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By **Atul Mishra Sir**



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Grand ambitions

India's cooperative sector can serve as a worker-centric model of development

Hypercompetitive business models that dominate the economic lives of people have undesirable social consequences. The cooperative model offers an alternative, albeit with its own imperfections. India's Ministry of Cooperation, which completed five years on July 6, is a bold experiment in harnessing the potential of this approach. Traditionally confined largely to agriculture, cooperatives now have the opportunity and a requirement to expand into other sectors, particularly services. Cooperatives, by their very character, are relatively small-scale and fragmented; organising them, and connecting them to the broader economy that disproportionately rewards hyper-scalers is a balancing intervention – an economic, political and social imperative. The Ministry aims to transform the cooperative landscape by bringing policy coherence across agriculture, dairy, fisheries, banking, housing, consumer cooperatives, and exports. This requires collaboration with States and national federations, capacity building, wise use of digital technology, and market linkages. Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) are the foundation of rural cooperatives. Through a reformed legal framework, they have been empowered to undertake over 25 business activities, transforming them into multifaceted institutions delivering many economic services in rural India.

The Ministry has facilitated new national-level multi-State cooperative societies, expanding market access for members and strengthening cooperative value chains from production to global markets. Cooperative enterprises are being encouraged to grow and compete, and a National Cooperation Policy is in the making. But there are challenges amid the opportunities. Corruption and inefficiency eroded the potential of India's cooperative sector, and the fear of local communities and States losing control of cooperatives to a national-level mechanism needs to be assuaged. The task is in finding the sweet spot of consolidation and decentralisation; localisation and nationalisation; technology and human labour, for boosting the sector. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who holds the portfolio, is pushing the cooperative sector to expand into production and marketing, beyond agricultural credit and input facilitation, which could help mitigate the sector's endemic crisis. A well-coordinated, yet federated, cooperative sector can offset the social, environmental and political costs of global capitalism, which is the default model of the economy. Government and business leaders worldwide are viewing cooperatives with renewed interest, as the pitfalls of hypercapitalism become pronounced. India can develop its cooperative sector as a global model.



सहकारी क्षेत्र : श्रमिक-केंद्रित विकास का भारतीय मॉडल



★ चर्चा में क्यों ?

- 6 जुलाई 2026 को सहकारिता मंत्रालय के 5 वर्ष पूरे हुए ।
- भारत में सहकारी आंदोलन की उपलब्धियों एवं चुनौतियों पर चर्चा ।

सहकारिता क्या है ?

सदस्यों द्वारा स्वेच्छा से मिलकर आर्थिक, सामाजिक और सांस्कृतिक हितों की पूति के लिए लोकतांत्रिक रूप से संचालित संगठन ।

मूल सिद्धांत

- स्वैच्छिक सदस्यता • लोकतांत्रिक नियंत्रण
- समानता • पारदर्शिता • सामूहिक लाभ • आत्मनिर्भरता

सहकारी मॉडल की आवश्यकता

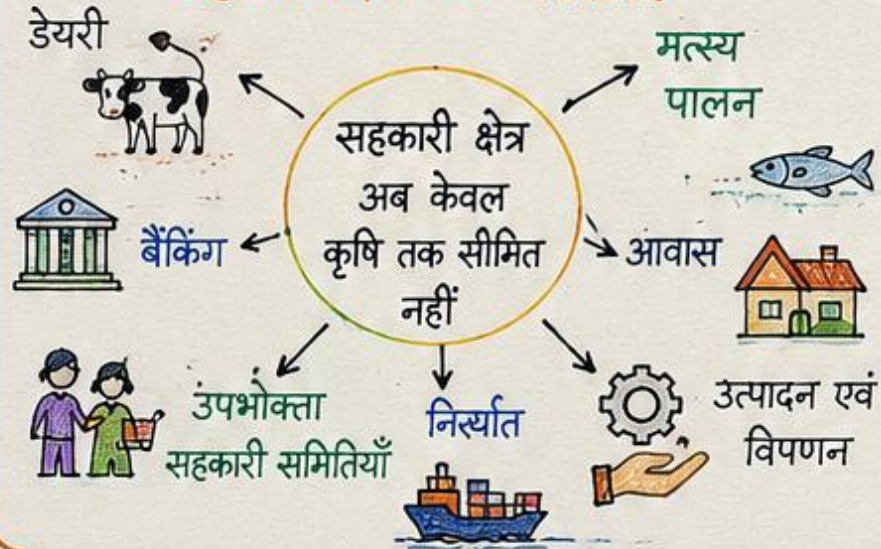
वर्तमान मॉडल की समस्याएँ

- अत्यधिक प्रतिस्पर्धा
- असमानता और शोषण
- पूंजी का केंद्रीकरण
- छोटे उत्पादकों की कठिनाई
- रोजगार असुरक्षा

सहकारी मॉडल के लाभ

- श्रमिक-केंद्रित विकास
- समावेशी आर्थिक विकास
- स्थानीय रोजगार सृजन
- आय का समान वितरण
- सामाजिक न्याय को बढ़ावा

सहकारी क्षेत्र का विस्तार



सहकारिता मंत्रालय की प्रमुख पहल

1



PACS का आधुनिकीकरण

- ग्रामीण सहकारिता की आधारशिला
- 25+ व्यावसायिक गतिविधियों की अनुमति
- बहुउद्देशीय संस्थाओं के रूप में विकास

2



Multi-State Cooperative Societies

- राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर नई सहकारी समितियाँ
- किसानों को बेहतर बाजार
- वैश्विक मूल्य श्रृंखला से जुड़ाव

3



राष्ट्रीय सहकारिता नीति

- नई नीति तैयार की जा रही है
- आधुनिकरण, पारदर्शिता और प्रतिस्पर्धात्मकता बढ़ाना

4



डिजिटल परिवर्तन

- डिजिटल तकनीक का उपयोग
- ई-गवर्नेंस, डिजिटल भुगतान
- ऑनलाइन विपणन

प्रमुख चुनौतियाँ



प्रशासनिक : श्रष्टाचार, पारदर्शिता की कमी, कमजोर प्रबंधन



आर्थिक : पूंजी की कमी, निजी क्षेत्र से प्रतिस्पर्धा



संस्थागत : राज्यों एवं केंद्र के बीच समन्वय, अत्यधिक केंद्रीकरण



तकनीकी : डिजिटलीकरण की कमी, आधुनिक प्रबंधन का अभाव

आगे की राह

- ✓ PACS का पूर्ण डिजिटलीकरण
- ✓ पेशेवर प्रबंधन और पारदर्शिता
- ✓ राष्ट्रीय एवं अंतरराष्ट्रीय बाजार से जोड़ना
- ✓ महिला एवं युवा भागीदारी बढ़ाना
- ✓ मूल्य संवर्धन एवं प्रोसेसिंग उद्योग विकसित करना
- ✓ राज्यों एवं केंद्र के बीच बेहतर समन्वय



निष्कर्ष



यदि पारदर्शिता, तकनीकी आधुनिकीकरण, पेशेवर प्रबंधन और प्रभावी नीति समन्वय सुनिश्चित किया जाए, तो भारत सहकारी क्षेत्र के माध्यम से **श्रमिक-केंद्रित, समावेशी और टिकाऊ विकास** का वैश्विक मॉडल बन सकता है।



सहकार से समृद्धि

Deceptive dispute

Courts should not waste their time in examining figments

In 2015, a civil suit sought to declare the Taj Mahal a Hindu temple. This April, after an Agra trial court refused the petitioners' request to appoint an Advocate Commissioner to survey the monument, the Allahabad High Court – hearing the petitioners' challenge – has sought responses from the Centre and the ASI before deciding whether the lower court's refusal should stand. The legal position aside, the matter is both frivolous and vexatious. The idea today that the Taj Mahal was 'originally' a Hindu temple is associated with the late 20th century writings of Purushottam Nagesh Oak. Professional historians and archaeologists have repeatedly rejected his claims because they bank on speculative linguistic arguments and unsupported historical assertions. On the other hand, evidence that Shah Jahan built the Taj Mahal is rooted in contemporary chronicles, administrative records, European travellers' accounts, architectural histories, and archaeology. No archaeological study has produced evidence of a medieval Hindu temple beneath the Taj. Even though the ASI has previously submitted in affidavits that some rooms are locked because they are structurally vulnerable, supporters of the temple idea have alleged that they conceal Hindu idols. A Bharatiya Janata Party leader also unsuccessfully filed a PIL in 2022 and activists tried to offer 'gangajal' in 2024. Given the right historical, political, economic, and social conditions, an idea can persist long after its origins from pseudohistory.

The ongoing case resembles aspects of the Gyanvapi and Mathura disputes, where requests for ostensibly objective surveys were also platforms to advance revisionist political narratives. Courts are empowered to reject pleadings that disclose no sustainable cause of action – even as they are not commissions of historical inquiry and should not treat every speculative historical hypothesis as sufficient grounds for a supervised investigation. Equally, civil procedure should not tolerate re-litigating claims lacking any real evidentiary foundation. All major monuments accumulate materials of additions and alterations over time but heritage scholars draw a line between studying a monument's evolution and redefining its identity outright. The Taj Mahal became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983. Repeated attempts to redefine its identity can also muddle international perceptions of India's stewardship of the monument and disrupt the region's tourism-based economy. The High Court may ultimately agree with the trial court's order after due examination, but the claim deserves not a breath of air. The petitioners have not advanced any new evidence, even as heritage institutions continue to face sustained legal pressure to manufacture controversies from figments.



भ्रामक विवाद :

ताजमहल पर हिंदू मंदिर होने का दावा

काल्पनिक दावों की जांच में अदालतों को अपना समय बर्बाद नहीं करना चाहिए



1. संदर्भ :

- वर्ष 2015 में दीवानी वाद दायर कर ताजमहल को हिंदू मंदिर धोषित करने की मांग की गई।
- अप्रैल 2024 में आगरा ट्रायल कोर्ट ने एडवोकेट कमिशनर द्वारा सर्वेक्षण कराने की मांग अस्वीकार कर दी।
- याचिकाकर्ताओं ने इलाहाबाद उच्च न्यायालय में चुनौती दी। HC ने केंद्र सरकार और ASI से जवाब मांगा है।

2. विवाद का आधार

- दावा – ताजमहल मूलतः हिंदू मंदिर (तेजोमहलय) था।
- इस सिद्धांत का प्रमुख स्रोत – पी. एन. ओक के लेखन।
- इतिहासकारों एवं पुरातत्व-विदों ने इसे छद्म-इतिहास माना है।

3. ताजमहल के पक्ष में ऐतिहासिक साक्ष्य

- * समकालीन मुगल अभिलेख
- * प्रशासनिक दस्तावेज
- * यूरोपीय यात्रियों के विवरण
- * स्थापत्य (Architectural) अध्ययन
- * पुरातत्त्विक अनुसंधान (ASI)

↓
अब तक किसी भी पुरातत्त्विक अध्ययन में ताजमहल के नीचे मंदिर होने का प्रमाण नहीं मिला।

4. ASI का पक्ष

- कुछ कमरे संरचनात्मक सुरक्षा के कारण बंद हैं।
- मूर्तियाँ छिपाने के आरोगों का कोई प्रमाण नहीं मिला।



ASI

ताजमहल (प्रेम और कला की अमर निशानी)

5. न्यायिक दृष्टिकोण



- न्यायालय ऐतिहासिक अनुसंधान संस्थान नहीं है।
- केवल विश्वसनीय एवं ठोस साक्ष्य के आधार पर ही जांच/सर्वेक्षण का आदेश दिया जाना चाहिए।
- निराधार दावों पर बार-बार मुकदमेबाजी न्यायिक समय की बर्बातदी है।

6. समान विवाद



- ज्ञानवापी विवाद
- मथुरा श्रीकृष्ण जन्मभूमि विवाद

इन मामलों में भी सर्वेक्षण की मांगें इतिहास और राजनीति से जुड़ी रहीं।

7. विरासत संरक्षण



- 1983 में ताजमहल को यूनेस्को विश्व धरोहर स्थल घोषित किया गया।
- इसकी पहचान पर बार-बार विवाद भारत की अंतराष्ट्रीय छवि और आगरा के पर्यटन उद्योग को प्रभावित कर सकते हैं।

8. प्रमुख निष्कर्ष

- ऐतिहासिक विवादों का समाधान साक्ष्यों, इतिहासलेखन और वैज्ञानिक अनुसंधान के आधार पर होना चाहिए, न कि अटकलों या राजनीतिक आख्यानों के आधार पर।
- न्यायपालिका को केवल विधिक अधिकारों का निर्धारण करना चाहिए, इतिहास का पुनलेखन नहीं।

9. एक पंक्ति में

ताजमहल विवाद दर्शाता है कि न्यायपालिका को ऐतिहासिक दावों की जांच केवल ठोस साक्ष्यों के आधार पर करनी चाहिए; छद्म-इतिहास पर आधारित याचिकाओं को प्रोत्साहित नहीं किया जाना चाहिए।



प्रिलिम्स
तथ्य



स्थान आगरा, उत्तर प्रदेश	निर्माता शाहजहाँ	निर्माण अवधि 1632 - 1653	UNESCO विश्व धरोहर स्थल 1983	संरक्षण संस्था भारतीय पुरातत्व सर्वेक्षण (ASI)
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★ न्यायालयों को काल्पनिक और निराधार याचिकाओं पर समय बर्बाद करने के बजाय सार्वजनिक हित के वास्तविक मामलों पर ध्यान देना चाहिए।

India's economic prospects after the West Asian crisis

The United States and Iran agreed to a 14-point preliminary Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) towards ending the West Asian crisis and reopening the Strait of Hormuz. Although there have been initial hiccups, it is expected that, with the reopening of the Strait, global crude oil supply will stabilise and prices will normalise at a lower level. Following these developments, India should adjust its strategies, keeping in mind both the 2026-27 outlook and medium-term growth prospects.

The West Asian crisis had resulted in a period of relatively higher crude prices. The monthly average price of the Indian crude oil basket was \$114.5 per bbl in April 2026. It declined to \$106.2 per bbl in May 2026 and further to \$86.3 per bbl as of June 24, 2026. For the remaining three quarters of 2026-27, crude oil prices are expected to remain below this level, provided the truce continues.

2026-27 growth prospects

The National Statistical Office's provisional estimates of GDP growth of 7.7% for 2025-26 confirm India's strong post-COVID-19 pandemic recovery. This was preceded by real GDP growth rates of 7.2% and 7.1%, respectively, in 2023-24 and 2024-25 as per the new GDP series. Real Gross Value Added (GVA) growth was even more impressive at 7.9% in 2025-26, with the manufacturing, trade, transport, and financial and real estate sectors recording growth rates exceeding 10%. With nominal GDP growth at 8.9%, the implicit price deflator-based inflation rate stood at 1.1% in 2025-26.

For 2026-27, growth prospects are likely to be impacted because of the disruptions in crude supply and higher prices affecting the first quarter, and due to a deficiency in rainfall associated with the onset of El Niño. The India Meteorological Department has estimated a 10% shortfall (as compared with the Long Period average). Up to June 24, 2026, the estimated shortfall is nearly 43%.

The combination of El Niño and fertilizer shortages pose a potential risk to India's agricultural output in 2026-27. In particular, in the immediate term, the *kharif* crop is likely to be affected. There may also be an impact on the *rabi* crop which is to follow. Therefore, it is important to build up fertilizer reserves and address issues



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D.K. Srivastava

Former Director,
Madras School
of Economics

Changing
dynamics
present
opportunities
and challenges
for the
economy

of potential shortages when it comes to important crops, which may warrant a reconsideration of crop-specific import and export policies. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has projected real GDP growth of 6.6% for 2026-27.

Fiscal prospects, petroleum economy

One important feature of 2026-27 growth is the likelihood of relatively higher nominal GDP growth as compared to 2025-26. This is because the implicit price deflator (IPD), which depends on Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation, is likely to be higher than the 2025-26 level of 1.1%. The RBI's June 2026 Professional Forecasters' median projections for WPI and CPI inflation for 2026-27 are 8% and 4.9%, respectively. With a resolution of the West Asian crisis, we consider WPI and CPI inflation rates for the full year to be lower at 6% and 4.5%; using weights of 60% and 40%, respectively, we can broadly estimate IPD-based inflation to be 5.4%. Combining this with a real GDP growth of 6.6%, we may have a nominal growth of about 12.4% in 2026-27, higher than the budgeted growth of 10.1%. This would have a positive impact on tax revenues. The Government of India should be able to realise its budgeted estimate of tax revenues absorbing the adverse revenue impact of any excise duty cuts. On the expenditure side, however, subsidies may be higher than budgeted.

The RBI has given a dividend of ₹2.69 lakh crore to the Government. This amount covers a significant portion of the budgeted 'Dividends and profits from RBI and Financial Institutions' in 2026-27 at ₹3.16 lakh crore. Given these developments, we expect the 2026-27 budgeted fiscal deficit at 4.3% of GDP to be either realised or only marginally exceeded.

The evolution of India's petroleum economy has been characterised by certain notable features. First, India's dependence on imported crude oil has increased to more than 90% in 2025-26 from 54.9% in 1998-99. Second, the volume of domestic production of crude oil has fallen over time to 26 million metric tons (MMT) in 2025-26 from a peak of 35.9 MMT in 2011-12. Third, demand for petroleum products/petroleum, oil, and lubricants (PoL) has increased, thereby generating the need for larger imports. Fourth, domestic consumption of PoL

products has increased to 243.2 MMT in 2025-26 from 90.6 MMT in 1998-99. Fifth, India has developed an impressive capacity for refining crude to produce various PoL products. This capacity has improved over time. Sixth, the energy intensity of India's output, as well as the intensity of use of PoL products in GDP, has fallen over time. This augurs well for sustaining an energy-efficient growth at a reasonably high level for a relatively longer period.

India may continue to augment its refining capacity, which has helped save refining costs compared to the situation if it had directly imported refined petroleum products. The trend towards growing dependence on imported crude oil needs to be reversed by emphasising the exploitation of domestic crude resources while accelerating the transition to greener and alternative energy sources, including nuclear power.

Build reserves

With a lowering of global crude prices and normalisation of supplies, the government should shore up its fertilizer reserves and reserves for other critical primary commodities including crude. There is a need to further diversify sources of imported crude and also reduce reliance on imports through the Strait of Hormuz. A policy for building strategic reserves of key primary commodities, along with estimates of the required volumes and needed infrastructure, should be put in place.

The current account deficit was 0.6% of GDP in 2025-26, with the fourth quarter showing a surplus of 0.7% of GDP. Prospects for 2026-27 indicate a deterioration in this magnitude. The RBI's June 2026 Survey of Professional Forecasters had estimated a current account deficit of 2.1% of GDP for 2026-27, as per their median estimate. With normalisation of the global oil market and the opening of the Hormuz strait, we expect this to be lower at about 1.5% of GDP.

The prospects of the Indian economy outlined above is on the assumption that peace will prevail in West Asia from now on. If this assumption turns out to be incorrect and if the war continues, India along with many other countries will face an extremely difficult situation.

The views expressed are personal



पश्चिम एशियाई संकट के बाद भारत की आर्थिक संभावनाएँ (2026-27)



अमेरिका और ईरान के बीच 14-सूत्रीय प्रारंभिक समझौते (MoU) के बाद हांमुज जलडमरूमध्य खुलने से कच्चे तेल की आपूर्ति सामान्य होगी और कीमतों में कमी की संभावना है। ऐसे में भारत को 2026-27 और मध्यम अवधि की संभावनाओं को ध्यान में रखते हुए नीतियाँ बनानी होंगी।

1. पश्चिम एशियाई संकट का प्रभाव



- संकट के दौरान कच्चे तेल की कीमतों में तीव्र वृद्धि हुई।
- भारतीय बास्केट का औसत कच्चा तेल मूल्य:
 - अप्रैल 2026 → **\$114.5** प्रति बैरल
 - मई 2026 → **\$106.2** प्रति बैरल
 - 24 जून 2026 → **\$86.3** प्रति बैरल
- युद्धविराम जारी रहा तो बाकी वर्ष में कीमतें इसी स्तर से नीचे रह सकती हैं।

2. 2026-27 की आर्थिक वृद्धि की संभावनाएँ

GDP वृद्धि (%) (NSO के अनुसार)

2023-24 → 7.2%
2024-25 → 7.1%
2025-26 → **7.7%** (अनुमान)

2025-26 में

- नाममात्र GDP वृद्धि → **8.9%**
- GDP Deflator आधारित मुद्रास्फीति → **1.1%**

सकल मूल्य वर्धन (GVA)

वृद्धि → **7.9%**
विनिर्माण, व्यापार, परिवहन, वित्तीय सेवाएँ, रियल एस्टेट ने 10% से अधिक वृद्धि की।

RBI ने 2026-27 के लिए बास्वविक GDP वृद्धि **6.6%** रहने का अनुमान लगाया है।

3. 2026-27 के प्रमुख जोखिम

- तेल आपूर्ति में बाधा
- एल-नीनो के कारण कम वर्षा
- उर्वरकों की कमी
- खरीफ एवं रबी फसलों पर प्रभाव



आवश्यक —



- ① उर्वरकों का पर्याप्त भंडारण
- ② कृषि आयात-निर्यात नीतियों की समीक्षा

4. राजकोषीय स्थिति एवं पेट्रोलियम अर्थव्यवस्था



- 2026-27 में नाममात्र GDP वृद्धि 2025-26 की तुलना में अधिक होने की संभावना।
- अनुमान —

WPI मुद्रास्फीति → 8%

CPI मुद्रास्फीति → 4.9%

→ GDP Deflator
लगभग 5.4%

- वास्तविक वृद्धि 6.6% रहने पर नाममात्र GDP वृद्धि लगभग 12.4% होगी।
- कर राजस्व में वृद्धि होगी।
- राजकोषीय घाटा लगभग 4.3% तक नियंत्रित रखा जा सकता है।
- सब्सिडी व्यय बढ़ सकता है।

RBI लाभांश

- RBI ने केंद्र सरकार को लगभग ₹2.69 लाख करोड़ का लाभांश दिया है।
- इससे बजट को महत्वपूर्ण सहायता मिलेगी और राजकोषीय स्थिति मजबूत होगी।

5. भारत की पेट्रोलियम अर्थव्यवस्था : प्रमुख तथ्य



① आयात निर्भरता

- 1998-99 → ~55%
- 2025-26 → 90% से अधिक

② घरेलू उत्पादन में गिरावट

- 2011-12 → 35.9 MMT
- 2025-26 → 26 MMT

③ पेट्रोलियम उत्पादों की मांग में वृद्धि (पेट्रोल, डीज़ल, LPG आदि)



④ घरेलू खपत

- 1998-99 → 90.6 MMT
- 2025-26 → 243.2 MMT

⑤ रिफाइनिंग क्षमता

भारत ने विश्व स्तरीय रिफाइनिंग क्षमता विकसित की है, जिससे विभिन्न पेट्रोलियम उत्पादों का उत्पादन संभव है।

⑥ ऊर्जा तीव्रता में कमी

भारत में GDP की ऊर्जा तीव्रता घट रही है और प्रति इकाई उत्पादन पर ऊर्जा उपयोग कम हुआ है।

6. आगे की रणनीति

- घरेलू तेल उत्पादन बढ़ाना
- हरित ऊर्जा की ओर तेजी से बढ़ना
- परमाणु ऊर्जा सहित बैकल्पिक ऊर्जा स्रोतों का विस्तार
- आयातित कच्चे तेल पर निर्भरता कम करना



ऊर्जा सुरक्षा = आर्थिक सुरक्षा + सतत विकास

7. रणनीतिक भंडार (Strategic Reserves)



- तेल कीमतों में गिरावट का लाभ उठाकर –
 - ✓ कच्चे तेल का रणनीतिक भंडारण
 - ✓ उर्वरकों का भंडारण
 - ✓ अन्य आवश्यक वस्तुओं का भंडारण
- आयात स्रोतों में विविधीकरण
- हॉर्मुज जलडमरूमध्य पर निर्भरता कम करना
- आवश्यक अवसंरचना का विकास करना



8. चालू खाता घाटा (CAD)

- 2025-26 → GDP का 0.6%
- चौथी तिमाही → 0.7% अधिशेष
- RBI के अनुसार 2026-27 में CAD 2.1% तक जा सकता है।
- यदि तेल बाजार सामान्य रहता है तो CAD लगभग 1.5% GDP तक सीमित रह सकता है।



यदि पश्चिम एशिया में शांति बनी रहती है और हॉर्मुज जलडमरूमध्य खुला रहता है, तो भारत की आर्थिक वृद्धि, राजकोषीय स्थिति और बाह्य क्षेत्र पर सकारात्मक प्रभाव पड़ेगा। लेकिन यदि संघर्ष पुनः बढ़ता है तो भारत समेत कई देशों को ऊर्जा सुरक्षा, महंगाई और आर्थिक वृद्धि से जुड़ी गंभीर चुनौतियों का सामना करना पड़ सकता है।

Beyond three Cs, the new lexicon of India-Australia ties

During his visit to Australia in May 2023, when the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and Australia was almost three years old, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had characterised India-Australia ties as having entered T-20 mode. He also stressed that the relationship had gone beyond the conventional three Cs – of Commonwealth, Cricket and Curry – and the subsequent three Ds – Democracy, Diaspora and *Dosti*. As Mr. Modi undertakes his third visit to Australia this week, it would be instructive to look at some of the recent progress in two other important dimensions, the Ds of Development and Defence.

Expanding trade and investment

Growing bilateral economic cooperation has brought dividends like never before for both countries. All Indian exports to Australia now have duty free access under the Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA), benefitting textiles, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, engineering goods, gems and jewellery. Preferential access to 90% of Australia's trade value has facilitated Australian exports of critical minerals, resources, wool, avocados, and macadamia. There is the shared ambition to raise bilateral trade from \$33 billion in 2025 towards \$100 bn by 2030.

The two-way cumulative investment is approaching \$50 billion. Australia's AirTrunk recently announced plans to invest \$30 billion by 2030 to develop digital infrastructure and Artificial Intelligence (AI)-ready data centre. Australian funds are increasingly active in India. At the same time, India is an important source of investment and technology. Indian investment in Australia's resources sector is well known. According to reports, Perdaman Chemicals & Fertilizers, founded by an Indian, is establishing Australia's largest urea plant in western Australia, with \$4.5 billion. This largest ever investment in Australia's fertilizer industry has also created millions of man hours of work in India where over 98% of the plant's modules are manufactured.

Defence represents perhaps the fastest growing sector of bilateral cooperation. In a clear signal of the importance of India as a reliable partner, Australia's Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Richard Marles visited India in his first foreign tours in both the terms of the Albanese government. Before his most recent visit for the Annual Defence Ministers' Dialogue last month, Mr. Marles had hosted Defence



Gopal Baglay

Former High
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India to Australia

A growing
partnership now
spans trade,
defence, energy,
education and
innovation

Minister Rajnath Singh in Australia last year, marking the first visit by an Indian Defence Minister to the country in 12 years. Regular leadership and other senior level exchanges involving all the three Services and participation in bilateral and multilateral military exercises such as AUSINDEX, Malabar and Talisman Sabre foster operational understanding and coordination, significant especially in the maritime domain.

There are growing opportunities for defence industry cooperation in cyber, AI, drone, and in view of India's expanding ship-building capabilities.

The 'E' factor

Beyond the Cs and the Ds, there are also enriching Es: Energy and Education. India-Australia Renewable Energy Partnership is implemented through a Solar Taskforce and a Green Hydrogen Task Force, and guided at the ministerial level.

India's unprecedented renewable energy targets present immense potential for clean energy cooperation across critical minerals and materials, manufacturing, laboratory research, commercial-scale deployment, industrial use, and solar rooftops.

Very recently, Australian media mentioned that arrangements for future Australian uranium exports to India might be finalised shortly. Were that to happen, India's ambitious civil nuclear programme will receive a significant boost, as would Australia's uranium exports.

The India-Australia education and skills partnership is steadily contributing to creation of an enduring base for future-ready youth, innovators and entrepreneurs. While more than one lakh Indian students are enrolled in Australia, world class and affordable education is now available in India itself through Indian campuses of a growing number of Australian universities. Joint research in priority areas such as advanced computing, energy, health care, space and defence promises to create both intellectual assets and networks. Specific visa programmes have created new avenues for educated Indian youth seeking employment opportunities in Australia and await better utilisation.

Australia's global leadership in imparting vocational skills is being tapped in areas such as solar rooftop and mining, including in Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Odisha. Practical solutions can pave way for meeting Australia's huge workforce

shortfall and spur its economy with Indian workers temporarily assigned to Australia.

Sport has emerged as a new priority. Focused and broad based strategy can propel cooperation in sport education, training, medicine, goods, infrastructure and organisation of large-scale events, such as Commonwealth Games 2030 and Brisbane Olympics in 2032. With the growing Indian diaspora in Australia, now over ten lakh and rightly called the living bridge, Indian traditional sports such as kabaddi and kho kho are gaining popularity, even beyond the diaspora community.

Building multilateral partnerships

The upward trajectory of the bilateral relationship owes itself to a high degree of mutual trust, understanding and respect. Broad convergence of values and interests expands the format of cooperation to trilateral, such as India-Indonesia-Australia and India-France-Australia. The Australia-Canada-India Technology and Innovation Partnership, launched in November 2025, the India-Japan-Australia Supply Chain Resilience Initiative and a possible triad with the United Arab Emirates could play important roles in countering supply chain disruptions and market dominance and distortions in crucial areas such as critical minerals, rare earths, semiconductors and new technologies.

The shared vision of India and Australia for a free, open, safe, peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific manifests in their work through fora such as the Quad and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). The foreign visits this week by Mr. Modi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese bring out the geopolitical logic for ever-growing cooperation between India and Australia at regional and global levels. Their existing ties with Pacific Island Countries provide a good basis for leveraging their respective strengths to the benefit of the region in areas such as education, health, technology, fintech, capacity building and disaster relief.

Mr. Albanese never tires of mentioning his connection with India as a young backpacker. His understanding of the significance of a consequential relationship with today's India and the close chemistry between the two leaders have set the perfect stage to progress bilateral ties in T20 mode but in the long format, and to multiple win-win outcomes for both.



तीन 'C' से आगे : भारत-ऑस्ट्रेलिया संबंधों की नई शब्दावली



प्रारंभिक संदर्भ

- मई 2023 में अपनी यात्रा के दौरान प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने कहा था कि भारत-ऑस्ट्रेलिया संबंध अब **तीन 'C'** (Commonwealth, Cricket, Curry) से आगे बढ़ चुके हैं।
- अब ये रिश्ते और व्यापक हो गए हैं, जिनमें **तीन 'D'** और आगे 'E' भी जुड़ चुके हैं।

तीन 'C'

- Commonwealth (राष्ट्रमंडल)
- Cricket (क्रिकेट)
- Curry (करी)



तीन 'D'

- Democracy (लोकतंत्र)
- Diaspora (प्रवासी भारतीय)
- Dosti (दोस्ती)



और आगे 'E'

- Energy (ऊर्जा)
- Education (शिक्षा)
- Economy / Development (विकास)



1 व्यापार एवं निवेश का विस्तार



- ECTA के तहत भारतीय निर्यात को शुल्क-मुक्त पहुंच।
- वस्त्र, दवा, रसायन, इंजीनियरिंग, रत्न-आभूषण को बड़ा लाभ।
- ऑस्ट्रेलिया के 90% बाजार तक प्राथमिक पहुंच।
- 2030 तक द्विपक्षीय व्यापार को 100 अरब डॉलर तक पहुंचाने का लक्ष्य।
- कुल निवेश ~ 50 अरब डॉलर।
- AirTrunk का 30 अरब डॉलर डिजिटल इन्फ्रा/AI डेटा सेंटर में निवेश।
- दीपक केमिकल्स का 4.5 अरब डॉलर निवेश (पश्चिमी ऑस्ट्रेलिया)।



2 रक्षा सहयोग में नई ऊंचाइयाँ



- रक्षा सहयोग सबसे तेजी से बढ़ता क्षेत्र।
- नियमित उच्च स्तरीय बैठकें, तीनों सेनाओं में सहयोग।
- संयुक्त सैन्य अभ्यास – AUSINDEX, Malabar, Talisman Sabre
- नए क्षेत्र – साइबर, AI, ड्रोन, जहाज़ निर्माण
- भारत की बढ़ती शिप-बिल्डिंग क्षमताओं पर ऑस्ट्रेलिया की रुचि।



3 'E' फैक्टर : ऊर्जा और शिक्षा



(i) ऊर्जा (Energy)

- नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा साझेदारी
- Solar Task Force
- Green Hydrogen Task Force
- महत्वपूर्ण खनिजों में सहयोग
- स्वच्छ ऊर्जा, बैटरी, सौर प्रोस।
- यूरेनियम निर्यात बढ़ने की संभावना।



(ii) शिक्षा (Education)

- 1 लाख+ भारतीय छात्र ऑस्ट्रेलिया में अध्ययनरत
- ऑस्ट्रेलियाई विश्वविद्यालय भारत में कैमस खोल रहे हैं।
- संयुक्त अनुसंधान – ऊर्जा, स्वास्थ्य, अंतरिक्ष, रक्षा, कंयूटिंग आदि
- कौशल विकास एवं व्यावसायिक शिक्षा में सहयोग।



4 खेल सहयोग : नया आयाम



- खेल शिक्षा, प्रशिक्षण, खेल चिकित्सा, अवसंरचना में सहयोग।
- Commonwealth Games 2030
- Brisbane Olympics 2032
- कबड्डी, खो-खो जैसे भारतीय खेल ऑस्ट्रेलिया में लोकप्रिय हो रहे हैं।



5 बहुपक्षीय साझेदारी को मजबूती

- Quad, IORA, India-France-Australia, India-Indonesia-Australia
- Australia-India-Canada Technology Partnership
- Supply Chain Resilience Initiative
- महत्वपूर्ण क्षेत्र – Critical Minerals, Rare Earths, Semiconductor, नई तकनीक



6 निष्कर्ष

- भारत-ऑस्ट्रेलिया संबंध अब बहुआयामी एवं भविष्य-उन्मुख हैं।
- लोकतंत्र, प्रवासी, मित्रता, विकास, रक्षा, ऊर्जा, शिक्षा, खेल और नवाचार – ये सभी स्तंभ संबंधों को नई दिशा दे रहे हैं।
- मुक्त, सुरक्षित, समृद्ध और नियम-आधारित इंडो-पैसिफिक के निर्माण में यह साझेदारी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा सकती हैं।



★ मुख्य संदेश

यदि दोनों देश व्यापार, रक्षा, ऊर्जा, शिक्षा और तकनीक के क्षेत्रों में सहयोग को और गहरा करते हैं, तो भारत-ऑस्ट्रेलिया संबंध 21वीं सदी की सबसे महत्वपूर्ण साझेदारियों में से एक बन सकते हैं।

Linking women's incomes and healthcare

India is experiencing two revolutions at once. The first is economic. Female labour force participation has risen sharply over the past few years, supported by greater formalisation, digital payments, and government efforts to increase women's participation in the workforce.

The second is epidemiological. India is no longer fighting only infectious diseases. Diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, obesity and mental health disorders are now becoming defining public health challenges. These chronic conditions already account for most deaths in the country and place increasing pressure on both households and public finances.

Most policy discussions assume that these two are unrelated. However, new research, forthcoming in the *Oxford Open Economics* journal, suggests that they may be deeply connected.

Looking beyond hospitals

India has traditionally measured progress in healthcare through familiar indicators such as more hospitals, more doctors, more insurance coverage, and higher healthcare expenditure. These investments remain indispensable; schemes such as the Ayushman Bharat have expanded financial protection for millions of households, while improvements in primary healthcare infrastructure continue to save lives. But healthcare expenditure is only one way of producing health. Many of the biggest determinants of health lie outside hospitals – better nutrition, healthier lifestyles, timely preventive care, education, sanitation, and informed household decision-making. If households began investing more in these activities, healthcare expenditure may fall, not because health deteriorates, but because health improves.

In the forthcoming research, a natural experiment created by India's 2018 reform of the



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Employees' Provident Fund was examined. The reform reduced the mandatory provident fund contributions for newly employed women in the formal sector from 12% to 8% during their first three years of employment. In effect, women experienced an unexpected increase in take-home salary without any change in their gross wages. This created an unusually clean opportunity to study how women allocate additional income.

Using nationally representative household panel data, it was observed that female-led households that benefited from the policy reduced overall healthcare expenditure by roughly 11.6%. Spending on medicines and doctors' consultations declined, while expenditure on activities associated with improving health (including nutrition and physical fitness) increased.

The research also analysed electronic medical records from one of India's largest eye hospital systems. Even after accounting for women who were already accessing healthcare, expenditure remained lower among women receiving the income shock.

This does not imply that women value healthcare less. Instead, it suggests that women may be using their additional income to reorganise household priorities in ways that reduce future dependence on healthcare.

Economists have long recognised that it matters who brings in the income. Research by Esther Duflo and Abhijit Banerjee has repeatedly shown that directing resources towards women changes household spending patterns. Transfers to women often generate greater investments in education, nutrition, and children's wellbeing. Banerjee and Niehaus have similarly shown that the identity of the income recipient influences how households allocate resources.

The new findings extend this insight into healthcare. Women appear to think about health over

a longer horizon. Rather than waiting until illness occurs, they seem more likely to invest in reducing health risks before they become expensive medical problems. That behavioural shift has important implications for a country where out-of-pocket expenditure still accounts for a substantial share of total healthcare financing.

Why this matters for India

India's demographic dividend depends not only on creating jobs for women but also on ensuring that greater economic participation translates into healthier families. If increasing women's incomes changes household investments in nutrition, preventive care and healthier lifestyles, then employment policy becomes health policy. Policies that improve women's economic agency may generate benefits that extend well beyond labour markets. They may also reduce pressure on India's already stretched healthcare system.

For decades, economists have debated whether healthcare is a necessity or a luxury. Perhaps, a more relevant question is whether households are investing in creating health rather than merely purchasing healthcare. That separation matters because healthcare expenditure is an imperfect measure of health. Lower spending on medicines or consultations is not automatically a sign of neglect. Sometimes it reflects fewer illnesses requiring treatment. Other times it reflects better prevention.

India's development strategy emphasises preventive healthcare and healthier lifestyles. This new evidence suggests another ingredient belongs in that conversation: the economic empowerment of women. When women earn more, they may not simply spend more; they spend differently. And those different decisions could quietly become one of India's most important investments in public health.

महिलाओं की आय और स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं का संबंध

जब महिलाओं की आय बढ़ती है, तो परिवार का स्वास्थ्य बेहतर होता है।

संदर्भ :

भारत में दो महत्वपूर्ण परिवर्तन एक साथ हो रहे हैं -

- ① महिलाओं की श्रमबलशक्ति भागीदारी में वृद्धि।
- ② स्वास्थ्य चुनौतियों का संक्रमक रोगों से गैर-संक्रमारी रोगों (NCDs) की ओर बढ़ना।



महिलाओं की आय बढ़ेगी तो स्वास्थ्य बेहतर होगा

शोध का आधार :

- 2018 EPF सुधार के बाद नई महिला कर्मचारियों का PF योगदान 12% से घटाकर 8% किया गया।
↓
- इससे महिलाओं की Take-home Salary बढ़ी।
↓
- शोधकर्ताओं ने पाया कि अतिरिक्त आय मिलने पर परिवारों का स्वास्थ्य संबंधी व्यवहार बदल गया।

मुख्य निष्कर्ष :

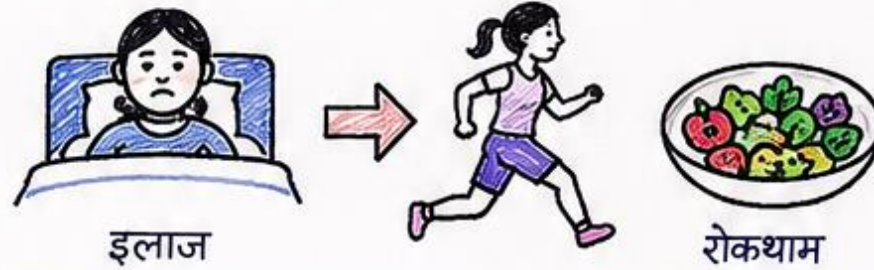
- ✓ अस्पताल और दवाओं पर खर्च कम हुआ ।
- ✓ डॉक्टर के पास जाने की आवश्यकता कम हुई ।
- ✓ लेकिन पौष्टिक भोजन, व्यायाम, फिटनेस और स्वास्थ्य सुधार गतिविधियों पर खर्च बढ़ा ।



इसका अर्थ क्या है ?

इसका मतलब यह नहीं कि महिलाएँ स्वास्थ्य पर कम खर्च कर रही हैं ।

बल्कि वे बीमारी के इलाज की बजाय बीमारी की रोकथाम (Prevention) पर खर्च कर रही हैं ।



महिलाओं के हाथ में आय आने से :

- परिवार की प्राथमिकताएँ बदलती हैं ।
- बच्चों के पोषण में निवेश बढ़ता है ।
- शिक्षा पर खर्च बढ़ता है ।
- स्वस्थ भोजन अपनाया जाता है ।
- भविष्य के स्वास्थ्य जोखिम कम होते हैं ।
- जीवनशैली बेहतर होती है ।



अर्थशास्त्रियों का दृष्टिकोण

एस्थर दुफ्ली एवं अभिजीत बनर्जी के शोध के अनुसार- परिवार में आय किसके हाथ में है, इससे खर्च का स्वरूप बदल जाता है ।

महिलाएँ अधिक निवेश करती हैं -



शिक्षा



पोषण



बच्चों का विकास



स्वास्थ्य

भारत के लिए महत्व

- ✓ कुपोषण घटेगा
- ✓ जीवनशैली बेहतर होगी
- ✓ गैर-संक्रामक रोग (NCDs) कम होंगे
- ✓ स्वास्थ्य व्यय कम होगा
- ✓ सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य व्यवस्था पर दबाव घटेगा
- ✓ आर्थिक विकास तेज होगा



मुख्य अवधारणाएँ

- * महिला आर्थिक सशक्तिकरण
- * रोकथाम आधारित स्वास्थ्य सेवा
- * मानव पूंजी (Human Capital)
- * गैर-संक्रामक रोग (NCDs)
- * श्रमबल भागीदारी
- * लैंगिक अर्थशास्त्र
- * परिवारिक निर्णय प्रक्रिया
- * सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य

चुनौतियाँ

- ◆ जेब से होने वाला स्वास्थ्य खर्च अभी भी अधिक है।
- ◆ स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं तक असमान पहुँच।
- ◆ पौष्टिक भोजन और फिटनेस के लिए जागरूकता की कमी।
- ◆ महिलाओं की आय में क्षेत्रीय और सामाजिक असमानताएँ।



निष्कर्ष



महिलाओं की आय में वृद्धि केवल आर्थिक सुधार नहीं, बल्कि परिवार के स्वास्थ्य, पोषण, शिक्षा और मानव पूंजी में निवेश बढ़ाकर दीर्घकालिक सामाजिक और आर्थिक विकास की मजबूत आधारशिला बनती है।



On the method for caste enumeration

After decades of debate, caste will be counted as part of the 2027 Census. It is significant to look at the ongoing 'pre-test' and questionnaire design, as well as past anomalies during 2011 Socio-Economic Caste Census, as Independent India prepares to enumerate caste for the first time as part of the Census exercise

EXPLAINER

Vijaita Singh

The story so far:

The rehearsal or the "pre-test" of the second phase of Census, which started in 16 States and Union Territories on July 6, 2026, has an "open column" for respondents to record their castes, several officials involved in the exercise told *The Hindu*. The pre-test is on till July 20, 2026, and the outcome will decide how Independent India enumerates caste for the first time as part of the Census. Other than the Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST), caste-wise population has not been enumerated in Independent India; the last time such data was collected was in 1931.

Background of caste Census

After repeatedly opposing caste enumeration, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) finally announced on April 30, 2025 that caste would be counted during Population Census 2027. Before this, the Opposition parties, particularly Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, had consistently demanded that the caste of all people be counted in India.

A few alliance partners of the BJP too made the demand. Unlike the 2011 Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC), which was done outside the purview of the Census, this time, caste will be enumerated with the second and final phase of the Census, giving it a statutory backing.

Significance of the ongoing pre-test

Though the ongoing rehearsal gives an indication of how caste is likely to be enumerated in the coming days, Census officials said the final methodology would be prepared based on the feedback received during the exercise. The pre-test exercise also allowed self-enumeration



The Opposition seeks wider consultations before the caste Census is conducted. C. VENKATACHALAPATHY

and the portal was accessible from July 1-5 only in the specific area where the rehearsal is being done.

The discourse on the methodology of caste enumeration has largely swung between either leaving an open column for caste, just as the 2011 SECC did, or preparing a list of castes for people to pick from – as the Bihar government did in its 2022-23 caste-based survey. The results of the SECC were neither released by the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government nor by the NDA government after it came to power in 2014.

The open-column methodology had resulted in the 2011 SECC returning over 46 lakh different "caste names", largely owing to the difference in what people understand by caste. The total number of castes during the 1931 Census conducted by the British was 4,147. In 2021, the Union government informed the Supreme Court in an affidavit, "Assuming that some castes may bifurcate into sub-castes, the total number cannot be exponentially high to this extent," adding that the data cannot be relied on for reservation in education, employment or elections to

local authorities.

Anomalies reported during 2011 SECC

Officials said the SECC threw up lakhs of caste names as it was kept open-ended. Respondents were asked to name their castes. For example, people wrote Gupta, Agarwal and so on for the Baniya caste, which increased the numbers exponentially. Though the method is not final, the pre-test is providing the same open-ended column for respondents to record their castes.

According to the latest government data, there are about 2,650 Other Backward Classes (OBCs) on the Central List, 1,170 in the Scheduled Castes category, and 890 in the Scheduled Tribes (ST) list. The State governments maintain their own OBC list.

Concerns about the methodology

The Opposition parties have demanded wider consultation with all stakeholders before the caste Census is undertaken. On December 2, 2025, Mr. Gandhi asked in the Lok Sabha if the government has any proposal to publish the draft Census

questions and seek inputs from the general public or people's representatives and whether it will consider best practices such as caste surveys done in other States.

Responding to this, Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai said, "The draft Census questionnaires are pre-tested in the field to assess their feasibility before finalisation of the same. Census has a history of more than 150 years. Learnings from previous Census are taken into consideration for conducting next Census. Before each Census, the inputs are also taken from stakeholders." Throughout 2025, the government repeatedly stated that the final caste questionnaire had not been settled. Parliament was informed in February 2026 that questions relating to caste would be notified before the commencement of the second phase of Census operations. The Union Home Ministry said representations had been received from various organisations and State governments regarding caste enumeration, and that the final questionnaire would be prepared according to established procedures.

Reason for delay in Census exercise

The Population Census exercise is done in two phases – the Housing and House Listing Operations (HLO) and Population Enumeration, spanning over 11 months. The last Census was completed in 2011. The next exercise, Population Census 2021, was initially delayed owing to the COVID pandemic that surfaced in India around March 2020, coinciding with the first phase enumeration that was to begin from April 1, 2020. While the restrictions related to the pandemic were over by 2022, government did not specify the reasons to delay the exercise till now. On June 4, 2025, the government announced that the population Census along with the enumeration of castes will be conducted in two phases by February 28, 2027. The reference date of the people's headcount will be 12 a.m., March 1, 2027.

THE GIST

▼ The BJP-led NDA government announced on April 30, 2025 that caste would be counted during Population Census 2027.

▼ The discourse on the methodology of caste enumeration has largely swung between either leaving an open column for caste, just as the 2011 SECC did, or preparing a list of castes for people to pick from – as the Bihar government did in its 2022-23 caste-based survey.



जातिगत गणना की पद्धति पर बहस



चर्चा में क्यों ?

- 30 अप्रैल 2025 को केंद्र सरकार ने घोषणा की कि **जनगणना 2027** में पहली बार **जातिगत गणना** को आधिकारिक रूप से शामिल किया जाएगा।
- वर्तमान में दूसरे चरण (Population Enumeration) से पहले **Pre-Test** और **प्रश्नावली** का परीक्षण किया जा रहा है।

जातिगत गणना क्या है ?

यह वह प्रक्रिया है जिसमें प्रत्येक व्यक्ति की जाति संबंधी जानकारी आधिकारिक रूप से जनगणना के दौरान एकत्र की जाती है।



पृष्ठभूमि

- 1931** : अंतिम बार सभी जातियों की गणना हुई।
- स्वतंत्रता के बाद केवल **SC** और **ST** की गणना नियमित जनगणना में होती रही।
- 2011** : **SECC** (Socio-Economic and Caste Census) कराया गया, लेकिन यह जनगणना अधिनियम के अंतर्गत नहीं था और रिपोर्ट पूरी तरह सार्वजनिक नहीं हुई।

Pre-Test (पूर्व परीक्षण) क्यों ?

- ★ प्रश्नावली का परीक्षण
- ★ डेटा संग्रहण की विधि जाँचना
- ★ तकनीकी समस्याएँ पहचानना
- ★ अंतिम प्रारूप तैयार करना

2027 जनगणना में क्या नया होगा ?

- जातिगत गणना आधिकारिक जनगणना का हिस्सा होगी।
- इसे **Population Census** के दूसरे चरण में किया जाएगा।
- इससे आँकड़ों को कानूनी मान्यता मिलेगी।

जातिगत गणना का महत्व

- ✓ सामाजिक न्याय को बढ़ावा
- ✓ कल्याणकारी योजनाओं का बेहतर लक्ष्यीकरण
- ✓ आरक्षण नीति के मूल्यांकन में सहायता
- ✓ वास्तविक सामाजिक-आर्थिक स्थिति का आकलन
- ✓ नीति निर्माण के लिए विश्वसनीय आँकड़े



जनगणना में देरी क्यों ?

- 2021 जनगणना कोविड-19 के कारण स्थगित हुई।
- अब 2027 में दो चरणों में पूरी की जाएगी।



2011 SECC की प्रमुख समस्याएँ

- तरीका : Open Column Method
- लोग स्वयं अपनी जाति लिख रहे थे।

उदाहरण → Gupta, Agarwal, Baniya, Vaish, Agrawal आदि

- परिणाम :
 - 46 लाख से अधिक अलग-अलग जाति नाम दर्ज हुए।
 - 1931 में कुल लगभग 4,147 जातियाँ दर्ज थीं।



वर्तमान चुनौती

भारत में

OBC	≈ 2,650
SC	≈ 1,170
ST	≈ 890

केंद्रीय सूची में हैं।

- राज्यों की अपनी अलग OBC सूची भी है।
- सही वर्गीकरण एक बड़ी चुनौती है।



मुख्य बहस : कौन-सा तरीका बेहतर ?

तरीका-1

Open Column
(खुला कॉलम)



- व्यक्ति स्वयं जाति लिखे।

लाभ

- ✓ अधिक स्वतंत्रता
- ✓ स्थानीय पहचान को अभिव्यक्त करने का अवसर

हानि

- × वर्तनी में अंतर
- × एक ही जाति के अनेक नाम
- × डेटा की गुणवत्ता प्रभावित

तरीका-2

Pre-defined List
(पूर्व निर्धारित सूची)



- उत्तरदाता सूची से जाति चुने।

लाभ

- ✓ डेटा एकरूप
- ✓ विश्लेषण आसान
- ✓ त्रुटि कम

हानि

- × कई स्थानीय जातियाँ छूट सकती हैं।
- × पहचान संबंधित विवाद

विपक्ष की मांग

- सभी हितधारकों से व्यापक परामर्श
- प्रश्नावली सांर्बजनिक की जाए
- राज्यों के अनुभवों को शामिल किया जाए
- पारदर्शी और बैज्ञानिक पद्धति अपनाई जाए



सरकार का पक्ष

- अभी केवल Pre-Test चल रहा है।
- अंतिम प्रश्नावली बाद में तैयार होगी।
- राज्यों एवं विशेषज्ञों से सुझाव लिए जा रहे हैं।



अब तक की यात्रा



प्रमुख चुनौतियाँ

- जातियों की विशाल संख्या
- एक ही जाति के अनेक नाम
- डेटा सत्यापन और गुणवत्ता
- राजनीतिक विवाद की संभावना
- गोपनीयता और डेटा सुरक्षा
- राज्यों की अलग-अलग सूची



निष्कर्ष

जातिगत गणना का उद्देश्य केवल जातियों की संख्या गिनना नहीं, बल्कि सामाजिक-आर्थिक वास्तविकताओं को समझकर अधिक न्यायपूर्ण एवं साक्ष्य-आधारित नीति निर्माण करना है। इसकी सफलता सही पद्धति, पारदर्शिता, सहभागिता और बैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोण पर निर्भर करेगी।

What does the lifting of gas curbs mean?

What led to the lifting of restrictions on energy supply imposed following the West Asia crisis?

Debayan Tewari

The story so far:

On July 4, 2026, the government lifted emergency curbs it had imposed on the supply of natural gas during the West Asia crisis in March. It cited “ceasefire and negotiations” and the resumption of “sea traffic through the Strait of Hormuz” to restore gas supplies to fertilizer plants, refineries, distributors and industrial users. The Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry, in a notification, amended the Natural Gas (Supply Regulation) Order, 2026, and omitted provisions that had prioritised sale of domestically produced natural gas and imported Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) as per a priority list released by the government during the U.S.-Israel war on Iran.

On March 12, Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri told Parliament about the “immediate priority sequence”.

“Domestic piped gas to homes and CNG for vehicles receive 100% supply with no cuts. Industrial and manufacturing consumers will receive up to 80% of their previous six-month average. Fertilizer plants will receive up to 70%, protecting the agricultural input chain ahead of the sowing season. Refineries and petrochemical units absorb a managed reduction, with that gas redirected to higher-priority sectors,” he had said.

Which sectors will benefit?

The latest measure follows a series of steps the government has taken to ease the supply of gas in the wake of an improved supply situation. On June 25, it restored the supply of industrial and commercial LPG to the pre-West Asia crisis levels.

The move is expected to benefit the refineries, city gas distributors, and industries such as ceramic. These sectors need reliable supply of natural gas at affordable rates.

According to Prashant Vasisht, senior vice-president at ratings agency ICRA, the biggest beneficiaries of this move will be the industrial and commercial users of natural gas. He said the supplies to fertilizer units and domestic users were all but normalised.

“The emergency measures had affected supplies of city gas distributors to their industrial and commercial clients. There were industries which did not get even alternate fuel to carry out operations. Hotels, for instance, had to stop making items that consumed more fuel,” he said.

Gas supplies to ceramic, power, sponge iron and petrochem sectors were curtailed. “So, factories that were operating in reduced capacity can now ramp up their capacities as and when the fuel supplies come in,” he said.

When the West Asia crisis peaked in March, ceramic manufacturing units based in Gujarat’s Morbi bore the brunt with reports indicating that 600 factories

and 4 lakh workers were affected amid a shortage of propane and natural gas, both used in the production of ceramic.

Which sector uses LNG the most?

Fertilizer plants are known to consume a bulk of India’s LNG. In an earlier interaction with *The Hindu* in March, Mr. Vasisht had said, “A little less than 30% of natural gas use goes into making fertilizers, while power plants account for 13% and city gas distribution 21%.”

Urea, which has around 46% of nitrogen, is the most common nitrogen fertilizer. It is produced by converting natural gas (methane) into ammonia and then combining it with carbon dioxide. The energy-dependent process, hence, makes LNG a crucial ingredient of the product.

What should be the next step?

India has been diversifying its energy sources. As Mr. Puri put it in a recent blog post, “The widening of our crude basket from 27 countries to 41, the doubling of our import terminals, and the pipelines and reserves built across a decade under Prime Minister Modi were not abstractions when the Strait finally closed; they were the very reason the lights stayed on.”

The road ahead now is one of capacity building. As Mr. Puri wrote, “Learning from this experience, we will build additional capabilities to strengthen our energy resilience...”

THE GIST

On July 4, 2026, the government lifted emergency curbs it had imposed on the supply of natural gas during the West Asia crisis, citing “ceasefire and negotiations” and the resumption of “sea traffic through the Strait of Hormuz”.

The move is expected to benefit refineries, city gas distributors and industries such as ceramics, which need a reliable supply of natural gas at affordable rates.



गैस आपूर्ति पर प्रतिबंध हटाने का क्या अर्थ है?

(पश्चिम एशिया संकट के बाद प्राकृतिक गैस आपूर्ति सामान्य होने का प्रभाव)



संदर्भ :

- 4 जुलाई 2026 को भारत सरकार ने पश्चिम एशिया संकट के दौरान प्राकृतिक गैस पर लगाए गए आपतकालीन प्रतिबंध हटा दिए।
- कारण → युद्धविराम, कूटनीतिक वार्ता और हांम्मुज जलडमरूमध्य में समुद्री यातायात का पुनः शुरू होना।

क्या हुआ ?

- मार्च 2026 में पश्चिम एशिया संकट के कारण LNG आपूर्ति प्रभावित हुई।
- सरकार ने गैस आपूर्ति को प्राथमिकता के आधार पर बांटा।
- अब स्थिति सामान्य होने पर प्रतिबंध समाप्त कर दिए गए हैं।



गैस आपूर्ति की नई व्यवस्था



घरेलू उपयोग (PNG) → 100%



CNG (वाहन) → 100%



औद्योगिक एवं विनिर्माण इकाइयाँ → लगभग 80%



उर्वरक उद्योग → लगभग 70%



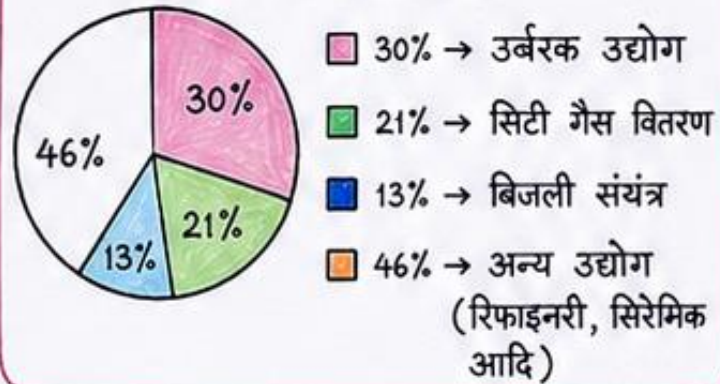
रिफाइनरी एवं पेट्रोकेमिकल → नियंत्रित कटौती जारी

किन क्षेत्रों को सबसे अधिक लाभ?

- ✓ सिरेमिक उद्योग
- ✓ रिफाइनरी
- ✓ सिटी गैस वितरण कंपनियाँ
- ✓ औद्योगिक एवं वाणिज्यिक उपभोक्ता
- ✓ उर्बरक उद्योग



भारत में LNG का सबसे बड़ा उपभोक्ता



उर्बरक उद्योग में प्राकृतिक गैस का महत्व

प्राकृतिक गैस (मीथेन)

↓
अमोनिया

↓
यूरिया

↓
कृषि उत्पादन



इसलिए गैस आपूर्ति का सीधा प्रभाव → खाद उत्पादन, कृषि लागत और खाद्य सुरक्षा पर पड़ता है।

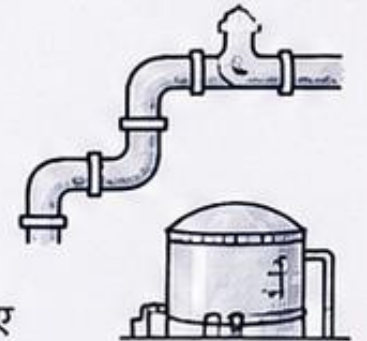
संकट के दौरान प्रभाव

- गुजरात के मोरबी का सिरेमिक उद्योग प्रभावित।
- पेट्रोकेमिकल उद्योग की उत्पादन क्षमता घटी।
- कई उद्योगों को वैकल्पिक ईंधन नहीं मिला।
- लगभग 4 लाख श्रमिक प्रभावित हुए।



सरकार की दीर्घकालीन रणनीति

- ✓ LNG आयात स्रोत बढ़ाए
- ✓ कच्चे तेल के आपूर्तिकर्ता देशों की संख्या बढ़ाई
- ✓ LNG टर्मिनल विकसित किए
- ✓ पाइपलाइन नेटवर्क मजबूत किया
- ✓ रणनीतिक भंडार (Strategic Reserves) विकसित किए



आगे की राह

- ऊर्जा स्रोतों का विविधीकरण
- घरेलू गैस उत्पादन बढ़ाना
- नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा का विस्तार
- ऊर्जा सुरक्षा को मजबूत करना
- रणनीतिक भंडारण क्षमता बढ़ाना



ऊर्जा सुरक्षा

मजबूत भारत

मुख्य तथ्य (Prelims Facts)



- LNG - Liquefied Natural Gas (द्रवीकृत प्राकृतिक गैस)
- PNG - Piped Natural Gas
- CNG - Compressed Natural Gas
- सर्वाधिक गैस उपयोग → उर्वरक उद्योग
- प्रमुख समुद्री मार्ग → हांम्मुज जलडमरूमध्य
- प्रभावित उद्योग → सिरेमिक, पेट्रोकेमिकल, उर्वरक

निष्कर्ष

प्राकृतिक गैस पर लगे प्रतिबंध हटने से उद्योगों, उर्वरक उत्पादन, परिवहन और घरेलू उपभोक्ताओं को राहत मिलेगी। साथ ही यह भारत की ऊर्जा सुरक्षा, आपूर्ति श्रृंखला की स्थिरता तथा आर्थिक गतिविधियों को गति प्रदान करेगा।



GS पेपर लिंक

GS-2 → भारत की ऊर्जा सुरक्षा, अंतराष्ट्रीय संबंध

GS-3 → ऊर्जा क्षेत्र, अवसंरचना, अर्थव्यवस्था, कृषि (उर्वरक)

