



# **VEDHIK**

## **DAILY NEWS ANALYSIS**

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## FOREWORD

We, at Team Vedhik is happy to introduce a new initiative - "Vedhik - Daily News Analysis (DNA)\_The Hindu" compilations to help you with UPSC Civil Services Examination preparation. We believe this initiative - "Vedhik - Daily News Analysis (DNA)\_The Hindu " would help students, especially beginners save time and streamline their preparations with regard to Current Affairs. A content page and an Appendix has been added segregating and mapping the content to the syllabus.

It is an appreciable efforts by Vedhik IAS Academy helping aspirants of UPSC Civil Services Examinations. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Babu Sebastian, former VC - MG University in extending all support to this endeavour. Finally I also extend my thanks to thank Ms. Shilpa Sasidharan and Mr. Shahul Hameed for their assistance in the preparing the compilations.

We welcome your valuable comments so that further improvement may be made in the forthcoming material. We look forward to feedback, comments and suggestions on how to improve and add value for students. Every care has been taken to avoid typing errors and if any reader comes across any such error, the authors shall feel obliged if they are informed at their Email ID.

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# Disquiet in Northeast

## Boundary disputes between States should be resolved quickly

**I**n November 22, five villagers from Meghalaya and an Assam forest guard were killed and two others were seriously injured in a firing incident along the boundary between the two States. The Assam government said the incident happened after its forest guards tried to intercept a truck smuggling illegal timber. When the truck was stopped, the forest personnel were gheraoed by unknown miscreants who resorted to violence, according to Assam, which maintains that the staff resorted to firing to save their lives. Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma said on Twitter that the Assam police and Assam forest guards entered Meghalaya and “resorted to unprovoked firing”. Versions differ and both States have instituted separate inquiries, but the mistrust and underlying conflicts in the northeast that lead to such incidents are deeper. Assam and Meghalaya have a five-decade old boundary dispute. Meghalaya, carved out of Assam as an autonomous region in 1970, became a full-fledged State in 1972. In March, Assam and Meghalaya resolved the boundary dispute at six out of total 12 such locations along their 884.9 km boundary, and the next round of talks was to take place soon. Though the latest flare-up did not arise out of this dispute, it happened along a disputed border stretch.

Assam has boundary disputes at various points in time with the States carved out of it – Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram. Last year, the police forces of Assam and Mizoram clashed, killing five on the Assam side. Dozens of people have died in conflicts along State borders in the northeast over the years. Union Home Minister Amit Shah had asked Assam to take the lead in resolving the lingering disputes, which have their origins in the colonial cartography that overlooked the life patterns of local communities. Traditional hunting, grazing and farming grounds of communities got divided by modern administrative boundaries at many places. When new States were formed, such concerns acquired a more serious nature, and the Naga demand for a unified homeland that is now spread beyond the State of Nagaland is instructive. It is unfortunate and tragic that States that are part of the Indian Union are involved in violent clashes with one another. The BJP is in government in much of the northeast and has the leverage to aim for a comprehensive resolution of all outstanding disputes in the region. Communities will have to be taken into confidence, and boundaries adjusted. In any case, these man-made lines should not be allowed to restrict the movement of people in pursuit of a livelihood.

# Deuba-led coalition on its way to winning polls in Nepal

## **Press Trust of India**

KATHMANDU

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba's Nepali Congress-led ruling coalition was on Thursday inching towards winning Nepal's parliamentary elections as the five-party alliance has bagged 58 seats out of the 101 declared so far.

In the 275-member House of Representatives, 165 will be elected through

direct voting, while the remaining 110 will be elected through a proportional electoral system. Till now, the Nepali Congress (NC) has won 36 seats and is leading in 16 others.

### **Hopeful of coalition**

The CPN-Maoist Centre has bagged 9 seats, CPN-Unified Socialist 9 and Rastriya Janamorcha and Lokatantrik Samajwadi Party two each. They all are part

of the ruling coalition.

The Maoist Centre and CPN-Unified Socialist have been leading in 7 and 1 seats respectively.

If the trend continues, the NC-led alliance will be in a position to form a coalition government.

Elections to the House of Representatives (HoR) and seven provincial Assemblies were held on Sunday. The counting of votes started on Monday.

# India, Iran discuss development of Chabahar Port

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**

NEW DELHI

India and Iran held Foreign Office Consultations on Thursday during the visit of Tehran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Ali Bagheri Kani here.

Dr. Kani, who is a close relative of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, handles Iran's nuclear negotiations and is considered to be part of the ruling elite of the Iranian state. This is the first high-profile visit from Iran since the crackdown on democratic protesters began in the country in the second fortnight of September. India has not commented about the ongoing crackdown so far.

"During the delegation-level talks, the two sides reiterated their commitment to continue cooperation for development of the Shahid Beheshti terminal of the Chabahar Port," said the Ministry of External Affairs in a press note

**Ali Bagheri Kani,**

**Deputy Foreign**

**Minister for Political**

**Affairs of Iran, is in**

**New Delhi**

released after the talks between the two delegations. Asked if India would restart buying Iranian oil, the Ministry spokesperson said there were no updates.

The Indian delegation to the meeting was led by Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra. The Ministry said the "entire gamut of bilateral relations including political, economic, cultural and consular" aspects were discussed during the consultations. "The two sides exchanged views on regional and international issues including Afghanistan. Deputy Foreign Minister Dr. Kani briefed the Foreign Secretary on issues related to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action," said a release.

# Russia's nuclear icebreakers and militarisation of the Arctic

What is the significance of the newly launched icebreakers? Why are countries racing to display power in the Arctic? What is India's position?

**Dinakar Peri**

## The story so far:

**I**n November 22, Russian President Vladimir Putin virtually presided over the launch and flag raising ceremony of two nuclear-powered icebreakers at St. Petersburg and said such icebreakers were of "strategic importance". As climate change opens up the Arctic giving access to new routes and resources, there is a race by adjoining countries to build up their militaries and Russia has a clear lead over them.

## Why are the Russian icebreakers significant?

Speaking at the launch ceremony, Mr. Putin said both icebreakers were laid down as part of their large-scale, systematic work to re-equip and replenish the domestic icebreaker fleet, to

strengthen Russia's status as a "great Arctic power." The 173.3-metre-long 'Yakutia', with a displacement of up to 33,540 tonnes, was launched into water and can break through three metres of ice. The flag was raised on another vessel Ural, which is expected to become operational in December, while the Yakutia will join service by end-2024, Mr. Putin said.

There are two already similar vessels in service, Arktika and Sibir. Mr. Putin said that a much more powerful 209-metre-long nuclear icebreaker "Rossiya," displacing up to 71,380 tonnes, would be completed by 2027.

In the last two decades, Russia has reactivated several Soviet era Arctic military bases and upgraded its capabilities.

Mr. Putin talked of the importance of the Northern Sea Route, which cuts down

time to reach Asia by up to two weeks compared to the current route via the Suez canal. In line with this, the updated Russian naval doctrine, unveiled in July, envisages "diversifying and stepping up naval activities on the Spitsbergen, Franz Josef Land and Novaya Zemlya archipelagos and Wrangel Island."

In the backdrop of the war on Ukraine, on March 3, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and the U.S. announced that they would "temporarily pause participation in all meetings of the [Arctic] Council and its subsidiary bodies...".

## Why are countries racing towards the Arctic?

There has been a race among Arctic states and near-Arctic states to augment their capabilities in a bid to be ready to capitalise on the melting Arctic. Russian

military modernisation in the Arctic has prompted other Arctic states to join the bandwagon. Unlike Antarctica, the Arctic is not a global common accentuating the problem.

For instance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) has been conducting regular exercises in the region while partner countries are investing in upgrading military capabilities. At the same time, China, which calls itself to be a near-Arctic state, has also announced ambitious plans for a 'polar silk route' to connect to Europe as well building massive icebreakers.

## Where does India stand with respect to the Arctic?

Since 2007, India has an Arctic research programme with as many as 13 expeditions undertaken till date. In March 2022, India unveiled its first Arctic policy titled: 'India and the Arctic: building a partnership for sustainable development'. India is also one of the 13 Observers in the Arctic Council, the leading intergovernmental forum promoting cooperation in the Arctic.

As the earth further heats up, which is more profound at the poles, the race for the Arctic is set to accelerate which makes the Arctic the next geopolitical hotspot with all interests converging on it - environmental, economic, political and military.

## THE GIST

▼  
Russian President Vladimir Putin virtually presided over the launch and flag raising ceremony of two nuclear-powered icebreakers at St. Petersburg on November 22.

▼  
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# A word of advice on OTT and the draft Telecom Bill

The inclusion of Over The Top or OTT (Communication Services) within the ambit of the draft Indian Telecommunication Bill, 2022 that was unveiled recently for public comments, is a feature that has drawn much attention and comment. What does this mean? And why is it a big deal? Is it a concern only for telcos and technology companies? Or are there larger implications that concern the average citizen? Besides, how will this affect the digital ecosystem in India?

The main argument behind its inclusion is the principle of "same service, same rules". Superficially, it seems logical that communication services, whether provided by telcos or OTTs, should be treated similarly. However, this is completely erroneous. Same service means that as a user, I should be able to substitute one for the other at my own volition. But no OTT provider including those providing communication services such as WhatsApp, Zoom, email, etc. can reach a customer without the intermediation and services of a telecom service provider. But the converse is not true. The absence of OTT is no impediment for a telco to provide its services. OTT communication services are applications or value-added communication services that ride on the basic communication services that telcos provide. The latter is in the domain of carriage and the former is in the domain of applications such as group and video communication, encryption, etc.

So why are telcos rooting for inclusion of OTT communication services within the new Telecom Bill? Quite simply, it is the desire to preserve the arbitrage that exists between voice and data tariffs. In OTT services, the telco gets lower data and not a higher voice/SMS tariff. That arbitrage is anyway doomed and will be extinguished sooner rather than later. Biting the bullet now



**Rentala Chandrashekhara**

is the Chairman of the Centre for The Digital Future, a former IT and Telecom Secretary and a former President of the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM)

Including OTT communication service providers within the ambit of the Telecom Bill could compromise the energy, innovation and funding that characterises India's startup ecosystem

makes more sense than bringing in a convoluted interpretation in the law.

## Heavy-handed versus light-touch regulation

Conversely, there are compelling arguments as to why OTT communication services should be kept out of the ambit of Telecom law which regulates terrestrial carriage. OTT communication services are already covered under the existing IT Act and, presumably, will continue to be so under the proposed Digital India Act. Whether it is encryption, data storage, interception or cooperation with law enforcement, OTTs can be and are regulated – but not licensed or pre-authorised.

So why should there be such a hue and cry if OTT communication services are moved from the purview of the IT Act to the Telecom Law? Simply put, the proposed Telecom Bill and the current Telegraph Act are based on the principle that provision of telecommunication services is the sole privilege of the government except to the extent that private entities are permitted – read licensed or authorised. On the other hand, the IT Act, which regulates technology usage, is based on the exact opposite premise: everything is permitted except that which is specifically and explicitly barred and subject to any mandatory requirements that must be met. A similar principle operates in respect of content, which the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, Prasar Bharti and the Censor Board, regulate. It is precisely this wide latitude that is afforded in technology/applications and content that enables and encourages creativity, innovation, new products and venture capital funding.

More worrisome is that the inflow of venture capital funding to OTTs would be severely discouraged. It is well nigh impossible to distinguish an OTT communication service from

any other OTT platform because every OTT platform such as Flipkart, Ola, MakeMyTrip does incorporate an element of messaging. How does one make a distinction between an OTT communication service provider and any other OTT platform or service that includes communication services? This is an impossible task. Only lawyers would celebrate the legal quagmire that would ensue from any such attempt.

What if only the communications component of OTTs were to be regulated? That would be equally problematic since requiring a license or authorisation for an element that is an inherent part of a platform's activity would be tantamount to control of the entire activity. Licensing innovation is a contradiction in terms.

Yet another factor is that the Telecom Bill will impact only India-based OTT players. Those operating from overseas would not be impacted. This would seriously handicap Indian service providers vis a vis their foreign competitors. Do we want this? It is not accidental that the exclusive privilege of government is confined to carriage which is confined to geographical boundaries.

## Regulate OTT communication services

The bottomline is that including OTT communication service providers within the ambit of the Telecom Bill is a deeply flawed idea that could seriously compromise the energy, innovation and funding that characterises India's startup ecosystem today. Hardly any other country has equated OTT communication services with foundational telecommunication services. Instead, the Government would be well-advised to include whatever controls are deemed necessary in the soon-to-be unveiled Digital India Act.



# SC Collegium lists seven High Court judges for transfer

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Collegium led by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud published on Thursday its resolution recommending the transfer of seven High Court judges. Justice Nikhil S. Kariel of the Gujarat High Court judge is not among them.

T. Raja, Acting Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, and Justice A. Abhishek Reddy of the Telangana High Court, however, figure on the list. Justice Raja was recommended for transfer to the Rajasthan High Court.

The judges recommended for transfer include Justice V.M. Velumani from Madras to Calcutta; Justices Battu Devanand and D. Ramesh from Andhra Pradesh to Madras and Allahabad, respectively; Justices Lalitha Kanneganti and D. Nagarjun from Telangana to Karnataka and Madras, respectively.

The Collegium resolution shows the decision to propose the transfer of these seven judges was taken at its meeting on November 24.

**Justice Kariel, whose proposed transfer led to protests in Gujarat HC Bar, is not on the list**

Social media reports and news articles had over the past few days reported that the Collegium met on November 16 to recommend the transfers of Justices Kariel, Reddy and Raja.

## **Lawyers' protest**

It was reported that Justice Kariel, like Justice Reddy, was proposed by the Collegium to be transferred to the Patna High Court. The reports had triggered protests in the Gujarat High Court Bar against the transfer of Justice Kariel, whom the lawyers described as a "fine, honest judge". They had boycotted work and the agitation had spread to Telangana, where lawyers had objected to the reported transfer of Justice Reddy. They too had declared strike. Madras High Court lawyers had also expressed their displeasure over the transfer of Justice Raja.

# SC questions 'lightning speed' of EC appointment

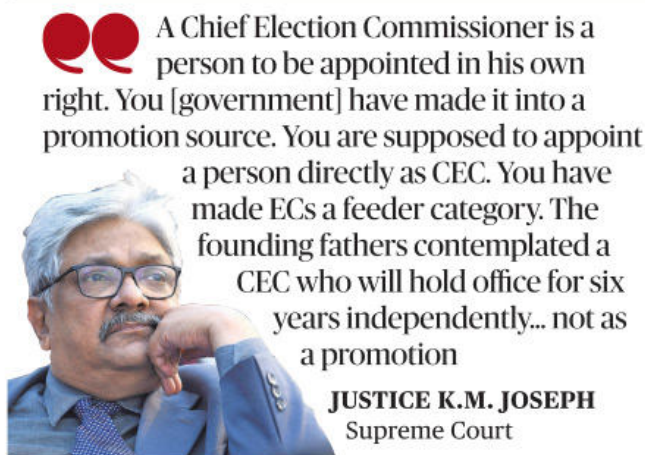
'It was done with such haste... Didn't you require time to contemplate,' Justice Joseph asks Centre on Goel's posting; Justice Rastogi flags 'superfast mechanism' used to fill a post vacant since May

**Krishnadas Rajagopal**

NEW DELHI

**T**he Supreme Court, after inspecting official files on Thursday, said that the appointment of Arun Goel as Election Commissioner was done with "lightning speed", the procedure taking less than 24 hours from start to finish on November 18.

A Constitution Bench, led by Justice K.M. Joseph, had asked Attorney-General R. Venkataramani on Wednesday to produce the files concerning Mr. Goel's appointment after petitioners alleged that it was "hurriedly" done. In fact, the appointment was made the very next day after the court started examining the need to insulate the Election Commission



from political influence by setting up a "neutral and independent mechanism" for appointment of Election Commissioners.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, for a petitioner, said Mr. Goel was a secretary in the government on Friday. He took voluntary retirement that day and was appointed an Election

Commissioner on Saturday and took charge on Monday.

"It was done with such haste... with a tearing urgency... You did not require time to contemplate?" Justice Joseph asked the government side.

Justice Ajay Rastogi, on the five-judge Bench, said

the Election Commissioner's post was vacant from May.

"The vacancy was there from May to November 18... Now, what prevailed on the government that everything needed to be done within the shortest possible time... This superfast mechanism... We know that where there is a will there is a way, but here the notification was brought out on the same day, the application was given the same day, it was accepted the same day and the appointment was made the same day... The file has not travelled even 24 hours! Lightning speed... What kind of evaluation was there?" Justice Rastogi asked.

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# SC questions 'lightning speed' of EC selection

Mr. Venkataramani said he could show a whole number of appointments made after 2015, which had taken a maximum of two to three days. "Are we finding fault with quick appointments?" he asked.

Justice Aniruddha Bose pointed out that Mr. Goel had taken voluntary retirement and was appointed EC the very next day. "Does it happen like that?" he asked. Mr. Venkataramani replied that it could have been a "coincidence".

Justice Joseph said Mr. Goel's records show excellent academic credentials, but asked whether brilliance and competency was enough of a guard against docility. The Attorney General said 'docility' was subjective and depended on the lens through which the court wanted to view a person. "It is not that we find some docile person lurking there and decide to appoint him," he shot back.

Justice Joseph said Mr. Goel's name was picked from a panel of four names prepared by the Law Minister. The court questioned the process by which the Law Minister had zeroed in on these four names from the entire database of the Department of Personnel and Training.

## **Tenure of CEC, ECs**

The court pointed out that the law required both the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and the two Election Commissioners (ECs) to have separate six-year tenures. The court said the government has reduced the scope of candidates to just bureaucrats and ensured that neither the CEC nor the ECs serve their full term. The government said ECs were "elevated" as CECs. "A CEC is a person to be appointed in his own right. You have made it into a promotion source. You are supposed to appoint a person directly as CEC. You have made ECs a feeder category. The founding fathers contemplated a CEC who will hold office for six years independently... not as a promotion," Justice Joseph addressed the government.

# Aviation Ministry notifies draft Aircraft Security Rules, 2022

The draft Rules, once finalised, will empower BCAS to impose penalties upto ₹1 crore on airports and airlines for violation of security measures

**Jagriti Chandra**  
NEW DELHI

**T**he Civil Aviation Ministry has notified the draft Aircraft Security Rules, 2022, which enable the aviation security regulator, Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), to impose penalties up to ₹1 crore on airports and airlines for violation of security measures.

Once the draft Rules are finalised, the BCAS can impose a fine of ₹50 lakh to ₹1 crore on airports and airlines if they fail to prepare and implement a security programme, or if they commence operations without seeking a security clearance.

Large airports can also face a penalty of ₹1 crore if they fail to plan the design and layout of the airport in accordance with the National Civil Aviation Security Programme. Individuals will also face penalties ranging from ₹1 lakh to ₹25 lakh depending on the nature of the offence.

According to the proposed rules, the BCAS will also be able to suspend or cancel an entity's airport



**Stringent provisions:** The rules will supersede the Aircraft Security Rules, 2011. FILE PHOTO

security clearance and security programme.

“Once the Aircraft Security Rules, 2022 are finalised, they will go a long way in ensuring an effective aviation security apparatus in the country. These are also as per ICAO norms,” said Zulfikar Hasan, Director-General, BCAS. The rules will supersede Aircraft Security Rules, 2011 and were necessary after Parliament passed the Aircraft Amendment Act, 2020, giving statutory powers to the BCAS, along with the Director-General of Civil Aviation and Aircraft Accident In-

vestigation Bureau. These allow them to impose penalties which could only be imposed by courts earlier. The Act also raised the maximum penalty from ₹10 lakh to ₹1 crore.

The amendment in Parliament was required after the United Nation's aviation watchdog, International Civil Aviation Organisation, raised questions about the three regulators functioning without statutory powers.

The Ministry has invited stakeholder comments for a period of 30 days. The draft rules were notified on November 10.

# Opening stance

## India-Australia trade pact's ratification is good, but staying competitive is critical

**I**n what would be India's first major free trade deal with a developed economy in over a decade, the first phase of a pact sealed with Australia in April this year is likely to be operationalised soon, paving easier market access for Indian services and goods. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's administration that assumed office a little over a month after his predecessor and now Leader of Opposition Scott Morrison signed the Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) with India, has steered its ratification through Parliament. So, the India-Australia partnership enjoys wide, bipartisan support in Canberra – that Australia has been particularly upset with what it called the 'weaponisation of trade' by China, has surely helped galvanise sentiment about India being a more trustworthy partner. While the two countries are already part of recently formed global cliques such as the four-nation Quad, the trilateral Supply Chain Resilience Initiative and the Indo-Pacific Economic Forum (IPEF), the bilateral trade deal is a strong positive signal about India's credentials to a world shuffling its feet away from dodgy supply chains towards a 'China plus one' strategy. Trading partners, some of whom are negotiating similar deals with India, will also be watching the contours of the next phase of talks between the two countries to firm up a more comprehensive treaty.

India expects bilateral trade to rise to about \$50 billion from the current level of \$31 billion in five years, with Indian exports driving half this surge, creating a million new jobs in labour-intensive sectors. Zero duty benefits on 98.3% of Australian tariff lines, from the day the agreement comes into force, will be extended to all Indian products within five years. Australia, in turn, will get zero duty benefits for 90% of its exports (in value terms) to India. With raw materials such as coal, metals and wool dominating its shipments, that means cheaper inputs for Indian firms. Annual visa quotas for Indian chefs and yoga trainers, and a post-study work visa regime for Indian students will bolster ties, as would the approval of a double taxation avoidance agreement by Australia, which is expected to save millions of dollars a year for Indian IT firms. As India pushes to close trade deals with the U.K., the EU and Canada, the wine import clauses with Australia that envisage an industry-level partnership, could also serve as a template for other spirits. It is critical to remember that trade deals open new doors, but do not automatically mean higher exports or better trade balances, as India's past pacts with ASEAN and Japan have shown. There is no shortcut or alternative to fixing India's overall global competitiveness.

# 'Recession unlikely in APAC region in 2023'

## **Press Trust of India**

NEW DELHI

A recession is unlikely in the APAC region in the coming year, although the area will face headwinds from higher interest rates and slower global trade growth, Moody's Analytics said on Thursday.

In its analysis titled 'APAC Outlook: A Coming Downshift,' Moody's Analytics said India is headed for slower growth next year more in line with its long-term potential.

On the upside, inward investment and productivity gains in technology as

well as in agriculture could accelerate growth. But, if high inflation persists, the Reserve Bank of India would likely take its repo rate well above 6%, causing GDP growth to falter.

## **Slowing growth**

In August, Moody's had projected India's growth to slow to 5% in 2023, from 8.5% in 2021.

"China is not the only weak link in the global economy. India, also suffered a year-to-year decline in the value exports in October," Moody's Analytics Chief APAC Economist Steve Cochrane said.



## ‘Rooftop solar installations fall 29% to 320 MW in July-Sept.’

Rooftop solar capacity installations in India fell 29% to 320 megawatt (MW) in July-September 2022, according to Mercom Research India. The country added 448 MW rooftop solar capacity in the same quarter a year earlier, the research firm said in a report on Thursday. During January-September, the installations at 1,165 MW were also down 11% compared with 1,310 MW in the corresponding nine-month period of the last year, Mercom Research India added. PTI

# Currency in circulation is almost double that in use before demonetisation: Chidambaram

**Krishnadas Rajagopal**  
NEW DELHI

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) figures show ₹32.18 lakh crore currency in circulation now in India, almost double the ₹17.97 lakh crore of currency in use just before demonetisation in November 2016, senior advocate P. Chidambaram submitted before a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court on Thursday.

Appearing before the five-judge Bench led by Justice S. Abdul Nazeer, Mr. Chidambaram was countering the government's argument that demonetisation was a "transformational economic policy step" that led to phenomenal growth in



**Official claim:** The government's argument is that demonetisation led to phenomenal growth in digital transactions. GETTY IMAGES

digital transactions.

The government claimed that the withdrawal of ₹500 and ₹1,000 banknotes, which had at the time formed more than 80% of the currency in circulation, was a "critical" part of a policy push to

thin the ranks of the informal cash-based sector.

The Ministry had said, post demonetisation, the volume of digital payment transactions had increased from 1.09 lakh transactions of value of ₹6,952 crore in the entire year of 2016 to

730 crore transactions of the value of more than ₹12 lakh crore in the single month of October 2022.

Quoting RBI figures to make his point, Mr. Chidambaram said, "In times of distress, the people fall back on currency."

"It is completely wrong to say advanced countries have become cashless... currency in circulation has increased. Since 2016, currency represented an overwhelming or large part of payments. There is more cash with the people... That is economic logic," he said, leading submissions for petitioners who have challenged demonetisation in 2016.

He said as the GDP grew, there would be more peo-

ple with more income; there would be a requirement for more currency. "That is why the right to issue currency is given to one independent authority, the RBI, which has a huge section which researches and decides what is the cash in circulation that people need to carry out their daily activities," he submitted.

He went on to say, "Simply by demonetisation, you withdraw over 80% of currency...it does not mean people do not require currency. They do. As you can see, ₹17.97 lakh crore has ballooned to ₹32.18 lakh crore...With humility, I can make the prediction that it will continue to grow and it ought to..."



# Domestic demand to help offset dent in exports from global slowdown: Ministry

**The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

The outlook for India's exports may be dented by the global slowdown driven by the confluence of stubbornly high inflation, rising borrowing costs and geopolitical tensions, but "resilient" domestic demand and a "re-invigorated" investment cycle will push the economy's growth and spark a rebound in jobs in the coming months, the Finance Ministry said on Thursday.

The recent inflation pressures had been driven more by local factors, including higher food prices, than imported reasons, the Ministry said in its monthly review of the economy.

Those pressures were also set to dampen, thanks to easing international commodity prices and the

## Inflation pattern change

Initially in 2022, retail inflation was largely driven by edible oil and fats which reflects imported inflation. Since June, domestic components of food have spurred inflation



### Retail inflation in 2022

	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.
Cereals	5.0	6.0	5.3	5.7	6.9	9.6	11.5	12.1
Clothing	9.4	9.9	8.9	9.5	9.9	9.9	10.2	10.2
Food	7.5	8.1	7.8	7.6	6.7	7.6	8.4	7.0
Fuel	7.5	10.7	9.5	10.1	11.8	10.8	10.4	9.9
Oils & fats	18.7	17.3	13.3	9.4	7.5	4.6	0.4	-2.2
Vegetables	11.6	15.3	18.3	17.3	10.9	13.3	18.2	7.8

Source: MOSPI

arrival of the Kharif crop, the Ministry said.

India's retail inflation has exceeded 7% in all but two months since April, and stood at 6.8% in October.

The Finance Ministry also emphasised in its monthly review that demand under the rural employment guarantee

scheme (MGNREGS) had fallen last month to its lowest level this year, adding that the sharp rise in tractor sales in September and October reflects "improved sentiments and an expected increase in crop area sown".

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# 'Domestic demand to offset dent in exports'

"A rapid deterioration in global growth prospects, high inflation, and worsening financial conditions have increased fears of an impending global recession," the Ministry noted, adding that the "spillovers" of this slowdown "may dampen India's exports businesses outlook".

India's goods exports contracted for the first time since February 2021 in October, with the slowdown in China also affecting global trade. China's economic slowdown had also "exacerbated the effects of high inflation and borrowing costs". "China's exports contracted in October 2022, the first time since May 2020, as local curbs and lower global demand impacted the country's trade," it pointed out. "However, resilient domestic demand, a re-invigorated investment cycle along with strengthened financial system and structural reforms will provide impetus to economic growth going forward," the Ministry said.

## **Recruitments will improve**

"Hiring by firms is likely to witness an improvement in upcoming quarters driven by a rebound in new business gains as firms continue to benefit from the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions and the possible sustaining of the sales momentum witnessed during the festival season," it said.

The recent financial upheavals in crypto exchanges and connected intermediaries, the review noted, is "a reminder of unknown unknowns" even as the global economy continues to navigate turbulence.

# 'Engineering exports slide on slowdown'

**The Hindu Bureau**

HYDERABAD

A slowdown in economic activity triggered by multiple factors, from the war in Ukraine to crumbling demand globally, saw India's engineering exports decline in as many as 19 out of 25 key markets in October.

Overall engineering exports fell 21.3% last month to \$7.4 billion compared with \$9.4 billion in October, 2021. It is the fourth consecutive month that exports have declined, engineering exporters body EEPC India said on Thursday.

Engineering exports to China slumped 64% to \$227.8 million (\$633.8 million), the greatest dip

**Exports to 19 key markets decline; removal of 15% export duty on steel is likely to aid sector**

among 25 destinations that contribute to about 75% of total engineering exports.

Shipments to the European Union were 23% less at \$1.26 billion (\$1.64 billion), while exports to North America fell 10.7% to \$1.66 billion (\$1.85 billion).

While recent trends point to challenging times ahead, the Centre's decision to remove 15% duty on steel products would help as the levy had impacted shipments of steel and its products, said Chairman Arun Kumar Garodia.

# Exporters seek helping hand to ride out global slowdown

FIEO urges reintroduction of interest subsidies, tax breaks for overseas marketing in pre-Budget interaction with Finance Minister; group seeks bigger allocations for export promotion schemes

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

**W**ith order books shrinking and credit costs rising, exporters on Thursday urged Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to reintroduce interest subsidies, grant tax breaks for overseas marketing spends, and expand allocations for the Commerce Ministry's export promotion schemes in the forthcoming Union Budget.

Observing that the rupee's decline against the U.S. dollar had not been as

## Call for support

Exporters seek Centre's intervention to help tide over demand slowdown, rising credit costs



- FIEO highlights fall in overseas marketing spends at a time when exporters' order books are shrinking
- Exporters' group calls for restoration of interest equalisation benefit of 5% to manufacturer MSMEs
- FIEO also urges reintroduction of interest equalisation of 3% to all 410 tariff lines

steep as other currencies, the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) president A. Sakthivel indicated that the In-

dian currency's relative strength was, however, hurting the competitiveness of exports, which all the more needed support.

"When global demand is declining, it becomes all the more necessary to go for aggressive marketing. However, most Indian companies are cutting marketing spends in view of contraction," Mr. Sakthivel said, adding this would hurt the prospects of 'getting whatever little demand there is' now and even when the global situation improved.

"There is an urgent need to restore the interest equalisation benefit of 5% to manufacturer MSMEs and 3% to all 410 tariff lines," Mr. Sakthivel said.

# Unemployment rate dips marginally to 7.2% in July-September: survey

It was 7.6% in the previous quarter and 9.8% in the corresponding period in 2021, according to data from the National Statistical Office; labour force participation rate rises to 47.9% from 46.9%

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

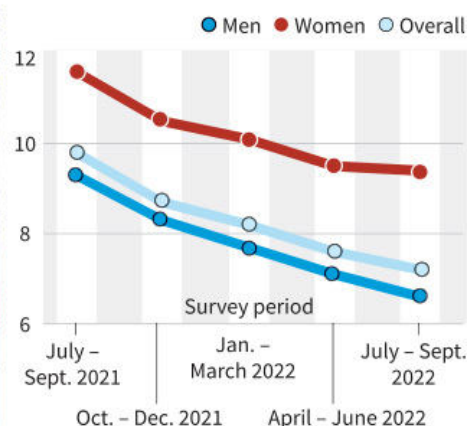
**T**he unemployment rate in urban areas for persons above the age of 15 eased to 7.2% in July-September from 9.8% a year ago and 7.6% in the previous quarter, according to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) here on Thursday.

The unemployment rate was 6.6% for men and 9.4% for women. The rate was 9.3% and 11.6%, respectively, in July-September 2021. The unemployment ratio is defined as the percentage of persons unemployed among the persons in the labour force.

The worker population ratio (WPR) also witnessed a marginal increase compared with last year's. The WPR is defined as the percentage of employed persons in the population. The WPR in urban areas for persons aged 15 and

## Unemployment declines

The unemployment rate (%) in urban areas dipped further to 7.2% in the June to September 2022 period, according to latest Periodic Labour Force Survey. However, among women, the decline in the unemployment rate was less pronounced



above stood at 44.5% in July-September 2022, an increase from 42.3% in the corresponding period in 2021. It was 43.9% in April-June 2022. The WPR among men was 68.6% and among women, 19.7%. It was 66.6% and 17.6%, respectively, in 2021.

The labour force participation rate (LFPR), defined as the percentage of persons in labour force who

are working or seeking or available for work in the population, in urban areas for persons aged 15 and above, increased to 47.9% in July-September 2022, from 46.9% in the corresponding period in 2021. It was 47.5% in April-June 2022. The LFPR among men was 73.4% and 21.7% among women. In 2021, it was 73.5% and 19.9%, respectively.

Ashoka University's Centre for Economic Data and Analysis on Thursday said in a release that over the past two decades, the LFPR of women has been steadily declining, despite an increase in their educational attainment.

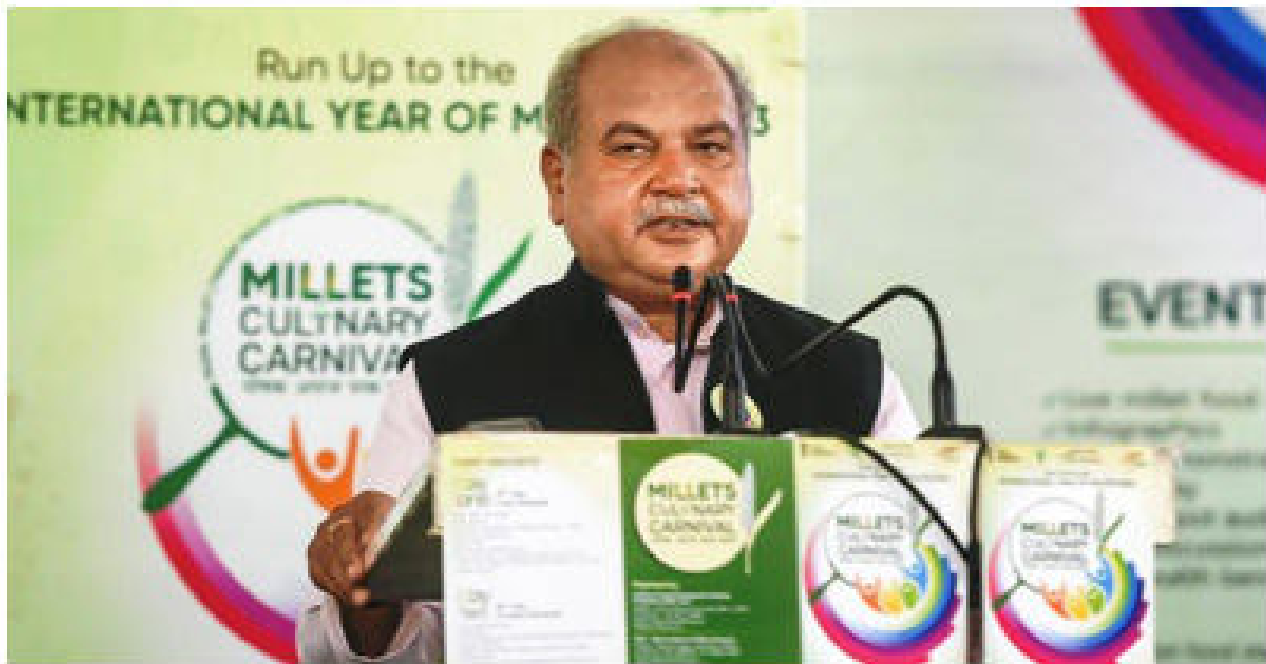
"This has serious consequences, both for the lives of Indian women and for the country at large," it said.

# Unemployment rate sees a decline in July-September 2022

# 7.2

In %, the unemployment rate for persons aged 15 years during July-September 2022

in urban areas from 9.8% a year ago, the National Statistical Office (NSO) informed. Unemployment rate is defined as the percentage of unemployed persons in the labour force. Joblessness was high in July-September 2021 due to the impact of COVID-related restrictions in India. PTI



## Centre pledges to promote millets internationally in 2023

In one of the pre-launch celebration programmes of the International Year of Millets, 2023 in New Delhi on Thursday, the Agriculture Ministry reached out to representatives of various countries in India to promote millets internationally. Both External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar (in photo) addressed the event and urged for global focus on millets for its nutritional and health benefits. Mr. Tomar said the International Year of Millets, 2023 would provide an opportunity to globally promote millets as nutritious cereals, and added that his Ministry was working in a mission mode to increase its production and consumption.

# Millets in the mainstream: how Odisha's Kutia Kondh tribe rediscovered a palate for the 'poor man's food'

SPECIAL

Satyasundar Barik  
TUMUDIBANDH

Rajamudu Majhi may not be articulate enough to recount the millet's journey from its glorious past to the brink of disappearance. But asked in what way the millet is valued in his Kutia Kondh tribe's life and dietary systems, the 60-year-old resident of Dupi village near the scenic Belghar Valley will passionately describe the strong bonding that the tribespeople enjoy with the crop.

Perhaps that close bonding, along with a movement centred on a traditional tribal festival, is the reason that his village and the Tumudibandh block it is located in are now recording the cultiva-

tion of 12 types of millets, a huge spurt from the five types found in 2011.

At a time when the revival of nutritious millets in Odisha is drawing wide attention, with the Centre and the State government ready to adopt its promotion model, the Kutia Kondhs in this little-known pocket of Kandhamal district deserve accolades for their contribution to the crop's survival and subsequent mainstreaming.

In the past, millets used to be the staple food of tribes in Odisha. When paddy and other foods reached their doorstep through the public distribution system and the expanding consumer market, they started treating millets as a subsistence crop which they grew to use themselves, rather than to sell. Some millets



**Unique tradition:** The Kandhamal tribes worship and exchange seeds in a celebration during the festival. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

started to disappear from the tribal food basket.

"While doing a study on millet for research in 2011, we came across a precarious situation in Dupi village. Disappearance of millets from the crop field was pronounced. The tribes had no idea how they had already lost a few varieties of their favourite crop," said Prasant Mohanty, ex-

ecutive director of NIRMAN, an NGO.

"The first experiment we did by asking them to recollect the number of millets grown in their village and periphery," Mr. Mohanty recalled. "Villagers came up with information on different varieties of millets they had seen and sown in their lifetime. This was how a basic data-

base was prepared before the tribes set out to fight their own battle."

The reasons for millets losing their significance were many. Tribal people, especially the youth, felt that they were looked down upon for consuming millets, which is perceived as the poor man's food. Moreover, it was not easy to harvest the crop.

Volunteers identified the Burlang Yatra, a traditional annual festival of the Kutia Kondh tribe, as the occasion around which they could strategise the revival of millets. During the festival, women of the community worship and exchange seeds through a celebratory mode of songs and dances.

NIRMAN, in collaboration with the Millet Network of India (MIND), a forum founded for

promotion of millet, started celebrating the Burlang Yatra on a large scale in order to increase awareness of millets and get rid of the inferiority complex prevailing among the youth.

"The exchange of millet seeds was taken up more vigorously. We started collecting millet seeds from our relatives in Kandhamal and outside. In a few years, millets staged a comeback to our crop field," said Mundi Maskadu Majhi, a resident of nearby Bulubaruru village. Villagers participated in the festival with finger millet, red little millet, black millet, sorghum (great millet), pearl millet and foxtail millet grown in their fields. Through this little-known movement, the tribal people also managed to revive companion crops such as pulses, oilseeds and tubers.



# Can poor countries afford to go green?



**Navroz K. Dubash**  
is a professor at the Center for Policy Research, New Delhi



**Tejal Kanitkar**  
is an associate professor at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore

## PARLEY

**T**he 27th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27) concluded on November 20 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. Nearly 200 countries pledged to set up a 'loss and damage fund' to help vulnerable countries affected by climate change. Developing countries have welcomed this development, which has been a long-time demand. Developed nations, however, are not satisfied with the level of commitment that poor countries have shown towards cutting down greenhouse gas emissions and phasing out fossil fuels. In a discussion moderated by **Prashanth Perumal J.**, Navroz Dubash and Tejal Kanitkar discuss issues surrounding the cost of going green. Edited excerpts:

**What is the likely economic cost of climate change? How can poor countries weigh the cost of climate change against the economic cost of cutting down on fossil fuel use?**

**Navroz K. Dubash:** It is well established that the cost of climate change impact is considerable to economies. As temperatures rise, the cost of not addressing climate change is likely to rise. There's enough science to suggest that this cost is high. The question of weighing the relative costs of trying to mitigate climate change against the cost of climate change impact is more complex. We must not think about mitigation as a distinct thing, but instead think about the kinds of transitions that are required to bring about mitigation. For example, there is a shift towards lower emission energy systems around the world; that's a technological shift and the cost of those technologies has decreased to the point where they are now more or less cost competitive with coal-fired power plants. It makes economic sense to invest in these technologies. But the transition is difficult and is going to be costly. I think that's how we should frame this, not whether but how we have to get there, and also how those costs are borne.

**Tejal Kanitkar:** First, are the costs of the fight against climate change high? Yes. The fight is long and includes not just mitigation costs. Often the focus is solely on estimates for the cost of mitigation. Many of these estimates are speculative, and we can err on either side. For example, even 15 years ago, we could not have anticipated the sharp drop in solar prices that we're seeing today. However, what makes the fight against climate change much harder is that for developing countries, much of our infrastructure is yet to be built. How possible is it to build this with just renewable energy technologies? There is a discourse around the opportunity offered by renewable energy that downplays the serious trade-offs that exist in moving away from known technology too soon.



A crude oil refinery in Kochi, AP

**Is it fair to expect developing countries to reach the per capita income levels of developed countries with the use of renewable energy?**

**TK:** Even the basic minimum, in terms of universal well-being, would require much higher levels of energy. Much of our infrastructure is yet to be built. We need roads, housing, hospitals, schools, industries, etc. Is this all possible with renewable energy? No, it is difficult. We need other sources of energy, which are equally fraught with other concerns. The developing world does not have the luxury of using fossil fuels in an unconstrained manner, which the developed world has had. Climate change is real; we are going to face the impact. So, we have to pursue more deliberate, purposeful and optimal utilisation of fossil fuels that will allow us to bootstrap ourselves to a low carbon future. This is not going to be easy, but it is necessary; the developing world is much more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. We need to utilise our fair share of carbon to build resilience and create the means to transition to a non-fossil fuel future. It is important, however, that our efforts are not utilised by developed countries to free ride on us, and that the benefits of our efforts must accrue back to us.

**NKD:** We don't have the luxury of unconstrained fossil fuel use or high carbon energy trajectories. If we all chose a high carbon path to development, the impacts of climate change would make development itself much less tenable and would undermine the benefits we seek from development. Does this mean that we are obligated to a maximally low carbon path? No. This is where your belief regarding the renewable energy opportunities available becomes very relevant. If you think that there aren't many opportunities, you won't deviate much from a high-carbon path. If you think there are opportunities, you might deviate quite a lot. The solution really lies in focusing on finding common ground between economic development and climate mitigation efforts. We need to search for opportunities in the



The solution lies in focusing on finding common ground between economic development and climate mitigation efforts.

**NAVROZ K. DUBASH**

renewable energy space and sustainable urbanisation. Let me give examples. We have to build our cities around public transport and to some extent around walking and biking, to achieve lower emissions. Studies have shown that if you internalise the health costs of coal-fired power plants, about half of coal-fired power plants today are not economically viable. There are lots of reasons aside from climate change to accelerate this transition.

**TK:** These are developmental objectives that we must meet and there are likely to be some overlaps. Public transportation is a given. But if we frame the entire economy-wide transition in this way, we might end up in a situation where we only look for developmental options that have mitigation co-benefits also. That would be dangerous because we have examples of serious trade-offs in agriculture, for example. Recommending restrictions on providing irrigation to farmers because it would mean more energy, more emissions, etc. is a problem because irrigation leads to increased productivity, which improves the resilience of farmers. So, we must be careful that the idea of mitigation does not overshadow development.

**NKD:** I don't think anybody is claiming that mitigation should be the dominant objective of development policy. The question is, can you approach this as a multiple objective problem where you are looking at development as encompassing many things including growth, distribution, air pollution, local environment benefits and a low carbon future? Is it legitimate to include mitigation outcomes or a lower carbon objective as one among several things that you seek to manage your policy around? I argue that it is. I agree we need to look at both opportunities and trade-offs. Look at those opportunities in a clear and objective way, with mitigation being one among a slew of different objectives. It can be weighted less, but we should have our eye open to it.

**Given the carbon footprint of many green technologies, can they actually help cut down greenhouse gas emissions? And are there solutions to the climate crisis that address the root of the climate issue, which is that it is a global commons problem?**

**TK:** Analysis of the life cycle emissions of renewable energy sources has shown that they are less compared to fossil fuels. But there are

other factors such as battery materials, raw materials mining, etc. whose impact we will know only later as the use of green energy increases. This is the nature of technology, and we will have to innovate to address these issues. There are arguments that favour restricting demand, going back to traditional ways of doing things, etc. I think while sustainable consumption must inform our choices, glorification of the traditional ways of doing things ignores the hardship this means for large sections, particularly women.

Yes, the carbon space must be thought of as an example of the global commons. Its fair distribution must be the starting point of the way in which we think about the utilisation of these commons. Policies for imposing caps on emissions must be designed with this understanding. But no high-income or even upper middle-income countries have been able to achieve high levels of human development without overshooting their fair share of the carbon space. So, just being within our carbon space is going to be a challenge for India.

**NKD:** Fossil fuel use should go to where it has the greatest welfare gains. A tonne of fossil fuel use gives you much greater welfare gains in poor countries where the use is lower. Poorer countries should also try to limit emissions not just for global reasons, but because they will have all these other associated development benefits. Let's not forget that limiting emissions is likely to be convergent with the goal of India becoming a more competitive economy in the future. India in the past made the mistake of focusing on deployment, and not manufacturing, of renewable energy. We now think more in terms of becoming competitive producers in these new low carbon technology spaces, which is good. It is a good approach to claim a large carbon space if we need it, but try as hard as possible not to utilise that claim.

Regarding the global commons, the climate crisis is a global collective action problem. As a political problem, it requires countries to agree to cap their emissions many decades into the future. Political systems work on three, five or seven-year cycles. So, we have a gap between the scientific and political understanding of the problem. At the end of the day, this is going to be dominated by the political understanding. I don't think we will have a political agreement on the allocation of carbon budgets. What we will have is political agreement on the means of support to accelerate the transition to a low-carbon future. That's what India needs to focus on.



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General Studies Paper I	
A	History of Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of art forms, literature and architecture from ancient to modern times;
B	Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present-significant events, personalities, issues;
C	Freedom struggle-its various stages and important contributors / contributions from different parts of the country;
D	Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country;
E	History of the world will include events from 18 <sup>th</sup> century such as industrial revolution, world wars, re-drawing of national boundaries, colonization, decolonization,
F	Political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc.-their forms and effect on the society
G	Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India;
H	Effects of globalization on Indian society;
I	Role of women and women's organization;
J	Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism & secularism
K	Salient features of world's physical geography;
L	Geographical features and their location- changes in critical geographical features (including water bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes;
M	Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc.
N	Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian subcontinent);
O	Factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India);
P	Population and associated issues;
Q	Urbanization, their problems and their remedies
General Studies Paper II	
A	India and its neighbourhood- relations;
B	Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate;
C	Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests;
D	Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.
E	Indian Constitution, historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure;
F	Comparison of the Indian Constitutional scheme with other countries;
G	Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein; Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
H	Parliament and State Legislatures - structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these;
I	Structure, organization and functioning of the executive and the judiciary, Ministries and Departments;

J	Separation of powers between various organs dispute redressal mechanisms and institutions;
K	Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional bodies;
L	Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies;
M	Mechanisms, laws, institutions and bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections;
N	Salient features of the Representation of People's Act;
O	Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential;
P	Citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures;
Q	Issues relating to poverty and hunger,
R	Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States, Performance of these schemes;
S	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to education and human resources;
T	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to health
General Studies Paper III	
A	Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment;
B	Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth;
C	Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
D	Infrastructure Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc. Government budgeting;
E	Land reforms in India
F	Major crops, cropping patterns in various parts of the country, different types of irrigation and irrigation systems;
G	Storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints;
H	e-technology in the aid of farmers; Technology Missions; Economics of Animal-Rearing.
I	Issues of buffer stocks and food security, Public Distribution System- objectives, functioning, limitations, revamping;
J	Food processing and related industries in India – scope and significance, location, upstream and downstream requirements, supply chain management;
K	Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices
L	Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology;
M	Indigenization of technology and developing new technology;
N	Developments and their applications and effects in everyday life;
O	Issues relating to intellectual property rights
P	Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment
Q	Disaster and disaster management
R	Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security;
S	Money-laundering and its prevention;

T	Various forces and their mandate;
U	Security challenges and their management in border areas;
V	Linkages of organized crime with terrorism;
W	Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security;
X	Linkages between development and spread of extremism.
<b>General Studies Paper IV</b>	
A	Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in human actions;
B	Dimensions of ethics;
C	Ethics in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators;
D	Role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.
E	Attitude: Content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behaviour;
F	Moral and political attitudes;
G	Social influence and persuasion.
H	Aptitude and foundational values for Civil Service , integrity, impartiality and non-partisanship, objectivity, dedication to public service, empathy, tolerance and compassion towards the weaker sections.
I	Emotional intelligence-concepts, and their utilities and application in administration and governance.
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K	Public/Civil service values and Ethics in Public administration: Status and problems;
L	Ethical concerns and dilemmas in government and private institutions;
M	Laws, rules, regulations and conscience as
N	sources of ethical guidance;
O	Accountability and ethical governance; strengthening of ethical and moral values in governance; ethical issues in international relations and funding;
P	Corporate governance.
Q	Probity in Governance: Concept of public service;
R	Philosophical basis of governance and probity;
S	Information sharing and transparency in government, Right to Information, Codes of Ethics, Codes of Conduct, Citizen's Charters, Work culture, Quality of service delivery, Utilization of public funds, challenges of corruption.
T	Case Studies on above issues.