

UPSC-CSE 2027/28

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

 **ONE STOP SOLUTION**

By **Faiyaz Sir**



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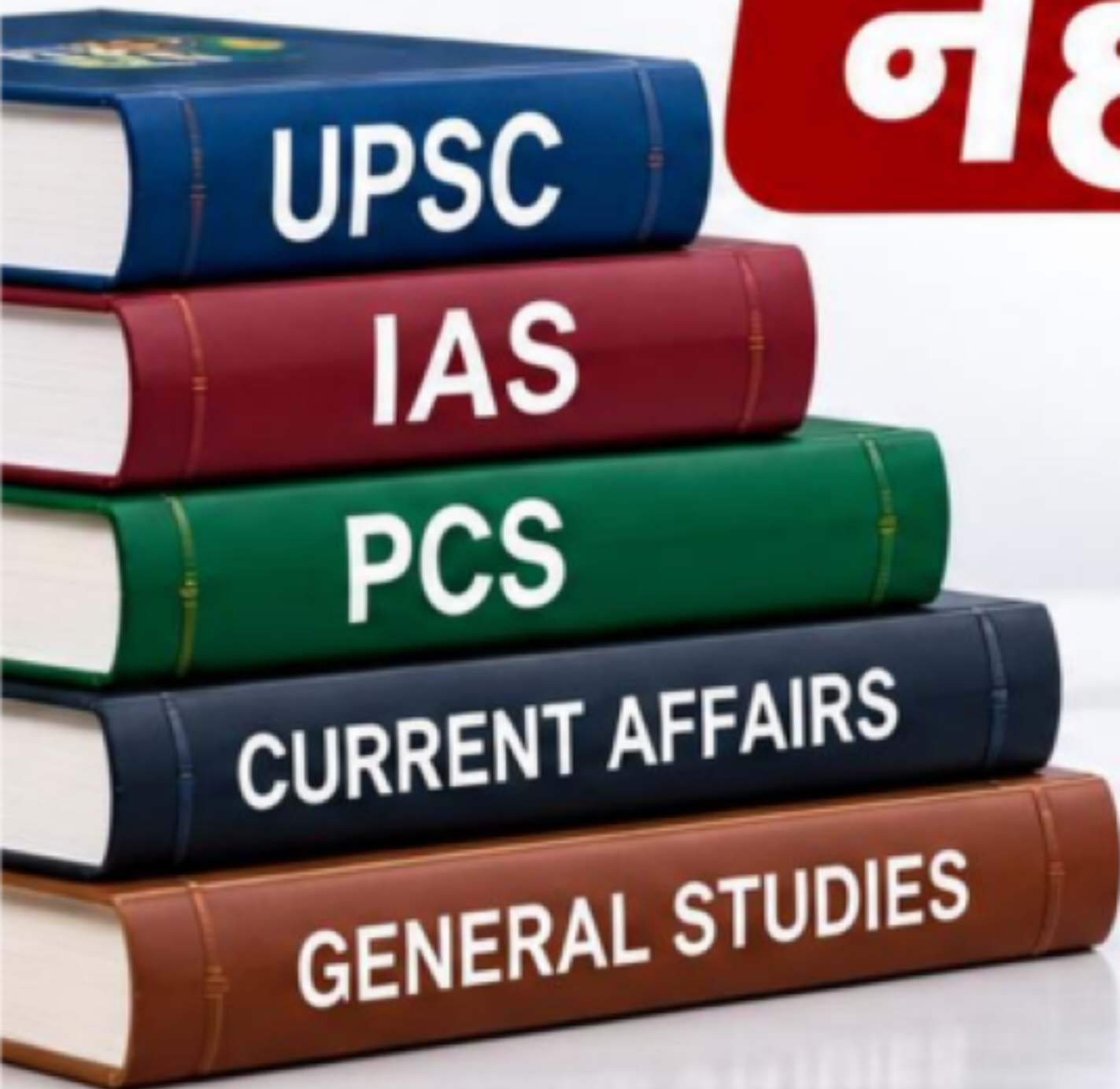
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**STAY AHEAD
STAY PREPARED**

**“जो मन से नहीं हारता,
उसे दुनिया की कोई ताकत
नहीं हरा सकती!”**

Never
Give Up
😊



आज क्या पढ़ेंगे?

- **Stubble Fire**
- **FTA – Investment in India**
- **महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य -**

पर्यावरण
+
Economy
+
Economy

Economy

Why stubble fires keep coming back

Stubble burning is the result of a combination of legal, technological and economic factors, including the paddy-wheat cycle, assured procurement and a narrow window between crops; a lasting solution needs stronger incentives for diversification, better residue management and more reliable measurement of burning

FULL CONTEXT

C.S.C.Sekhar

It is that time of the year when air pollution in North India, and in Delhi in particular, takes centre stage in public discourse. One oft-cited reason for the worsening air quality index (AQI) is stubble burning by farmers.

Why farmers burn stubble

Stubble burning is the practice of setting fire to crop residue, consisting of the lower parts of plants left after harvesting. This practice is prevalent from the beginning of October to the end of November across northwest India, especially in Punjab, Haryana, and parts of Uttar Pradesh. Stubble burning is mainly associated with the burning of paddy straw in Punjab and Haryana, which together produce around 29 million metric tons of paddy straw.

Stubble burning releases large amounts of particulate matter, carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and other carcinogenic substances, which together form a thick smog that can harm human health. It also leads to a loss of soil fertility by depleting nitrogen, sulphur, potassium, phosphorus, and other micronutrients. The heat generated by stubble burning results in a loss of soil moisture and organic content, which, in turn, leads to increased use of fertilisers in the next crop cycle.

Stubble burning is not a new phenomenon. It has been practised in Punjab since the late 1970s and early 1980s, largely following the introduction of combine harvesters, which leave a portion of the plant in the soil after harvesting. What has changed is its timing, which now coincides with the winter months in North India. This shift in timing followed the enactment of the Punjab Preservation of Sub-Soil Water Act, 2009 (PPSSWA 2009).

In 2012, nearly 73% of the cropped area in Punjab was irrigated using groundwater resources. There was a deficit of 14.31 billion cubic metres, which was met through excessive withdrawal of groundwater. Groundwater levels in Punjab declined at an alarming rate of 0.36 metres annually between 1999 and 2009, driven by intense over-exploitation for agriculture. A landmark NASA GRACE satellite study in 2009 showed that the region comprising Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan lost 109 cubic kilometres of groundwater between 2002 and 2008 alone, which was considered the largest instance of groundwater depletion in the world at the time.

Water crisis

The PPSSWA 2009 was a result of this alarming situation. The main goal of the Act was to prevent rapid groundwater depletion by prohibiting early paddy nursery sowing and transplantation before the arrival of the monsoon rains. The Act prohibited farmers from sowing paddy before May 10 and transplanting it before June 10, thus delaying paddy transplantation to align with the monsoon season. To ensure compliance, the Act prescribed stringent punishments. Implementing officers were authorised to destroy paddy sown in contravention of the Act and impose a penalty of ₹10,000 per hectare for every month of contravention. These actions by officials were also exempt from legal scrutiny.

These sowing restrictions under PPSSWA 2009 pushed the paddy harvest



A farmer burns paddy stubble in a field on the outskirts of Amritsar, in Punjab. *not photo*

to late October and early November, leaving farmers a narrow 10-15-day window to prepare their fields for the next wheat crop and reducing the time available for sowing. The PUSA-44 variety, which produces higher yields but takes 150-160 days to harvest, further narrowed the window between paddy harvesting and wheat sowing. Combine harvesters, which leave about a foot of stubble behind, put heavy pressure on farmers to clear the crop residue in a very short time. Manual clearing is time-consuming and expensive. Together, these factors made stubble burning almost a necessity for farmers.

The moot point is why farmers continue to grow paddy and wheat despite a stringent legal framework and depleting groundwater levels. The answer lies in the incentive structure built for these two crops. The present minimum support price and procurement framework heavily favours rice and wheat procurement in Punjab and Haryana. Between 2012 and 2024, average paddy procurement in India was about 27% of production. The corresponding figures for Punjab and Haryana were 87% and 74%, respectively, more than double the national average. The pattern is similar for wheat, with procurement accounting for 30% of production nationally, compared with 70% in Punjab and 62% in Haryana. It needs to be noted that the computation of national averages includes Punjab and Haryana, and if these two States are excluded, the differences could be even higher. Such a system provides assured incomes to producers of these two crops in these two States, discouraging them from diversifying into other crops. In addition, power is free for farmers in Punjab and almost free in Haryana. This further encourages farmers to grow water-intensive crops like paddy and wheat through groundwater extraction.

Incentive problem

The technical solutions to stubble burning fall broadly into two categories: *in-situ* measures that include the use of crop residue management (CRM) machines such as Happy Seeders, Super Seeders and Rotavators; short-duration rice varieties; and direct seeding of rice; and

ex-situ measures that involve using crop residue for alternative energy production, such as bio-ethanol and compressed biogas. However, both approaches face formidable problems. Happy Seeders and Super Seeders require an expensive 60-horsepower (HP) tractor, which remains unused for most of the year. Even hiring one typically costs a farmer ₹10,000 and involves a long waiting period. *Ex-situ* measures cost ₹1,500-₹2,500 per acre, a significant expense for many farmers.

The economic approach to address stubble burning involves building an incentive structure for farmers to diversify from paddy to other crops. The National Green Tribunal ruled in 2018 that farmers who burn stubble could be excluded from the purview of the minimum support price (MSP) policy. The Supreme Court upheld this view in 2023. During the stubble burning season of 2025, 31 dying squads by CPOB were deployed in 18 districts of Punjab and 13 districts of Haryana, involving 10,500 field functionaries in Punjab and 10,000 in Haryana.

Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has directed that complaints be filed before the judiciary against the officials responsible for the lack of effective monitoring. The Parliamentary Committee on air quality, however, advocated that penalising farmers should be the last resort. The Committee recommended setting a minimum price covering all the costs for selling stubble for *ex-situ* measures, which can ensure farmers' guaranteed income.

The government of Punjab mostly adopted *in-situ* CRM-based measures and limited *ex-situ* initiatives. CAQM observed in 2025 that a lot is required to be done in Punjab in terms of timely availability of CRM machinery, necessary support for CBG plants and other industries utilising paddy straw, and better enforcement. On the other hand, Haryana adopted an incentive-based approach, along the lines of the Parliamentary Panel's recommendations, in addition to *in-situ* and *ex-situ* measures. A financial incentive of ₹1,000/acre for CRM use; ₹4,000/acre for direct seeding of rice; ₹7,000/acre for diversification to alternate crops; and incentives to panchayats for better

performance have been put in place.

Punjab and Haryana are reported to have collectively achieved a 90% reduction in stubble burning incidents during paddy harvesting in 2025 in comparison to the same period in 2022 (Lok Sabha starred question No. 18, 1.12.2025). However, this assessment needs to be interpreted with caution, given some issues in measurement.

Measurement problem

Presently, the CREAMS (Consortium for Research on Agroecosystem Monitoring and Modeling from Space) protocol used for measuring stubble burning is built on NASA's MODIS and VIIRS satellites. These are polar satellites that orbit the earth's poles and observe India only at fixed times of the day, from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm. Their sensors are able to capture only active fires and are unable to compute the actual number of fires over a 24-hour period. According to a report by the International Forum for Environment, Sustainability and Technology in 2025, when data from multiple satellites was used to compute the actual land area affected by fire, the reduction was more gradual, at around 30%. A *Current Science* study in November 2025, led by scientists from ISRO using geostationary satellite observations, showed that farmers have shifted to stubble burning in the evening hours to avoid polar satellites. This study suggested using both polar and geostationary satellite data for an accurate picture of stubble burning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, stubble burning is a complex phenomenon driven by technological, economic and legal factors. The solution should be a judicious mix of the short-term *in-situ* and *ex-situ* measures with the medium/long term crop diversification (away from paddy). There needs to be an improvement in the methodology of measurement. Penal provisions are unlikely to be useful as there can be perverse incentives for collusion between farmers and officials, which may lead to 'showing' a reduction, rather than an actual reduction. (C.S.C.Sekhar is professor of economics, Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi University)

THE GIST

▼ The Punjab Preservation of Sub-Soil Water Act, 2009 delayed paddy cultivation, pushing harvesting into late October and leaving farmers little time to prepare fields for wheat sowing, making stubble burning an easier option

▼ The strong procurement of paddy and wheat, along with free or cheap power, has discouraged crop diversification and encouraged continued cultivation of water-intensive crops despite falling groundwater levels

▼ While Punjab has largely relied on crop-residue management, Haryana has adopted financial incentives for residue management and crop diversification, however, satellite-based estimates of declining stubble burning need closer scrutiny

*The Hindu
Up To Date Book*



स्ट्रबल बर्निंग (पराली जलाना) बार-बार क्यों लौट आता है?

- पराली जलाने की समस्या केवल किसानों के व्यवहार का परिणाम नहीं है, बल्कि इसके पीछे कानूनी, तकनीकी और आर्थिक कारकों का संयुक्त प्रभाव है। धान-गेहूँ की फसल चक्र व्यवस्था, सरकारी खरीद की गारंटी और दो फसलों के बीच कम समय का अंतर इस समस्या को बढ़ाते हैं। स्थायी समाधान के लिए फसल विविधीकरण, पराली प्रबंधन के बेहतर प्रोत्साहन और पराली जलाने की घटनाओं की अधिक विश्वसनीय निगरानी आवश्यक है।

किसान पराली क्यों जलाते हैं?

- पराली जलाना फसल कटाई के बाद खेत में बचे अवशेषों को आग लगाने की प्रक्रिया है, जिससे अगली फसल बोने से पहले खेत को साफ किया जा सके। पंजाब, हरियाणा और उत्तर प्रदेश के कुछ हिस्सों में अक्टूबर से नवंबर के अंत तक यह समस्या अधिक दिखाई देती है।
- धान की कटाई के बाद खेतों में बड़ी मात्रा में फसल अवशेष बचते हैं। पंजाब और हरियाणा में हर वर्ष लगभग 2.9 करोड़ मीट्रिक टन धान की पराली पैदा होती है।

Introduce

- राली जलाने से कार्बन मोनोऑक्साइड, वाष्पशील कार्बनिक यौगिक (VOCs) और अन्य हानिकारक पदार्थ निकलते हैं। ये मिलकर धुएँ की मोटी परत बनाते हैं, जो मानव स्वास्थ्य के लिए हानिकारक होती है। इसके अलावा, आग से मिट्टी की नमी और जैविक पदार्थ कम होते हैं, जिससे मिट्टी की उर्वरता प्रभावित होती है। मिट्टी में नाइट्रोजन, सल्फर, पोटैश, फॉस्फोरस और अन्य सूक्ष्म पोषक तत्वों की उपलब्धता भी प्रभावित हो सकती है।
- पराली जलाने के कारण मिट्टी में पोषक तत्वों की कमी होने पर किसान अगली फसल में उर्वरकों का अधिक उपयोग करने लगते हैं।

पराली जलाने की समस्या नई नहीं है

- पंजाब में पराली जलाने की प्रथा 1970 और 1980 के दशक से चली आ रही है। इस दौरान कृषि में बड़े हार्वेस्टर्स का उपयोग बढ़ा, जो फसल काटने के बाद खेत में अधिक अवशेष छोड़ते हैं।
- समस्या का एक प्रमुख कारण फसल कटाई के समय में बदलाव है। पंजाब संरक्षण उप-मृदा जल अधिनियम, 2009 (Punjab Preservation of Sub-Soil Water Act, 2009) के कारण धान की रोपाई और कटाई का समय प्रभावित हुआ। इस बदलाव से धान की कटाई और अगली गेहूँ की बुवाई के बीच का समय कम हो गया।
- वर्ष 2012 में पंजाब के लगभग 73% सिंचित कृषि क्षेत्र में भूजल का उपयोग किया जा रहा था। भूजल का अत्यधिक दोहन एक गंभीर समस्या बन गया था। नासा के GRACE उपग्रह अध्ययन के अनुसार, 2002 से 2008 के बीच पंजाब, हरियाणा और राजस्थान में लगभग 109 घन किलोमीटर भूजल का नुकसान हुआ। उस समय इसे दुनिया में भूजल की सबसे बड़ी कमी की घटनाओं में से एक माना गया था।

PPSSWA 2009

2002-2008

जल संकट

पराली जलाने के पीछे का जल

- पंजाब संरक्षण उप-मृदा जल अधिनियम, 2009 का मुख्य उद्देश्य तेजी से गिरते भूजल स्तर को रोकना था। इसके तहत धान की नर्सरी तैयार करने और रोपाई की तारीखों को मानसून के आगमन के अनुरूप निर्धारित किया गया।
- किसानों को मानसून आने से पहले धान की रोपाई करने से रोका गया। निर्धारित तिथियों का उल्लंघन करने पर आर्थिक दंड का प्रावधान किया गया। संबंधित अधिकारियों को खेतों में धान की रोपाई नष्ट करने और उल्लंघन करने वाले किसानों पर प्रति हेक्टेयर ₹10,000 तक का जुर्माना लगाने का अधिकार दिया गया।
- हालाँकि, इन प्रतिबंधों का एक अप्रत्यक्ष प्रभाव यह हुआ कि धान की कटाई का समय देर से आने लगा। इसके परिणामस्वरूप किसानों को गेहूँ की बुवाई के लिए बहुत कम समय मिलने लगा और पराली जलाना उनके लिए एक आसान विकल्प बन गया।

कृषि का

2. पराली जलाने की समस्या के पीछे प्रोत्साहन व्यवस्था की भूमिका

- पराली जलाने की समस्या के समाधान को मोटे तौर पर दो भागों में बाँटा जा सकता है।
- इन-सीटू (In-situ) प्रबंधन:** फसल अवशेषों को खेत में ही मशीनों की मदद से मिट्टी में मिलाना या उनका प्रबंधन करना।
- एक्स-सीटू (Ex-situ) प्रबंधन:** पराली को खेत से बाहर ले जाकर जैव ईंधन, बायो-एथेनॉल, संपीड़ित बायोगैस या अन्य उपयोगी उत्पादों के निर्माण में इस्तेमाल करना।
- हैप्पी सीडर, सुपर सीडर और रोटोवेटर** जैसी मशीनें पराली प्रबंधन में मदद कर सकती हैं। हालाँकि, इन मशीनों की लागत अधिक है और इनके इस्तेमाल में समय भी लगता है।
- किसानों के लिए इन मशीनों को खरीदना या किराए पर लेना आर्थिक रूप से कठिन हो सकता है। उदाहरण के लिए, एक सीडर की लागत लगभग ₹10,000 या उससे अधिक हो सकती है और इसके लिए लंबा इंतजार भी करना पड़ सकता है। एक्स-सीटू प्रबंधन में पराली को खेत से बाहर ले जाने और उसके उपयोग की व्यवस्था करना भी चुनौतीपूर्ण है।

In-situ

धान-गेहूँ की फसल चक्र व्यवस्था

- पराली जलाने की समस्या को समझने के लिए धान और गेहूँ की खेती की आर्थिक व्यवस्था को समझना आवश्यक है।
- राष्ट्रीय हरित अधिकरण (NGT) ने 2018 में यह निर्देश दिया था कि पराली जलाने वाले किसानों को न्यूनतम समर्थन मूल्य (MSP) से वंचित किया जा सकता है। लेकिन व्यवहार में इस व्यवस्था को लागू करना कठिन रहा है।
- पंजाब और हरियाणा में सरकारी खरीद की मजबूत व्यवस्था के कारण किसान धान और गेहूँ की खेती को प्राथमिकता देते हैं। इससे फसल विविधीकरण को बढ़ावा देना कठिन हो जाता है।
- वर्ष 2012 से 2024 के बीच भारत में कुल धान उत्पादन का लगभग 37% पंजाब और हरियाणा से आया। इन राज्यों की राष्ट्रीय उत्पादन में हिस्सेदारी क्रमशः लगभग 7% और 4% रही। गेहूँ के मामले में भी सरकारी खरीद की व्यवस्था इन राज्यों में अपेक्षाकृत मजबूत रही।
- सरकारी खरीद किसानों को आय की निश्चितता देती है, लेकिन साथ ही यह उन्हें धान और गेहूँ की खेती जारी रखने के लिए प्रोत्साहित करती है। इससे जल-गहन फसलों की खेती बनी रहती है और फसल विविधीकरण की गति धीमी पड़ती है।

3. पराली प्रबंधन के लिए प्रोत्साहन की समस्या

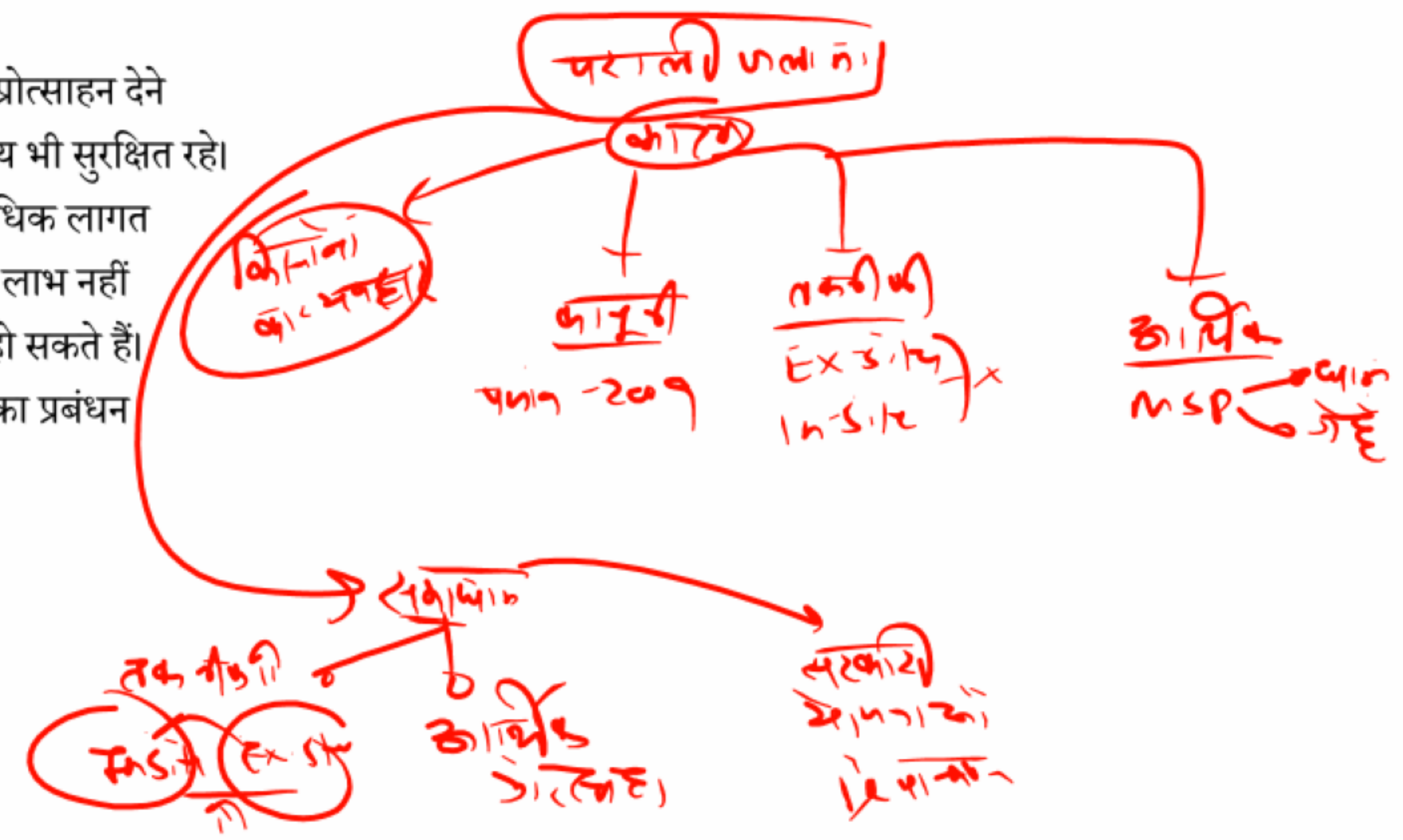
- पराली जलाने की समस्या के समाधान के लिए आर्थिक प्रोत्साहन और प्रभावी नीतियों की आवश्यकता है।
- सरकार ने पराली प्रबंधन के लिए मशीनों पर सब्सिडी और अन्य सहायता योजनाएँ शुरू की हैं। लेकिन केवल मशीनें उपलब्ध करा देना पर्याप्त नहीं है। किसानों को समय पर मशीनें मिलना, उनका संचालन, मरम्मत और किराए की व्यवस्था भी जरूरी है।

✓ एक्स-सीटू प्रबंधन की संभावनाएँ

- पराली को खेत से बाहर निकालकर ऊर्जा उत्पादन और औद्योगिक उपयोग में लगाया जा सकता है। इससे किसानों को अतिरिक्त आय मिल सकती है और पराली जलाने की आवश्यकता कम हो सकती है।
- हालाँकि, इसके लिए पराली एकत्र करने, परिवहन, भंडारण और प्रसंस्करण की मजबूत व्यवस्था आवश्यक है। यदि उद्योगों को नियमित रूप से पराली उपलब्ध नहीं होती, तो वे अपनी क्षमता के अनुसार काम नहीं कर पाते।
- इसलिए पराली को केवल कृषि अपशिष्ट नहीं, बल्कि संभावित आर्थिक संसाधन के रूप में देखना चाहिए।

सरकारी योजनाओं की सीमाएँ

- सरकार को पराली प्रबंधन के लिए किसानों को ऐसे प्रोत्साहन देने चाहिए, जिससे पर्यावरण संरक्षण के साथ उनकी आय भी सुरक्षित रहे।
- यदि किसानों को पराली जलाने से बचने के लिए अधिक लागत उठानी पड़ती है, लेकिन उसके बदले पर्याप्त आर्थिक लाभ नहीं मिलता, तो वे पुराने तरीके अपनाने के लिए मजबूर हो सकते हैं।
- इसलिए ऐसी व्यवस्था आवश्यक है, जिसमें पराली का प्रबंधन किसानों के लिए आर्थिक रूप से व्यवहार्य हो।



Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. स्टबल बर्निंग (पराली जलाने) और उसके प्रभावों के संदर्भ में निम्नलिखित कथनों पर विचार कीजिए:

1. ~~धान की पराली जलाने से हवा में केवल कार्बन मोनोऑक्साइड और वोलेटाइल ऑर्गेनिक कंपाउंड्स (VOCs) का उत्सर्जन होता है, जबकि मृदा पोषक तत्वों पर इसका कोई प्रभाव नहीं पड़ता।~~
2. ~~PUSA-44 जैसी धान की किस्में अपनी उच्च पैदावार के कारण लोकप्रिय हैं, लेकिन इन्हें पकने में अधिक समय लगता है, जिससे रबी फसलों की बुआई के लिए किसानों के पास कम समय बचता है।~~
3. ~~हैप्पी सीडर (Happy Seeder) और सुपर सीडर (Super Seeder) पराली प्रबंधन के लिए ex-situ (स्थान-बाह्य) तकनीकी उपायों के अंतर्गत आते हैं।~~

In-Situ - हवा-स्थान

उपर्युक्त कथनों में से कौन-सा/से सही है/हैं?

- (a) केवल 1 और 2
- (b) केवल 2**
- (c) केवल 2 और 3
- (d) 1, 2 और 3

Syn.
41-10

- **Q1. (General Studies Paper III - Agriculture & Environment)**
- "उत्तर भारत में पराली जलाने की समस्या कानूनी, तकनीकी और आर्थिक कारणों के जटिल संयोजन का परिणाम है।" इस कथन के आलोक में, पराली जलाने के मुख्य कारणों का विश्लेषण कीजिए और इसके दीर्घकालिक समाधान हेतु सुझाव दीजिए।

(15 अंक, 250 शब्द)

UPSC-828
पि+व

2. UPSC Prelims 2021

Q. निम्नलिखित में से कौन-से फसल अवशेषों (Crop Residues) को खेत में जलाने के कारण वातावरण में उत्सर्जित होते हैं?

1. कार्बन मोनोऑक्साइड (Carbon monoxide)
2. मीथेन (Methane)
3. ओजोन (Ozone)
4. सल्फर डाइऑक्साइड (Sulphur dioxide)

नीचे दिए गए कूट का प्रयोग कर सही उत्तर चुनिए:

- (a) केवल 1 और 2
- (b) केवल 2, 3 और 4
- (c) केवल 1 और 4
- (d) 1, 2, 3 और 4

पि+व

UPSC Mains 2017 (General Studies Paper III)

- Q. "किसान पराली (फसल अवशेष) क्यों जलाते हैं? इसके पर्यावरण पर पड़ने वाले प्रभावों की चर्चा कीजिए और इस समस्या के स्थायी समाधान हेतु प्रौद्योगिकीय तथा नीतिगत उपायों का सुझाव दीजिए।" (15 अंक)

Calibrating India's inbound investment framework



Following the successful 18th BRICS Summit, in New Delhi in September, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's planned December visits to Canada and Brussels, where formal free trade agreements (FTAs) are expected to be signed, signal consistency in institutionalising India's global economic footprint. The trade push, alongside domestic structural reforms and a new FTA strategy, has changed India's investment trajectory. Reserve Bank of India data show gross inward foreign direct investment (FDI) reached a record \$94.8 billion in FY26. UNCTAD's World Investment Report 2026 notes India as 11th among the world's top FDI destinations, following a 44% rise in inflows.

India follows global trend

However, the report reveals that globally, international project finance remains roughly a quarter below its 2021 peak, a trend India reflects. In greenfield data centre investments (a focal sector across economic partnerships), India attracted approximately \$7 billion during the first three quarters of 2025. While this placed India within the top 10, it trailed Thailand and Spain, and sat substantially behind South Korea's \$21 billion, the United States's \$29 billion, and France's \$69 billion. What creates this lag between committed investment and its actual deployment in greenfield projects, particularly in India?

Investors believe incremental reform can ease the challenges behind this lag. In some ways, the remaining 'negotiations' will be internal – between the Centre and States, between the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and line Ministries, or between central rules and State notifications needed to enforce policy. Crucially, resolving these operational bottlenecks would benefit domestic enterprises as much as foreign investors. Commercial dispute resolution is faster



Bharat Joshi

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Turning
investment
commitments
into projects
requires tackling
State-level
administrative
bottlenecks

than before, but India's courts still had nearly 48 million pending cases as of April, including about six million in High Courts. Reforms such as the Commercial Courts Act, 2015 and the Mediation Act, 2023 have helped, with institutional arbitration increasingly becoming the corporate default. Smaller enterprises, however, still rely on courts. Better staffing of commercial benches and mediation centres remains essential to reducing resolution times.

On the labour codes

This fragmentation is also mirrored in the rollout of the landmark labour codes. Parliament's consolidation of 29 central labour laws into four codes was a legislative milestone, with the Central Rules notified in May 2026. But since labour is on the Concurrent List, implementation depends on State notifications. Gujarat moved swiftly to notify rules under all four codes, while other industrial States are finalising theirs. For enterprises designing national human resource frameworks, this necessitates managing a messy transitional phase of varied State timelines.

On tax certainty, the Taxation Laws (Amendment) Act, 2021 effectively ended the ghost of retrospective tax disputes by withdrawing outstanding demands against entities such as Vodafone and Cairn Energy. The relaunch of the Vivad se Vishwas scheme has also helped reduce the broader direct-tax litigation backlog.

Compliance, however, has required recalibration. Mandatory BIS certification under Quality Control Orders (QCOs) was designed to safeguard consumers, but the framework expanded extensively. The Gauba Committee found QCOs had grown from fewer than 70 to nearly 790, covering raw materials and intermediate goods. For imported components, compliance costs rose to ₹20 lakh, with six- to eight-month certification timelines disrupting domestic MSME supply chains. In response, the

government withdrew QCOs on critical intermediate goods, including PVC, aluminium and zinc, providing relief to manufacturers.

India's modern trade pacts now introduce binding investment targets. The EFTA agreement sets a historic \$100-billion target, but investor-protection mechanisms remain a work in progress. As the India-EFTA TEPA lacks an independent bilateral investment dispute mechanism, Switzerland is separately negotiating a bilateral investment treaty. This could inform negotiations with the EU and the U.K.

Further, speeds remain uneven. The DPIIT is the nodal agency but not the decision-maker on approvals. A revised SOP issued in May 2026 sets a 12-week deadline, but compliance remains uneven. However, large-scale projects such as Tata Electronics' semiconductor facility in Dholera, Gujarat, demonstrate how effective administrative coordination can accelerate capital deployment.

Reform lessons from successes

India's reform agenda can draw lessons from past successes. Singapore's CECA has facilitated over \$195 billion in cumulative FDI since 2000, including \$19.8 billion last year. Its non-discrimination and investor-protection frameworks are a useful blueprint for treaty negotiations. Domestically, the mobile-phone industry shows the potential of coordinated policy: production has grown 33-fold since FY15, from ₹180 billion to ₹6.27 trillion, while exports reached ₹2.59 trillion. India is now the world's second-largest mobile-phone manufacturer by volume and meets 99.2% of domestic demand through local production.

India's rise to the 11th-largest FDI destination and the world's second-largest mobile-phone manufacturer reflects its resolve in addressing internal governance bottlenecks. These achievements underscore the long-term benefits of sustained institutional reform and free trade.

subsidy
FTA
Laxman

भारत के इनबाउंड (आंतरिक) निवेश ढांचे को सुव्यवस्थित करना

December FTA EU

- नई दिल्ली में सितंबर में हुए सफल 18वें ब्रिक्स (BRICS) शिखर सम्मेलन के बाद, प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी की दिसंबर में कनाडा और ब्रुसेल्स की प्रस्तावित यात्राएं, जहां औपचारिक मुक्त व्यापार समझौते (FTAs) पर हस्ताक्षर होने की उम्मीद है।
- भारत के वैश्विक आर्थिक प्रभाव को संस्थागत रूप देने में निरंतरता का संकेत देती हैं।
- व्यापार को बढ़ावा देने की इस पहल ने, घरेलू संरचनात्मक सुधारों और एक नई एफटीए रणनीति के साथ मिलकर, भारत के निवेश मार्ग को बदल दिया है।
- भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक (RBI) के आंकड़े दर्शाते हैं कि वित्त वर्ष 2026 (FY26) में कुल प्रत्यक्ष विदेशी निवेश (FDI) बढ़कर \$94.8 बिलियन के रिकॉर्ड स्तर पर पहुंच गया।
- अंकटाड (UNCTAD) की वर्ल्ड इन्वेस्टमेंट रिपोर्ट 2026 के अनुसार, निवेश प्रवाह में 44% की वृद्धि के साथ भारत दुनिया के शीर्ष एफटीए (FDI) गंतव्यों में 11वें स्थान पर पहुंच गया है।

1-01

भारत वैश्विक रुझान का पालन करता है

- हालांकि, रिपोर्ट से पता चलता है कि वैश्विक स्तर पर, अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रोजेक्ट फाइनेंस अपने 2021 के शिखर से लगभग एक चौथाई नीचे है, जो प्रवृत्ति भारत में भी दिखाई देती है। ग्रीनफील्ड डेटा सेंटर निवेश में (जो आर्थिक साझेदारियों के बीच एक प्रमुख क्षेत्र है),
- भारत ने 2025 के पहले तीन तिमाहियों के दौरान लगभग \$7 बिलियन आकर्षित किए। हालांकि इसने भारत को शीर्ष 10 में ला दिया, लेकिन यह थाईलैंड और स्पेन से पीछे रहा, तथा दक्षिण कोरिया (\$21 बिलियन), संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका (\$29 बिलियन) और फ्रांस (\$69 बिलियन) से काफी पीछे था।
- प्रतिबद्ध निवेश और ग्रीनफील्ड परियोजनाओं में इसके वास्तविक कार्यान्वयन (deployment) के बीच इस अंतर का क्या कारण है, विशेषकर भारत में?

- निवेशकों का मानना है कि क्रमिक सुधार इस अंतराल के पीछे की चुनौतियों को कम कर सकते हैं.
- कुछ मायनों में, बाकी बची 'बातचीत' आंतरिक होगी — केंद्र और राज्यों के बीच, उद्योग और आंतरिक व्यापार संवर्धन विभाग (DPIIT) और लाइन मंत्रालयों के बीच, या नियमों को लागू करने के लिए आवश्यक केंद्रीय नियमों और राज्य अधिसूचनाओं के बीच.
- क्रूर रूप से कहें तो, इन परिचालन संबंधी बाधाओं को दूर करने से विदेशी निवेशकों जितना ही लाभ घरेलू उद्यमों को भी होगा.
- वाणिज्यिक विवादों का निपटान अब तेज हुआ है, लेकिन अप्रैल तक भारत की अदालतों में लगभग 48 मिलियन मामले लंबित (pending) थे, जिनमें से लगभग 6 मिलियन उच्च न्यायालयों में थे.
- कमर्शियल कोर्ट्स एक्ट, 2015 और मीडिएशन एक्ट, 2023 जैसे सुधारों ने मदद की है, और कॉरपोरेट डिफॉल्ट के मामलों में संस्थागत मध्यस्थता तेजी से बढ़ रही है.
- हालांकि, छोटे उद्यम अभी भी अदालतों पर निर्भर हैं. समाधान के समय को कम करने के लिए वाणिज्यिक पीठों (commercial benches) और मध्यस्थता केंद्रों में बेहतर कर्मचारियों की तैनाती आवश्यक बनी हुई है.

श्रम संहिताओं (Labour Codes) पर

- यह विखंडन (fragmentation) ऐतिहासिक श्रम संहिताओं के कार्यान्वयन में भी झलकता है. संसद द्वारा 29 केंद्रीय श्रम कानूनों को चार संहिताओं में समेकित करना एक विधायी मील का पत्थर था, जिसके केंद्रीय नियम मई 2026 में अधिसूचित किए गए.
- लेकिन चूंकि **श्रम समवर्ती सूची (Concurrent List)** में है, इसलिए इसका कार्यान्वयन राज्य की अधिसूचनाओं पर निर्भर करता है.
- गुजरात ने सभी चार संहिताओं के तहत नियमों को तुरंत अधिसूचित किया, जबकि अन्य औद्योगिक राज्य इन्हें अंतिम रूप दे रहे हैं.
- राष्ट्रीय मानव संसाधन ढांचे को डिजाइन करने वाले उद्यमों के लिए, इसके कारण विभिन्न राज्यों की अलग-अलग समय-सीमाओं के एक जटिल और अव्यवस्थित संक्रमण काल (transitional phase) का प्रबंधन करना पड़ता है.

- कर निश्चितता (Tax certainty) के मोर्चे पर, कराधान कानून (संशोधन) अधिनियम, 2021 ने वोडाफोन और केर्न एनर्जी जैसी संस्थाओं के खिलाफ बकाया मांगों को वापस लेकर पूर्वव्यापी कर (retrospective tax) विवादों के साये को प्रभावी ढंग से समाप्त कर दिया.
- 'विवाद से विश्वास' योजना के पुनारंभ से भी प्रत्यक्ष कर मुकदमेबाजी के बै बैकलॉग को कम करने में मदद मिली है.
- हालांकि, अनुपालन (Compliance) के लिए पुनर्निर्धारण की आवश्यकता पड़ी है. उपभोक्ताओं की सुरक्षा के लिए गुणवत्ता नियंत्रण आदेशों (QCOs) के तहत अनिवार्य बीआईएस (BIS) प्रमाणीकरण तैयार किया गया था, लेकिन इसका दायरा अत्यधिक बढ़ गया.
- गौबा समिति ने पाया कि QCOs 70 से कम से बढ़कर लगभग 790 हो गए हैं, जो कच्चे माल और मध्यवर्ती वस्तुओं को कवर करते हैं. आयातित घटकों के लिए, अनुपालन लागत बढ़कर ₹20 लाख हो गई, और छह से आठ महीने की प्रमाणन समय-सीमा ने घरेलू एमएसएमई (MSME) आपूर्ति श्रृंखलाओं को बाधित कर दिया.
- इसके जवाब में, सरकार ने पीवीसी, एल्यूमीनियम और जस्ते सहित महत्वपूर्ण मध्यवर्ती वस्तुओं पर QCOs वापस ले लिए, जिससे निर्माताओं को राहत मिली.

- भारत के आधुनिक व्यापार समझौते अब बाध्यकारी निवेश लक्ष्यों (binding investment targets) को भी शामिल करते हैं.
- EFTA समझौता \$100-बिलियन का एक ऐतिहासिक लक्ष्य निर्धारित करता है, लेकिन निवेशक-संरक्षण तंत्र अभी भी प्रगति पर है.
- चूंकि भारत-EFTA TEPA में एक स्वतंत्र द्विपक्षीय निवेश विवाद निपटान तंत्र का अभाव है, इसलिए स्विट्जरलैंड अलग से एक द्विपक्षीय निवेश संधि पर बातचीत कर रहा है.
- यह यूरोपीय संघ (EU) और यूके के साथ भविष्य की वार्ताओं को आकार दे सकता है.
- इसके अलावा, गति अभी भी असमान है. DPIIT नोडल एजेंसी है लेकिन स्वीकृतियों पर निर्णय लेने वाली संस्था नहीं है.
- मई 2026 में जारी एक संशोधित एसओपी (SOP) 12 सप्ताह की समय-सीमा तय करता है, लेकिन अनुपालन अभी भी असमान बना हुआ है.
- हालांकि, धोलेरा (गुजरात) में टाटा इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स की सेमीकंडक्टर सुविधा जैसे बड़े पैमाने की परियोजनाएं यह प्रदर्शित करती हैं कि प्रशासनिक तालमेल कैसे पूंजी की तैनाती को तेज कर सकता है.

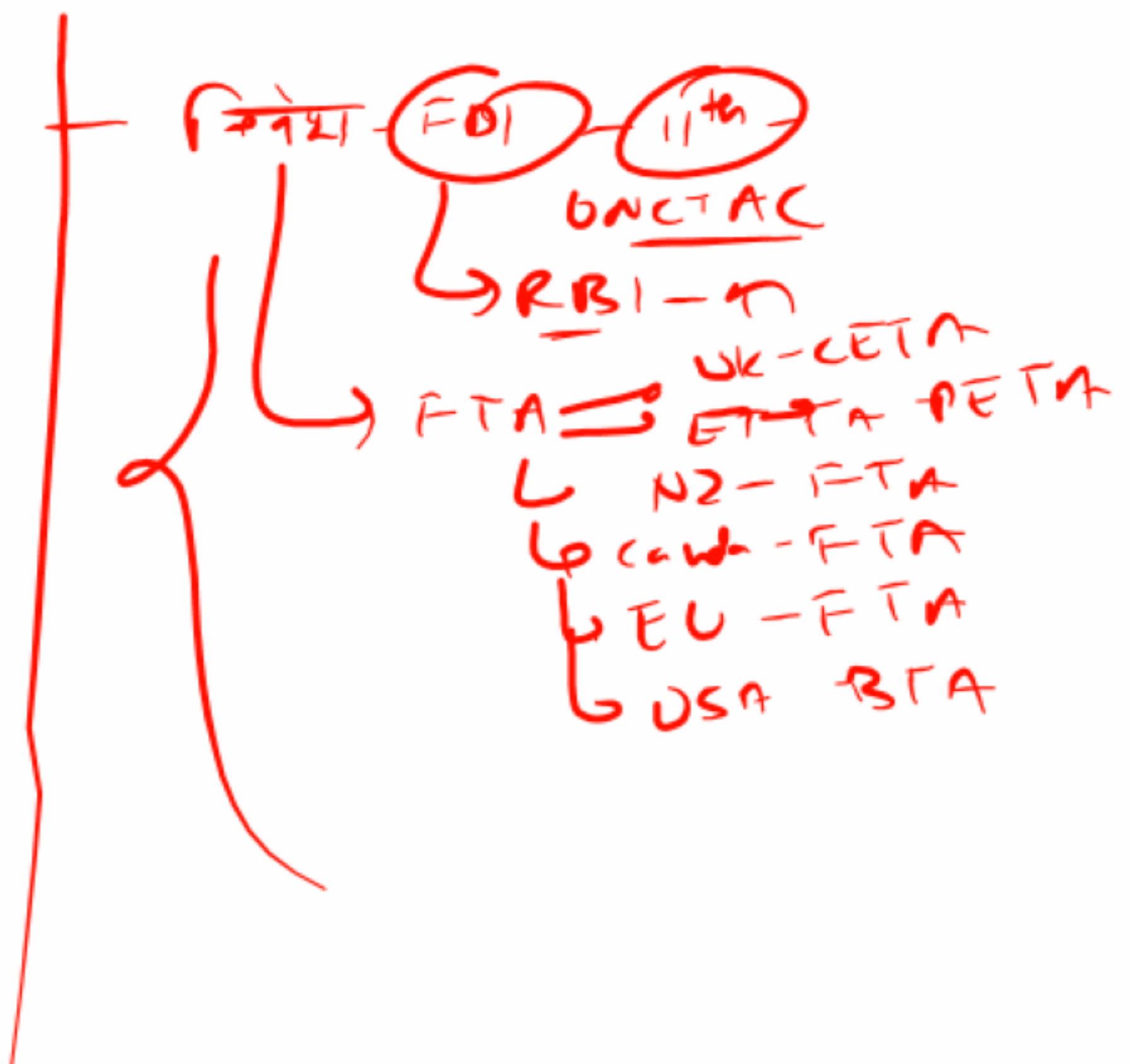
Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. भारत में प्रत्यक्ष विदेशी निवेश (FDI) और व्यापारिक ढांचे के संदर्भ में निम्नलिखित कथनों पर विचार कीजिए:

1. ~~UNCTAD~~ की World Investment Report 2026 के अनुसार, भारत वैश्विक स्तर पर शीर्ष FDI गंतव्यों में 11वें स्थान पर है।
2. ग्रीनफील्ड निवेश (Greenfield Investments) का तात्पर्य उस निवेश से है जहाँ कोई विदेशी कंपनी किसी मौजूदा घरेलू कंपनी का अधिग्रहण (Acquisition) करती है। ग्रीनफील्ड निवेश
3. भारत-EFTA (TEPA) समझौते में एक अलग और बाध्यकारी द्विपक्षीय निवेश विवाद निपटान (ISDS) तंत्र पहले से मौजूद है। *

उपर्युक्त कथनों में से कौन-सा/से सही है/हैं?

- (a) केवल 1 ✓
- (b) केवल 1 और 2
- (c) केवल 2 और 3
- (d) 1, 2 और 3



Mains Practice Questions

- "यद्यपि भारत विश्व के शीर्ष FDI गंतव्यों में से एक के रूप में उभरा है, फिर भी प्रतिबद्ध निवेश (Committed Investment) और परियोजनाओं के वास्तविक कार्यान्वयन के बीच एक बड़ा अंतर बना हुआ है।" इस अंतर के पीछे के प्रशासनिक, कानूनी और केंद्र-राज्य समन्वय संबंधी कारणों का विश्लेषण कीजिए और भारत के निवेश ढांचे को सुदृढ़ करने के उपाय सुझाइए। (15 अंक, 250 शब्द)

GST refunds made easier; arrest powers cut

Rates remain unchanged; decisions on rates only once a year; penalty cut from ₹25,000 to ₹10,000 | The council has eased the litigation-related rules of the system, providing relief to small taxpayers | Goods can be inspected or seized only by the officer of supplier or destination State, it said

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council on Thursday took a slew of decisions in its 57th meeting here to enhance simplification, improve certainty in tax treatment, remove hold-ups in the processing of input tax credits, and ease the compliance burden on businesses, especially smaller ones.

The council also recommended removing arrest powers of GST officers and increasing the prosecution threshold from ₹1 crore to ₹5 crore. The general penalty will also be reduced from ₹25,000 to ₹10,000.

"I can say that 99% of issues in GST relating to rates and processes have now been addressed," Nirmala Sitharaman, Union Finance Minister and Chairperson of the GST Council, said following the

meeting. "The door is not closed to further reforms, and those will be taken up as needed, but the bulk of them are now done," she added.

Apart from easing processes related to GST registration and availing of refunds and input tax credits, the council has also eased the litigation-related rules of the tax system, providing relief to small taxpayers.

Ms. Sitharaman said all the changes are expected to come into effect from April 1, 2027, and added that no GST rates were changed during this meeting. The rate decisions will now come up before the Council only once a year and will be implemented from the start of the subsequent financial year, the Finance Minister said.

She noted that, beyond the GST Council, the Union government has decided to introduce a faceless assess-

Good and simple

The 57th meeting of the GST council decided to enhance simplification, improve certainty in tax treatment, and ease the compliance burden on small businesses

KEY DECISIONS

- Tax officers' power to arrest scrapped
- Prosecution limit increased to ₹5 crore turnover
- Export of services brought into input tax credit system
- Automated registrations, reduced paperwork, and eased input tax credit processes
- No notices for amounts below ₹10,000, pending notices to be cancelled

The committee has also decided to examine proposal to allow small taxpayers to file returns once a year

New measures likely to come into force from April 1, 2027



I can say that 99% of issues in GST relating to rates and processes have now been addressed... The door is not closed to further reforms, and those will be taken up as needed, but the bulk of them are now done

NIRMALA
SITHARAMAN
Union Finance
Minister



ment system for the Central GST system, similar to the one currently in place for income tax. A framework for this will be issued for public consultation before Budget 2027, and the system will be implemented during 2027-28.

"The process reforms have been driven by the principle of trust," Ms. Sitharaman said. "The businesses and taxpayers

have to be trusted... and we shouldn't be too intrusive."

Thursday's meet in New Delhi came over a year after its previous meeting in September 2025, during which it had rationalised the rates on most goods and services, and reduced the total number of tax slabs under the GST. The GST Council has approved a system that will provide

greater certainty about the documents required during registration. According to the government, 68% of taxpayers are granted automatic registration within three working days.

The upgraded system approved by the Council is expected to streamline the process for the remaining low-risk taxpayers by avoiding queries and rejections. The new system will

also incorporate a simplified registration mechanism for small taxpayers who provide supplies through e-commerce platforms, and it has also eased the process for amendments to and cancellations of registrations.

This will now allow small e-commerce sellers to register in a single State rather than in each State where they sell goods.

The Centre has also shared a concept note with the GST Council and has received its in-principle approval for an optional scheme for businesses with a turnover of up to ₹5 crore that supply to consumers, allowing them to file returns once a year instead of quarterly.

The final decision on this will come up for approval in the next GST Council meeting.

Refunds are proposed to be acknowledged within 10 days, down from the cur-

rent 15 days. Based on a risk assessment, the government estimates that 90% of the claims will be released within three working days of acknowledgement.

Reducing disputes

The Council has also said that goods moving between States can be inspected, detained or seized only by the officer of the supplier or destination State and not by any officer in between.

Further, goods can now be intercepted only on the basis of "specific intelligence" and only with authorisation of a Joint Commissioner-level officer.

"This prevents arbitrary checks by GST enforcement wings that affect the movement of goods from one State to another," Ms. Sitharaman said.

"This would significantly improve the ease of movement of goods."

GST Council

→ 92% in

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य



- यहाँ GST Act (वस्तु एवं सेवा कर अधिनियम) और GST Council (जीएसटी परिषद) का पूरा विवरण हिंदी में दिया गया है:

1. GST Act (वस्तु एवं सेवा कर अधिनियम)

- भारत में अप्रत्यक्ष कर प्रणाली को सरल बनाने के लिए 101वें संविधान संशोधन अधिनियम, 2016 के तहत **1 जुलाई 2017** को GST लागू किया गया था। इसका मुख्य उद्देश्य "एक राष्ट्र, एक कर" (One Nation, One Tax) के सिद्धांत को साकार करना था।
- मुख्य विशेषताएँ:
- अप्रत्यक्ष करों का विलय (Subsuming of Indirect Taxes): GST ने केंद्र और राज्यों के 17 से अधिक अप्रत्यक्ष करों (जैसे- उत्पाद शुल्क, सेवा कर, वैट, बिक्री कर, एंटरटेनमेंट टैक्स) को समाप्त कर उन्हें एक छत्र के नीचे ला दिया।
- GST का ढांचा:-
 - CGST (केन्द्रीय जीएसटी): राज्य के भीतर होने वाली बिक्री पर केंद्र सरकार द्वारा वसूला जाता है।
 - SGST (राज्य जीएसटी) / UTGST: राज्य के भीतर बिक्री पर संबंधित राज्य या केंद्र शासित प्रदेश सरकार द्वारा वसूला जाता है।
 - IGST (एकीकृत जीएसटी): दो राज्यों के बीच (Inter-State) होने वाले व्यापार और आयात (Imports) पर केंद्र सरकार द्वारा वसूला जाता है और फिर राज्यों में बांटा जाता है।
- टैक्स स्लैब: GST में मुख्य रूप से 5 कर दरें हैं: 0%, 5%, 12%, 18%, और 28%।

101^{वां} - 2016
279(A) - GST Council

2. GST Council (जीएसटी परिषद)

- जीएसटी परिषद एक संवैधानिक निकाय (Constitutional Body) है जो भारत में GST दरों और नियमों को तय करने के लिए सर्वोच्च निर्णय लेने वाली संस्था है।
- संवैधानिक प्रावधान:
- इसका उल्लेख भारतीय संविधान के **अनुच्छेद 279A** (Article 279A) में किया गया है।
- राष्ट्रपति संविधान संशोधन के लागू होने के 60 दिनों के भीतर इस परिषद का गठन करते हैं।
- संरचना (Composition):
- अध्यक्ष (Chairperson): भारत के केंद्रीय वित्त मंत्री।
- सदस्य: केंद्रीय राज्य वित्त मंत्री (Minister of State for Finance) तथा सभी राज्यों के वित्त मंत्री या उनके द्वारा नामित कोई अन्य मंत्री।

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य



GST Council - October 5th 2026

मुख्य कार्य:

- वस्तुओं और सेवाओं पर कर दरों (Tax Rates) को निर्धारित करना या उनमें संशोधन करना।
- कर छूट (Exemptions), ई-वे बिल, रिटर्न फाइलिंग और अनुपालन (Compliance) नियमों को तैयार करना।
- केंद्र और राज्यों के बीच GST से जुड़े विवादों का समाधान करना।

मदान और निर्णय प्रक्रिया (Voting Structure):

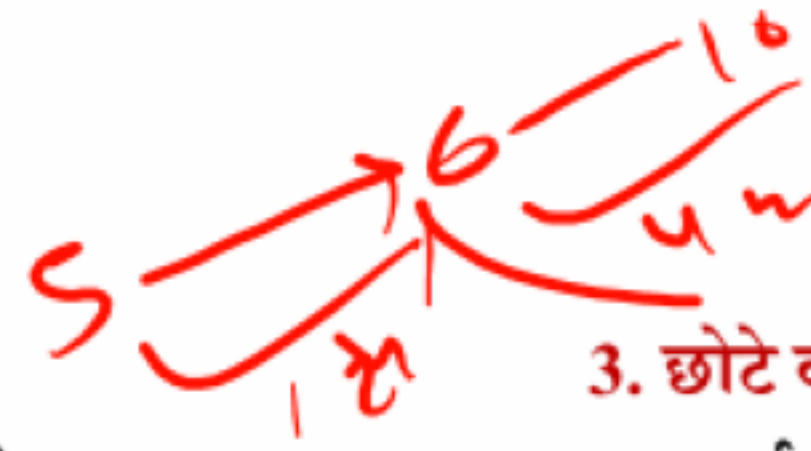
- परिषद का कोई भी निर्णय उपस्थित और मतदान करने वाले सदस्यों के **3/4 (75%)** विशेष बहुमत से लिया जाता है।
- **मतभार (Weightage):**
 - केंद्र सरकार के वोट का मूल्य कुल वोटों का 1/3 (33.33%) होता है।
 - सभी राज्य सरकारों के वोटों का कुल मूल्य मिलाकर 2/3 (66.67%) होता है।

- 57वीं GST काउंसिल बैठक (8 अक्टूबर 2026) में वित्त मंत्री निर्मला सीतारमण की अध्यक्षता में कई बड़े और ऐतिहासिक नीतिगत फैसले लिए गए हैं। इस बैठक का मुख्य ध्यान टैक्स दरों में बदलाव के बजाय अनुपालन (Compliance) को आसान बनाने, गैर-अपराधीकरण (Decriminalisation), और ऑटोमेशन पर रहा।
- बैठक में किए गए प्रमुख बदलाव और सिफारिशें नीचे सूचीबद्ध हैं:

1. दंडात्मक शक्तियों और अभियोजन में बड़ी राहत (Decriminalisation)

- **गिरफ्तारी की शक्तियां खत्म (Arrest Powers Scrapped):** GST अधिकारियों से करदाताओं को गिरफ्तार करने की शक्तियां (Section 69) वापस लेने की सिफारिश की गई है।
- **प्रोसीक्यूशन लिमिट में बढ़ोतरी:** GST मामलों में कोर्ट कार्यवाही (Prosecution) शुरू करने की न्यूनतम सीमा ₹1 करोड़ से बढ़ाकर ₹5 करोड़ कर दी गई है।
- **सामान्य जुर्माना घटाया:** किसी विशिष्ट श्रेणी में न आने वाले उल्लंघनों के लिए सामान्य जुर्माना (General Penalty) ₹25,000 से घटाकर ₹10,000 कर दिया गया है।

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य



2. इनपुट टैक्स क्रेडिट (ITC) के नियमों का उदारीकरण

- **कर्मचारी बीमा पर ITC:** कंपनियों द्वारा अपने कर्मचारियों के लिए खरीदी गई हेल्थ और लाइफ इंश्योरेंस पॉलिसी पर अब ITC मिलेगा।
- **इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर पर राहत:** टेलीकॉम टावर (Telecom Towers) और कारखाने से बाहर बिछाई गई पाइपलाइनों पर भी ITC क्लेम करने की छूट दी गई है।
- **सैंपल और एक्सपायर्ड स्टॉक:** फ्री सैंपल और कानूनी कारणों से नष्ट किए गए एक्सपायर्ड स्टॉक पर अब ITC नुकसान नहीं होगा।
- **ईमानदार खरीदारों की सुरक्षा:** सप्लायर द्वारा टैक्स न जमा करने पर खरीदार का ITC रोकने की समस्या की समीक्षा के लिए अधिकारियों की एक विशेष समिति बनाई गई है, जो 3 महीने में रिपोर्ट देगी।

5. GST दरों में कोई बदलाव नहीं (No Rate Changes)

- काउंसिल ने इस बैठक में GST की टैक्स दरों में कोई बदलाव नहीं किया है।
- भविष्य में GST दरों से जुड़े मामलों पर विचार करने के लिए वर्ष में केवल एक विशेष बैठक समर्पित की जाएगी।

3. छोटे कारोबारियों और MSMEs के लिए सरलीकरण

- **वर्ष में केवल एक रिटर्न:** ₹5 करोड़ तक के टर्नओवर वाले B2C कारोबारियों के लिए 'वार्षिक रिटर्न योजना' का सिद्धांत रूप से अनुमोदन किया गया है, जिसमें वे साल में 1 रिटर्न भरेंगे और टैक्स तिमाही आधार पर देंगे।
- **₹10,000 से कम के नोटिस बंद:** ₹10,000 से कम के टैक्स मामलों में कोई शो-काउज नोटिस (Show-Cause Notice) जारी नहीं किया जाएगा।
- **ई-कॉमर्स विक्रेताओं को राहत:** छोटे ऑनलाइन विक्रेताओं को दूसरे राज्यों में अलग से भौतिक कार्यालय (Physical Office) खोलने की आवश्यकता नहीं होगी; वे ई-कॉमर्स प्लेटफॉर्म के वेयरहाउस को मुख्य स्थान बना सकेंगे।

4. रिफंड और माल परिवहन में तेजी

- **फास्ट-ट्रैक रिफंड:** रिफंड क्लेम की पावती समय सीमा 15 दिन से घटाकर 10 दिन की गई है। 90% पात्र रिफंड ऑटोमैटिक जोखिम मूल्यांकन के बाद 3 कार्य दिवसों के भीतर मंजूर कर दिए जाएंगे।
- **ई-वे बिल और लॉजिस्टिक्स सुधार:** रास्ते में माल की भौतिक जांच (Physical Check) अब केवल ठोस खुफिया जानकारी के आधार पर और केवल मूल राज्य (Origin) या गंतव्य राज्य (Destination) के अधिकारी ही कर सकेंगे, जिससे इंटर-स्टेट माल परिवहन आसान होगा।

INDIA bloc protests against CEC at Rajghat



INDIA bloc leaders stage a peaceful protest at Mahatma Gandhi's memorial at Rajghat in New Delhi on Thursday. PTI

Sandeep Phukan
NEW DELHI

For the third day in a row, leaders of the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) on Thursday protested in Delhi against alleged "vote chori (theft)" and demanded the removal of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar, staging a symbolic satyagraha at Mahatma Gandhi's memorial at Rajghat, New Delhi.

Following two days of face-offs with the police, Opposition leaders were allowed to hold a peaceful protest at Rajghat without being prevented from reaching there. They offered floral tributes at the memorial, with Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge saying they "prayed that the BJP government gets the wisdom

to stop vote chori, remove the CEC, and protect the citizen's right to vote".

The INDIA bloc said it will continue its protest on Friday.

Leaders of the Opposition bloc are likely to march towards Rashtrapati Bhavan after assembling at the Parliament House in the morning.

Senior leaders, including Mamata Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee, may join the march, even though President Droupadi Murmu has not yet given an appointment to meet them.

Show of unity

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Mr. Kumar of "hijacking" the country by allegedly indulging in the

vote theft.

In a replay of Wednesday's outreach, Mr. Kharge hosted a lunch for Opposition MPs and leaders at Moets restaurant in the Outer Circle of Connaught Place. In a show of Opposition unity, leaders of the Samajwadi Party, Shiv Sena (UBT) and the Nationalist Congress Party (Sharadchandra Pawar) were present at Thursday's lunch.

Interacting with reporters after the lunch, Mr. Gandhi targeted Mr. Modi, Mr. Shah, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat and Mr. Kumar, accusing them of "destroying" the Constitution.

He claimed that around 300 MPs wanted to hold a peaceful dharna on the first day, but were stopped near the Election Commission's office, while on the second day, they were prevented from going to Jantar

Mantar and were "beaten up". "They will be brought to justice. This is our guarantee, and you will see it happen," he said.

Congress general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal said the INDIA bloc had sent a message by holding the protest at Rajghat.

"Entire democracy has been completely finished by Mr. Modi and Mr. Shah through Gyanesh Kumar. We have come here to pray to the Mahatma," he said.

Besides Congress leaders such as Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Kodikunnil Suresh, Abhishek Banerjee of the Mamata Trinamool Congress, John Brittas of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), P. Sandosh Kumar of the Communist Party of India, and Manoj Jha of the Rashtriya Janata Dal were also present at the Rajghat protest.

CJP leaders alert police on threat videos ahead of rally

Lavpreet Kaur
NEW DELHI

Ahead of the October 10 protest at Delhi's Jantar Mantar, several videos containing threats of violence against demonstrators have circulated on social media. Organisers of the protest, including Cockroach Janta Party's (CJP) Saurav Das, have urged the Delhi Police to take preventive action against those allegedly issuing the threats.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 5

7,000 CRPF personnel mobilised for Delhi protest

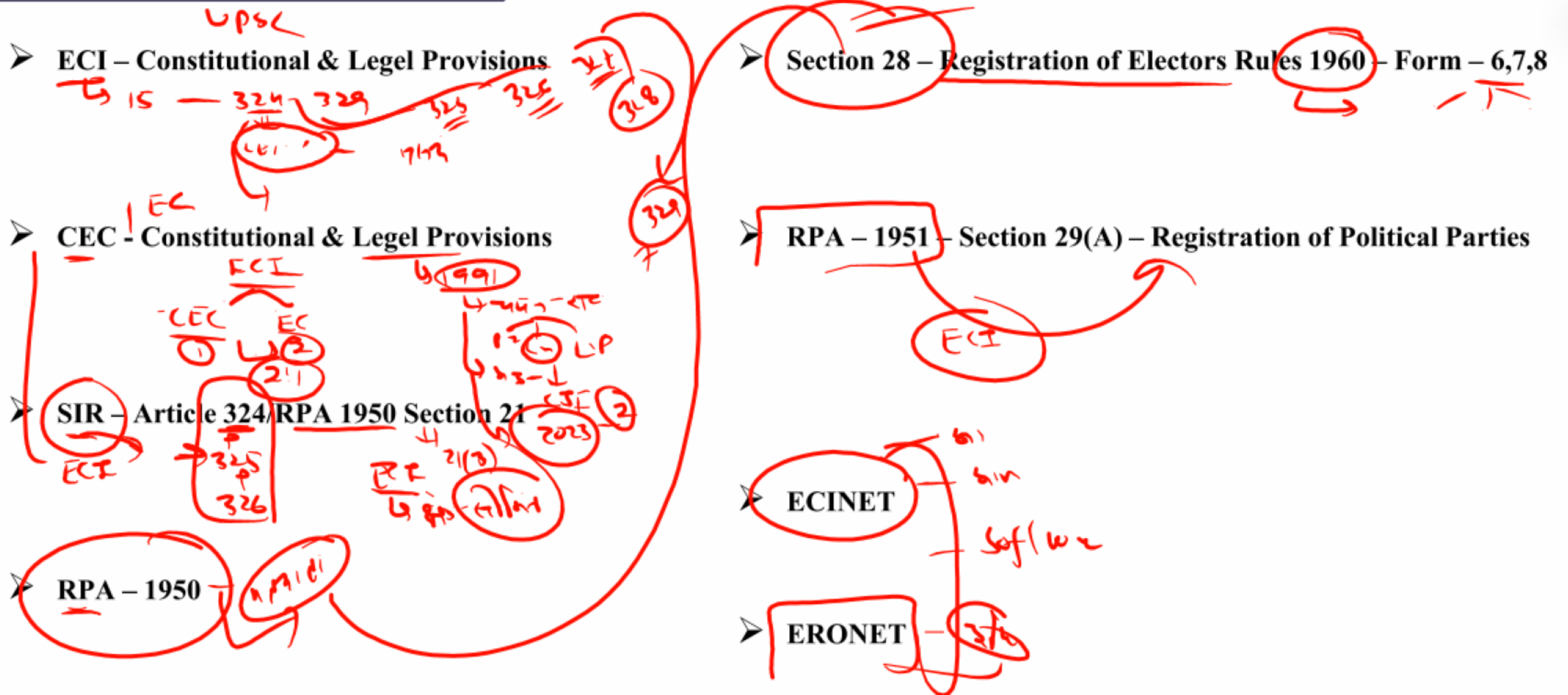
Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

At least 70 companies of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), comprising around 7,000 personnel, who are currently deployed in West Bengal and Chhattisgarh, are being mobilised for law-and-order duties in Delhi, ahead of the protest called by the Cockroach Janta Party on October 10, according to two official communications issued on October 5 and 6.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 5

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'What is andolanjeevi?': HC questions use of the term in Satyam Verma detention case

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

The Allahabad High Court on Thursday questioned the use of the term "andolanjeevi" and how it found its way into a government document mentioning the grounds of detention under the National Security Act issued by Gautam Buddha Nagar District Magistrate Medha Roopam against journalist Satyam Verma, an accused in the Noida workers' protest.

The order in Hindi, described Mr. Verma as an "illogical, stubborn and violent andolanjeevi" whose "warped ideology" led to the unrest.

"Where does this term 'andolanjeevi' come from?" Justice Atul Sreedharan asked the Additional Advocate General representing the Uttar Pradesh government.

The Bench came down heavily on the authorities asking how a person's ideology, reading material or organisational ties could,



The Noida Authority's order on the grounds of Satyam Verma's detention described him as a 'violent andolanjeevi'. FILE PHOTO

on their own, form a valid basis for preventive detention.

The questions came during the hearing of Mr. Verma's plea challenging the District Magistrate's 12 May detention order, along with the State government's approval and confirmation orders. He has sought quashing of the orders, his immediate release and compensation for alleged illegal detention. The Bench of Justices

Sreedharan and Achal Sachdev reserved its order.

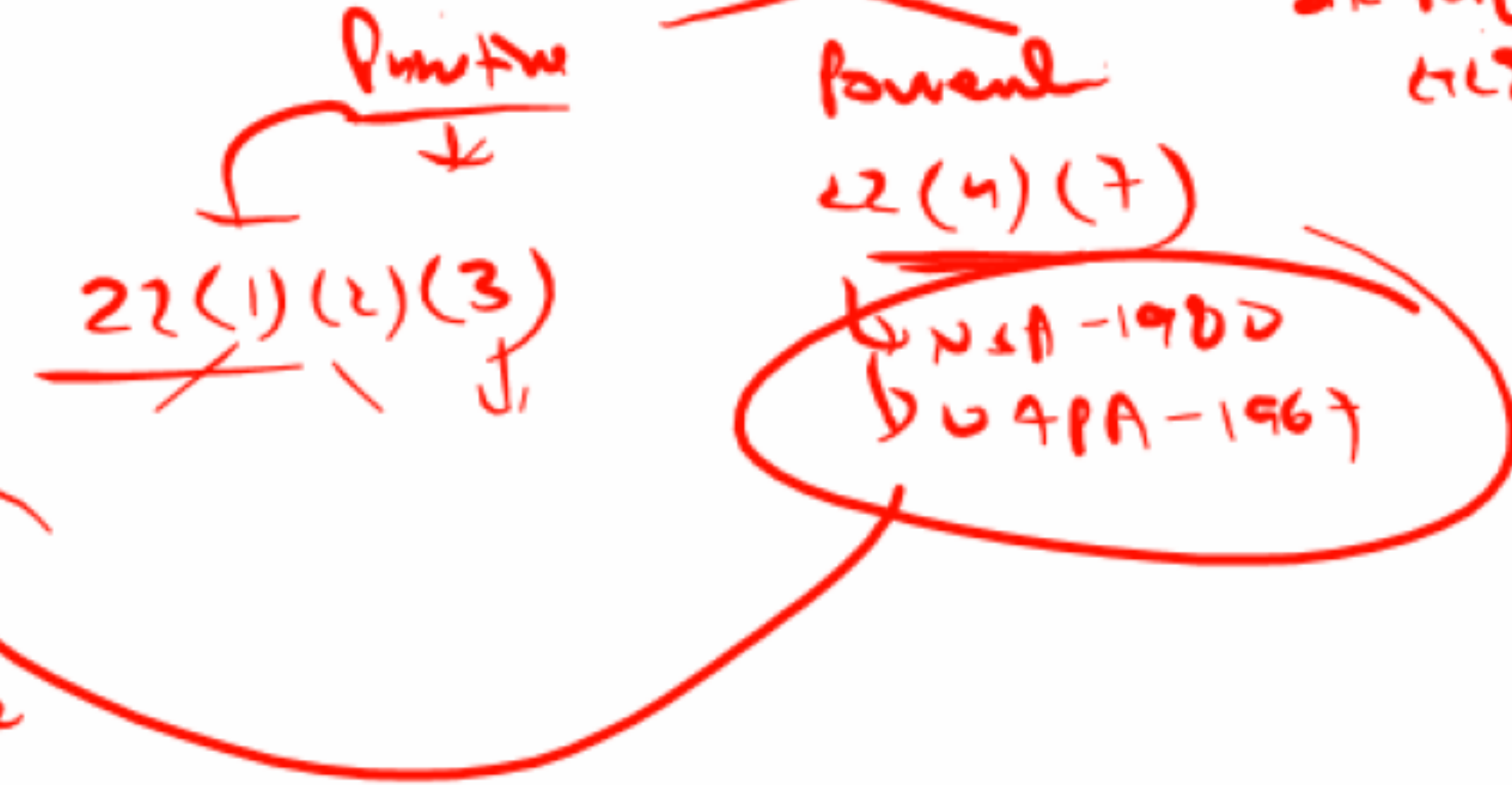
The term "andolanjeevi" was popularised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who used it in a Rajya Sabha speech on 8 February 2021 about the 2020-21 farmers' protest. It refers to "professional protesters" or people who thrive on agitations.

According to the order mentioning the detention grounds, a copy of which is with *The Hindu*, Mr. Verma is a founding member of the Revolutionary Workers Party of India (RWPI) and the publisher and writer of *Mazdoor Bigul*. He has been accused of acting as an ideological instigator who indirectly incited Noida's industrial workers to violence, arson and vandalism.

Workers in the Noida industrial area staged a series of protests in April over issues such as wage hike, working hours and better overtime pay, with violence reported during one such stir on April 13.

YouTube Homework

➤ Article - 22 — फिजली डोर मजदूर हलक



→ नोटा में मजदूर की हलक

→ नोटा में मजदूर की हलक

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→ नोटा में मजदूर की हलक

ISRO employees seek talks with Chairman over privatisation row

Hemanth C.S.
BENGALURU

The Joint Action Council (JAC), representing nine Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) employees' associations, have sought a meeting with Chairperson of the space agency, V. Narayanan, to discuss key issues, such as emerging threats of privatisation and transfer of technology, among others.

In a letter dated October 7, the nine associations requested an early structured personal interaction or meeting to discuss the future role of the ISRO, emerging threats of privatisation,

transfer of technology, and operational functions of launch vehicles and facilities.

They have sought a clarification on other pressing employee issues, including inordinate stagnation after Cadre Review, recruitment and attrition, concentration of functional positions, vigilance clearance relating to Performance Related Incentive Scheme, and restoration of Joint Consultative Mechanisms (Joint Consultative Machinery).

The JAC stated that fundamental doubts and concerns raised by the employees were not clarified.

YouTube Homework

- ISRO ✓
- PSLV ✓
- GSLV ✓

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य



- भारत में अंतरिक्ष क्षेत्र (Space Sector) के उदारीकरण और निजीकरण (Privatization/Private Sector Participation) को लेकर सरकार ने पिछले कुछ वर्षों में कई ऐतिहासिक कदम उठाए हैं।
- ध्यान देने योग्य बात यह है कि सरकार इसरो (ISRO) को बेच नहीं रही है, बल्कि ISRO के साथ-साथ निजी कंपनियों (Private Space Startups/Companies) को भी अंतरिक्ष क्षेत्र में काम करने की अनुमति और प्रोत्साहन दे रही है। इसका मुख्य उद्देश्य भारत को वैश्विक स्पेस मार्केट (Global Space Economy) में एक प्रमुख खिलाड़ी बनाना है।
- नीचे सरकार द्वारा उठाए गए कदमों, बनाई गई एजेंसियों और इसमें शामिल प्रमुख निजी कंपनियों की पूरी जानकारी दी गई है:

1. सरकार द्वारा किए गए प्रमुख सुधार और नीतियाँ

- **2020 के अंतरिक्ष सुधार (Space Sector Reforms 2020):** केंद्र सरकार ने जून 2020 में अंतरिक्ष क्षेत्र को निजी संस्थाओं (Non-Government Entities - NGEs) के लिए खोलने का ऐतिहासिक निर्णय लिया।

- **IN-SPACe (इंडियन नेशनल स्पेस प्रमोशन एंड ऑथराइजेशन सेंटर) का गठन:** यह एक एकल-खिड़की (Single-window) नोडल एजेंसी है, जो निजी कंपनियों को ISRO की प्रयोगशालाओं, लॉन्च पैड और बुनियादी ढांचे का उपयोग करने की अनुमति और स्वीकृति देती है।
- **NSIL (NewSpace India Limited) का सुदृढ़ीकरण:** यह ISRO की एक वाणिज्यिक (Commercial) शाखा है। इसका काम ISRO द्वारा विकसित तकनीकों को निजी उद्योगों को स्थानांतरित करना (Technology Transfer) और निजी कंपनियों के जरिए रॉकेट व उपग्रह बनवाना है।
- **भारतीय अंतरिक्ष नीति 2023 (Indian Space Policy 2023):** यह नीति निजी क्षेत्र की भूमिका को स्पष्ट रूप से परिभाषित करती है:
- **ISRO का मुख्य ध्यान अब केवल रिसर्च एंड डेवलपमेंट (R&D), उन्नत अंतरिक्ष मिशनों (जैसे गगनयान, चंद्रयान) और नई तकनीकों की खोज पर होगा।**
- **निजी कंपनियाँ कमर्शियल गतिविधियों जैसे— रॉकेट बनाना, सैटेलाइट बनाना, लॉन्च सेवाएँ देना और डेटा एप्लीकेशन प्रदान करने का काम करेंगी।**
- **100% FDI (प्रत्यक्ष विदेशी निवेश) की मंजूरी (2024):** सरकार ने अंतरिक्ष क्षेत्र में स्वचालित मार्ग (Automatic Route) के तहत 100% तक FDI की अनुमति दी है, जिससे विदेशी निवेश को बढ़ावा मिला है।

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य



2. प्रमुख भारतीय निजी कंपनियाँ (Private Space Companies)

- भारत में अब कई 'न्यू-स्पेस' (NewSpace) स्टार्टअप्स उभर कर सामने आए हैं, जो अपने स्वयं के रॉकेट और सैटेलाइट्स बना रहे हैं:
- (A) लॉन्च व्हीकल (रॉकेट) बनाने वाली कंपनियाँ:
- Skyroot Aerospace (हैदराबाद):
 - इन्होंने नवंबर 2022 में भारत का पहला निजी तौर पर विकसित रॉकेट 'Vikram-S' सफलतापूर्वक लॉन्च किया।
 - ये 'Vikram' सीरीज के छोटे उपग्रह प्रक्षेपण यान (Small Satellite Launch Vehicles) विकसित कर रहे हैं।
- Agnikul Cosmos (चेन्नई):
 - इन्होंने IIT मद्रास में भारत का पहला निजी 3D-प्रिंटेड रॉकेट इंजन ('Agnite') तैयार किया और मई 2024 में अपने सब-ऑर्बिटल रॉकेट 'Agnibaan SORTED' का सफल परीक्षण किया।
 - इन्होंने श्रीहरिकोटा (ISRO परिसर) में भारत का पहला निजी लॉन्चपैड भी स्थापित किया है।

constellation
most
SSR

(B) सैटेलाइट और पेलोड बनाने वाली कंपनियाँ:

• Pixxel (बेंगलुरु):

- यह कंपनी हाइपरस्पेक्ट्रल अर्थ ऑब्जर्वेशन सैटेलाइट्स (पृथ्वी निगरानी उपग्रह) का एक समूह (Constellation) बना रही है, जो कृषि, पर्यावरण और संसाधन प्रबंधन में डेटा प्रदान करता है।

• Dhruva Space (हैदराबाद):

- यह उपग्रह निर्माण, पेलोड और ग्राउंड स्टेशन सेवाएं प्रदान करती है। इनके सैटेलाइट्स को ISRO के PSLV द्वारा अंतरिक्ष में भेजा जा चुका है।

• Digantara:

- यह अंतरिक्ष में जमा कचरे (Space Debris) और स्पेस सिचुएशनल अवेयरनेस (SSA) को ट्रैक करने के लिए सैटेलाइट विकसित कर रही है।

(C) पारंपरिक रक्षा व एयरोस्पेस दिग्गज (Traditional Vendors):

• L&T (Larsen & Toubro) और HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Limited):

- यह कंसोर्टियम (समूह) अब ISRO के सबसे भरोसेमंद रॉकेट PSLV का निर्माण पूरी तरह से कमर्शियल स्तर पर कर रहा है।

• Tata Advanced Systems और Godrej Aerospace:

- यह कंपनियाँ ISRO के रॉकेटों और सैटेलाइट्स के लिए महत्वपूर्ण कलपुर्जे (Components) और इंजन बनाती हैं।

3. निजीकरण से लाभ (Significance)

- वैश्विक हिस्सेदारी में वृद्धि: वर्तमान में वैश्विक अंतरिक्ष अर्थव्यवस्था (~\$400+ बिलियन) में भारत की हिस्सेदारी केवल ~2-3% है। निजी भागीदारी से इसे 10% से अधिक तक पहुँचाने का लक्ष्य है।
- ISRO पर बोझ कम होना: ISRO को नियमित लॉन्चिंग और निर्माण से राहत मिलेगी, जिससे वह गहरे अंतरिक्ष मिशनों (Deep Space Exploration) पर ध्यान केंद्रित कर सकेगा।
- इनोवेशन और रोजगार: स्पेस-टेक क्षेत्र में हजारों उच्च-कुशल (High-skilled) नौकरियों और नए स्टार्टअप्स का निर्माण हो रहा है।

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य



Women account for 43% of workforce in Ayush sector: report

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

Women account for 43% of the workforce in India's Ayush services sector, with their representation crossing 50% in several organised segments, including hospitals, day-care centres, educational institutions and wellness establishments, according to a new assessment of the sector released by the Central government on Thursday.

The Ayush Services Sector Report, prepared by the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) and released on Ayurveda Day 2026, estimates that the sector supports 1.76 million livelihoods across healthcare, wellness, education and allied services.

Women's representation is highest in spas and wellness resorts, where it exceeds 60%, followed by educational institutions at 58%, day-care centres at 57% and hospitals at 53%, says the report.

The findings come as the Ayush services economy expands beyond traditional clinical practice into wellness, education, preventive health and medical

Ayurveda remains the largest Ayush system, accounting for 48% of services revenue, survey says

value travel. The sector, comprising Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa and Homoeopathy, was estimated at \$36.92 billion in 2024-25. It has registered a compound annual growth rate of 16.91% since 2022-23.

Standalone clinics remain the largest segment, generating an estimated \$16.21 billion, or 43.9% of the sector's revenue. Day-care centres contribute another \$10.13 billion. Together, the two segments account for more than 70% of the sector's revenue. "More than one million livelihoods are concentrated in local and standalone clinics, underlining the sector's employment footprint across urban and rural areas," says the report.

Ayurveda remains the largest individual Ayush system, accounting for \$17.73 billion, or about 48% of the total services revenue.

➤ **The Ayush Services Sector Report – Prepared by Research & Information System For Developing Countries**

YouTube Homework

➤ Ayurveda Day

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य



Adequate response

The RBI policy review will need central assistance to effectively fight inflation

After months of waiting and watching, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has decided to act to try to rein in rising inflation. Its decision to raise interest rates by 25 bps seemed increasingly inevitable. The RBI now projects retail inflation at 4.9% in Q2, higher than its August projection of 4.7%. This is set to rise in Q3 to 6% before easing marginally to 5.7% in Q4. Global oil prices have again crossed \$100 a barrel following a brief reprieve. India's oil marketing companies, likely following government instructions, have held off on passing most of this increase on to consumers. However, they cannot withstand such fiscal pressures forever. The impact of higher crude prices has been bad enough, but higher petrol and diesel prices will likely send inflation spiralling. Simultaneously, a deficient monsoon is pushing up food prices and will continue to do so for the rest of the year. When supply-side factors are the primary drivers of inflation, an interest rate hike can only have second-order and largely marginal effects on inflation. In such a scenario, the signal sent by the MPC becomes as important as the actual action. The MPC has used this latest policy review to attempt to dampen inflation expectations, an important area of action. The expectation of high inflation in the near future can often become a self-fulfilling prophecy, independent of the factors driving prices up.

A 25 bps interest rate hike is a careful nudge rather than an inevitably ineffectual bludgeon. The fact that the MPC has changed its stance to 'calibrated tightening' from 'neutral' is the bigger signal. The question no longer is whether the RBI will hike rates in its next meeting in December, but by how much. The message from this stance change is that the central bank will use all the tools at its disposal to keep inflation in check. The RBI also clearly thinks that the economy can withstand such tightening. It has revised upwards its GDP growth forecast for 2026-27 to 7.1% from the 6.7% projected in August. That said, all economic agencies have, even before interest rates were hiked, been predicting a slowdown in the second-half of the year. The growth-inflation trade-off will again test the RBI's deftness. Higher interest rates may also pause the ongoing exodus of Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs), giving the RBI some exchange rate-related breathing room. The central bank has done what it can on inflation so far. The onus is now on the government. It has several tools to control food inflation, such as strategic buffers, import and export controls, anti-hoarding measures, and open market operations. Those need to be used more effectively.

- **RBI - MPC** - 2 HTE -
- **Neutral to Calibrated Tightening**
- **RR - 5.50** - 25
- **SDF - 5.25**
- **MSF - 5.75**
- **Bank Rate - 5.75**
- **GDP Growth Rate - 7.1**
- **Inflation - CPI - 5.2**
- **Core Inflation - 4.4**

YouTube Homework

- **RR**
- **RRR**
- **SLR**
- **CRR**
- **SDF**
- **MSF**
- **Bank Rate**

Is Ambani the 'boss of India', asks Musk

Telecom department dismisses allegation that India's regulatory framework was unfair and discriminatory as baseless and misconceived; statement came in response to SpaceX founder and CEO Elon Musk's charge that 'certain oligarchs in India were blocking the satellite internet service'

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) on Thursday rejected allegations that it was shielding oligarchs from competition by delaying approvals for SpaceX's Starlink satellite internet service in India.

The statement came in response to billionaire Elon Musk's charge on Wednesday that "certain oligarchs" were hindering Starlink's launch in India. Bharti-backed OneWeb and Reliance Industries Ltd's satellite internet arm are the other two compa-

nies that have secured satellite internet authorisations from the DoT.

However, the DoT said security assessments for both operators are "currently under way", stressing that the regulatory framework applies uniformly to all satellite communication providers.

"A post is being circulated on social media regarding the fairness of India's regulatory framework for satellite communication services and suggesting that it is being applied in a discriminatory manner," the DoT said. "The suggestion that the framework or its application is unfair or



Starlink has spent five years complying with every single law and requirement of the government of India, so why still no license

ELON MUSK,
SPACEX FOUNDER AND CEO

discriminatory is baseless and misconceived."

At the India Mobile Congress on Wednesday, SpaceX executive Lauren Dreyer said she hoped Starlink would have received approval to begin services in India by this time next year. She also said the company had al-

ready established 20 facilities in India to process Indian users' data locally.

The DoT said all satellite communication licensees are required to demonstrate compliance with specified security conditions before services can be rolled out. "Under the terms and conditions of li-

cence [sic], every such licensee is required to demonstrate compliance with security conditions," the department said. "This is aimed at ensuring that services provided meet various security requirements to ensure safety of all users and their data."

Mr. Musk, however, doubled down on his criticism on Thursday, amplifying several posts supporting Starlink's launch in India. "Starlink will be of great help to areas of India that have bad or no Internet and even no mobile coverage," he said. "No country has perfect coverage, including America,

but Starlink can fill in the coverage gaps for those who most need it."

In a subsequent post, Mr. Musk named Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani, asking whether the latter was "the real boss of India".

"Starlink is licensed in over 165 countries and has spent five years complying with every single law and requirement of the government of India, so why still no license," he asked.

Responding to a query at the India Mobile Congress on Thursday on Mr. Musk's remarks, Reliance Jio chairman Akash Ambani declined to comment.

Sensex, Nifty fall amid rising crude prices, rupee decline

Gowri Lakshmi
MUMBAI

The benchmark index Nifty 50 closed at its lowest level since 18 months on Thursday, while the BSE Sensex dropped 1.4%, to its lowest since February 13, 2024. The Nifty stocks index closed at 22,231.80 points, down 1.6%, while Sensex closed at 71,593.24 points.

Market analysts attributed multiple factors including rising global crude oil prices, persistent decline in the rupee, and cautionary onset of Q2 (July-Sep-

Thursday's decline followed the markets' sharp reaction to the MPC's decision to hike interest rates

tember) earnings season to the market's downward movement.

Thursday's decline followed a sharp reaction by the markets on Wednesday to the Monetary Policy Committee's (MPC) decision to hike interest rates by 25 bps.

"During the session, the Nifty breached the pre-

vious swing-low support at 22,217 as well as the key April 2026 swing low of 22,182," Nandish Shah, deputy vice president, HDFC Securities said in a report.

"The decisive breakdown of these levels indicates a further escalation in selling pressure and an intensification of the ongoing downtrend."

Ajit Mishra, senior vice-president of research at Religare Broking added that the market recovery that occurred between April and August was over now and that the market would likely fall further.

YouTube Homework

- Sensex
- Nifty

SEBI
Share market

Russian strike on buses kills 30 in Kramatorsk; Kyiv vows response

Moscow is trying to destroy all life in the Donbas region and the world must respond to the attacks, says Ukraine President Zelenskyy; visiting British Foreign Minister Ed Miliband says Vladimir Putin is trying to win the war by 'terrorising civilians'

Agence France-Presse
KYIV

Ukraine on Thursday accused Russia of deliberately targeting civilians after 30 people were killed when two buses were blown up in the frontline city of Kramatorsk, in one of the deadliest single attacks for weeks.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy vowed that the attack "will not go unanswered" after photos posted by local authorities showed the burnt-out metal shell of the vehicles, with bodies and debris strewn across the road.

"Russia is trying to destroy all life in (the) Donbas



The site where two buses were struck by projectiles in Kramatorsk, near the frontline in eastern Ukraine, on Thursday. AFP

(region) and the world must respond to this," he wrote on Telegram, warning that the death toll could rise. Police said the buses were hit with a glide bomb. Three more people were

killed in a nearby village as a result of shelling, the emergency services said.

The strikes come just a day after five children were among 22 killed when a Russian missile flattened a

five-storey apartment block in Pryluky, in the northern Chernihiv region.

"The Russians are deliberately targeting civilians," Donetsk Governor Vadym Filashkin said, accusing Moscow of flouting "every conceivable rule of warfare and norm of international humanitarian law".

Kramatorsk City Council called it "yet another horrific crime committed by the Russian army against the civilian population".

"Once again, the Russians have struck a location where there are absolutely no military targets," it added. There has been mounting concern about the increase in civilian deaths and injuries in the

nearly five-year conflict, as both sides step up long-range attacks beyond their borders.

Since Russia's invasion in February 2022, Ukraine has accused its forces of deliberately attacking and killing civilians.

Touring the site of the Pryluky attack on Thursday, visiting U.K. Foreign Minister Ed Miliband said there was "no clearer sign of Putin's evil, evil intent and strategy in this conflict". "Putin once said that he was going to win on the battlefield," he told reporters, as London announced more sanctions on Moscow. "He is trying to win by terrorising civilians."

YouTube Homework

➤ Black Sea



U.S. suspends major IT firms from green card programme

Reuters
WASHINGTON

The U.S. government is suspending Microsoft, Adobe and several large IT firms from a programme that allows skilled foreign workers to gain permanent residency, senior U.S. officials announced on Thursday, citing alleged fraud, and as part of an effort to push companies to hire more Americans.

"Our message to Microsoft is: You're a great American company, but you've got to hire great American workers," U.S. Vice President J.D. Vance said.

Secretary of Labour Keith Sonderling added that some of the largest IT firms in the world would also be suspended from that programme, including Cognizant, Infosys, Tata, Wipro, HCL and Capgemini.



J.D. Vance

"We will not accept any new or process any pending permanent labour certification applications involving these companies," Mr. Sonderling said.

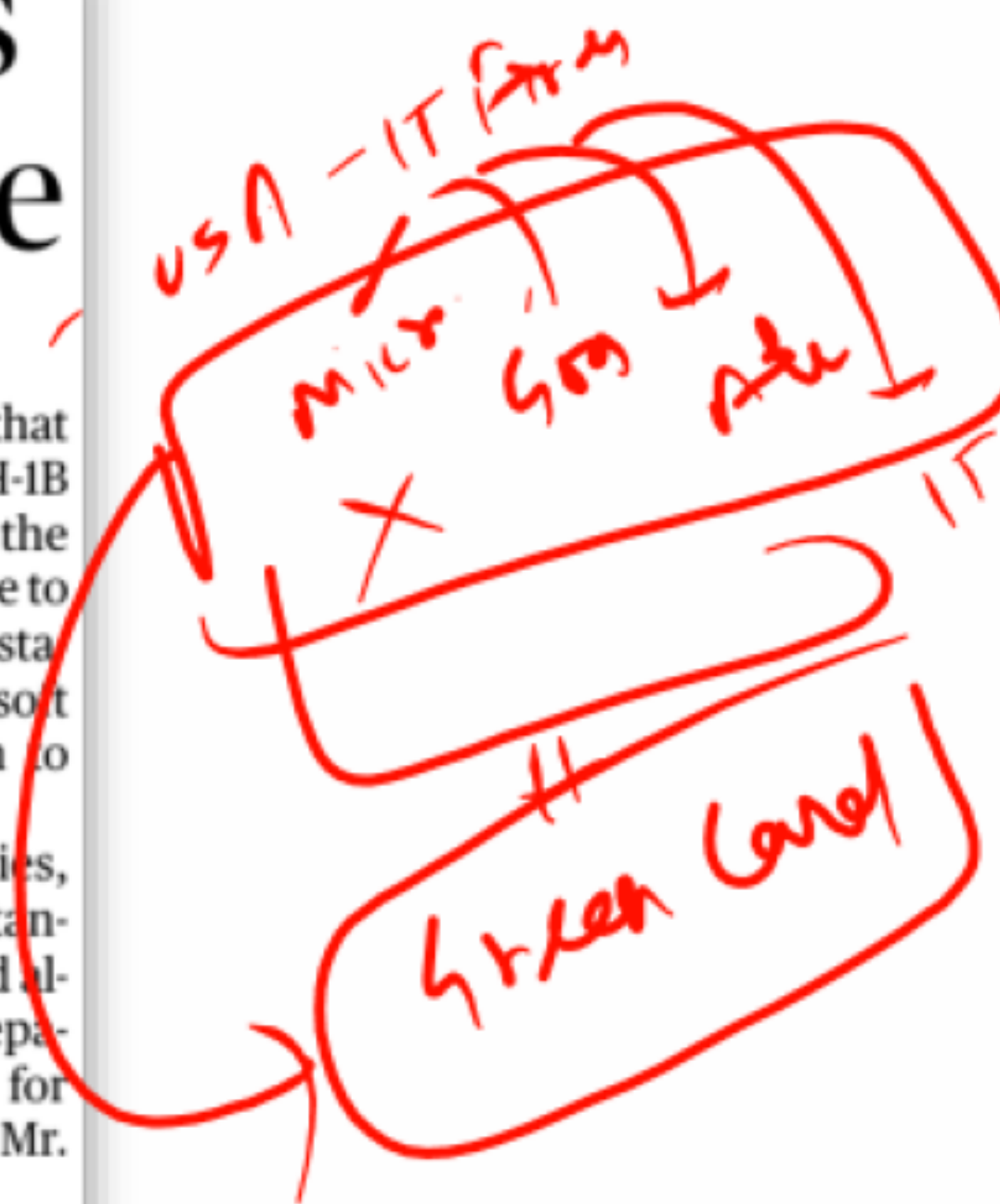
Mr. Vance accused Microsoft of abusing the H-1B visa programme, saying they had "laid off 6,000 American workers while replacing them with 6,300 H-1Bs." Microsoft pushed back, saying the "vast majority" of its U.S. employees were Americans.

The company said that of the roughly 6,000 H-1B applications it filed in the last fiscal year, 80% were to extend or change the status of existing Microsoft employees rather than to hire new staff.

Nine elite universities, also including Yale, Stanford and the MIT, would also be probed over a separate visa programme for study exchanges, Mr. Vance said.

The H-1B programme has long been a target of Trump supporters who say that the programme undercuts American workers and is rife with abuse.

H-1B visas are meant for high-skilled jobs that are difficult to find American workers to fill. Technology companies are the biggest users, with nearly three-quarters of approvals going to workers from India.



YouTube Homework

➤ H1B Visa

New U.S. indictment charges Nicolas Maduro with torture

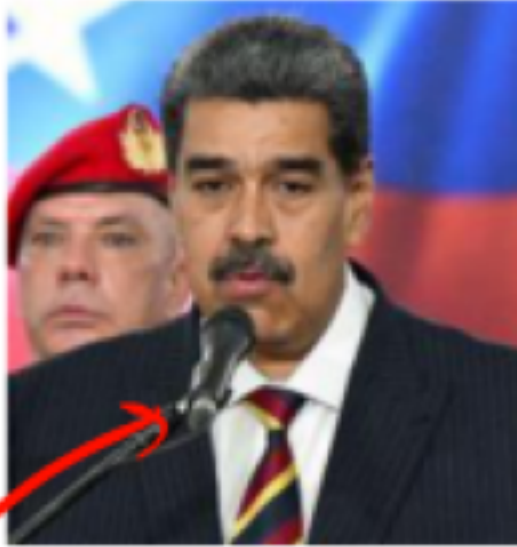
Associated Press

NEW YORK

U.S. authorities added new torture charges on Thursday to their case against former Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, ramping up pressure on the ousted leader already fighting drug trafficking allegations.

Mr. Maduro and wife Cilia Flores, already charged with participating in a conspiracy to send cocaine into the U.S., now also face allegations of human rights abuses during his time as President of the oil-rich South American nation.

The updated indictment "alleges conduct that is truly unthinkable," New York-based U.S. Attorney Jamie McDonald said outside the courthouse where the case is being handled. He said thousands of Venezuelans, and some Ameri-



Nicolas Maduro

cans, were tortured to ensure that Mr. Maduro and Ms. Flores held onto power.

"This is the epitome of corruption," Mr. McDonald said.

The allegations include electric shocks, beatings and asphyxiation at Mr. Maduro's behest. Mr. Maduro, the indictment claims, signed off on torture methods, sought and got updates on specific victims' treatment, watched a video of a forced confes-

sion and personally threatened the killing of one prisoner's child "as a form of psychological torture".

Ms. Flores, a former legislator and attorney general, helped develop the repressive system and ordered the torture of some specific people, the indictment contends.

The couple pleaded not guilty in the U.S. drug case first brought years ago against them and numerous alleged co-conspirators. Their attorneys have asked for the case to be dismissed on the grounds that they have immunity as the leader and first lady of a foreign country. They face potential sentences of life in prison if convicted.

Mr. Maduro has been under investigation for years by the International Criminal Court over allegations of crimes against humanity.

YouTube Homework

➤ US – CUBA –

➤ Cuba Missile Crisis

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

Taiwan detects Chinese militia boat off its eastern coastline for the first time

Reuters
TAIPEI

A Chinese militia boat was spotted along with two other vessels off Taiwan's Pacific coast in August, according to a surveillance report reviewed by Reuters, the first known sighting of such a craft in the sensitive area.

The report by Taiwan's Apex Aviation identifies the Mingfudingyu 07902 as a fishing boat that doubles as a Chinese militia vessel, which was seen operating with a Chinese coastguard cutter and a research vessel one day in mid-August.

China, which views Taiwan as its own territory, has stepped up activity off the island's east coast since June with regular coast guard patrols.

Officials in Taiwan, which rejects Beijing's sovereignty claims, say they believe China is practising for a potential maritime blockade using overlapping military, paramilitary and civilian assets.

Taipei regards the area off its east coast as critical to wartime supply routes from allies in the event of a blockade or conflict.

'Harassment drills'

China was "using law enforcement and scientific research as cover for harassment, seeking to expand their scope of operations during a non-conflict scenario to create an illusion of de facto jurisdiction," Taiwan's Defence Ministry told Reuters in a statement when asked about the Apex report.

Analysts say the fleet

includes vessels under military international order and challenge Taiwan's maritime rights, the Ministry said, adding that the island's military was using reconnaissance tools to track Chinese activity in coordination with other agencies, including Taiwan's coast guard.

China's Taiwan Affairs Office and Defence Ministry did not respond to requests for comment.

In a practice dating to the 1950s, China's maritime militia, more commonly observed around South China Sea flashpoints, consists of fishing vessels whose crews receive training and support to operate in disputed waters, often alongside coast guard ships.

Analysts say the fleet



Sensitive sighting: A vessel, which APEX Aviation says is Chinese fishing boat Mingfudingyu 07902, off Taiwan's coast in Aug. REUTERS

helps Beijing assert maritime claims while maintaining a civilian appearance.

Taiwan has confirmed that the Mingfudingyu, the coast guard cutter 2502 and the research vessel

Xiang Yang Hong 03 were operating near Taiwan in mid-August, said two senior Taiwan officials briefed on the matter.

Authorities identified the fishing boat as part of the People's Liberation Army's maritime militia fleet, which Taiwan was tracking and which was operating "in coordination with Chinese coast guard maritime harassment drills", one official said.

"The purpose of militia boats is to conduct substantive harassment," the official said.

The other official said the three craft were operating "in an area not commonly used by Chinese vessels" and had been "designated for heightened monitoring".

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue.

'Whole of society' push

The Apex report says a reconnaissance aircraft the company operates detect-

ed a Chinese maritime group more than 30 nautical miles off the coast of Taiwan's eastern county of Hualien.

The company asked that the date of the spotting be withheld, citing safety concerns related to counter-reconnaissance against its operations.

The report uses radar screenshots, infrared imagery and automatic-identification system data to document the cluster of vessels.

The patrol by Apex, better known for pilot training and charter flights, reflects Taiwan's efforts to involve civilian firms in technologies relevant to the government's "whole of society resilience" initiative, though the company says its patrols are independently run and not carried

out for the government.

Chinese warships, coast guard vessels, research ships and some civilian vessels continue to operate in overlapping ways, "creating pressure in the waters surrounding Taiwan", said Honor Hung, Apex's Defence and Security Director.

The three Chinese vessels were spread over a roughly 10-nautical-mile radius, Honor said, adding that one surveillance tracking could not determine their missions or any coordination among them.

Apex uses a civilian light aircraft equipped with a powerful U.S.-made radar that allows its patrols to detect objects on the surface as small as 900 square centimetres (340 square inches).

YouTube Homework

South China Sea

4 कोप्



महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य



- ताइवान को लेकर जापान और चीन के बीच विवाद के **5 मुख्य कारण** संक्षेप में:
- **जापान की सुरक्षा:** ताइवान जापान के सबसे पश्चिमी द्वीप से केवल 110 किमी दूर है। चीन का कब्जा होते ही चीनी सेना सीधे जापान के दरवाजे पर पहुँच जाएगी।
- **व्यापार और ऊर्जा मार्ग:** जापान का ज्यादातर समुद्री व्यापार और तेल आयात ताइवान जलडमरूमध्य से होकर गुजरता है। इस पर चीन का नियंत्रण जापान की अर्थव्यवस्था के लिए खतरा है।
- **अमेरिका-जापान सैन्य संधि:** जापान में अमेरिकी सैन्य अड्डे हैं। ताइवान पर युद्ध की स्थिति में अमेरिका के शामिल होते ही जापान भी खुद-ब-खुद युद्ध में खिंच जाएगा।
- **ऐतिहासिक कड़वाहट:** जापान ने 1895 से 1945 तक ताइवान पर कब्जा रखा था। चीन इसे अपने "अपमान का दौर" मानता है और इस मुद्दे पर जापान के हस्तक्षेप का कड़ा विरोध करता है।
- **सेनकाकू द्वीप विवाद:** पूर्वी चीन सागर में स्थित सेनकाकू द्वीपों पर जापान का कब्जा है, पर चीन दावा ठोकता है। ताइवान पर कब्जे से चीन का दावा और मजबूत हो जाएगा।

Houthis claim another strike on airport in Riyadh, warn airlines of 'consequences'

Associated Press
CAIRO

Several explosions were heard in Saudi Arabia's capital of Riyadh on Thursday, including a large blast at the city's international airport, a day after the kingdom said an attack on the airport killed one person and wounded others.

Houthi (Ansar Allah) rebels in neighbouring Yemen claimed responsibility for the new attack on King Khalid International Airport, saying the ballistic missile caused damage but giving no evidence. The



A fighter affiliated with the Houthis firing his machine gun as they advance against Yemeni government troops in Taiz. AFP

Saudis had no immediate comment about the claim.

The spokesperson for the Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthis, Major General Turki al-Malki,

said they intercepted and destroyed two ballistic missiles launched by the Houthis toward Riyadh, along with a ballistic missile fired toward Khamis

Mushait, in the southwest near the Yemen border.

The Houthis have repeatedly claimed attacks against Saudi airports, military and oil facilities in recent days. Early on Thursday, the rebels warned global airlines "for the last time" about the potential consequences of operating in Saudi airspace, which it called a theatre for its military operations.

King Khalid International Airport "closed again," the Flightradar24 monitor said on Thursday afternoon on X not long after the blasts.

YouTube Homework

➤ Mecca Pact

— अब
— (कम-कम) करी
— ५ यमान करे



महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य



Canadian poet Anne Carson wins Nobel Prize in Literature

Associated Press
STOCKHOLM

Canadian poet, essayist and translator Anne Carson won the Nobel Prize in literature on Thursday for playful, genre-blending works that fuse the classical and the modern.

Toronto-born Ms. Carson, 76, draws on themes and stories from ancient Greek and Roman literature for writing that often blends elements of poetry, essay and fiction.

The permanent secretary of the Swedish Academy Ingrid Carlborg said the author was in Iceland "listening to the wind" when the academy reached her to notify her of the win. "She was very taken by surprise," she said.

Asked how she felt about the award, Ms. Carson told the Icelandic public broadcaster RUV: "I think they're all crazy." She described the conversation with the academy as "rather halting".

"They have the usual questions, and I have no answers." She said poetry is "probably more useful than prose right now because it's faster, and everybody is in a hurry. So basically I think it's good because it's brief. Except Homer. Homer's not brief."

Ms. Carson is among the more high-profile recent winners of the literature Nobel, which often honours authors little known outside of the literary world and is sometimes criticised for valuing literary experimentation over the ability to connect with a broad readership.

However, the prize can also introduce readers to writers and works beyond their own languages or



Anne Carson

reading habits. Asked how the prize would change her sales, she said: "I'll get a sticker on the front of my book. *Sticker shock!*"

Works by Carson

Ms. Carson's books include *Eros the Bittersweet*, *Autobiography of Red*, as well as *Men in the Off Hours*, and *Norma Jeane Baker of Troy*.

She also has translated works of classical Greek literature that, the academy said, "may be regarded as independent works in their own right."

They include *If Not, Winter*, based on poem fragments by Sappho, Sophocles' tragic plays *Electra* and *Antigone* and Euripides' *Bakkhai*.

"Almost all her literary production has centred upon the intersection between the philologist's obsession with words and the poet's desire for new meaning," said Anders Olsson, chair of the Nobel Literature Committee.

Ms. Carson blends genres and styles, offering "different voices that play off against each other," he added.

The prize money this year is 12 million Swedish kronor (about \$1.2 million) per prize. The prize was announced in Stockholm.

Anne Carson

YouTube Homework

- ✓ ➤ Medicine
- ✓ ➤ Physics
- ✓ ➤ Chemistry

Home Assignment



☐ Hara Mangroves

☐ Samudra Manthan *क्षेत्र*

UPSC - Prelims - 2024/2025

प्रश्न. सऊदी अरब की प्रसिद्ध 'ईस्ट-वेस्ट पाइपलाइन' (East-West Pipeline / Petroline), जो फ़ारस की खाड़ी (Persian Gulf) को लाल सागर (Red Sea) से जोड़ती है, के दोनों छोरों पर स्थित प्रमुख शहर/बंदरगाह निम्नलिखित में से कौन-से हैं?

- (a) रियाद (Riyadh) और जेद्दा (Jeddah)
- (b) अबक़ैक़ (Abqaiq) और यानबू (Yanbu)
- (c) दम्माम (Dammam) और मक्का (Mecca)
- (d) जुबैल (Jubail) और जिज़ान (Jizan)

Overview

- Stubble Fire
- FTA – Investment in India
- GST Reform
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- Andolanjeevi
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- Russia – Ukraine War
- US Green Visa Card
- US- Latin America
- Taiwan Issue
- Houthis
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531
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