

● POLITY

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POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN 5 KEY STATES IN NOVEMBER

CONTEXT: The Election Commission of India announced Assembly elections in five crucial States — Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Mizoram — would be held between November 7 and 30. The counting of votes would take place on December 3 for all the five States. There are a total of 16.14 crore voters in the five States going to polls, which is approximately 1/6th of the total voters in country.

Article 172 (1) of the Indian Constitution provides a fixed tenure of not more than 5 years for State Legislative Assembly, unless sooner dissolved.

Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh have Congress governments, Madhya Pradesh is ruled by the BJP, Telangana by the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) and Mizoram by the Mizo National Front.

The CEC said there would be 1.77 lakh polling stations in the five States, of which 1.01 lakh would have facilities for webcasting and more than 8,000 polling stations would be managed by women.

For the first time a new Election Seizure Management System had been introduced for better oversight for ensuring inducement-free elections. A total of 940 check-posts had been put in place for a strict vigil along the inter-State borders and to dry up the inflow of illicit liquor, cash, freebies and drugs.

Election Commission of India

Article 324 of Indian Constitution.

- Supervise, direct and control
- Elections to the President of India;
- Elections to the Vice-President of India;
- General Elections;
- Assembly Elections;
- Elections to Council of States;
- Elections to the State Legislative Council.

The President appoints the Chief Election Commissioner and 2 Election Commissioner(s) for an office term of 6 years or till he attains the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier*. The Chief Election Commissioner submits resignation to the President of India.

All expenditures of the Election Commission of India, including salaries and emoluments of the Election Commissioners are made from the Consolidated Fund of India.

The conditions of service, including salaries and emoluments of the Election Commissioners cannot be varied to his disadvantage after their appointment.

The Chief Election Commissioner shall not be removed from his office except in like manner and on like grounds as a Judge of the Supreme Court.

Administrative role of Election Commission of India:

Conduct of free and fair elections:

- Delimitation of electoral constituencies.
- Preparation and periodical revision of electoral rolls.
- Conduct of elections.
- Enjoys powers to advise the President regarding conduct of elections in a state under President's Rule under Art. 356.
- Enjoys powers to advise the President and State Governor regarding matters related to the disqualifications of the MPs and MLAs / MLCs respectively.
- Enjoys quasi-judicial powers to grant recognition and allotment of election symbols to political parties.

ART AND CULTURE

NOBEL PRIZE FOR ECONOMICS AWARDED FOR GENDER GAP RESEARCH

Harvard University professor Claudia Goldin received the Nobel Prize for economics on Monday in recognition of her groundbreaking research that has significantly advanced the understanding of the gender gap in the labour market.

Underrepresentation of Women

Out of 93 economics laureates, Ms. Goldin is only the third woman to win the prestigious prize. Her work has shed light on the persistent challenges faced by women in the workforce despite continuous economic growth and the fact that women now attain higher levels of education than men.

Evolving Labor Force Participation

Goldin's research, spanning two centuries of women's involvement in the workplace, reveals that women's pay has not consistently caught up with men's wages. This gender pay gap persists even as women achieve higher education levels.

Addressing the Gender Gap

While Goldin's research does not provide specific solutions, it equips policymakers with valuable insights into the entrenched problem. Economist Randi Hjalmarsson emphasized the complexity of addressing the gender gap and the need to understand its underlying causes before implementing effective policies.

The Intersection of Home and Workplace

Goldin highlighted the interconnectedness of home and workplace dynamics, where women often opt for jobs that allow them to be on call at home, even though these positions often pay less. Achieving more equity within couples can contribute to greater gender equality in the labor market.

Individual Decision-Making

Goldin's research emphasizes that a woman's role in the job market and her salary are influenced not only by broader societal and economic changes but also by her individual decisions, including the level of education she pursues.

Inter-generational Impact

Young girls often base their career decisions on the experiences of their mothers, perpetuating gender norms and disparities across generations.

Sluggish Progress

The gradual change in labour market gender gaps can be attributed to the process of evaluating prospects as societal norms evolve, with each generation learning from the successes and failures of the previous one. This slow pace of change has contributed to persistent disparities.

NOBEL PRIZES

The Nobel Prizes are prestigious international awards presented annually in recognition of outstanding achievements in various fields. They were established in accordance with the will of Alfred Nobel, a Swedish inventor, scientist, and philanthropist, who left a substantial portion of his fortune to fund these prizes.

The Nobel Prize has been conferred in the categories of physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature, and peace since 1901, with the addition of an economic sciences memorial prize in 1968.

Institutions and Disciplines

- The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences: This institution is responsible for awarding the Nobel Prize in Physics and the Nobel Prize in Chemistry. These prizes recognize exceptional contributions to the fields of physics and chemistry.
- The Nobel Assembly at the Karolinska Institute: This assembly awards the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. It acknowledges remarkable discoveries and achievements in the field of medical and life sciences.
- The Swedish Academy: This academy presents the Nobel Prize in Literature, which recognizes outstanding literary work by an author, poet, or playwright.
- The Norwegian Nobel Committee: Unlike the other prizes, the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded in Oslo, Norway. It is presented by the Norwegian Nobel Committee and recognizes individuals or organizations that have made significant contributions to the promotion of peace and conflict resolution on a global scale.

- The Sveriges Riksbank (Swedish National Bank) Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel: Often referred to as the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences, this award recognizes outstanding contributions to the field of economics. It is presented along with the other Nobel Prizes and follows a similar format.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

ISRAEL IMPOSES TOTAL SIEGE ON GAZA; DEATH COUNT RISES

CONTEXT: Israel imposed a total siege on the Gaza Strip on Monday and cut off the water supply as it kept bombing targets in the crowded Palestinian enclave in response to the Hamas surprise assault it has likened to the 9/11 attacks.

Israeli media reported that more than 900 people were killed in multi-pronged attacks by Hamas on the country's south. In Gaza, where Israel has launched a withering barrage of airstrikes, 560 people were reported dead. West Asia tensions have spiked as Israel's arch enemy Iran and their Lebanese ally Hezbollah have praised the Hamas attack, although Tehran rejected any role in the military operation. Hamas has called on "resistance fighters" in the occupied West Bank and in Arab and Islamic nations to join its "Operation Al-Aqsa Flood", launched half a century after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

ECONOMICS

GAZA STRIFE RAISES WORRIES FOR INFLATION, FISCAL MATH, RUPEE

CONTEXT: A protracted Israel-Hamas conflict could spur oil prices beyond India's comfort zone and even if the government holds retail fuel prices ahead of critical elections, wholesale prices may spike and a higher import bill could pressure the rupee.

Brent crude oil prices rose over 3% on Monday, crossing \$87 a barrel even as equity markets around the world, including India, came under pressure as investors turned risk-averse and rushed to safe haven assets like gold. Fears of a wider conflict between Israel and Hamas not only pulled down the NSE Nifty 0.72 % or 141.2 points to 19,512.4, but also dragged trading volumes on the NSE to "the lowest in many weeks".

If the war persists for even a fortnight or more, the oil dynamics will change. Crude oil prices going beyond \$90 a barrel would pose trouble. For the Centre, there could be fiscal implications. With State and general elections looming, raising fuel prices may be an unlikely option, but higher costs will have to be borne by oil marketing firms or the exchequer.

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

CHALLENGING THE LEGAL VACUUM SURROUNDING DIGITAL DATA SEIZURES

CONTEXT: Recent actions against journalists at the online portal NewsClick, including raids, seizures, and arrests, have amplified the need for digital data protections. Some wonder if they are living through a de facto Emergency, with ADM Jabalpur's spirit still alive despite its formal demise.

A Troubling Historical Precedent

Over half a century ago, India's Supreme Court made a controversial ruling during an Emergency, stating that individuals could not challenge illegal detentions. While this ADM Jabalpur case remains infamous for its disturbing decision, Justice H.R. Khanna's courageous dissent is a remarkable highlight. Although the subsequent Justice K.S. Puttaswamy case recognized the right to privacy and repudiated ADM Jabalpur, concerns about enforcement persist.

Aggressive Executive Actions

The aggressive actions of India's executive branch against NewsClick, accusing its staff of terrorism, reflect broader issues. India ranks 161st out of 180 countries in the World Press Freedom Index, considering legal interference in journalism. Investigative and tax agencies have scrutinized 44 media entities and journalists over the past five years.

Outdated Legal Framework

India's criminal justice process, guided by the Code of Criminal Procedure, has not kept pace with technological advancements. The code, rooted in the past, does not adequately protect democratic rights within India's Constitution.

Lack of Safeguards

Chapter 8 of the Code outlines search and seizure powers but often becomes mere formality in practice. Many individuals willingly comply with law enforcement demands even without warrants due to fears of consequences.

Privacy Concerns and Legal Conflicts

Legal provisions often clash with the right to privacy and protection against self-incrimination, violating the Constitution. Despite the law's safeguards, exceptions, and specific statutes such as the Prevention of Money Laundering Act and the Income-Tax Act, undermine privacy rights.

Endorsement of Smartphone Unlocking

The Karnataka High Court's ruling in the Virendra Khanna vs. State of Karnataka case allows law enforcement to coerce individuals to unlock their smartphones, granting unrestricted access to personal data.

Intrusion into Journalists' Lives

Digital device seizures during investigations expose extensive

personal and professional communications of journalists. This intrusion can compromise journalistic independence and sources.

Challenges to Journalists' Reporting

Journalists reporting on sensitive matters face interrogations that center around events like anti-farm law protests, the North East Delhi riots of 2020, and the COVID-19 response. The entity they report on, the Delhi police, also investigates them.

Judicial Inaction

The judiciary's slow response to cases like Paranjay Guha Thakurta's, who sought intervention after Pegasus spyware compromised his phone, is troubling. The judicial system must address issues like compulsory warrants, seizure specificity, protection against forced device unlocks, and secure evidence handling.

The Need for Judicial Courage

India is undergoing a digital authoritarian transformation, challenging its constitutional framework. The Supreme Court must follow the lesson of Justice H.R. Khanna's dissent: act with judicial courage, even when it demands sacrifice, to uphold constitutional values in this era of digital challenges.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

MENTAL HEALTH AND THE FLOUNDERING INFORMAL WORKER

CONTEXT: ILO study: 15% of adults globally have mental disorders; work conditions significantly impact mental health.

BACKGROUND: The theme of this year's World Mental Health Day is 'mental health as a universal human right.' Informal workers, often overlooked, face mental health challenges due to precarious employment, workplace discrimination, and poor working conditions. A study by the ILO found that 15% of global working-age adults live with a mental disorder. Decent work positively influences mental health, while insecure jobs and isolation can compromise it.

The Indian Experience

- **Predominance of Informal Workforce:** Over 90% of India's workforce operates informally, lacking regulatory protection and access to social and financial safeguards, which detrimentally affects mental health.
- **Gender Disparities:** Women in India's informal sector, constituting over 95%, face precarious employment, social discrimination, and patriarchal structures, compounding mental health challenges.
- **Youth Mental Health:** High youth unemployment rates in India, coupled with societal stigma, negatively impact mental health, making them vulnerable to negative emotions.
- **Shift to Precarious Work:** Young workers often accept low-paying and insecure informal jobs out of desperation, exacerbating the issue of unemployment and mental health challenges.

· **Aging Population Concerns:** With India's aging population growing rapidly, the lack of social security for the elderly who engage in informal work threatens their physical and mental well-being, highlighting a pressing need for long-term support.

On Social Security

· **Informal Workers' Mental Health:** World Mental Health Day highlights mental health as a universal right, but often, the plight of informal workers is overlooked.

· **Global Mental Health Impact:** Unemployment, unstable employment, workplace discrimination, and unsafe environments can harm mental health. A study finds 15% of global working-age adults have mental disorders.

· **India's Informal Workforce:** Over 90% of India's workers are informal, facing challenges like regulatory gaps, unsafe conditions, and discrimination, particularly impacting women. Youth unemployment is high, affecting mental health.

· **Aging Population Concerns:** India's aging population faces poor mental health due to a lack of social security. Many elderly individuals work post-retirement, struggling with economic dependency and healthcare access.

· **Social Security:** Informal workers experience mental distress due to financial instability and rising healthcare costs. Social security measures are essential to address mental health challenges among vulnerable worker groups.

Informal workers in India face economic, physical, and mental vulnerabilities, yet the budget allocation for mental health remains low. The World Mental Health Report 2022 emphasizes the importance of community-based care and human rights-oriented approaches. Proactive policies

ECONOMICS

FESTIVE CHEER: URBAN CONSUMER CONFIDENCE AT SEVEN-YEAR PEAK

Confidence boost

The data for the charts were sourced from the Reserve Bank of India's Consumer Confidence Survey



Chart 1 | The chart plots respondents' views on the general economic situation, for every September since 2012

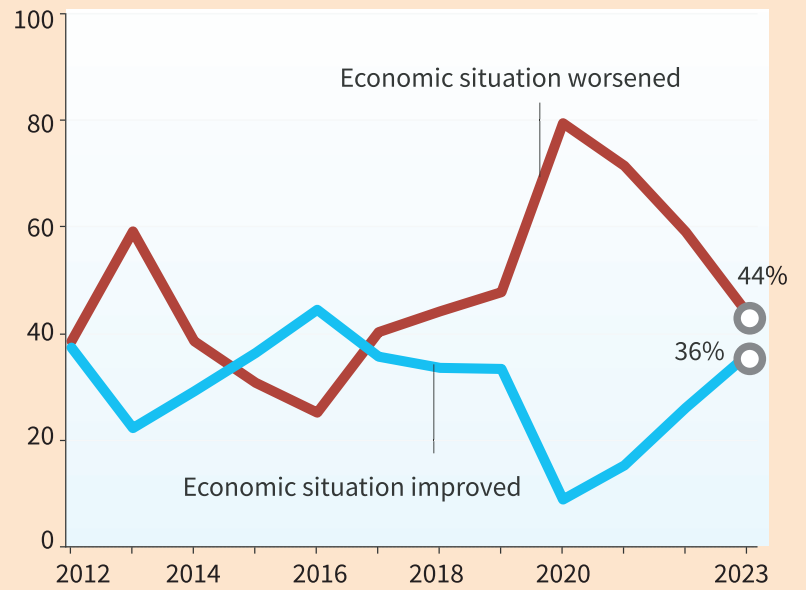


Chart 2 | The chart plots respondents' views on employment opportunities, for every September since 2012

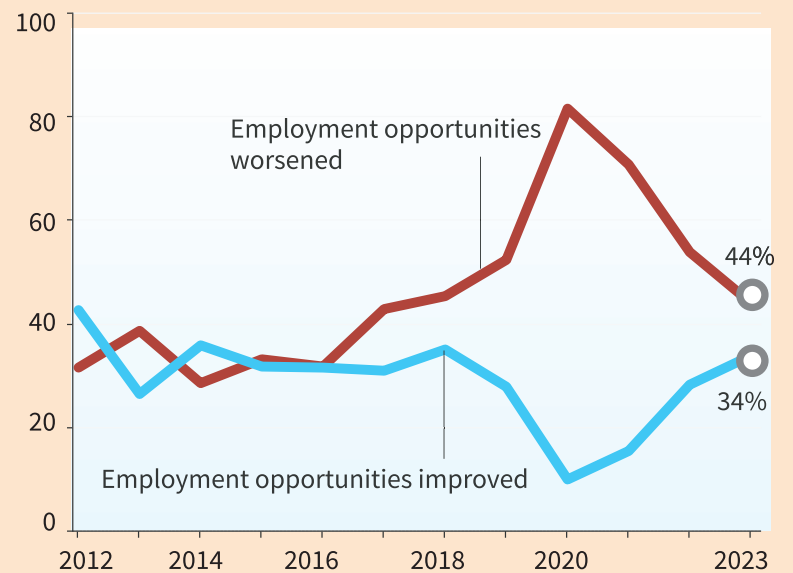


Chart 3 | The chart plots respondents' views on income levels, for every September since 2012

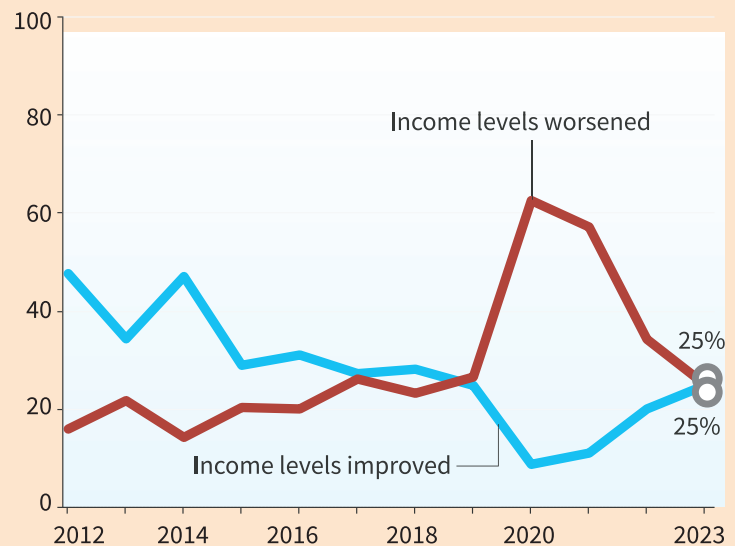


Chart 4 | The chart plots respondents' views on price levels of commodities, for every September since 2012

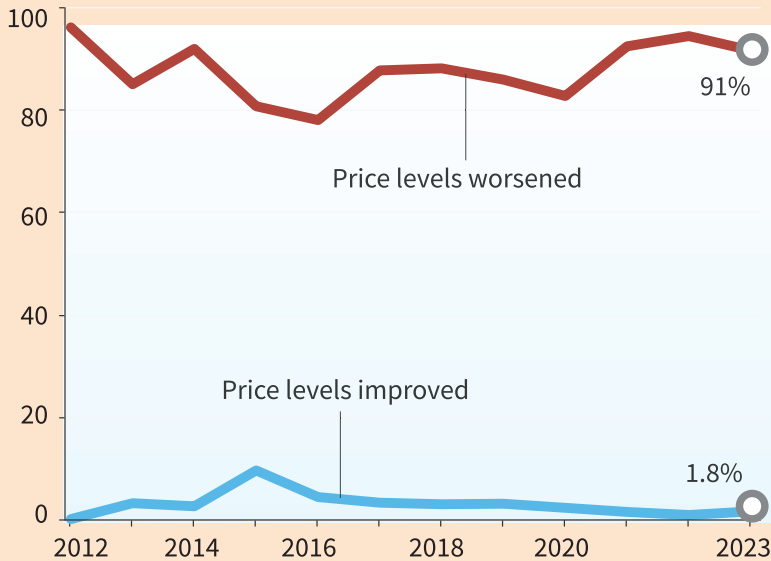


Chart 5 | The chart plots respondents' views on spending levels, for every September since 2012

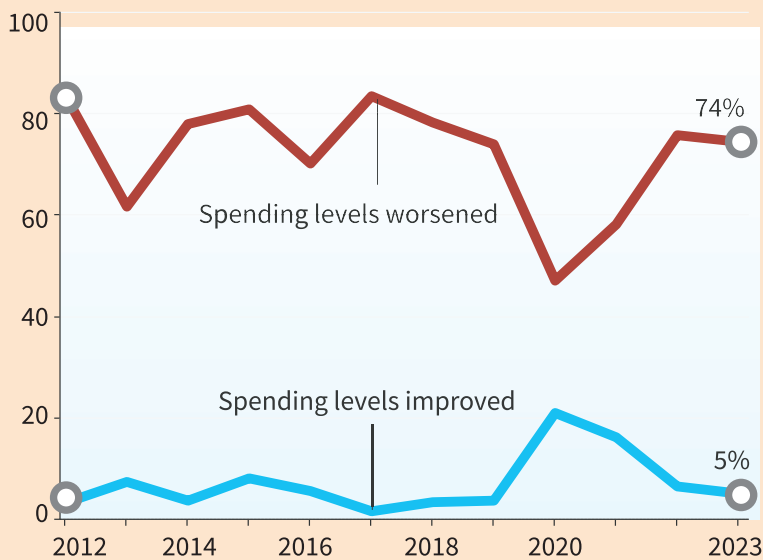


Chart 1 plots respondents' views on the general economic situation for every September since 2012. In September 2023, 34% said their employment opportunities had improved compared to a year ago — the highest for any September after 2018. Pessimism about job opportunities was also low. In September 2023, 44% said their employment levels had worsened compared to a year ago — the lowest for any September after 2017. However, more respondents continued to report that their employment opportunities had worsened than those who said it has improved.

Chart 2 plots respondents' views on employment opportunities for every September since 2012. In September 2023, 25% of the respondents said their income levels had improved compared to a year ago — the highest for any September after 2018. Pessimism about income levels was also low. In September 2023, 25% also said their income levels had worsened compared to a year ago — the lowest for any September after 2018.

Chart 3 plots respondents' views on income levels for every September since 2012. In September 2023, 91% of the respondents said the price levels of commodities had increased compared to a year ago. For the third consecutive September, the share of such respondents persists above the 90% mark.

Chart 4 plots respondents' views on price levels of commodities for every September since 2012. In September 2023, 74% said their spending levels had increased compared to a year ago — the highest for any September after 2018. For the second consecutive September, the share of such respondents persists above the 70% mark.

Chart 5 plots respondents' views on spending levels for every September since 2012. In summary, a higher share of people entered the festival season this year with more confidence about the economy, their job opportunities and income levels than before. A high share of them continue to feel that the price level of commodities is higher than a year ago. A high share of them also spent more this September than in previous years.

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

THE STATE OF INDIA'S SCHEDULED AREAS

CONTEXT: Adivasi communities in India lack proper representation in villages despite residing in Scheduled Areas and ST-populated regions.

BACKGROUND: Despite comprising 8.6% of India's population across 26 states and six Union Territories, Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities face exclusion from scheduled areas. The criteria for such designation, established by the 1961 Dhebar Commission Report, include tribal population prevalence, area compactness, administrative viability, and economic backwardness compared to neighboring regions.

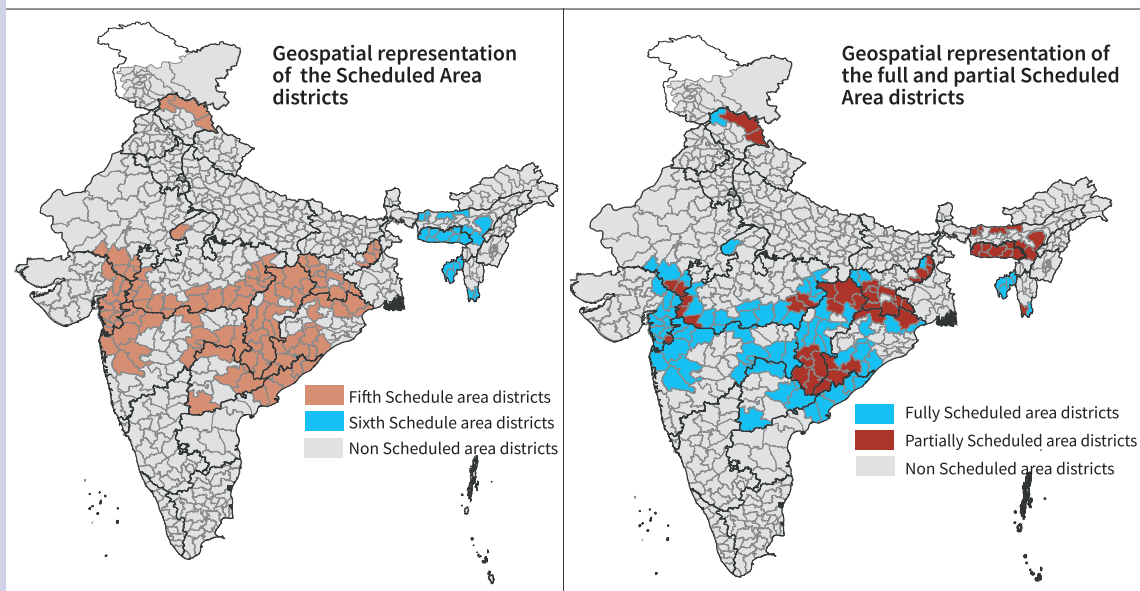
CRACKING
CIVIL SERVICES
NO MORE A
DIFFICULT TASK

COME JOIN WITH US



The homelands of tribal communities

These maps show us geospatial representations of Scheduled Areas in India. Scheduled Areas cover 11.3% of India's land area, and have been notified in 10 States. The President holds exclusive power to declare any area as a Scheduled Area



Source: The Legal Regime and Political Economy of Land Rights of Scheduled Tribes in The Scheduled Areas of India, Namita Wahi and Ankit Bhatia, Centre for Policy Research

Defining Scheduled Areas

Scheduled Areas are regions in India designated for the protection and development of tribal communities. These areas have special governance and land ownership regulations to safeguard tribal rights and culture.

Despite covering 11.3% of India's land, Scheduled Areas exclude many ST villages in 10 states and other regions. 59% of India's STs lack Article 244 rights, including key legislation benefits. The Bhuria Committee's 1995 recommendation to include these villages remains unimplemented. Bureaucratic challenges persist, hindering the extension of these essential provisions, affecting tribal communities.

Governance of Scheduled Areas

- **Presidential Notification:** The President of India designates Scheduled Areas, where Tribal Advisory Councils, with up to 20 Scheduled Tribe (ST) members, advise the Governor on ST welfare.
- **Governor's Authority:** Governors can amend or repeal laws, make regulations, and report annually on Scheduled Areas' administration, with the national government's power to provide directions.
- **Underutilized Provisions:** Despite significant authority vested in Governors and the President's oversight, these provisions have

largely remained inactive, except for a brief period in Maharashtra from 2014 to 2020.

- **PESA Act Empowerment:** The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, enacted in 1996, revitalized the intended constitutional framework, empowering gram sabhas to exercise substantial authority in Scheduled Areas through direct democracy.

- **Gram Sabha Empowerment:** PESA ensured that gram sabhas, not higher-level structures, hold the powers and authority, aligning with the Constitution's original intent and the Constituent Assembly's vision.

Identification of Scheduled Areas

- **Dhebar Commission Criteria:** Scheduled Areas are identified based on criteria like a preponderance of tribal population, compactness, viable administrative entity,

and economic backwardness relative to neighboring areas.

- **No Prescribed Percentage:** Neither the Constitution nor any law specifies a minimum percentage of STs in such areas or a cutoff date for identification.

- **2002 Recommendation:** The 2002 Commission recommended considering areas with 40% or more tribal population according to the 1951 Census as Scheduled Areas, but this was not widely adopted.

- **PESA Act Clarity:** The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act defined a 'village' and 'gram sabha,' settling ambiguity and expanding the definition to include forest fringes and villages.

- **Demarcation Challenge:** While the law empowers gram sabhas, they face challenges in demarcating traditional boundaries on revenue lands, particularly in the absence of a suitable law.

To ensure the rights and well-being of ST communities, all habitations with ST majorities in States and Union Territories should be declared Scheduled Areas, regardless of contiguity. This designation should extend to community forest resource areas and customary boundaries, necessitating amendments to State laws. Redrawing geographical limits to encompass these areas is vital for their inclusion and empowerment.



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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

MULTIMODAL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

CONTEXT: The future of AI models lies in multimodal systems for more comprehensive human-like cognition.

HIGHLIGHTS: OpenAI is racing to catch up with Google in the multimodal AI field, enabling GPT-3.5 and GPT-4 models to analyze images and incorporate speech synthesis. Google's Gemini model, still unreleased, has a head start due to its vast image and video database. OpenAI is aggressively hiring experts and developing a new multimodal AI system called Gobi to compete in this evolving tech race.



How Does Multimodality Work?

Multimodal AI systems, like OpenAI's DALL.E, link text and images during training. These systems analyze patterns in visual data and image descriptions to generate images from text prompts. Similarly, for audio, GPT's voice processing uses Whisper, an open-source speech-to-text model, to recognize speech in audio and translate it into plain text.

Applications of Multimodal AI

- Hate Speech Detection: Meta and Google have developed multimodal systems to automatically detect hateful memes on social media platforms like Facebook.
- Dialogue Prediction: Google researchers created a multimodal system to predict the next lines of dialogue in videos, enhancing user experiences.
- Image Bind by Meta: Meta introduced Image Bind, an open-source AI multimodal system that incorporates various sensory data, paving the way for more immersive virtual reality experiences.
- Medical Diagnosis: Multimodal AI is crucial in fields like medicine, where it helps process complex datasets from CT scans and genetic variations to provide clear, plain-language responses.
- Speech Translation: Multimodal AI plays a key role in speech translation, with models like Meta's SeamlessM4T offering text-to-speech, speech-to-text, speech-to-speech, and text-to-text translations for numerous languages.

ECONOMICS

URBAN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DROPS TO 6.6 % IN Q1

CONTEXT: The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), carried out by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), has reported that unemployment rate in urban areas of the country has shown a decrease during the period April-June 2023. The national survey processed details from 5,639 first-stage sampling units (FSUs) and 1,67,916 people from 44,190 urban houses.

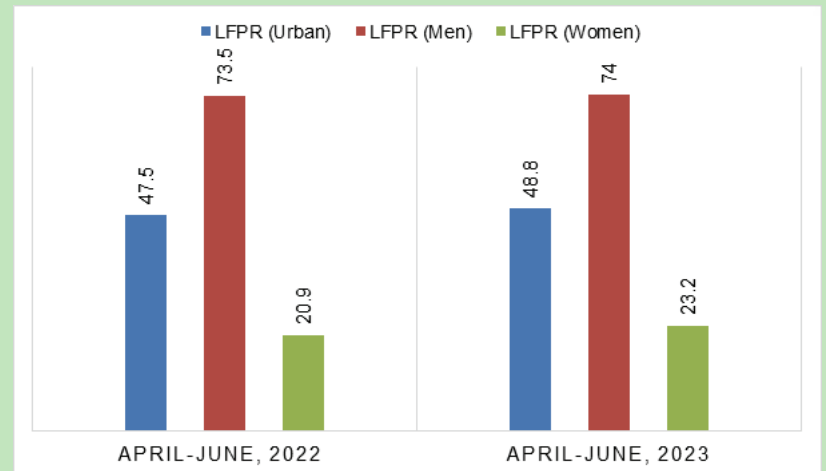


FIGURE: Column chart representation of the Labour Force Participation Rate(LFPR).

The Centre claimed improvement in key labour market indicators in urban areas compared with those in pre-pandemic period (April-June 2018 to October–December 2019). The LFPR ranged from 46.2% to 47.8% during the pre-pandemic period and in the latest report it was 48.8%

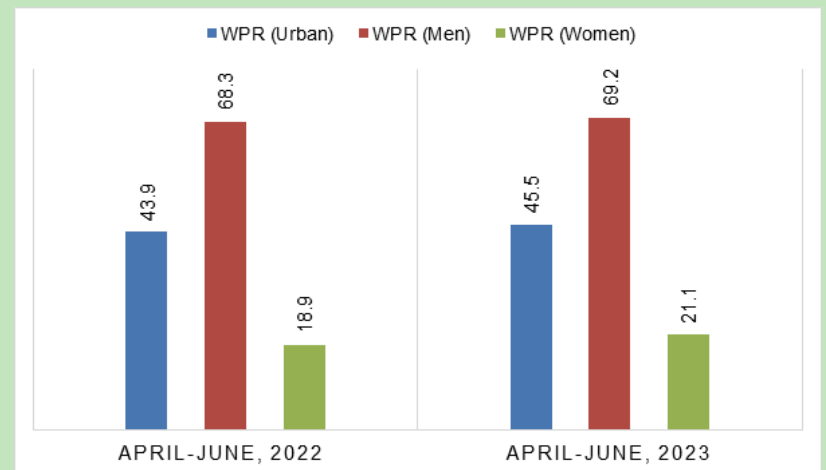
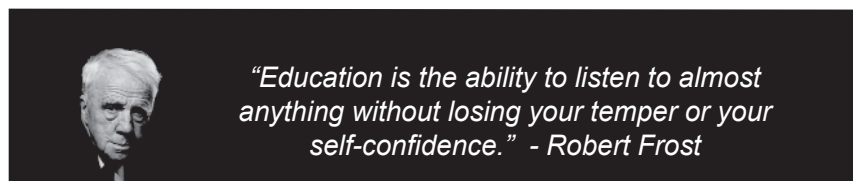


FIGURE: Column chart representation of the Worker to Population Ratio (WPR).

The WPR was between 41.8 % and 44.1 % before the pandemic and now it is 45.5 %.



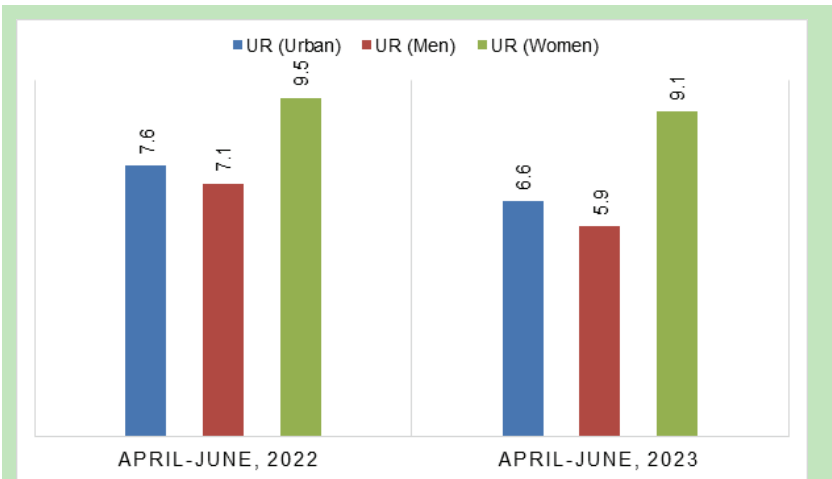


FIGURE: Column chart representation of the Unemployment Rate (UR) for persons aged 15 and above.

The unemployment rate ranged between 7.8% and 9.7% during the pre-pandemic period and at the latest survey it was 6.6%, which, according to the Centre, is lower than the unemployment rates observed in the quarters covered in the pre-pandemic period.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SRI LANKA TO TAKE OVER AS CHAIR OF INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION

CONTEXT: Foreign Ministers from multiple countries to attend IORA meeting in Colombo; Sri Lanka to assume Chairmanship. **BACKGROUND:** The Council of Ministers meeting in Colombo will host 16 Ministers, including Foreign Ministers from Bangladesh, India, Iran, Mauritius, Malaysia, and South Africa. Additionally, ministerial and senior-level representatives from various member countries and dialogue partners like China, Germany, Japan, and the United States will participate in the event.

NEWS Highlights

- **New Chair of IORA:** Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Ali Sabry will lead the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) for the next two years, taking over from Bangladesh.
- **Priority Areas:** IORA focuses on six priority areas, including Trade, Maritime Safety, Fisheries Management, Disaster Risk Management, and Blue Economy, to enhance regional cooperation.
- **Membership Expansion:** IORA has grown to include 23 member states and 11 dialogue partners, spanning regions around the Indian Ocean.
- **Competing Interests:** Sri Lanka, amidst competing strategic interests from India and China in the Indian Ocean Region, is an active participant in the forum.
- **Chinese Vessel and Connectivity:** The IORA meeting coincides with discussions regarding a possible visit by the Chinese research vessel Shi Yan 6 to Sri Lanka. Additionally, India and Sri Lanka are launching a ferry service to enhance

connectivity between Nagapattinam and Kankesanthurai.

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

- **Establishment and Vision:** The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) was founded on March 7, 1997, stemming from a vision outlined during President Nelson Mandela's visit to India in 1995.
- **Geopolitical Significance:** The Indian Ocean, as the world's third-largest ocean, controls vital sea routes, handling half of global container ships, one-third of bulk cargo, and two-thirds of oil shipments, making it crucial for international trade.
- **Cultural and Demographic Diversity:** IORA member states, home to 2.7 billion people, boast rich cultural diversity, languages, religions, traditions, arts, and cuisines, creating a vibrant tapestry within the region.
- **Regional Sub-divisions:** Despite diverse sub-regions like Australasia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, West Asia, Eastern & Southern Africa, and various regional groups (e.g., ASEAN, SAARC, GCC, and SADC), the countries are united by the Indian Ocean.
- **Organizational Structure:** IORA's apex body, the Council of Foreign Ministers (COM), convenes annually. The United Arab Emirates and Bangladesh have held chair positions, fostering cooperation among member states through committees and working groups.

INTERNAL SECURITY

SMART FENCE ALONG MYANMAR BORDER

CONTEXT: The annual report (2022-23) of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) called for an advanced smart fencing system of 100 km along the Myanmar border is in the pipeline to strengthen the existing surveillance system.

Unfenced border and unregulated migration from Myanmar have been attributed as some of the factors responsible for the ethnic violence in Manipur. India shares a 1,643 km border with Myanmar, including 171 km of undemarcated borders. Out of the 201 insurgency-related incidents registered in all the northeast States in 2021, as many as 137 incidents were registered in Manipur. Manipur is affected by the activities of Meitei, Naga, Kuki, Zomi, Hmar insurgent groups. A total of 23 UG [underground] outfits under two conglomerates [United Peoples' Front [UPF] -8 and Kuki National Organisation [KNO] -15] are under Suspension of Operation [SoO] pact with the Government of India since August 2008.

Under the Free Movement Regime (FMR) that exists between India and Myanmar, every member of the hill tribes, who is either a citizen of India or a citizen of Myanmar and who is resident of any area within 16 km on either side of the Indo-Myanmar border can cross the border on production of a border pass (one year validity) issued by the competent authority and can stay up to two weeks per visit. The Manipur government has suspended the FMR since 2020, post COVID-19 pandemic.



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