source: US Citizenship and Immigration Services data; US FY: Oct-Sep

Visit :-

<https://youtu.be/AnhGkwcpv2k>

21.09.2025

Topic : Mains (GS)

H-1B visa fees: US protectionism **is targeting mobility of high-skilled professionals**

India's IT sector leaders have formidable talent; they need to look beyond their cost-plus, labour arbitrage mode

In recent weeks, there have been signs of a thaw in India-US relations. But the Donald Trump administration's announcement of raising the H-1B visa fees is a setback — it effectively targets Indians, by far, the biggest beneficiaries of the programme. It's clear that labour mobility and services are the latest targets of America's protectionist policies, which have, till now, used tariffs to repress the goods trade. Both ends of the employment spectrum are now under pressure — tariffs on goods have a bearing on low and semi-skilled jobs, while the visa fee will impact high-skilled IT jobs. Trump's latest salvo will, no doubt, cast a shadow over the India-US trade talks — Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal is slated to visit the US in the coming days.

The Trump administration may well believe that IT firms have “manipulated the H-1B system”. But the move will have wide-ranging consequences for the US economy as well. Ensuring cost-effective labour replacement will be difficult for US companies. The demand-supply mismatch will put pressure on firm margins. More critically, skilled migrant workers form the core of the US knowledge and innovation ecosystem. As University of California economist Giovanni Peri has pointed out, 26 per cent of US-based Nobel Prize winners from 1990 to 2000 were immigrants. Stuart Anderson of the National Foundation for American Policy and Michaela Platzer of Content First, LLC, have also shown that between 1990-2005, 25 per cent of founders of public venture-backed US companies were immigrants. As companies are now unlikely to fork out \$100,000 for each visa, talent may simply move to other, more welcoming parts of the world.

The visa fee hike will impact operations of both American and Indian businesses — Indian IT majors like Infosys, TCS, HCL and Wipro have the most H-1B staff on their payrolls, as do US tech giants like Amazon, Microsoft, Meta, Apple and Google. The move will disrupt onshore projects of Indian tech companies. The Indian IT sector, already confronted with an uncertain global environment and grappling with the fallout of increasing adoption of AI, has its task cut out. A reduced flow of migrants could also have implications for remittances to India — the US accounted for 27.7 per cent of all remittances to the country in 2023-24. But there could be some silver linings. The visa restrictions could provide an impetus to India's Global Capacity Centres. Britta Glennon of the Wharton School of Business has shown that restrictions on H-1B immigration result in increased foreign employment, with firms opening more offices and hiring more people. Such an expansion tends to be concentrated in Canada, India, and China. Indian policymakers and the industry have no time to lose. While India and other countries can do little to influence the ideological foundations of the American discourse on immigration, the question is what can be done domestically. Can the innovation hubs that power the US economy be replicated in India? Trump may, hopefully, soften his stance. The market, hopefully, will push him to do so. But hope, when it comes to Trump, is no strategy. India's IT sector leaders have formidable talent, they need to look beyond their cost-plus, labour arbitrage model, get better at creating talent and nurturing an enabling ecosystem.

Topic : Mains (GS)

Saudi-Pakistan defence pact **shouldn't alarm India**

But the pact should still prompt reflection on India's reluctance to extend security support to partners in the Gulf.

India has done well to react with restraint to last week's signing of the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. Over

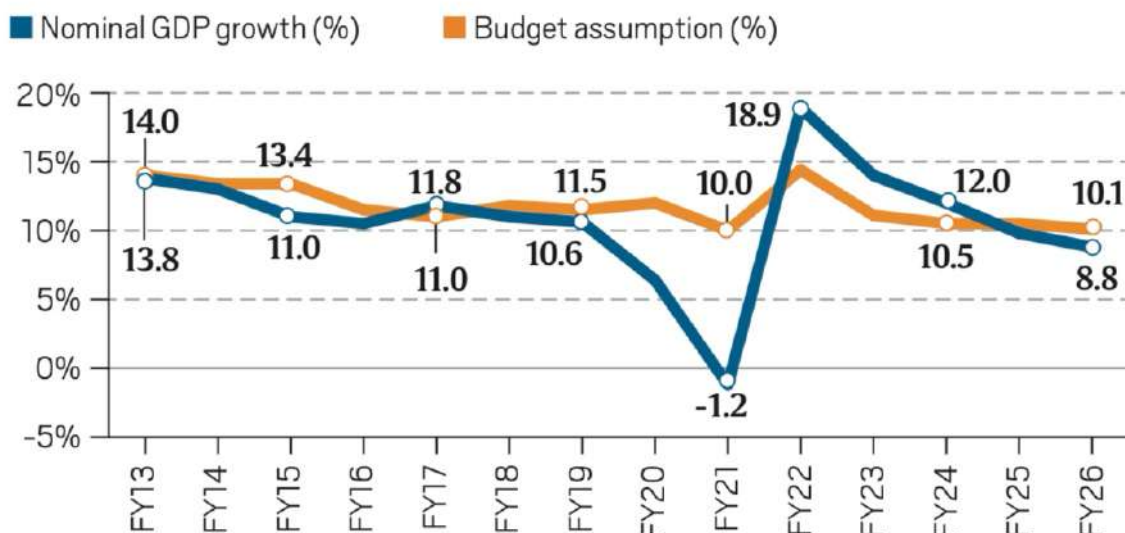
the past decade, Delhi has built an increasingly substantive partnership with Riyadh; Saudi officials also appear to have kept India informed about their talks with Pakistan. This has spared New Delhi the temptation for an over-the-top response of the kind so visible on social media. The pact is undeniably important for the kingdom and for the West Asian region, where India's stakes have grown rapidly. Amid India's current tensions with Pakistan, it deserves careful assessment. Saudi motivations for rebooting its long-standing security ties with Pakistan are not hard to discern. Signals from the Trump Administration that Washington is no longer a reliable security guarantor for the Arab Gulf— despite the region's lavish indulgence of the US President — have compelled Riyadh to diversify its options. Israel's growing military assertiveness — bombing Arab targets with impunity — has added urgency. And America's inability to “defang” Iran — its nuclear programme and its proxies that threaten the Kingdom — has left Riyadh little room for complacency.

Yet, much of the commentary about a Pakistani “nuclear umbrella” for Saudi Arabia and the Gulf is exaggerated. Having long financed Pakistan's faltering economy, and even underwritten parts of its nuclear programme, the Saudis are now merely collecting old IOUs in Rawalpindi. It is Pakistan's establishment that is taking the real risk by posing as a Gulf security provider. Since Partition, the Pakistan Army has offered various low-level security services to Saudi Arabia and other Gulf monarchies. But it is in no position to confront either Israel — with its unlimited US backing — or Iran, a difficult neighbour for decades. Domestic opposition in Pakistan further constrains Rawalpindi. In 2015, for example, Pakistan's parliament unanimously rejected participation in a Saudi-led coalition against the Iran-backed Houthis. The simplest explanation for the latest bravado may lie in the ambitions of Pakistan's army Asim Munir, who seems to be reaching for foreign-policy adventures to shore up his position at home.

Delhi, therefore, has little reason for panic. But the pact should still prompt reflection on India's reluctance to extend security support to partners in the Gulf. But can India forever remain a mercantilist by-stander in the Gulf? Despite the growing salience of its partnerships in the Gulf, Delhi has chosen to stay on the margins of the region's geopolitics. This may be an opportune moment for Delhi to debate the prospects —and constraints — of a more active involvement in the region's security.

Decoded: **Real vs nominal GDP** – Key differences and which is more reliable

NOMINAL GROWTH VS BUDGET ASSUMPTION



Note: FY26 nominal GDP growth is for Q1

Source: MoSPI, Budget documents

LINK BETWEEN INFLATION, FISCAL ARITHMETIC

■ GDP measures the monetary value of all goods and services produced within a country within a timeframe. The GDP growth figure usually cited is after adjusting for inflation to arrive at the 'real GDP

growth rate', but the number more relevant for the government is the unadjusted, or nominal GDP.

■ With inflation low, nominal GDP growth has been weaker than anticipated so far this year.

Missing nominal GDP growth targets

- To be sure, nominal GDP growth regularly misses the government's Budget assumption; *after all, making economic forecasts is difficult at the best of times.*
 - Over the last 13 years, actual nominal GDP growth of the Indian economy has been lower than the Budget assumption on 9 occasions.

- The recent past, though, is in the government's favour: in three of the last four years, nominal growth has been higher than what the Budget had anticipated.

❑ There is also what is called the **base effect**.

- The GDP for 2024-25 has now been revised higher by 2 per cent to Rs 331 lakh crore.
- This means that to meet the Budget assumption of Rs 357 lakh crore for the current fiscal, **nominal GDP growth only has to be 8 per cent**.

Nominal GDP	Real GDP
Nominal GDP reflects the total value of goods and services produced within a country during a given period <u>at current market prices</u>. This figure <u>does not account for inflation or deflation</u>, capturing the economic output at prevailing prices. Nominal GDP is <u>valuable for comparing economic output across countries at a specific time</u>. However, since it does not adjust for inflation, ○ <u>changes in nominal GDP may simply reflect price hikes</u> rather than actual growth in <u>production</u>.	Real GDP <u>adjusts for inflation</u> by using prices from a <u>fixed base year</u>. ○ This adjustment eliminates the effects of price changes, isolating the <u>actual growth in production</u>. By focusing on <u>constant prices</u>, real GDP provides a clearer and more accurate measure of an economy's performance over time. It is particularly useful ○ for assessing long-term trends, ○ formulating economic policies, and

This limitation makes nominal GDP less reliable for assessing an economy's long-term growth trends.	○ understanding changes in living standards when considered on a per capita basis.
--	--

Why is real GDP more reliable?

1) True representation of economic growth:

Real GDP is considered more reliable because it accounts for inflation, offering a true representation of economic growth.

- Nominal GDP, on the other hand, can increase merely due to rising prices, masking the real state of production and growth.

2) Targeting Inflation @ helpful for Policymakers :

For policymakers and economists, real GDP is invaluable for distinguishing between price-driven changes and actual growth.

- For example, if nominal GDP rises but real GDP remains flat, it indicates that the increase is due to inflation rather than a rise in production.

3) Analysing long-term economic trends:

Real GDP also helps in evaluating long-term economic trends and making informed decisions on fiscal and monetary policies.

- Whether responding to inflation or recessions, real GDP offers insights critical for achieving sustainable growth.

Real vs nominal GDP in practice in India

India's GDP growth trends illustrate the practical differences between real and nominal GDP:

- **2014-15:** Real and nominal GDP grew at 7.41 per cent.

- **2015-16:** Real GDP rose to 8.00 per cent, while nominal GDP spiked to 13.60 per cent, driven by inflation.
- **2020-21:** A pandemic-induced contraction saw real GDP decline by -6.60 per cent and nominal GDP by -2.96 per cent.
- **2021-22:** Economic recovery boosted real GDP growth to 8.68 per cent, with nominal GDP growth at 17.61 per cent.
- **2024-25 (projected):** Real GDP is expected to grow at 6.4 per cent, while nominal GDP is forecasted at 9.7 per cent.

✍ These figures **demonstrate how nominal GDP can be influenced by inflation,** while real GDP provides a more accurate picture of actual economic performance.

Impact and importance

Real GDP

- ✧ Real GDP is crucial for understanding long-term trends and formulating effective policies.
- ✧ It reflects genuine growth in production, helping policymakers gauge the economy's true health and allocate resources efficiently.
- ✧ Businesses and investors also rely on real GDP data for forecasting and planning.

Nominal GDP

- ✧ Nominal GDP, while helpful for comparing economies at a single point in time,
 - is less reliable for long-term analysis due to its susceptibility to price fluctuations.

Conclusion

Both nominal and real GDP play important roles in economic analysis, but real GDP is generally regarded as a better measure of economic growth. By accounting for inflation, real GDP provides a clearer, more accurate picture of an economy's performance, making it indispensable for policymakers, businesses, and investors alike.

N.B:

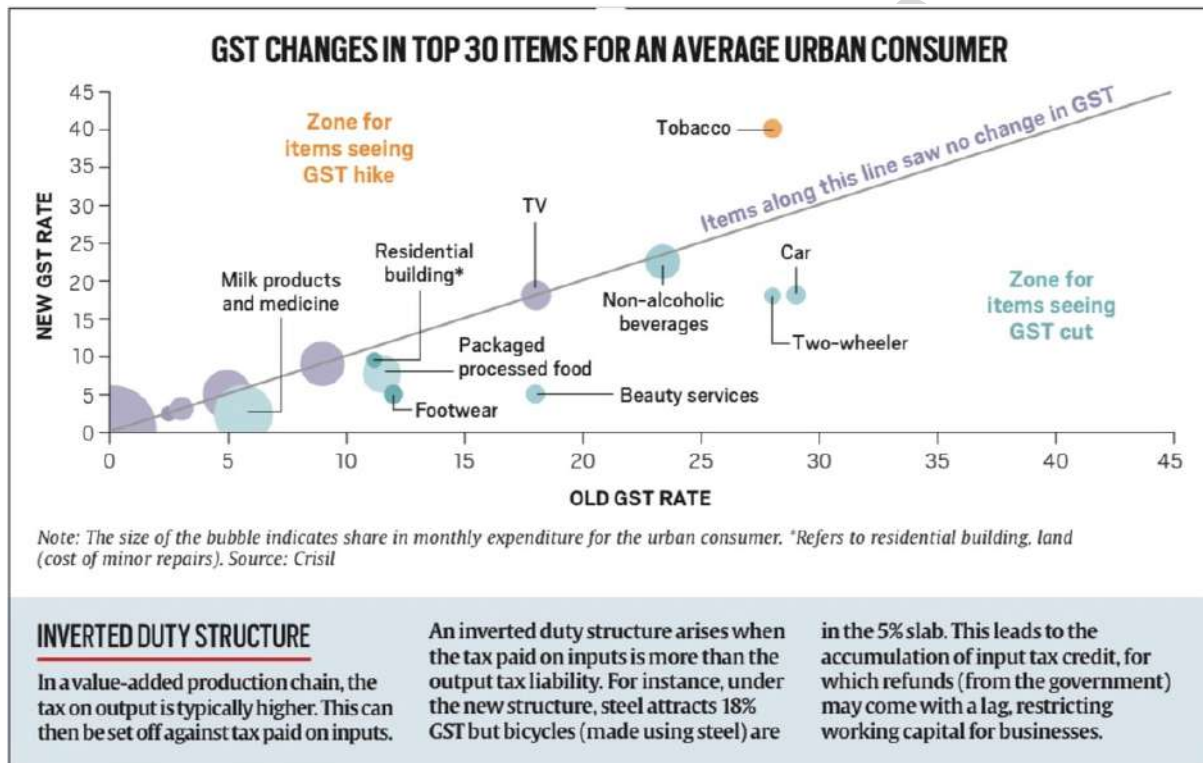
Is low inflation bad?

- ✓ Low inflation is not always bad when it comes to impacting nominal GDP growth. What matters is why its low.
 - ✓ It's best if prices are subdued because of oversupply and not weak demand.
-

23.09.2025

GST 2.0: What changes

The GST rate rejig will leave more disposable income in the hands of the consumer and, as a result, spur consumption. But a few concerns, especially regarding inverted duty structure on certain items, remain



UP government order on ‘**caste-based signs**’: Don’t silence the marginalised

Assertion of caste by upper caste individuals or groups might, intentionally or otherwise, intimidate marginalised castes. For the latter, in contrast, public displays of identity – especially in political contexts -- are a way to counter historical injustices.

Introduction

- Through much of the freedom struggle and in the decades since Independence, **India’s politics and democracy have contended with caste —**
- as an axis of historical and ongoing discrimination,
 - an arena for affirmative action, and
 - one of the primary modes of political and social mobilisation.

Backdrop

- *While navigating these complexities is an ongoing task,* the Uttar Pradesh government’s decision to prohibit “**public display of caste-based signs**” **during political rallies**,
- citing that **it might promote conflict**, turns the clock back and undermines the gains made through an evolving politics.

Welcoming part

- The government's directive issued to state officials is welcome insofar as it asks the **police not to reveal the caste of an accused** — this is inherently discriminatory and could impact investigations.

Contentious part

- However, the decision **not to allow caste markers across public spaces, including vehicles and rallies, presumes a non-discriminatory society.**
 - The directive appears blind to the ground realities, especially the various ways in which caste operates today.
 - Assertion of caste by upper-caste individuals or groups might, intentionally or otherwise, intimidate marginalised castes.
 - **For the latter, in contrast, public displays of identity — especially in political contexts — are a way to counter historical injustices.**
- The UP government's decision blurs this line and undermines the long struggle for visibility and equality.
 - It also flies in the face of the Centre's decision to enumerate caste in the upcoming Census for the “holistic interests and values of the nation and society”.

Allahabad High Court : Recent Verdict

- The UP government's directive followed the Allahabad High Court's September 16 order, which **asked the Home Department and the DGP to frame and implement standard operating procedures to prohibit the disclosure of caste in any police documents** except for the cases filed under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.
- Criticising the practice of putting up **caste identifiers on cars, homes and slamming the social media reels** that “often romanticise caste aggression and dominance, rural masculinity, and regressive honour codes”, the court observed: “**The socio-psychological, cultural, and legal dimensions of such behaviour reveal how the assertion of caste in public domains**

undermines constitutional morality and reflects an identity crisis rooted in historical superiority and modern insecurity.”

➤ The HC order echoes the essence of **SC/ST (PoA) Act, 1989**

which considers intentional insult or intimidation

“with intent to humiliate”

a member of the SC or ST communities

in any place within public view, an offence.

➤ In contrast, the government directive is a blunt instrument, ill-suited to the complexities of caste discrimination and assertion.

➤ The directive goes against the spirit of

the rights to equality (**Articles 14-18**), and
freedom of expression and speech, and
assembly in **Articles 19(1)(a) and (b)**
respectively.

Conclusion :

✂ **Historical injustice and lack of representation** are recognised by the Constitution, just as free speech is protected by it.

✂ **Caste mobilisation is a phenomenon across the political spectrum.** From the Brahmin Mahapanchayat in Rajasthan to the BJP’s allies in UP — NISHAD party, Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party or Apna Dal — **caste-based mobilisations are not uncommon.**

✧ The path to the “annihilation of caste”, as B R Ambedkar saw it, was not by ignoring its realities.

- In fact, he suggested the opposite:

Recognition of caste discrimination
and
targeted affirmative action.

✧ The UP government should limit the directive’s ambit — it should go by the HC order.

For Your Own Curiosity:-

Hidden in aircraft’s wheel well, Afghan teen flew 94 mins from Kabul to Delhi – and survived

According to sources, the boy intended to travel to Iran but mistakenly boarded the Delhi-bound flight.

- A 13-year-old boy from Kunduz, in Afghanistan, wanted to travel to Iran. So, early on Sunday morning, he sneaked into the Kabul airport, trailed a group of passengers, and stowed away in an aircraft’s rear wheel well — the internal compartment which houses the landing gear — carrying just a “small red-coloured audio speaker”. But, it was a flight bound for Delhi, not Tehran.

- ❑ For over 90 minutes, the boy flew in the wheel well, miraculously landing unscathed at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport in the Capital, where he was seen wandering around by some airport staff. By evening, he was sent back on a flight to Kabul, ending his day's adventure.

➤ Commercial aircraft

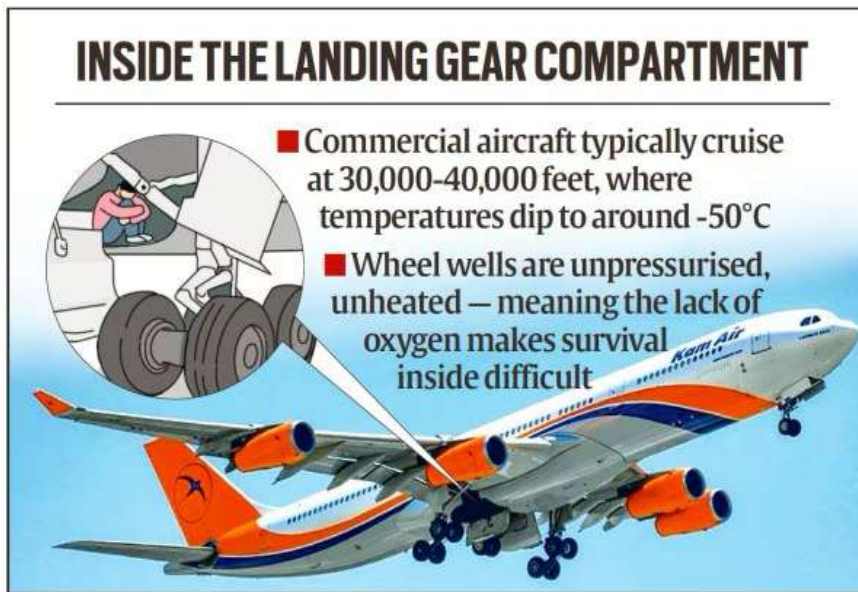
- typically cruise at **altitudes between 30,000 and 40,000 feet**,
 - where temperatures plummet to around **-50 degrees Celsius**.
- ✍ **Unlike the aircraft cabin that is pressurised**, lack of oxygen makes survival difficult for a person travelling in a wheel well, which is neither heated nor pressurised.

- The **mortality rate** for wheel well stowaways is estimated at around **77%**
 - Apart from *hypoxia* due to lack of sufficient oxygen and
 - *hypothermia* due to freezing temperatures,
 - the chances of *fatal injury* by the movement of the landing gear
 - as well as the *risk of falling out* are high.

History of journey :

- ✂ According to US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) data, **132 people** tried to travel in the landing gear compartments of commercial aircraft **between 1947 and 2021**.

- ✂ There was an incident involving **Indian** wheel well stowaways in **1996**. Pradeep Saini and Vijay Saini managed to get into the wheel well of a British Airways Boeing 747 aircraft operating a flight from **Delhi to London**. *Pradeep survived the long-haul flight, but Vijay didn't.*



24.09.2025

Trump’s **clampedown on paracetamol** is not just anti science — it’s anti people

It’s the latest in a series of measures that **could make the world more vulnerable and dent the credibility of American science**

In News :-

Acetaminophen,	also known as	Tylenol or paracetamol,
-----------------------	---------------	---

is among the **most widely used painkillers.**

Like all other medicines, it should be taken under a physician’s care.

Contentious issue :-

links between

acetaminophen and autism.

Trump's call :-

- ✓ US President Donald Trump has said doctors in the country will soon be advised not to prescribe the pain reliever to pregnant women, linking the drug with autism.

Summary of both

- NO to pregnant women
- FDA will change the **safety level**

Health Secretary's call :-

- ✓ In a similar vein, the country's Health Secretary, Robert F Kennedy Jr., had said that the FDA would also initiate the process of changing the safety label on the medication and launch a public health campaign to raise awareness.

Contrasting view @ AUTISM link :-

- ✓ Medicines should, indeed, undergo review, and
 - a section of scientists has cited rigorous studies to rule out the links between acetaminophen and autism.
 - Another group of scientists has taken a somewhat more nuanced view on the causes of autism — they argue against singling out a medicine or a vaccine, and instead underline factors such as **genetic predisposition** and **environmental exposure.**

Problem with Trump-Kennedy approach :-

- ✓ The problem with the Trump-Kennedy approach **is not just the refusal to engage with scientific knowledge.**
 - The US President and the Health Secretary **seem to be playing on the legitimate anxieties of the American public over the growing cases of autism** to target acetaminophen.

- Their focus on an unproven link could be a distraction in the fight against the developmental disorder.

CDC vs Trump :-

- ✓ The clampdown on acetaminophen is the latest in a series of measures that could dent the credibility of American science.
- ✎ Last month, one **top official** of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) **was fired**, after she clashed with Kennedy over vaccine policy.
 - Kennedy is a known vaccine sceptic, and his handling of the US measles crisis has received flak.
- ✎ Another **top vaccine official** of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), **resigned** in March after accusing the US health secretary of spreading misinformation.
- ✎ The CDC has faced
 - budget cuts,
 - layoffs,
 - resignations, and
 - an array of questionable changes to protocols.
- ✎ The **fund crunch** in the premier US institution is impacting research on infectious diseases in other parts of the world.
 - ◆ For instance,
 - the world's largest study on the safety of Covid vaccines, stewarded by the New Zealand-based Global Vaccine Data Centre, was terminated in April, a year shy of completion, because the cash-strapped CDC couldn't afford to fund it.
 - HIV research has been undermined because the Trump administration has paralysed the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Research, which funds not only treatment,

but also millions of HIV tests every year that help scientists gauge the spread of the virus.

Conclusion :-

- ✓ Public health experts are worried that Trump's diatribe — “**Don't take Tylenol**”, “**Fight like hell not to take it**” — and the FDA's strictures on paracetamol could create confusion beyond the US and affect treatment of high fevers among pregnant women, a real and documented risk to foetal health.
 - ✓ Trump and Kennedy may position their policies as “**Making America Healthy Again**”, **but they are actually making the world more vulnerable.**
-

25.09.2025

Ladakh : Protests **demanding statehood,** **autonomy from Centre**

Ladakh protests, Sonam Wangchuk hunger strike:

The issue dates back to 2019, since Article 370 was repealed and the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 was passed.

Ladakh protests:

- ☐ Protestors demanding statehood and the Sixth Schedule for Ladakh set a BJP office on fire, and police fired teargas shells to disperse them on Wednesday (September 24).
- ☐ This triggered a massive shutdown sponsored by the Leh Apex Body (LAB) in Ladakh's Leh town.
- ☐ **4 were killed and 30 others** were injured in intense clashes between protesters and security personnel.

Demand

- Statehood
- 6th Schedule

- ❑ Climate activist **Sonam Wangchuk** ended his **15-day hunger fast** following the violence.

- In a social media post, Wangchuk appealed to Ladakh's youth, urging them to protest peacefully and not derail the movement of over five years, which seeks to urge the Centre to advance talks on the long-pending demands.....**has been slapped with NSA on 26th September.**

What has spurred the protests in Ladakh?

- ❑ The issue dates back to **2019**, since

Article 370 was repealed
and
the **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019**
was passed.

The result was
the **bifurcation of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir**
into two **Union Territories**:

J&K with a legislature,	and	Ladakh without one.
----------------------------	-----	------------------------

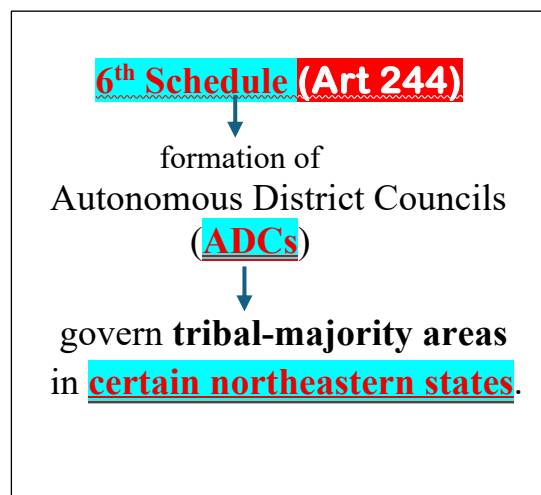
- ❑ The political and legal status of Ladakh has remained contentious since, with the people of the UT finding themselves **under direct central administration.**

What is the demand for the Sixth Schedule in Ladakh?

- ❑ Given that over 90% of Ladakh's population belongs to the Scheduled Tribes, there has been a consistent demand to include the region under the Sixth Schedule.

90% population ST

- ❑ The Sixth Schedule under **Article 244** of the Indian Constitution provides for the formation of autonomous administrative regions called Autonomous District Councils (ADCs), which govern tribal-majority areas in certain northeastern states.



❑ **ADCs**

have up to 30 members	with a term of 5 years	can make laws, rules and regulations on ➤ land, ➤ forest, ➤ water, ➤ agriculture, ➤ village councils, ➤ health, ➤ sanitation, ➤ village-and town-level policing, etc.
------------------------------	-------------------------------	--

Currently, there are 10 ADCs in the North East ,			
Assam	Meghalaya	Mizoram	Tripura
3	3	3	1

Who is Sonam Wangchuk?

- ❑ Wangchuk is an **engineer and innovator of sustainable products**.
- ❑ He is best known as having inspired a character essayed by Aamir Khan in the 2009 Hindi film 3 Idiots.
- ❑ In 2018, he was awarded the prestigious **Ramon Magsaysay Award**, in recognition of “his **uniquely systematic, collaborative and community-driven reform of learning systems in remote northern India**, thus

improving the life opportunities of Ladakhi youth, and his constructive engagement of all sectors in local society... setting an example for minority peoples in the world.”

What is Wangchuk’s role in the protests?

Staunch advocate for 6 th Schedule inclusion demand @ autonomy for Ladakh @ all through		
2019 → wrote to Union Govt → seeking Scheduled Area status under 6 th Schedule		Though was assured by, no subsequent discussion in between as confirmed by Wangchuk in 2023
Student-led protests in 2019	were supported by former MP Thupstan Chhewang,	who then created the Apex Body Leh(ABL).
Organisations in Kargil also came together to form the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA).		
Wangchuk has maintained that protections under the Sixth Schedule were an election promise made by the BJP in 2019 , and that the Government of India has to keep its word.		
He also said the people of Ladakh have demanded <u>the decentralisation of power as they believe that “lower levels of bureaucracy” may have been “influenced by industrial powers and business houses”, who wanted “mining to take place in every valley here”.</u>		

Is this the first time protests have broken out?

No.

➤ **March, 2024 – Wangchuk’s fast @ 21 days @ sub-zero temperature**

- On March 6 2024, two days after talks among the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, the ABL and KDA fizzled out, Wangchuk and others began a fast in Leh. He subsisted on water and salt and slept outdoors in sub-zero temperatures for 21 days.

➤ **“Pashmina march” @ Issues :- Shepherds, loss of land due to setting up industry, activities along the LAC @ cancelled @ Section 144 imposed**

- Subsequently, a planned ‘Pashmina march’ to the China border was cancelled, with Wangchuk claiming the administration told them Section 144 would be imposed, which prohibited unlawful assemblies. The march meant to highlight the issues faced by shepherds who have traditionally reared the famed Pashmina goats in Leh. These included the loss of land to corporations who planned to set up large industrial plants, and the activities of the Chinese along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), according to Wangchuk.

➤ **September, 2024 @ ‘Delhi Chalo Padyatra’ @ 4 point agenda**

- **Many in Leh had initially welcomed the 2019 moves** revoking special status for J&K, and had demanded UT status and separation from the administrative set-up of J&K.

However, Ladakhis soon began to feel the loss of

significant powers of the autonomous hill development councils, and the shortage of jobs after being delinked from the J&K recruitment boards.

- 
- 1) Ladakh's statehood,
 - 2) extension of the 6th Schedule,
 - 3) early recruitment process, as well as a public service commission for Ladakh and
 - 4) separate Lok Sabha seats for Leh and Kargil districts.

- In September 2024, the ‘Delhi Chalo Padyatra’ was organised by the LAB, with a four-point agenda for the support of Ladakh's statehood, extension of the Sixth Schedule, early recruitment process, as well as a public service commission for Ladakh and separate Lok Sabha seats for Leh and Kargil districts.



LADAKH PROTESTS: A TIMELINE

August 5, 2019: Ladakh becomes UT

December 2019: Ladakh Students' Environmental Action Forum (LEAF), a joint student initiative, holds protests in Leh demanding Sixth Schedule

2020: Apex Body Leh (ABL) is formed to steer People's Movement for Sixth Schedule; Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) joins in

2020: ABL gives a call to boycott Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) polls. Its team is flown to Delhi, boycott withdrawn on Centre's assurances

2020: Wangchuk joins agitation, provides outside support to ABL

October, 2020: BJP includes Sixth Schedule in its LAHDC poll manifesto

January, 2021: MHA announces high-powered committee to discuss Ladakh issues, but its constitution is delayed

January 2023: HPC finally constituted, structured talks begin

March 2024: Wangchuk sits on a 21-day fast in sub zero temperatures in Ladakh

May 2025: Centre, ABL reach an agreement; govt notifies domicile policy for Ladakh, reserves 85% jobs for locals

July 2025: Wangchuk joins ABL, chairman Thupstan Chhewang resigns, Delhi stalls talks

September 2025: Wangchuk decides not be on the talks table with Delhi, Chhewang returns as ABL chair

September 10, 2025: Wangchuk begins hunger strike in Leh

September 20, 2025: MHA announces next date of talks as October 6

September, 24, 2025: Youth at Wangchuk's protest engage in violence, four killed in police firing

What made **Super Typhoon Ragasa** so intense?

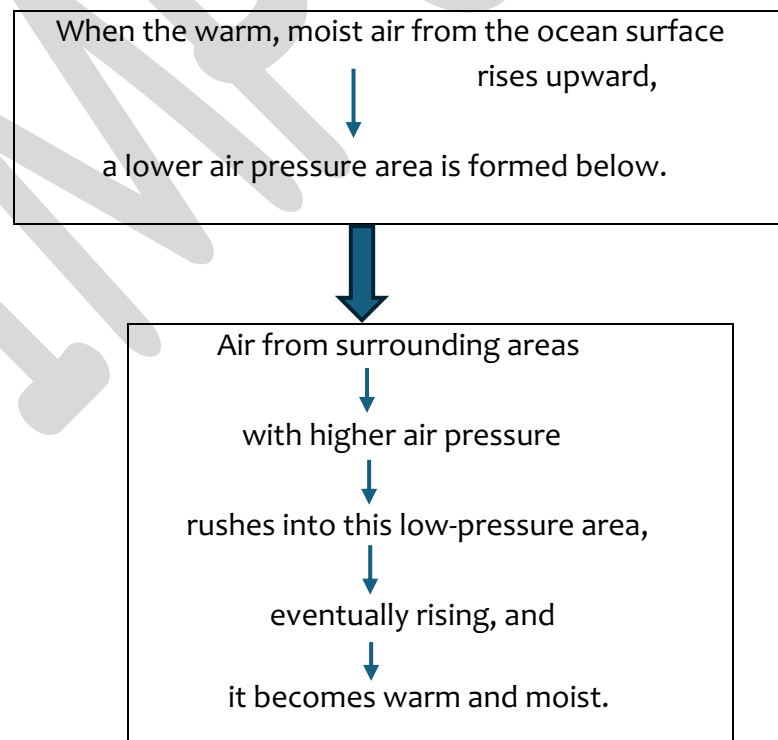
Ragasa **Hong Kong** impact: **The storm is the most intense tropical cyclone recorded in 2025.** At its peak, Ragasa was moving with the maximum sustained winds of **280 kmph.**

Super Typhoon because it is a **Category 5 tropical cyclone.**

- ❑ Super Typhoon Ragasa **battered Hong Kong** with fierce winds and pounding rain, and **headed into southern China** on Wednesday.
- ❑ It has forced two million people to evacuate in southern China and brought a “significant storm surge”, with waters in coastal areas rising more than 3 metres above the reference level in Hong Kong.
- ❑ This came after Ragasa left at least 14 people dead in **Taiwan** and at least 2 dead in northern **Philippines.**

How are tropical cyclones formed?

- Tropical cyclones form over warm ocean waters near the **equator.**





As warm, moist air rises,

it cools down, and

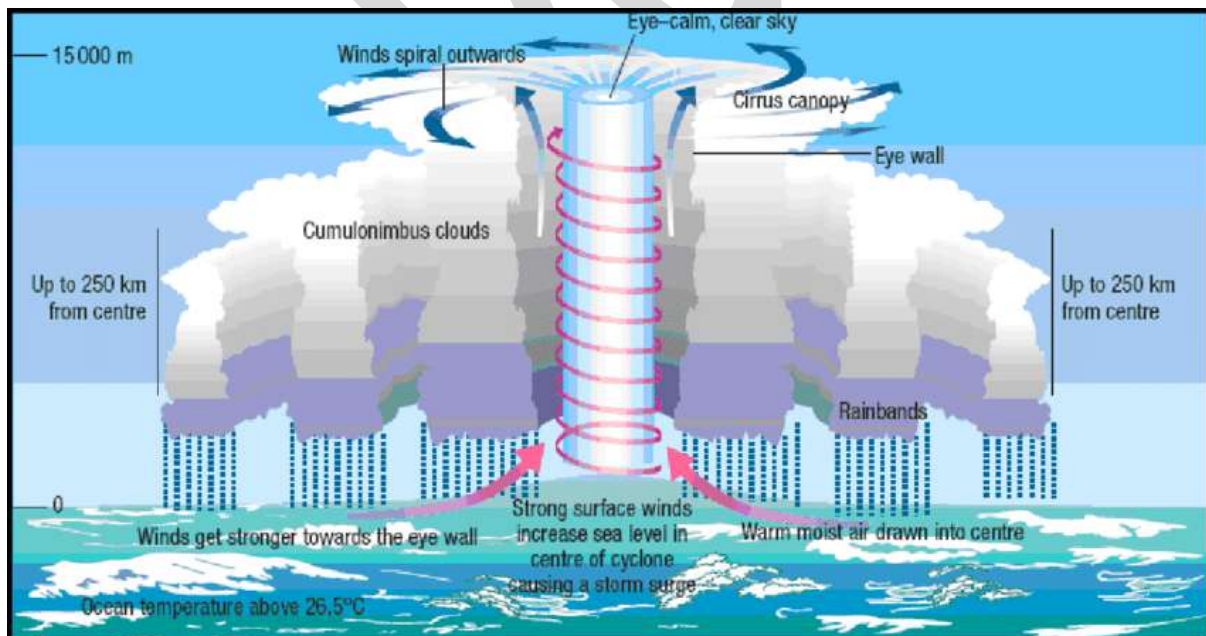
the water in the air

forms clouds and thunderstorms.

This whole system of clouds and winds gains strength and momentum using the ocean's heat, and

the water that evaporates from its surface.

– **Example : Hurricane, Typhoon, Cyclone**



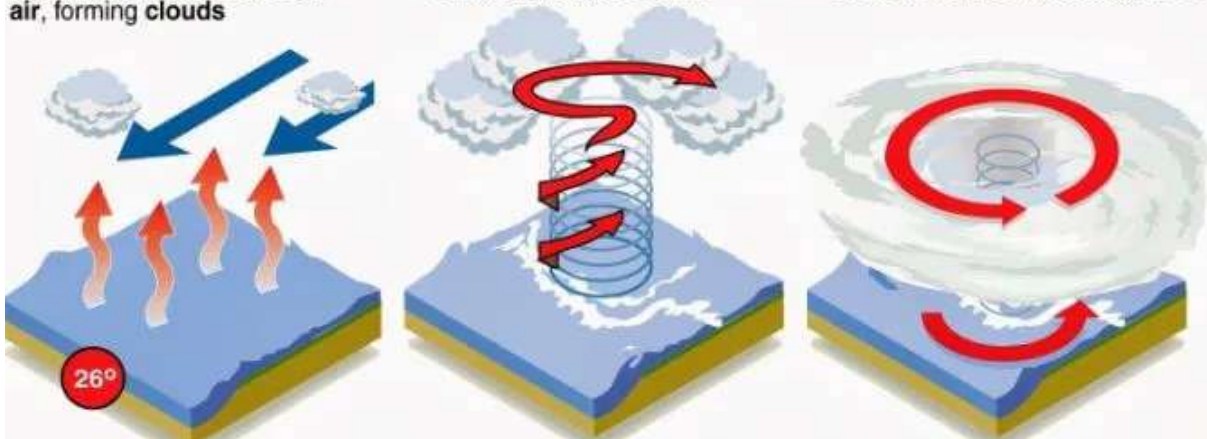
How tropical storms are formed

High humidity and ocean temperatures of over 26°C are major contributing factors

Water evaporates from the ocean surface and comes into contact with a mass of cold air, forming clouds

A column of low pressure develops at the centre. Winds form around the column

As pressure in the central column (the eye) weakens, the speed of the wind around it increases



Conditions for Tropical Cyclone

Warm sea temperature >27° C	Continuous supply of warm and moist air	Strong Coriolis force	Absence of strong vertical wind wedge
--------------------------------	---	-----------------------	---------------------------------------

Category : Intensity @ wind speed

☐ Tropical Depressions:

The weakest tropical cyclones are called tropical depressions.

☐ Tropical Storm:

If a depression intensifies such that its maximum sustained winds reach 63 kmph, the tropical cyclone becomes a tropical storm.

☐ Hurricanes, Typhoons, or Super Tropical cyclones:

Storm systems with wind speeds of 119 kmph and above

◆ The category of a tropical cyclone is determined by its sustained wind speed, as measured by the

Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale.

It is classified into five categories — **Category 1 to Category 5**

Category 1 tropical cyclones	winds of 119 to 153 kmph
Category 5 tropical cyclones	winds of 252 kmph or higher.

✍ Storms that reach **Category 3 and higher are considered major tropical cyclones** due to their potential to inflict significant damage.

✍ **Ragasa** has been referred to as a **super typhoon** because it is a **Category 5** tropical cyclone.

Why has Ragasa been so intense?

Global warming

✓ There is a consensus that with rising global temperatures, **tropical cyclones are becoming more intense.**

○ For instance, a study showed that



tropical cyclones in Southeast Asia
are now forming closer to coastlines,
intensifying more rapidly, and
lingering longer over land.

○ This could be happening due to **warmer surface temperatures of the ocean.**

– *Average temperatures in the **Pacific Ocean** have **risen by about 1.5 degrees Celsius** in the past century, according to the United Nations Environment Programme.*

"Typhoons exist on planet Earth to dissipate heat.

The more heat in the ocean, the more tropical cyclones you get to remove the heat.

The Earth is an amazing balance.

It is obvious that if you warm up the oceans, these typhoons are going to be bigger."

Topic : Mains (GS)

When Donald Trump held up a mirror to the UN – and the world watched

Donald Trump's General Assembly speech was a recap of his domestic political rhetoric. It also underlined the challenges he represents to the global order.

There were few surprises in US President Donald Trump's speech at the UN General Assembly. For nearly an hour — four times longer than the allotted time — Trump repeated the shibboleths of the MAGA movement that propelled him to power. Full of praise for himself, denigrating domestic political opponents, repeating claims of having "ended seven wars", including between India and Pakistan, attacking liberal migration policies and denying climate change, the US President's speech was a mixture of exaggerations and half-truths. He paid lip service to sovereignty while at the same time commenting on the domestic politics of allies, including attacking the mayor of London. In essence, Trump's

domestic political base now shapes US foreign policy. That said, the underlying logic of Trumpism on display also underlined just how far his administration has upended the global order. In that, there are several lessons for national capitals and, perhaps most significantly, for the United Nations itself.

While Trump's self-proclaimed success as a peacemaker is questionable, his claim that "the United Nations did not even try to help in any of them [conflicts]" cannot be denied. Through much of this century, the UN's role as mediator, as a neutral arbiter with the authority and means to intervene in conflicts, has been on the wane. Its increasing irrelevance in global politics is not accidental, or merely a function of leaders ignoring it: It stems from structural issues, from financing to the UNSC, that do not reflect how dynamics have shifted since World War II. As "sovereignty" and bilateral and minilateral engagements become more important, several middle powers, including India, are likely to assess just how deeply to engage with the body. For the UN to live up to its principles, it must introspect, adapt and evolve. Take climate change, which Trump called "the greatest con job ever". Addressing it demands global cooperation and compromise, which must move forward despite Washington's recalcitrant denial of its dangers. The UN must now ensure that the global community continues its efforts to combat an impending catastrophe creatively.

The speech also invites a broader question: With the Trumpian bull rampaging through the global china shop, how should the rest of the world adapt? The broadly domestic politics-proof orientation of the world's largest economic and military power is clearly a thing of the past. A change of guard at the White House has seen the US's position shift — and then oscillate — on the support to Ukraine, the Paris Accord, the Iran nuclear deal and even NATO. In a scenario defined by unpredictability, the best course of action appears to be quiet, bilateral deal-making. Unlike Trump's maiden speech at the UNGA in his first term, there was no derisive laughter from the audience this time — just polite applause and even chuckles at his humour. And world leaders, including those from European nations attacked by Trump, are eager to meet with the US President and strike agreements. This course of action is prudent in the current moment. But the long-term consequence of Trumpism could well be a further erosion of the depleted idea of internationalism.

26.09.2025

Topic : Mains (GS)

Centre must speak to Ladakh protesters — and listen to them

Ladakh is one of India's most important frontiers, and its people have stood steadfastly by the country in war and peace. **The promise to them in 2019 was that their cultural, ecological and linguistic heritage would be protected.**

The national conversation around the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019 and its aftermath has, by and large, centred on Jammu and Kashmir — how the state was made a Union Territory, the detention of political leaders, the move to elections, and the demand for restoration of statehood. The political story has unfolded somewhat differently in Ladakh. The region that was upbeat after moving out of Srinagar and Jammu's shadow in 2019 is now rocked by protests. At least four people were killed and around 50 injured in Leh on Wednesday. A section of the youth among the protesters turned to vandalism and arson after leaders on hunger strike fainted and were hospitalised. The violence and arson, strongly condemnable, should not be allowed to overshadow the unique trajectory and the broader place Ladakh has in India's national security and imagination. The lawbreakers have to face due process but the "crackdown" needs a strong caveat: the Centre should speak to the protesters and, more importantly, listen to them.

The promise to the people of Ladakh, both explicit and implicit, in 2019 was that their cultural, ecological, and linguistic heritage would be protected. The Centre's notifications in June this year, introducing domicile-based requirements for government jobs and recognition of local languages, were steps in the right direction. However, much more needs to be done. The devolution of powers to the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LADHCs) has not been

implemented, and questions regarding land ownership and large-scale energy projects remain unanswered. The cries for statehood and inclusion in the Sixth Schedule must, then, be read as demands for representation and autonomy to preserve a culture and environment that is an essential and unique part of this country's tapestry. Nearly all the UT's important political and social groups — the Leh Apex Body and the Kargil Democratic alliance, Muslims and Buddhists, leaders of diverse political persuasions — have supported the protests. This is reason enough for the Centre to talk to them and find a reasonable accommodation. Maximalist positions, such as those taken by one of the principal faces of the agitation, educator-activist Sonam Wangchuk, aren't surprising. Surely, the government has the capacity to both address it and, if needed, ensure that it does not derail the larger process of talks and negotiation.

Ladakh is one of India's most important frontiers, bordering Pakistan and China. In war and peace, its people have stood steadfastly by the country, often as the first line of defence and intelligence gathering. In the current moment, when passions are high, the protesters' demands are all within the Constitutional framework. Some political actors and organisations of various persuasions may have tapped into this sentiment and echoed the protesters, as is the case in any democracy. That is no reason to unleash a troll army to demonise the protesters as “anti-Indian”, or architects of a grand conspiracy. New Delhi and Leh are on the same side, both need to work to get on the same page. The vitriol must stop before it vitiates the atmosphere further. Too much is at stake.

Visit :

<https://youtu.be/QF3fbpFi8bo>

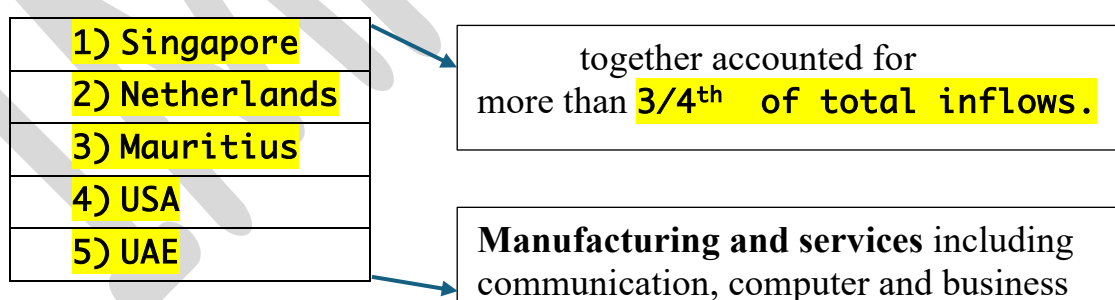
FDI into India in July at 50-month high of \$11.11 billion

Gross foreign direct investment into India in July was twice as high compared to the same month last year.

Even before S&P Global Ratings upgraded its rating on India and the government announced a raft of measures to boost the economy, **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into the country had risen to the highest in over four years** in July, according to data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday. At \$11.11 billion, the gross FDI inflow in July was the **highest since May 2021**, when \$12.32 billion had come into the country on a gross basis.

In June, gross FDI inflows into India stood at \$9.57 billion, while the figure for July 2024, at \$5.54 billion, was half the latest number.

“Singapore, followed by the Netherlands, Mauritius, the US and the UAE, together accounted for more than three-fourth of total inflows. Manufacturing and services including communication, computer and business services were the top recipient sectors,” the central bank’s staff noted in their monthly State of the Economy article, also published on Wednesday.



On a net basis, \$5.05 billion came into India in July compared to \$2.51 billion in June and an outflow of \$2.69 billion a year ago. Net FDI is calculated after adjusting for investments that are repatriated by foreign companies and overseas investments made by Indian companies.

Net FDI (calculation)

is calculated **after adjusting for investments that are repatriated by foreign companies and overseas investments made by Indian companies.**

FDI is a key indicator of the health of the economy and the confidence foreign investors have in the country. S&P's decision on August 14 to upgrade its rating on India to BBB from BBB- is expected to boost flows in the medium to long term. A day later, on August 15, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a wide range of economic reforms to boost domestic growth. This included cuts to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates that came into effect earlier this week on Monday.

Inflows have picked up steam in recent months after a disappointing 2024-25 which saw net FDI inflow total just \$959 million even though gross inflows rose to \$80.62 billion. The precipitous fall in net FDI in 2024-25 from \$10.15 billion in 2023-24 came on the back of a sharp increase in overseas direct investments made by Indian companies and foreign companies cashing in on their past investments in India.

In 2024-25, foreign firms took back \$51.49 billion to their home countries from India, up 16 per cent from 2023-24. Meanwhile, overseas FDI by Indian companies rose 69 per cent to \$28.17 billion. Both these factors contributed to the net FDI in the last fiscal being negligible.

So far in 2025-26, despite the global trade, policy, and financial market uncertainty, the numbers are on the up for India. At \$10.75 billion, net FDI in the first four months of the fiscal is three times that in the same period last year, gross FDI is up 33 per cent at \$37.71 billion, and repatriations by foreign companies is down 6 per cent at \$16.28 billion.

On the other hand, Indian companies' direct investments abroad are up 44 per cent at \$10.68 billion.

However, in July, both repatriation of FDI and outward FDI moderated, the RBI noted in its State of the Economy article. “Outward FDI was mainly directed towards financial, insurance and business services, as well as manufacturing, with the US, Singapore, the Netherlands, Mauritius, and the UK being the major destinations. These movements together led to an increase in net FDI,” it said.

27.09.2025

'BACKING PALESTINE SENDS MESSAGE THAT MURDERING JEWS PAYS OFF'

Must finish job in Gaza: Netanyahu at UNGA, many nations stage walkout

EXPLAINED

E **Stakes higher for Netanyahu**

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's annual speech to the UN is always closely watched. But this time, the stakes were higher than ever for the Israeli leader. The defiant speech came as the EU, one of Israel's closest allies, is considering tariffs and sanctions on Israel. The International Criminal Court has issued an arrest warrant accusing Netanyahu of crimes against humanity, which he denies. And the U.N's highest court is weighing South Africa's allegation that Israel has committed genocide in Gaza, which it vehemently refutes.

ACCUSED OF INCITING MOB WHICH TURNED VIOLENT IN LEH

Wangchuk held under NSA, flown from Leh to Jodhpur as Govt cracks down

Trump announces new tariffs on pharmaceuticals, heavy trucks and kitchen cabinets from October 1

Backdrop: Trump has launched numerous national security probes into potential new tariffs on a wide variety of products during his second term, casting a shadow over the global economic outlook and paralysing business decision-making.

Announcement:

➤ Starting from 1st October, 2025

- **100% Tariff** on any branded or patented **Pharmaceutical Product**, unless a Company IS BUILDING their Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plant in America.
- **50% tariff** on **bathroom vanities**
- **30% tariff** on **upholstered furniture**

<https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/115267512131958759>



EXPLAINED India's generic exports

INDIA ACCOUNTS for nearly 6 per cent of total US imports, largely dominated by generic medicines. According to Global Trade Research Initiative, India exported \$9.8 billion worth of pharmaceutical formulations to the US in 2024-25, accounting for 39.8 per cent of its total pharma exports.



MiG-21 supersonic jets receive a water salute during the 'Operational Flying Culmination Ceremony' at the Air Force Station, Chandigarh, on Friday. /18

MiG-21 flies into the sunset

“MiG-21 always held the honour of the national flag high” — *Rajnath Singh, Defence Minister*

“The MiG-21 was not only a mighty machine that carried the weight of national security on its wings for decades, but also a hallmark of collective pride of the nation, and a testimony to the deep ties between India and Russia.” - *Defence Minister Rajnath Singh*

➤ The iconic **Soviet-made** Mikoyan-Gurevich (MiG)-21 fighter jets remained the backbone of the IAF's combat fleet ever since they were **inducted in 1963.**

- Wing Commander (later Air Chief Marshal) Dilbagh Singh was tasked with raising and commanding the No. 28 Squadron, the very first operational unit equipped with MiG-21s.

➤ The supersonic jets played a major role in the

1971 war with Pakistan

1999 Kargil conflict

2019 Balakot airstrikes

2025 Operation Sindoor

- Underscoring the significance of **Chandigarh** as the venue for the decommissioning ceremony, Singh said that it was the place from where India's "supersonic journey" began.

28.09.2025

8 CHILDREN AMONG THOSE KILLED; TOLL LIKELY TO RISE

38 dead in stampede at Vijay campaign rally in Tamil Nadu



TVK chief and actor Vijay addresses the gathering before the stampede in Karur district. *ANI* LEADERSEXPRESSGRIEF, [PAGE 4](#)

29.09.2025

TILAK, VARUN, KULDEEP STAR IN 5-WICKET WIN WITH 2 BALLS LEFT

India hold nerve to beat Pak in last-over thriller, claim Asia Cup

ASIA CUP FINAL

Final scoreline: 3-0

India beat Pakistan by five wickets in the final, their third win in as many matches over their arch-rivals

Sonam Wangchuk detained under NSA: What to know about National Security Act

The use of the NSA has brought focus back on one of India's most stringent preventive detention laws. **Invoked in the past against separatists, gangsters and radical preachers**, the NSA empowers governments to act pre-emptively against individuals seen as a threat to public order or national security.

In News:

- ❑ Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, at the forefront of the movement seeking statehood and protections under the Sixth Schedule for Ladakh, was detained under the stringent National Security Act (NSA) by the police in Leh on Friday (September 26). According to his wife, he has been taken to a jail in Jodhpur.

- ❑ The Centre had previously held him responsible for **instigating the violent protests that broke out in Leh on Wednesday**, in which four persons were killed in police firing, and 50 were injured.

Art 22 - Preventive detention and NSA

- Preventive detention has a long history in India, *dating back to colonial times* when it was used to control dissent during wars.
 - After Independence, Parliament passed
 - the **Preventive Detention Act, 1950**, followed by the Maintenance of Internal Security Act **(MISA), 1971**, which became notorious for misuse during the Emergency.
 - **MISA was repealed in 1978**, and
 - two years later, the **National Security Act (1980)** was enacted.
- The **NSA, 1980**, empowers the **Centre and states**
 - to detain individuals to prevent them from acting in a manner “prejudicial to the defence of India, relations with foreign powers, the security of India, or the maintenance of public order or essential supplies”.
 - **District Magistrates and Police Commissioners** can also exercise these powers **when authorised**.
 - ◆ Unlike an arrest under criminal law, NSA detention **is preventive, not punitive**—it is designed to prevent an individual from committing an act deemed harmful.
- The stated purpose of the NSA was to give the government wide ranging powers to deal with threats to security, law and order, and essential supplies, while building in some procedural safeguards.

What the NSA entails

The law

- A detention order under the NSA can be **executed like a warrant of arrest**.

- Once detained, a person can be held in specified places, moved across states, and subjected to conditions set by the government.
- The Act mandates that the grounds of detention must be communicated to the detainee within 5 days, and 15 days at most. I
- It also says that the detainee has the right to make a representation to the government, and that an Advisory Board of High Court judges must review the case within 3 weeks, *releasing the detainee if it finds “no sufficient cause.”*
- Detention cannot ordinarily exceed 12 months, though it may be revoked earlier.

The Limitation

However, there are serious limitations.

- ✎ The detainee has no right to legal representation before the Advisory Board, and
- ✎ the government may withhold facts in “public interest.”
- ◆ These provisions leave wide discretion in official hands.

Wangchuk’s options

1) Representation to Advisory Board of HC

Wangchuk could either challenge the detention order by filing a representation to the government, as provided under the Act, or wait for the Advisory Board’s review within three weeks. If the Board finds no sufficient cause, he must be released immediately.

2) Exercising Writ jurisdiction

Alternatively, he may move the High Court or Supreme Court under writ jurisdiction (Articles 226/32 of the Constitution) to contest the legality of his detention. (He has done this @ SC)

3) Seek Revocation

He can also seek revocation if the government itself decides the detention is unnecessary at any stage.

- ◆ Until these remedies play out, however, the NSA allows authorities to hold him without filing formal charges or producing evidence in open court.

How the NSA has been used previously

Wangchuk is the latest in a series of high-profile cases where the law has been invoked. In recent years, the law has been invoked in several high-profile cases.

- In **2023**, radical Sikh preacher **Amritpal Singh, leader of ‘Waris Punjab De,’** was detained under NSA and shifted to Assam’s Dibrugarh jail.
- In **2017**, **Bhim Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad** “Ravan” was booked under the NSA in Uttar Pradesh.
 - The order was revoked after the matter reached the ***Supreme Court***, and he was ***released in September 2018***.
- And during the **anti-CAA protests in 2020**, several protesters in **Uttar Pradesh** were booked under the NSA.

Civil liberties groups and courts have repeatedly flagged the misuse of the NSA.

- In **2020**, **paediatrician Dr Kafeel Khan** was detained under the NSA by the Uttar Pradesh government following an alleged inflammatory speech.
 - His case received widespread attention after the **Allahabad High Court questioned the grounds for detention and ordered his release.**
- **Love Jihad, Communal violence**
In **Madhya Pradesh**, the Act has been invoked in “**Love Jihad**” cases, and in **Uttar Pradesh**, it has been used during episodes of **communal violence**.
- **Cow slaughter or Habitual criminals**

NSA has also been used against those accused of *cow slaughter or habitual criminals in states like Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh*, which critics say stretches the definition of a “national security” threat.

In 2012, the **Supreme Court struck down the NSA detention of a man accused of black-marketing kerosene**, holding that the grounds were

- ◆ Together, these instances highlight a **recurring pattern**: governments defend the act as a necessary tool for **security**, while critics see it as a blunt instrument prone to misuse.

Delhi allows loudspeakers till midnight for festivals: what does the law say?

The **Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000** provide a detailed framework for regulating noise from various sources, including loudspeakers

LEGAL as per NPR, 2000 – Rule 5 (3)

In News

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Tuesday (September 23) announced that the deadline to use loudspeakers in Ramlila performances, Durga Puja pandals and other cultural festivities will be extended until midnight, providing a two-hour extension from the **usual 10 pm cut-off time** for the use of loudspeakers in public.

Law on loudspeakers

The Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000,
framed under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986,
are the **primary regulation** governing noise pollution.

➤ These rules provide a detailed framework for **regulating noise from various sources**, *including loudspeakers*.

- ◆ **Rule 5(1)** states that a loudspeaker or a public address system cannot be used **without obtaining written permission from a designated authority**.
- ◆ Crucially, **Rule 5(2)** imposes a **blanket ban on their use during night hours**, defined as the period between **10 pm and 6 am**, *except in closed premises like auditoriums, conference rooms, and banquet halls for internal communication*.
- ◆ **Rule 5(3)** allows a **state government** to permit the use of loudspeakers between **10 pm and 12 midnight on or during any cultural or religious festive occasion** for a limited duration, ***not exceeding 15 days in a calendar year***.

✧ Decibel regulation

The rules prescribe maximum permissible noise levels for different areas, categorised as

industrial	commercial	residential		silence zones
		daytime limit (6 am to 10 pm)	55 dB	
		for nighttime	45 dB	

✧ For context, *a whisper* is about **30 dB**,
while *normal conversation* is about **60 dB**.

Court rulings

Over the past two decades, the Supreme Court and High Courts have repeatedly adjudicated on the issue of noise pollution. The judiciary has consistently prioritised the right to a peaceful environment over the use of sound amplification for religious purposes.

Supreme Court

Limitation to Art 25 @ SC :

- ✓ In a judgement in **2000** concerning the **use of loudspeakers by a church in Chennai**, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court held that **no religion prescribes that prayers should be performed by disturbing the peace of others.**
- ✓ It emphatically stated that the use of **loudspeakers could not be claimed as a fundamental right under Article 25** of the Constitution, *which provides the fundamental right to freedom of religion.*
- ✓ The court observed that “in a civilised society in the name of religion, activities which disturb old or infirm persons, students or children... cannot be permitted.”

Bedrock judgement @ SC : Art 21

- ✓ However, it was in a judgement in **2005** that the apex court laid the bedrock for **modern noise pollution jurisprudence.**
- ✓ In a suo moto case — that is, one initiated by the court on its own accord — the Supreme Court declared that the **right to a peaceful and noise-free environment is a fundamental right implicit in Article 21** of the Constitution that **guarantees protection of life and personal liberty.**
- ✓ It held that the freedom of speech and expression under **Article 19(1)(a)** **does not grant anyone** the right to force an unwilling audience to listen to them through “aural aggression”.
- ✓ This ruling established the **strict 10 pm-6 am ban** on loudspeakers in public places.

15 days Exception judgment @ SC :

- ✓ Just a few months later, though, the same Bench of the Supreme Court heard a specific challenge to the constitutional validity of the **15-day midnight exception under Rule 5(3)**. The Court upheld the rule,

calling it a “**limited power**” necessary for a country with diverse cultures and religions. However, it laid down strict conditions for its use.

- The power to grant exemption is conferred only on the **state government** and cannot be delegated to any other authority.
- The exemption must be for the **entire state** as a unit and **different dates could not be specified for different districts.**
- The scope of the exemption could not be widened by increasing the number of days beyond **15 or the duration beyond two hours (10 pm to midnight).**
- The exemption would not apply to designated ‘**silence zones**’ – areas within 100 metres of hospitals, educational institutions and courts.

High Courts (recent ones)

Following the Supreme Court’s lead, various High Courts have strictly enforced the Noise Rules, often going further to prescribe practical measures for implementation.

Bombay HC : 2016

- ✓ In **2016**, the Bombay High Court reiterated that the **use of loudspeakers is not an essential part of any religion.**
 - It pulled up the state government for its “**very casual**” **approach** to implementation and failing to procure the necessary number of decibel meters for the police.

Allahabad HC : 2020

- ✓ In a judgement in **2020**, the Allahabad High Court made a crucial distinction while hearing a plea for using loudspeakers for **aqaan**, the Islamic call to prayer.
 - It held that **while aqaan is an essential part of Islam**, its recitation through loudspeakers is not.
 - It affirmed that the use of microphones was a recent development and not a historical part of the religious practice.

Bombay HC @ 2025 :

- ✓ The most recent significant ruling in this regard came from the Bombay High Court in January.
 - Hearing a petition from residents against noise from mosques, the court prescribed a practical, **graded penalty system for enforcement:**
 1. ***First offence:*** A caution.
 2. ***Repeat violations:*** Fines imposed on the concerned trusts or organisations.
 3. ***Continued violations:*** Seizure of loudspeakers and cancellation of licences.
 - ✓ Significantly, the court introduced the **concept of cumulative Noise levels.**
 - It ruled that if several religious places in a vicinity use loudspeakers, authorities must consider the **combined sound level of all amplifiers, not just the noise from an individual source.**
-
-