

INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONSINDIA'S CONCERNS OVER SAFE SPACE FOR
"TERRORISTS AND CRIMINAL ELEMENTS" IN CANADA

The Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson, Arindam Bagchi, highlighted a critical issue at the core of India's relationship with Canada. He expressed concerns about the safe haven that "terrorists and criminal elements" have seemingly found in Canada.

The Lingering Issue of Parity

The issue of parity has persisted between the two nations since Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau alleged that Indian agents were involved in the June 18 killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, the alleged leader of the Khalistan Tiger Force.

Diplomatic Tensions Impact G-20 Parliamentary Speakers Summit (P-20)

The diplomatic dispute between India and Canada cast a shadow over the G-20 Parliamentary Speakers Summit (P-20), which India was hosting. The Speaker of the Canadian Senate, Raymonde Gagne, opted out of the event. Initially, Canada had confirmed its attendance at the meeting. These developments coincided with Mr. Trudeau's discussions with King Abdullah of Jordan, where he reportedly mentioned the killing of Mr. Nijjar and its alleged Indian connection.

India's Call for Diplomatic Safety

While Mr. Bagchi did not directly counter Mr. Trudeau's claims, he reiterated India's primary demand for the safety of Indian diplomats. He urged Canada to take its international obligations regarding the security of diplomats and their premises more seriously.

Compliance with Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations

Mr. Bagchi reassured that India's actions align with the principles outlined in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. This underscores India's commitment to diplomatic norms and international obligations.

The Significance of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations

The United Nations Conference on Diplomatic Intercourse and Immunities, which took place in Vienna, Austria, adopted the Convention on April 14, 1961. India is among the countries that have ratified this convention.

The Convention became effective on April 24, 1964, and has garnered widespread ratification, with nearly all nations adopting it. The exceptions are Palau and South Sudan.

The Cornerstone of Diplomatic Law

The 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations plays a pivotal role in governing international diplomacy, safeguarding diplomats' freedom to carry out their duties without undue influence from host governments. It outlines a comprehensive framework that

covers various aspects of diplomatic relations.

Key Provisions of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations

The Convention establishes several fundamental rules and principles to govern diplomatic relations, including:

Appointment of Foreign Representatives: The Convention provides guidelines for the appointment of foreign representatives, ensuring transparency and legality in the diplomatic process.

- **Inviolability of Mission Premises:** It guarantees the inviolability of diplomatic mission premises, safeguarding them from intrusion or interference by the host government.
- **Protection for Diplomats and Their Families:** Diplomats and their families are granted protection from arrest or detention, shielding them from legal actions in the host country.
- **Protection of Diplomatic Communication:** The Convention upholds the confidentiality and security of all forms of diplomatic communication, ensuring that diplomatic correspondence remains immune from unwarranted scrutiny.
- **Exemption from Taxation:** Diplomats are exempted from taxation by the host country, helping to maintain their financial independence.
- **Immunity from Civil and Administrative Jurisdiction:** Diplomats are generally shielded from civil and administrative jurisdiction, with limited exceptions, to prevent undue interference with their diplomatic duties.
- **Respect for Host State Laws:** Diplomats are required to respect the laws of the host state, ensuring they do not engage in any activities that could jeopardize diplomatic relations.

Promoting Friendly Relations Among Nations

The preamble of the Convention emphasizes that its rules are designed to facilitate the development of amicable relationships between nations, irrespective of their varying constitutional and social systems. The primary objective of granting privileges and immunities to diplomats is to enhance the effective functioning of diplomatic missions.

Enforcement and Sanctions

The Convention acknowledges the necessity for diplomats to adhere to local laws. However, in the absence of a waiver of immunity, the only sanction permissible under the Convention is expulsion. This restriction prevents potential abuses of power by local authorities within the host state's law enforcement system. Reciprocity, where host countries apply similar rules to foreign diplomats, also serves as an effective sanction to ensure compliance with the Convention's regulations.

ECONOMICS AND DEVELOPMENT

RETAIL INFLATION COOLED FROM 6.83% IN AUG. TO 5% IN SEPT.

CONTEXT: India's retail inflation eased from 6.83 % in August to 5.02 % in September, with food prices easing from almost 10 % to 6.6 %.

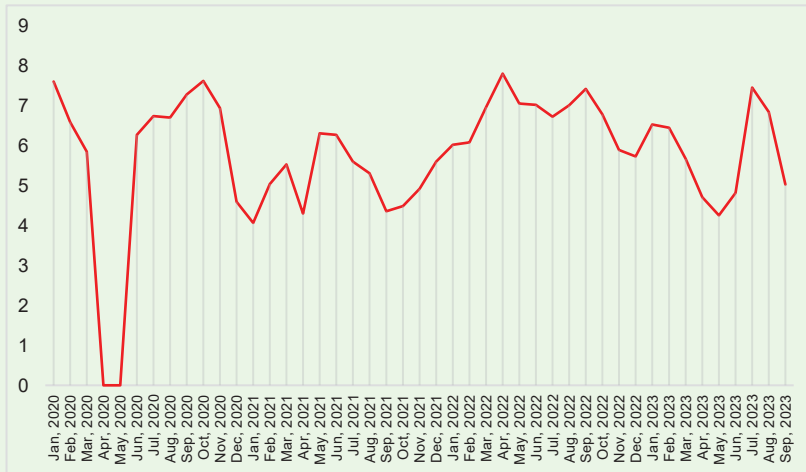


FIGURE: Line chart representation of the Consumer Price Index based inflation.

The MPC in its recent Bi-monthly Policy Review raised its average inflation projection for the July-to-September quarter from 6.2 % to 6.4 %. In the current quarter, the MPC expects inflation to average 5.6%; for the full year 2023-24, it expects an average rate of 5.4%. Rajasthan and Haryana recorded the steepest inflation at 6.5%. Inflation was the lowest in Chhattisgarh at 1.98% and below the 5 % mark in eight other States, including Tamil Nadu (4.5 %), Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal (3.7 % each), and Kerala (4.7 %). However, 13 of the 22 States for which the NSO had released inflation rates recorded a higher price rise than the headline figure of 5.02 %.

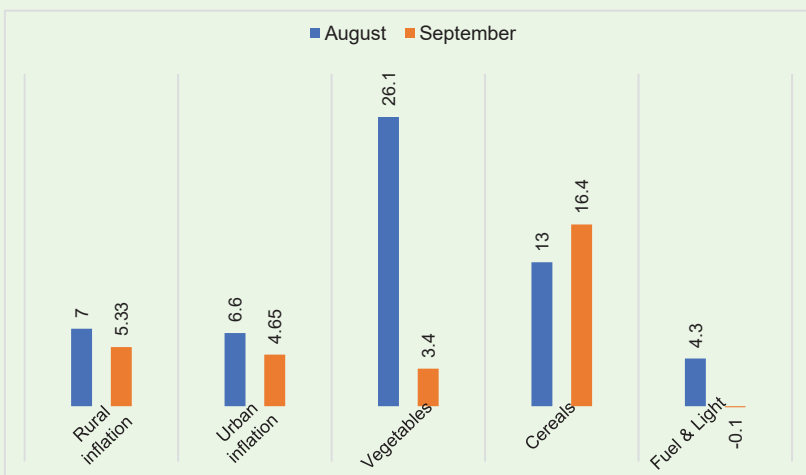


FIGURE: Column chart representation of inflation of products.

The Kharif harvest will have a bearing on inflation along with the El-Niño effect in Asia, and the evolution of the Israel-Palestine crisis. Moreover, costs of services like health, up 5.9% in September, and personal care, up 8.5 %, are still rising.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

INDIA RANKS 111 OUT OF 125 COUNTRIES IN HUNGER INDEX

CONTEXT: India ranks 111 out of a total of 125 countries in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2023, with its progress against hunger nearly halted since 2015, reflecting a global trend.

The Union government contested India's performance for the third year in a row, citing flawed methodology. Afghanistan, Haiti and 12 sub-Saharan countries performed worse than India on the GHI. India's ranking is based on a GHI score of 28.7 on a 100-point scale, where 0 is the best score (no hunger) and 100 is the worst. This categorises India's severity of hunger as "serious".

GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX SCORE

The GHI score is calculated on a 100-point scale reflecting the severity of hunger. Zero is the best score (no hunger) and 100 is the worst. Each set of GHI scores uses data from a 5-year period. The 2022 GHI scores are calculated using data from 2017 through 2021.

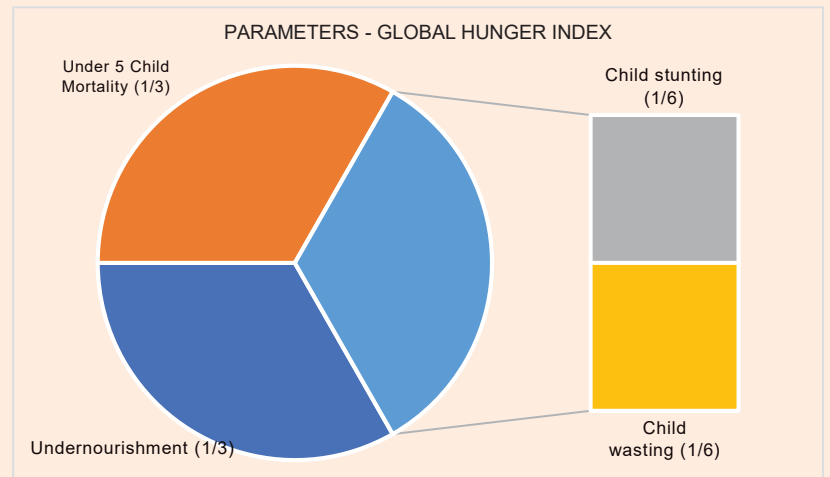






FIGURE: Pie chart representation of the weights of parameters of Global Hunger Index.

HOW THE GHI IS CALCULATED

Each country's GHI score is calculated based on a formula that combines 4 indicators that together capture the multidimensional nature of hunger:

-  **UNDERNOURISHMENT:** Share of the population with insufficient caloric intake.
-  **CHILD STUNTING:** Share of children under age five who have low height for their age, reflecting chronic undernutrition.
-  **CHILD WASTING:** Share of children under age five who have low weight for their height, reflecting acute undernutrition.
-  **CHILD MORTALITY:** Share of children who die before their fifth birthday, partly reflecting the fatal mix of inadequate nutrition and unhealthy environments.

The GHI score is based on a formula which combines four indicators that together capture the multi-dimensional nature of hunger, including under-nourishment, child stunting, child wasting, and child mortality.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

PROPOSALS FOR ACQUISITION OF AIRCRAFT CARRIER, LCA-MK1A JETS LINED UP FOR APPROVAL BY DAC

CONTEXT: The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh expected to meet on October 29 or 30 will consider defence acquisition proposals from the Navy and the Air Force, cumulatively cost over ₹1 lakh Cr. expected to meet at the end of this month.

The DPB has already cleared the proposals for a second indigenous aircraft carrier, IAC-II, and 97 LCA-Mk1A in mid-September.

The Navy's proposal is for a repeat order of a Vikrant-like aircraft carrier, estimated to cost approximately ₹ 40,000 Cr. The IAC-II, displacing 45,000 tonnes, will see some modifications and newer technologies being incorporated in the original design of the country's first indigenous aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant, which was commissioned in September 2022. The second ship, if cleared, will also be manufactured by Cochin Shipyard Ltd. (CSL).

The Air Force is looking to acquire 97 additional light combat aircraft, LCA-Mk1A, estimated to cost around ₹ 67,000 Crore. Air Force had moved a case for 97 additional LCA-Mk1A jets in addition to the 83 jets on order with Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL), which would cumulatively cost around ₹1.15 lakh crore. This would take the fleet strength to 180 LCA-Mk1A jets and 220 jets of the Mk1 variant.

Another proposal for a major upgrade of 84 SU-30MKI fighter jets in service with the Air Force, at a cost of over ₹6,000 crore, is set to be taken up by the Defence Procurement Board (DPB). The long-pending Su-30MKI upgrade will be initially rolled out with 84 jets and will largely be an indigenous effort, sources said. Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari had said that 51 systems would be upgraded in the 84 jets with an indigenous content of 78 %.

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

7-JUDGE BENCH TO TAKE A CALL ON GIVING PRIORITY TO MONEY BILL CASE

CONTEXT: A seven-judge Bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud will "take a call" on a request from petitioners to give priority to a reference concerning the manner in which the Centre got crucial amendments passed in Parliament as Money Bills.

The Centre objected to the request, saying the Bench should not give priority to the case based on a request made by the petitioners, on the basis of "political exigencies". The reference includes legal questions concerning amendments



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made from 2015 onwards in the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) through Money Bills, giving the Enforcement Directorate almost blanket powers of arrest, searches, and so on. Though the court had upheld the legality of the PMLA amendments, it left the question whether the amendments could have been passed as Money Bills to the seven-judge Bench.

The case also raises questions about the passage of the Finance Act of 2017 as a Money Bill to alter the appointments to 19 key judicial tribunals, including the National Green Tribunal and the Central Administrative Tribunal. The Finance Act of 2017 was deliberately categorised as a Money Bill to "extend executive control over these institutions (tribunals) by altering the composition of the selection committees and vastly downgrading the qualifications and experience required to staff these bodies".

The seven-judge Bench is hearing the Money Bill question based on a reference made in November 2019 by a five-judge Bench headed by then Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi in the case of Rojer Mathew vs. South Indian Bank Ltd. The cardinal issue is whether such amendments could be passed as a Money Bill, circumventing the Rajya Sabha, in violation of Article 110 of the Constitution.

Financial matters

A Money Bill is deemed to contain only provisions dealing with all or any of the matters under clauses (a) to (g) of Article 110(1), largely including the appropriation of money from the Consolidated Fund of India and taxation. In other words, a Money Bill is restricted only to the specified financial matters.

The Money Bill reference is numbered five in the list of cases scheduled before the seven judges. The Bench had convened on Thursday to iron out the pre-hearing formalities before the cases were to be heard. The question of passage of laws after dressing them up as Money Bills had come up in the Aadhaar case too. However, the top court had, in a majority verdict in 2021, refused to review its 2018 judgment (K. Puttaswamy case) upholding the validity of the Aadhaar Act and its certification as a Money Bill. Justice Chandrachud, who is heading the current Bench, had delivered the dissenting opinion on the Review Bench in 2021.

The Review Bench had been whether the Lok Sabha Speaker's decision to declare the proposed Aadhaar law as Money Bill was "final", and whether the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 was correctly certified as a 'Money Bill' under Article 110(1) of the Constitution. Justice Chandrachud, in his dissent, had said the Review Bench ought to wait till the seven judge Bench decided the larger questions on Money Bill in the Rojer Mathew reference. The majority, led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar (retd), had disagreed with him.

ECONOMICS AND DEVELOPMENT

IIP RISES AT 14-MONTH HIGH OF 10.3%

CONTEXT: India's industrial output surged at a 14-month high pace of 10.3 % in August, from a revised 6 % rise in July, aided by favourable base effects from last year when production levels had contracted 0.7 % and the best manufacturing performance since this April.

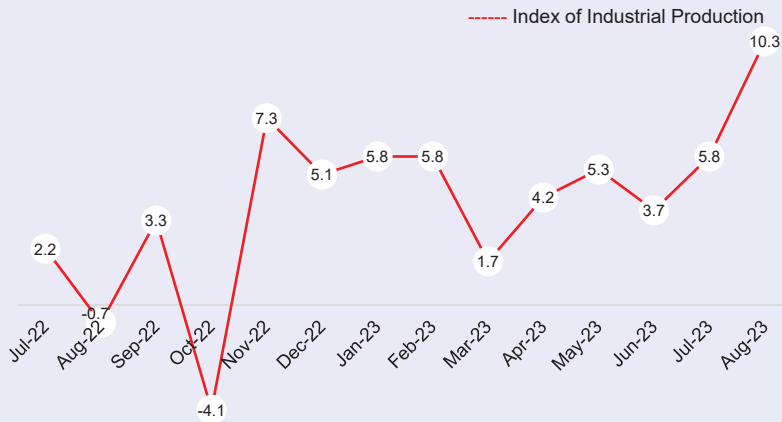


FIGURE: Line chart representation of the Index of Industrial Production growth rates (on Y-o-Y basis in per cent).

Electricity and mining rose a sharp 15.3 % and 12.3 %, respectively. Manufacturing output grew 9.3 % in August, with just seven of 23 major segments recording a contraction compared with nine in July. Production in the export-dependent apparel and chemicals sectors dropped 17.1% and 4.3%, respectively. Computers and electronics also fell 8.7%.

Consumer durables output grew for the first time in three months, at 5.7 %, and hit the highest levels since September 2022. Non-durable consumer items' output jumped 9 % year, but was 3.9% below July levels. Moreover, base effects played a role in their uptick, as durables' output had dropped 4.4% last August, while non-durables had plummeted 9 %. Three of the six use-based segments recorded a double-digit surge, on top of positive growth recorded last year, led by infrastructure and construction goods which grew in double digits for the fifth successive month, at 14.9 %. Capital goods jumped 12.6 %, with production reaching the highest levels in 2023-24, indicating strengthening investment demand. Primary goods grew 12.4 % and intermediate goods rose 6.5 %.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

INDIA'S STANCE ON PALESTINIAN STATEHOOD AND OPERATION AJAY

India Reiterates Support for Palestinian Statehood

India's Ministry of External Affairs restates its support for the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state, emphasizing the obligation to uphold humanitarian principles.

Operation Ajay: Evacuating Indian Citizens from Israel

India initiated Operation Ajay; a mission aimed at rescuing its citizens from conflict-hit Israel. The operation commences with the first flight set to evacuate 230 Indians. India maintains close contact with relevant stakeholders to navigate the rapidly evolving situation.

Details of Operation Ajay

MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi provides details of Operation Ajay, highlighting that a ferry flight is scheduled to reach Israel to evacuate approximately 230 passengers. With around 18,000 Indians in Israel, the government plans to organize more flights based on demand. India is open to deploying additional aircraft as needed.

A Consistent Policy on Palestine

India reiterates its longstanding policy advocating direct negotiations for the creation of a sovereign, independent, and viable Palestinian state. The state should coexist peacefully with Israel within secure and recognized borders. The Indian government asserts that its position on the Palestinian issue remains consistent, with no change in policy.

Engagement with Stakeholders

India maintains an active dialogue with various stakeholders involved in the West Asian conflict. The MEA underscores its commitment to engage in conversations and contacts with relevant parties in the realm of diplomacy.



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SOCIAL JUSTICE

THE CASE FOR CASTE CENSUS IN INDIA

CONTEXT: PM rejects demand for a nationwide caste census following Bihar's caste survey revealing EBC and OBC numbers.

HIGHLIGHTS: The Mandal Commission recommended a 27% reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in government services and education, within the 50% reservation cap set by the Supreme Court. Now, there's a demand for a caste census to determine the population share of OBCs, but it faces opposition due to concerns of increased reservation demands. With the Supreme Court validating quotas beyond 50%, there's a growing push to expand OBC reservations. A caste enumeration is seen as necessary to accurately understand OBC demographics.

Indra Sawhney judgement: In 1990, the V.P. Singh government introduced a 27% OBC reservation for public services. The Supreme Court's 1992 Indra Sawhney judgment upheld OBC reservation based on criteria beyond caste. This led to demands for a caste enumeration in the national census to accurately determine caste group populations, which are crucial for implementing government policies and reservation schemes.

- **Multidimensional Poverty:** Multidimensional poverty estimates based on the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4/2015-16) indicate a higher poverty ratio among STs (44.4%), SCs (29.2%), OBCs (24.5%), and Others (14.9%).
- **Poverty Distribution:** Despite constituting around 73% of the Indian population, STs, SCs, and OBCs accounted for 84% of the country's poor, with over 50% of multi dimensionally poor individuals belonging to the OBC category.
- **Oxford Poverty Estimates:** Data from the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) showed a similar pattern with STs, SCs, and OBCs accounting for around 84% of the country's poor in 2015-16.
- **Religion-Based Poverty:** Multidimensional poverty was also higher among Muslims (31%) compared to Hindus (28%), Christians (16%), and other religious communities (15.7%).
- **Persistent Disparities:** Disproportionate poverty concentration among STs, SCs, OBCs, and Muslims has remained stable over time, indicating a causal link between discrimination, exclusion, and poverty.
- **Lack of Transparency:** The NITI Aayog has not published caste and religion-wise data in its publications on the national multidimensional poverty index, highlighting a lack of transparency in addressing these disparities.

Education & Employment Indicators by Social Group

The table shows the Percentage distribution of persons by general education level, workers in usual status by broad status in employment, and employees in posts and services of the Central government



	ST	SC	OBC	GEN	Source	Data
Percentage distribution of persons of age 7 years and above by general education level						
Literacy rate	69.6	72.4	76.9	85.9	Household Social Consumption on Education in India, NSS 75th Round (July 2017 - June 2018), NSO, MoSPI, Gol	
Secondary Education	9.9	11.5	13.5	15.8		
Higher Secondary Education	6	7.7	9.4	12.8		
Graduate	3.3	4.1	5.9	12.3		
Post Graduate and above	0.7	0.9	1.2	3.4		
Percentage distribution of workers in usual status (ps+ss) by broad status in employment						
Regular wage/ Salaried	12.3	19.8	20.1	30.6	Periodic Labour Force Survey 2021-22, NSSO, MoSPI, Gol	
Casual Labour	28.9	38.2	20	11.2		
Self-employed	58.8	42.1	59.9	58.2		
Percentage distribution of employees in posts and services of the Central Government						
Group A	5.9	13.0	16.6	64.6	Annual Report 2021-22, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Gol	
Group B	7.1	16.8	16.7	59.5		
Group C	7.8	17.7	22.8	51.7		
Total	7.7	17.5	22.1	52.7		

What do socio-economic data indicate?

- **Caste-Based Disparities:** Socio-economic data reveal significant disparities in India, with lower average per capita consumption among Scheduled Tribes (ST), Scheduled Castes (SC), and Other Backward Classes (OBC) in both rural and urban areas.

Education and Employment

- **Education Disparities:** Official data reveals significant educational disparities with a higher proportion of literates, graduates, and post-graduates in the general category compared to OBCs, SCs, and STs.
- **Graduation Rates:** Only 3% of STs, 4% of SCs, and 6% of OBCs are graduates, while the general category boasts over 12% graduates, as per NSS 75th round data.
- **Post-Graduate Disparities:** Within the general category, over 3% are post-graduates, but among OBCs, it's around 1%, and for SCs and STs, it's below 1%.
- **Employment Status:** Data from PLFS 2021-22 indicates that over 30% of the general category has regular employment, compared to around 20% for OBCs and SCs, and just over 12% for STs.
- **Informal Sector:** STs, SCs, and OBCs have a higher presence in the informal labor sector, with almost 29% of STs, 38% of SCs, and 20% of OBCs employed as casual laborers, compared to 11.2% in the general category.
- **Government Employment:** The central government, one of the largest formal employers, has over 18.78 lakh employees as of January 2021. More than 52% belong to the general category.
- **Caste-Inequality Persistency:** Educational disparities continue to reproduce caste-based inequalities in formal employment, especially in skilled positions, even decades after the Mandal Commission recommendations. This situation has fueled the demand for a nationwide caste census.

Opposition to a Caste Census

- **Reservation Concerns:** Some oppose a caste census fearing it would reveal OBC population over 52%, possibly leading to demands for increased OBC reservation beyond the 27% quota.
- **Constitution (103rd Amendment):** The enactment of this law in 2019 already broke the 50% reservation ceiling by providing 10% for "economically weaker sections" (EWS) in the general category.
- **Legal Challenges:** The Constitution (103rd Amendment) Act faced legal challenges but was upheld by a Supreme Court majority judgment in November 2022.
- **Supreme Court Validation:** The Supreme Court's approval of reservation quotas beyond 50% has spurred calls to expand

OBC reservations beyond the 27% Mandal commission threshold.

- **Population Basis:** The 27% OBC quota was determined as a residual from the 50% threshold after accounting for SC and ST quotas, lacking a basis in population estimates.

Due to varying estimates of the OBC population and concerns over reservations and benefits distribution, a comprehensive caste census is vital for accurate data. This includes understanding the numbers and proportions of individual castes within the OBC category, especially to address concerns of concentration among dominant caste groups. Such data is essential for sub-categorizing OBCs, as highlighted by the Justice Rohini Commission. This census is also crucial for states with their own OBC lists due to diverse caste compositions.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

THE ONGOING GAZA CONFLICT AND ITS HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Renewed Focus on Gaza

The conflict in the Middle East has once again drawn the world's attention to the Gaza Strip, as Israel's defense minister orders a "complete siege" of this Palestinian enclave. To understand the current situation, it is crucial to delve into the historical context of Gaza and the factors contributing to the ongoing crisis.

The Gaza Strip: A Brief Historical Overview

The Gaza Strip, a narrow piece of land situated on the southeastern Mediterranean shore, is approximately twice the size of Washington, D.C. It is geographically sandwiched between Israel to the north and east and Egypt to the south. Historically, Gaza has been a vital trade and seaport, an integral part of the broader region known as Palestine.

Early 20th Century: Ottoman Rule and Emergence of Palestinian Nationalism

At the onset of the 20th century, Gaza was predominantly inhabited by Muslim and Christian Arabs who lived under Ottoman rule. Intellectuals in Gaza actively joined the nascent Palestinian national movement when Britain took control of Palestine following World War I.

1948 War and Influx of Refugees

During the 1948 war that established the State of Israel, the Israeli military conducted airstrikes on 29 villages in southern Palestine, leading to the displacement of tens of thousands of villagers who sought refuge in the Gaza Strip. The Egyptian army assumed control after Israel declared independence, and many of these refugees and their descendants still reside in Gaza today.

1967: Israeli Occupation

Following the Six-Day War of 1967, the Gaza Strip came under Israeli military occupation. Amnesty International has noted "systematic human rights violations" under this occupation, which include land seizures, home demolitions, and suppression

of nonviolent political dissent.

Emergence of Palestinian Uprisings and Militant Groups

In an attempt to end the occupation and establish an independent Palestinian state, Palestinians initiated major uprisings in 1987-1991 and 2000-2005. Hamas, a Palestinian Islamist militant group based in Gaza, was founded in 1988 to resist the Israeli occupation. These groups launched repeated attacks on Israeli targets in Gaza, ultimately leading to Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Gaza in 2005.

Hamas Takes Control

In 2006, Hamas won the Palestinian legislative elections, defeating its secular rival, Fatah, which faced accusations of corruption. In 2007, after a brief conflict with Fatah militants, Hamas gained complete control of the Gaza Strip, a status that persists today. Although Gaza remains under the administrative control of Hamas, international bodies, including the United Nations and the U.S. State Department, continue to consider it under Israeli occupation.

The Population of Gaza

The Gaza Strip is home to over 2 million people, making them a part of the larger global Palestinian community, which comprises approximately 14 million individuals. Roughly one-third of Gaza's inhabitants have ancestral ties to the land within the Gaza Strip, while the remaining two-thirds are descendants of refugees from the 1948 war, many originating from nearby towns and villages.

Challenges Facing Gaza's Population

Gaza's population consists primarily of young individuals, with nearly half under the age of 18. Despite the enclave's economic struggles, educational levels are relatively high. Nonetheless, a severe economic crisis prevails, with a poverty rate of 53%. For graduates between 19 and 29 years old, unemployment stands at a staggering 70%. Mental health challenges are prevalent, with 71% of Gazans exhibiting signs of

depression and high levels of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The Impact of the Blockade

A critical factor contributing to Gaza's dire conditions is the enduring blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt, with U.S. support, for the past 16 years. The blockade restricts the import of essential goods like food, fuel, and construction materials. It also limits the area Gaza's fishermen can access, bans most exports, and imposes severe restrictions on the movement of people into and out of the enclave.

The Legality and Impact of the Blockade

U.N. experts have deemed the blockade illegal under international law, considering it a collective punishment against Gaza's population. This approach violates international conventions, including the Hague Convention and the Geneva Conventions.

No Resolution in Sight

Israel contends that the blockade is necessary for its security and asserts that it will be lifted when Hamas renounces violence, recognizes Israel, and adheres to previous agreements. Hamas has consistently refused these terms, leading to a prolonged stalemate.

Recurring Conflicts and Humanitarian Consequences

Over the years, four major military confrontations between Israel and Gaza have resulted in significant casualties and extensive damage to Gaza's infrastructure. These conflicts have left a lasting impact on Gaza's population, with over \$5 billion worth of damage and countless lives disrupted.

Conclusion: The Suffering of Gaza's Civilians

The recent escalation and Israel's "complete siege" of Gaza underscore the tragic reality that civilians bear the brunt of this protracted conflict. Despite the continued suffering, a lasting resolution to the conflict remains elusive.



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