



IAS

THE



HINDU

ANALYSIS

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GS II

GS II / GS III

GS III

GS II / GS III

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PIB

1. World Day to combat desertification
2. Area coverage under Kharif crops ✓✓
3. Green Hydrogen certification portal

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UNION PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION



Iran-U.S. framework deal outlines nuclear pledge, financial relief

Stanly Johnny

The U.S. has agreed to facilitate the release of frozen Iranian assets, contingent on progress in negotiations towards a final agreement, and create a plan for Iran's economic development, involving \$300 billion, according to a text of the 14-point framework agreement reached between Tehran and Washington which was published by Saudi Arabia's *Al Arabiya* network and the Bloomberg news agency on Wednesday.

The memorandum of understanding is expected to be signed in Geneva on Friday. The draft stated that Iran has pledged never to produce nuclear weapons and, pending a final agreement, maintain a status quo on its nuclear programme. However, the AP reported later that unnamed U.S. officials read out the draft to pressper-

Peace process

The 14-point framework is expected to be signed in Geneva tomorrow

U.S. PLEDGES

- Lifting sanctions on Iran's products and services, including crude and banking

- Immediate lifting of naval blockade

- Withdrawing forces from 'surrounding areas'

IRAN PLEDGES

- Restoring pre-war traffic through Strait of Hormuz

- Never produce nuclear weapons

sons, according to which Iran has agreed to down-blend (dilute) its highly enriched uranium under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

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UNLOCKING ACCESS

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Framework deal reveals nuclear commitment

On its part, the U.S. will lift sanctions on the sale of Iranian crude oil, petrochemical products, and financial services, including banking, during the negotiation period.

The draft, which has not been released officially, calls for an "immediate and permanent end to the war on all fronts, including Lebanon" – a key Iranian demand.

Under the agreement, the U.S. and Iran have pledged to "respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to refrain from interfering in each other's internal affairs".

The U.S. will immediately lift its naval blockade and Iran will allow traffic through the Strait of Hormuz to reach pre-war volumes within 30 days. Mr. Trump has said that traffic through the Strait will be toll-free. According to Iran's Foreign Ministry, however, Tehran will not impose a toll but ships will have to pay a fee to Iran's newly created Persian Gulf Strait Authority, for environmental upkeep and other services

Nuclear talks in next phase

"Iran reiterates that it will never produce nuclear weapons. Iran and the U.S. have agreed that the fate of enriched material and the fate of all other mutually agreed nuclear-related issues, including Iran's nuclear needs, will be adequately addressed in a final agreement," the leaked text says.

Iran has hundreds of kilograms of highly enriched uranium, which the U.S. and Israel want to take out of the country and dilute or destroy.

Two of the contentious points of the MoU are Iran's demands for the unfreezing of its assets and reparation for the war damage. The leaked text says Iran would get access to the funds and financing for reconstruction.

"The U.S. undertakes that, in light of the progress of negotiations towards a final agreement, frozen or restricted funds and assets of Iran will be released and made fully available."

Lifting of sanctions

(Frozen assets) [\$100bn]

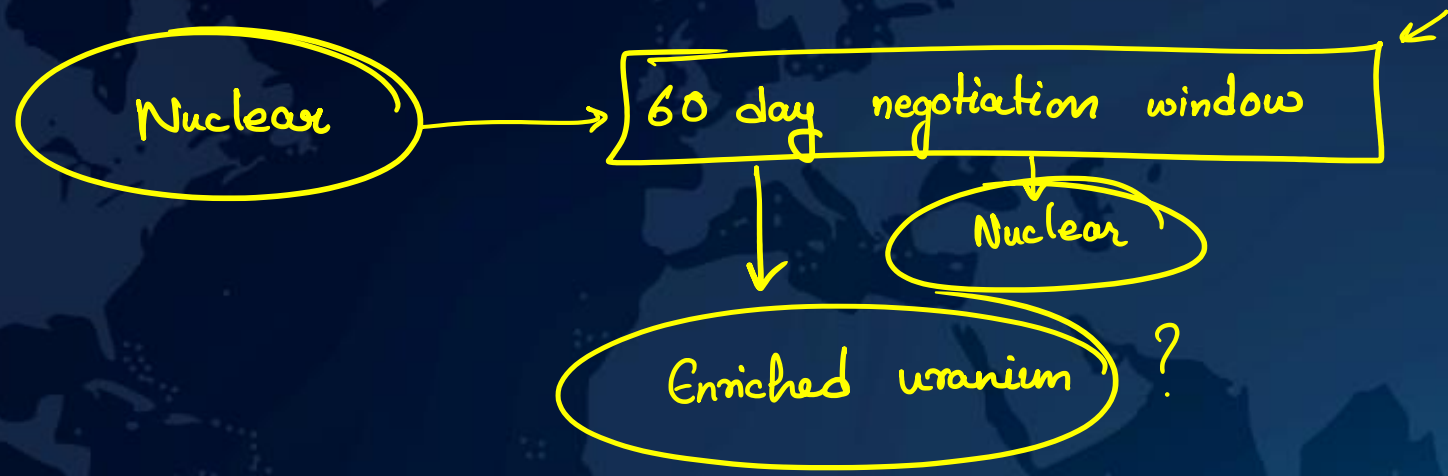
Developmental funds \$300bn

Withdrawal of forces

Lifting of naval blockade



No further attacks → Iran
→ Lebanon



Health data must drive action, not just headlines

→ GSI / GSI

There is an unsettling paradox in the release of health survey data in India. Survey findings often end up doing exactly the reverse of what they should. They often highlight what we already know, do not take a sufficiently serious view of what has not improved, and rarely lead to immediate programmatic action. The discussion that follows is often ritualistic: the government highlights achievements, newspapers amplify numbers, academics wait for raw data to analyse, and business and industry identify market opportunities.

This seems to be the case with the three recently released health-linked surveys: the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-6), the National Statistical Office (NSO) 80th Round Household Consumption on Health and the National Health Accounts Estimates for India 2022-23.

All three should have offered a moment of national stocktaking. Instead, the two reports on health expenses barely received any attention, while the third, the NFHS-6, and its use by key stakeholders, tells a familiar story. In government communication, improvements have been selected and celebrated. Achievements must, of course, be acknowledged. However, the real value of such surveys is not in confirming what has worked, but in showing where programmes remain weak and old strategies are no longer sufficient.

The business of disease

Industry and business groups have flagged rising health challenges reported in NFHS-6. Rising obesity becomes an argument for weight-loss products, apps, gyms, diagnostics and drugs. Rising diabetes becomes an opportunity for monitoring devices, test packages and private clinics. Rising non-communicable diseases become the market case for more screening, testing and medicalisation. Where public health messaging is weak and private health markets are aggressive, every survey finding can become a business prospect.

The one positive development so far has been the extensive coverage in the print media, which has flagged what matters to citizens: the rise of obesity, diabetes, hypertension and other non-communicable diseases (NCD). Yet, much of this was already known. Obesity and other NCDs have moved from urban and affluent groups to all social and economic groups. The new data merely put fresh numbers to an old warning.

What is grossly missing is critical reflection and policy dialogue around these findings. This should worry us. A health survey is not meant to be a national reminder of familiar problems but an instrument of course correction. If anaemia



Chandrakant Lahariya

Practising physician in preventive and cardio-metabolic medicine and specialist in health policy. He has worked with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN system for nearly 18 years

Health data should guide accountability, budgets and programme reform

has not improved, the response cannot be another paragraph in a report. If out-of-pocket expenditure remains high, the answer cannot be only a headline on a declining percentage share. If obesity is rising among children, the response cannot be a few articles followed by silence.

The NFHS-6 also carries a temporal problem. Its data were collected during 2023-24, but the findings entered public debate in mid-2026. In a political system skilled at both claiming credit and avoiding blame, this lag is convenient. A government can celebrate positive indicators as proof of current policy success while dismissing uncomfortable findings as “old data”, influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, past administrative disruptions or conditions that have since improved. The survey then becomes less a compass and more a weapon. This is unfair to the survey and unhelpful to policymaking.

Academics and public health researchers play a crucial role in interpreting large-scale survey data beyond official reports. In India, however, such analysis is often delayed because raw data are released late. By the time peer-reviewed studies appear, three to five years may have passed since data collection. Policymakers can then dismiss critical findings as outdated and no longer relevant. As a result, data lose their impact: when reports are released, raw data are unavailable for scrutiny; when analysis finally arrives, the opportunity for policy action has often passed.

From data to action

There is a need to reflect on how India continues to miss these opportunities. Data improve health outcomes only when they are linked to timely and relevant policy decisions. Countries that make effective use of health data do not wait years for perfect academic papers or definitive solutions. Instead, they have robust systems and empowered institutions that generate rapid policy briefs, identify lagging districts and regions, conduct regular reviews, compare performance, allocate resources efficiently and adapt programmes as needed. The translation of data into action is not merely a slogan; it is a discipline. India needs to cultivate that discipline if it is to realise the full value of the vast amounts of health data it collects.

First, every major national health survey should be followed, within 30 to 45 days, by a national and State-level action note jointly prepared by the government and independent academic institutions. The note should candidly identify what has improved, what has remained stagnant and what has deteriorated. Each finding should be linked to a specific programme and a clearly accountable authority. If child nutrition has stagnated, the nutrition programme must

respond. If hypertension detection remains inadequate, the primary health-care system must respond. If out-of-pocket expenditure on medicines remains high, the drug procurement system must respond. Data should not merely describe problems; they should trigger accountability and corrective action.

Second, there should be State-level health data review meetings, not ceremonial events but working sessions. Health Secretaries, Finance Departments, District officials, public health experts, civil society representatives, other key stakeholders and independent subject experts should examine the findings together. The question should not be, “What can we highlight?” It should be, “What must we change?”

Third, India needs systems for the optimal and timely use of survey data. It has started developing the Integrated Health Informatics Platform (IHIP), but that is primarily for real-time data. Survey data, Health Management Information System (HMIS) data and IHIP data must be combined to generate analytical information. Fragmented data produce fragmented policy.

Fourth, primary data and source files from surveys should be made available early so that independent researchers and public institutions can produce quick analysis. There is no reason to wait years for serious interpretation. Data should not sit like a guarded file. They should be available as a public good.

Fifth, findings should influence budgetary allocation. If a survey shows rising NCDs, primary care budgets must reflect the need for NCD prevention and treatment. If households are spending heavily on medicines, public facilities must strengthen essential drug availability. If obesity is rising in children, school health, food regulation and urban planning must respond. Data without budgetary consequence are merely information.

Looking ahead

Economist Aaron Levenstein said in 1951 that “statistics are like bikinis. What they reveal is suggestive, but what they conceal is vital”. Health data should be like an x-ray. They are useful only when interpreted correctly, discussed honestly and followed by policy actions. Data and statistics are only as useful as their interpretation; interpretation is only as useful as the action it produces. The next time survey findings are released, the real question should not be what the numbers show. The real question should be: what will change in programmes in a month’s time, in six months and in a year? Alongside this, India definitely needs more and timely health data. However, what we need even more is accountability.

Union Health Ministry Releases National Family Health Survey – 6

NFHS-6 Reflects India's Accelerated Progress in Maternal and Child Health, Nutrition and Financial Protection

Institutional Deliveries Reach 90.6%

Antenatal care

ANC Coverage increases from 92.6% to 95.9%

Any Vaccine received by Children age 12-23 months remains Consistently High above 96%

95.6% children received most vaccinations through public health facilities as preferred choice

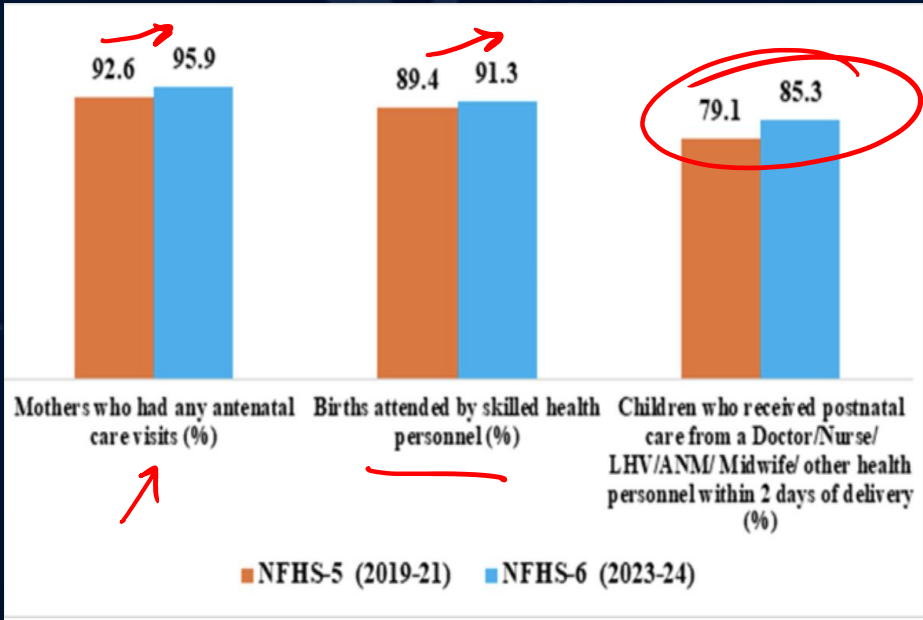
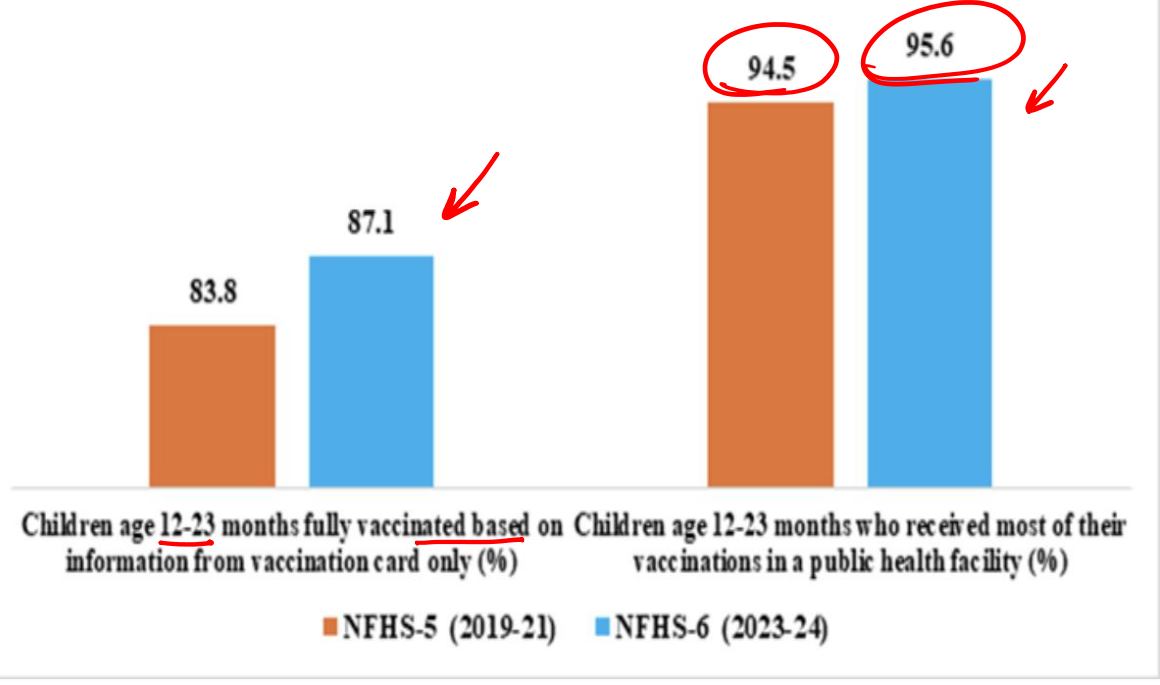
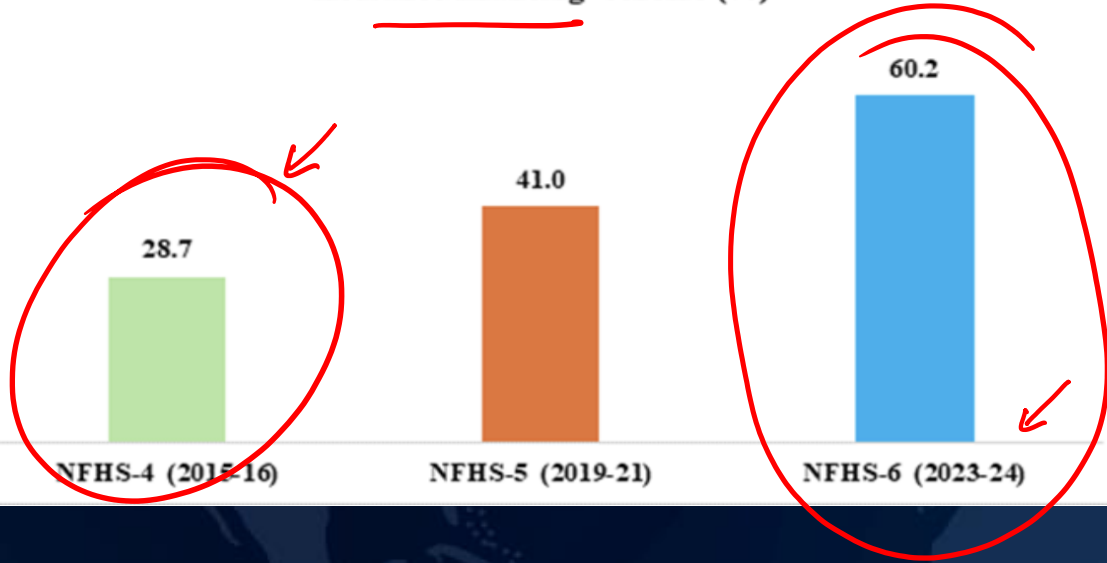
Rotavirus Vaccination Coverage more than Doubled

Primary Healthcare Strengthening Propels India Towards Significant Improvement in Full Immunization Coverage from 83.8% to 87.1%

Child Nutrition Indicators show Improvement with Reduction in Stunting by 17% and Severe Wasting by 32%

Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY and Expanded Health Protection Initiatives Strengthen Financial Security in Healthcare

Households with any usual member covered under a health insurance/financing scheme (%)



Concerns

- Selective data celebration ↙ ↘
 - **Example:** Rising obesity or diabetes rates should lead to targeted health programmes rather than simply becoming news headlines.
- [Commercialisation of Health Challenges]
- **Problem of Data Lag**
 - NFHS-6 data were collected during 2023–24.
 - Results entered public discussion only in 2026.Consequences:
 - Findings become outdated. ✓
 - Governments may dismiss negative indicators as “old data”. ✓
 - Opportunities for timely intervention are lost.
- Delayed Release of Raw Data



International norms

- Conduct regular performance reviews.
- Compare regions and districts.
- Identify lagging areas.
- Allocate resources dynamically.
- Modify programmes based on evidence.

Way Forward

Action Notes After Every Survey

- Within 30–45 days of survey release:
 - National and State governments should publish action plans.
 - Responsibilities and timelines should be specified.

State-Level Review Meetings

- Conduct working sessions involving:
 - Health departments
 - Finance departments
 - District officials
 - Researchers
 - Civil society



Integration of Health Databases

- Combine:
 - NFHS data
 - HMIS (Health Management Information System)
 - IHIP (Integrated Health Information Platform)

↳ Early Public Access to Raw Data

- Raw datasets should be released quickly.
- Independent researchers should be able to conduct rapid analyses.
- Data should be treated as a public good.



Link Findings with Budget Allocation

- Examples:
 - Rising NCDs → Higher funding for NCD prevention and treatment.
 - High medicine expenditure → Strengthen public drug procurement.
 - Childhood obesity → Increase spending on school health and nutrition.

• **Importance on accountability**

Practice Question (10 marks)

- Discuss the implications of 'delayed data reports' in health. Suggest measures to increase the impact of periodic health surveys.

Intro → Generic

Body → NFHS 6



Issues

How to improve

Conclusion

→ GS II

Rubio's remarks and the limits of strategic empathy

A day after the United States and Iran struck an interim deal on June 14, 2026, to end the war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz, it remains unclear whether the agreement will be implemented at all. Not only have details not been made public, but negotiators have, by all accounts, pushed the difficult issues down the road. There is no mention in the interim agreement of Iran's nuclear programme, its missile programme, or even ending Tehran's support for regional groups. Iran's top officials maintain that a final deal for a lasting truce is yet to take shape.

Washington's troubling response

These developments, though significant, are unlikely to make headlines in India, where policymakers and the public are still smarting over the deaths of three Indian sailors in a U.S. strike in the Strait of Hormuz on June 10.

Particularly galling are the remarks by the U.S. Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, who told External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar last week that "violations of the American blockade and the illicit transport of Iranian oil would not be tolerated and that commercial vessels must immediately comply with US forces". There was reportedly no expression of condolence for the deaths of the sailors, nor any indication that the incident would prompt a broader reassessment of the risks now confronting civilian shipping in the Gulf.

The implication was unmistakable: Washington does not view the episode principally as a humanitarian tragedy requiring accountability, but as a compliance problem arising from the failure of merchant vessels to obey American directives.

That framing has implications for New Delhi. It suggests that for Washington, the safety of neutral shipping and the interests of partner countries during a conflict are secondary to the enforcement of U.S. strategic objectives.



Abhijit Singh

Retired naval officer and former Head of the Maritime Policy Initiative at the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), New Delhi

The U.S. Secretary of State's comments reveal the human cost of American strategic objectives

Merchant vessels are expected simply to comply with American instructions; should they become collateral victims of the increasingly militarised environment in the Strait of Hormuz, the costs are expected to be borne by the countries that own the ships and by the sailors who crew them.

Indian sailors stand alone

For a nation such as India, whose economic interests are deeply tied to the free flow of commerce through the Strait of Hormuz and whose citizens make up a significant share of the global maritime workforce, this should be unacceptable. Great power competition inevitably imposes costs on third parties with little say in the decisions that create or sustain crises. But those costs cannot simply be externalised onto partner countries and civilian mariners in the expectation that they will quietly acquiesce.

India's predicament is particularly stark because it supplies roughly a fifth of the world's maritime workforce but possesses few realistic means of ensuring the safety of its seafarers. The Indian Navy's escort operations in the Gulf are valuable but necessarily limited. They cannot protect the more than 18,000 Indian sailors in the region, many of whom serve aboard vessels registered under flags of convenience such as Palau, Guinea-Bissau and the Marshall Islands. Such flags offer little meaningful diplomatic protection in times of crisis. When things go wrong, Indian sailors are often left effectively stateless from a protection standpoint. The three deaths aboard the *MT Settebello* have exposed a structural vulnerability that New Delhi has long recognised but never adequately addressed.

Whether or not this will fundamentally alter the trajectory of India-U.S. relations is hard to say. The bilateral relationship possesses too many load-bearing elements – defence cooperation, critical technologies, the Indo-Pacific and the Quad (Australia, India, Japan, U.S.) – for one

incident to trigger a rupture. Even so, Mr. Rubio's remarks seem to have done real damage at the level of trust and political optics. New Delhi's summoning of the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires twice within three days last week signals genuine anger. Many in India view Washington's response not as an aberration but as evidence of a deeper pattern: when the interests of partner states conflict with American strategic objectives, the U.S. invariably chooses itself.

Seeking accountability and answers

From an Indian standpoint, accountability for the incident has yet to be established. India must push for a credible, independent fact-finding investigation into the circumstances surrounding the strike. Beyond bilateral protest, New Delhi should consider taking the issue to multilateral forums, including the International Maritime Organization and consultations with other crewing and flag states. A lone démarche simply does not carry the weight of a coordinated international position. Importantly, Indian officials must articulate a principled and consistent position on maritime norms, one that applies irrespective of how powerful the state violating them may be.

For the Narendra Modi government, this episode is about more than the tragic deaths of three Indian sailors. Mr. Rubio's remarks have inadvertently laid bare an uncomfortable truth about great-power partnerships: strategic empathy has limits. The United States may regard India as an indispensable partner in the Indo-Pacific, but it will not subordinate its priorities in the Gulf to Indian sensitivities. That is not a reason for New Delhi to distance itself from Washington. It is, however, a reminder that close partnerships do not eliminate divergences of interest. India must continue to engage the U.S. with clear eyes and defend its maritime interests without assuming that others will do so on its behalf.

Particularly galling are the remarks by the U.S. Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, who told External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar last week that “violations of the American blockade and the illicit transport of Iranian oil would not be tolerated and that commercial vessels must immediately comply with US forces”. There was reportedly no expression of condolence for the deaths of the sailors, nor any indication that the incident would prompt a broader reassessment of the risks now confronting civilian shipping in the Gulf.

Independent investigation

India's predicament is particularly stark because it supplies roughly a fifth of the world's maritime workforce but possesses few realistic means of ensuring the safety of its seafarers. The Indian Navy's escort operations in the Gulf are valuable but necessarily limited. They cannot protect the more than 18,000 Indian sailors in the region, many of whom serve aboard vessels registered under flags of convenience such as Palau, Guinea-Bissau and the Marshall Islands. Such flags offer little meaningful diplomatic protection in times of crisis. When things go wrong, Indian sailors are often left effectively stateless from a protection standpoint. The three

Innovate or be eaten

India must realise the importance of innovating up to the frontier

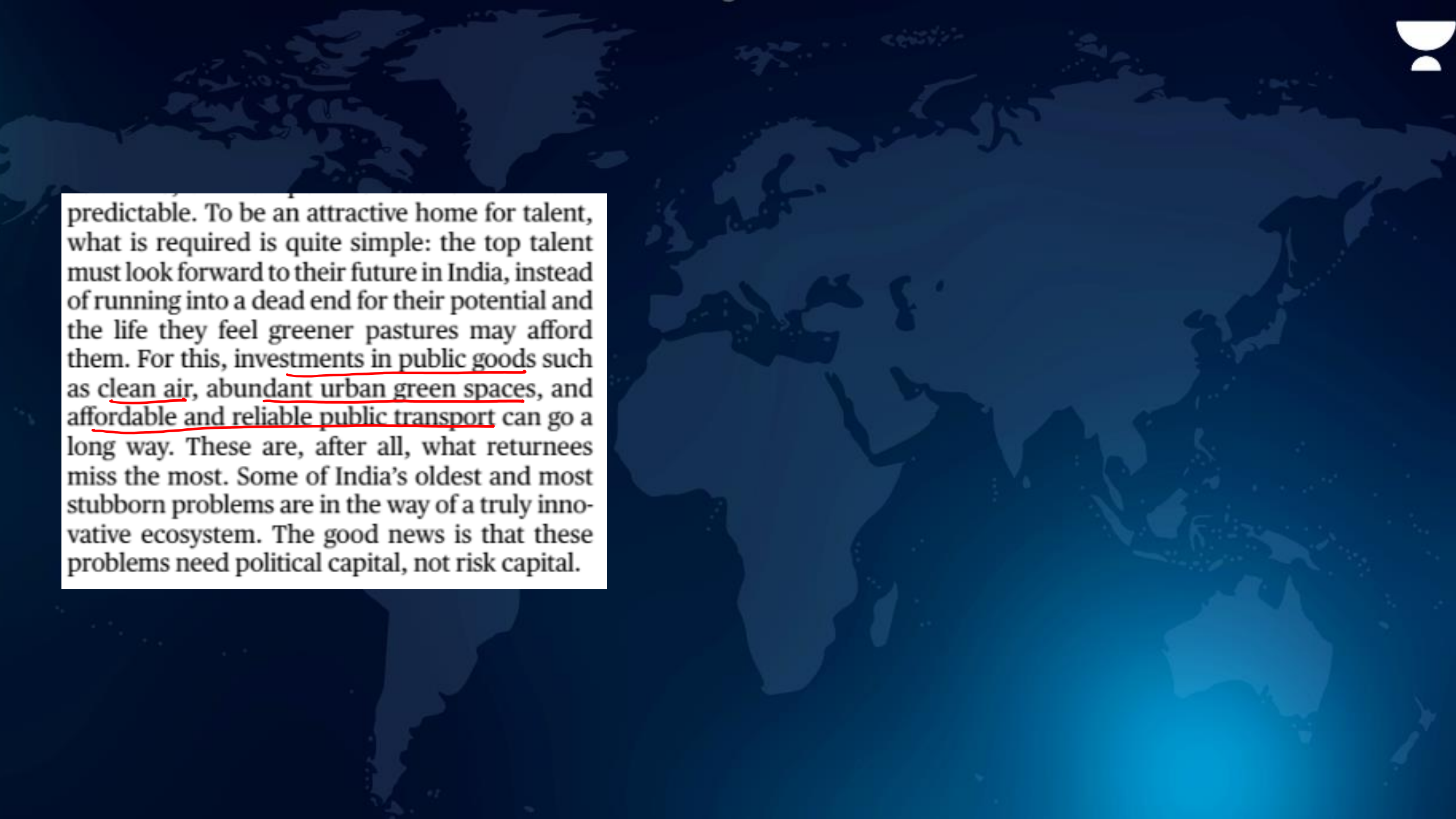
There is no question that Indian professionals are capable of pathbreaking innovation. As evidenced by the strong representation of Indian and Indian-origin technology industry leaders, Indian executives have displayed extraordinary talent in both the managerial and technical work that goes into building and advancing complex businesses at the forefront of the global economy's most important engines. 'Bharat Innovates 2026', the event in Nice, France, supported by the Ministry of Education, has shown that many of these innovations are possible in India, and that patient incubation of startups in key strategic areas can lead to exceptional results that are competitive with the best-in-class globally. India's potential to be a global home for innovation is real, especially with the kind of middle power collaboration that French President Emmanuel Macron advocated for at the event. The innovation question is key to processing the aftermath of Anthropic's most powerful AI models, Claude Mythos and Fable, being banned for non-Americans, a move that has already affected some Indian entities and users.

Perhaps it is not possible to brute-force frontier AI or semiconductor technology, given the tens of billions of dollars even a single player requires to make incremental advances in these fields. Becoming an AI deployment superpower, as many tech policymakers advocate, may also be a pursuit of a losing battle; India, after all, is not alone in seeking knowledge economy efficiencies from AI. But the field of opportunities remains nonetheless vast: deep tech in areas such as space exploration, defence, and even material sciences remain an open contest. For India to pursue innovation, two ingredients are important: India must be a stable and attractive home for capital and talent. For the former, the swash-buckling rent-seeking of the successful must be reined in to keep innovators from dreading success on Indian soil; venture capital must be in a position to assess exploratory and cutting-edge pitches on the same footing as they do in other countries; and tax policies must be clear and predictable. To be an attractive home for talent, what is required is quite simple: the top talent must look forward to their future in India, instead of running into a dead end for their potential and the life they feel greener pastures may afford them. For this, investments in public goods such as clean air, abundant urban green spaces, and affordable and reliable public transport can go a long way. These are, after all, what returnees miss the most. Some of India's oldest and most stubborn problems are in the way of a truly innovative ecosystem. The good news is that these problems need political capital, not risk capital.

'Bharat innovates 2026' → Nice

↳ Ministry of Education

Brain drain



predictable. To be an attractive home for talent, what is required is quite simple: the top talent must look forward to their future in India, instead of running into a dead end for their potential and the life they feel greener pastures may afford them. For this, investments in public goods such as clean air, abundant urban green spaces, and affordable and reliable public transport can go a long way. These are, after all, what returnees miss the most. Some of India's oldest and most stubborn problems are in the way of a truly innovative ecosystem. The good news is that these problems need political capital, not risk capital.

Water security is central for a Viksit Bharat

Did you know that the Jal Jeevan Mission is the world's largest rural drinking water supply programme? Or that the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) is the most significant rural sanitation movement in the world? Together, these initiatives represent not merely government schemes, but a re-imagining of how a nation of 1.45 billion people is building a water-secure future.

Few sectors shape human dignity, economic growth, public health, agriculture and environmental sustainability as profoundly as water. Yet, for decades, India's water challenges were addressed in fragmented ways. What has changed in recent years is the focus and integrated nature of the response led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The scale of investment and execution in the water sector in the last 12 years has been unparalleled. Water is now viewed as a shared national priority, cutting across departments, States, and communities. While earlier water was relegated to the side, under Prime Minister Modi, the Government of India has assumed responsibility for filling the long-standing gaps in planning, management, and delivery in the water sector.

A complete turnaround

The most prominent example of this transformation is the Jal Jeevan Mission. When the programme was launched, only about 3.23 crore rural households, roughly 17% of rural Indian households, had tap water connections. Today, more than 15.8 crore rural households, covering over 81% of rural India, have access to tap water at home. The government is moving towards achieving 100% coverage by 2028. For millions of families, this is not merely a utility service; it is a change in their way of life.

Studies indicate that earlier, rural women in India spent billions of hours each year fetching water. The expansion of



C. R. Patil

Union Minister of Jal Shakti

Access to drinking water, sanitation, river conservation, groundwater recharge, wastewater reuse and climate resilience must all be viewed as parts of a connected ecosystem

household tap water supply has helped save more than 5.5 crore person-hours daily; that time is now being invested in education, livelihoods, childcare and economic activity. Across households, access to safe drinking water has also reduced out-of-pocket health expenditure arising from water-borne diseases.

Equally transformative is the SBM. India's sanitation movement demonstrated that behavioural change, public participation and political commitment can work together at scale. According to the World Health Organisation's assessment of health gains, SBM-Grameen is estimated to have averted more than 3 lakh diarrhoea deaths between 2014 and October 2019. The construction of household toilets also brought dignity, privacy and safety to millions of rural women. Beyond making villages open defecation-free, the country has moved towards sustainable solid and liquid waste management under SBM-Grameen 2.0.

India has also undertaken one of the largest water conservation and groundwater recharge initiatives anywhere in the world. Under the 'Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari' initiative, more than 1.55 crore rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge structures have been created across the country by May 31, 2026. The impact of these efforts is visible in groundwater trends as well. Recent assessments indicate improvement in groundwater recharge and a reduction in the number of over-exploited assessment units in several parts of the country. It also showcases that sustained conservation efforts, when combined with community participation, can reverse environmental stress.

Parallely, India has advanced long-pending national water projects. The Ken-Betwa River Linking Project, the country's first major river interlinking initiative to bring water to the arid region of Bundelkhand, is moving ahead at an accelerated pace.

Under the guidance of Prime Minister Modi, the Namami Gange programme has demonstrated that environmental restoration and development can advance together. Over the past decade, the government has created 4,260 million litres per day (MLD) of sewage treatment capacity; reduced the Biochemical Oxygen Demand from 26 tonnes per day (TPD) in 2017 to 10.75 TPD in 2024; and brought down effluent discharge from 349 MLD to 265.56 MLD. Today, monitoring shows that pH and dissolved oxygen levels in the Ganga meet bathing criteria at all monitored locations.

India's water journey over these years offers an important global lesson. Water challenges in the 21st century cannot be addressed through isolated interventions. Drinking water, sanitation, river conservation, irrigation efficiency, groundwater recharge, wastewater reuse and climate resilience must all be viewed as parts of a connected ecosystem.

The road ahead

This integrated approach becomes even more critical in the face of climate change. For India, the challenge is unique. The country is home to nearly 18% of the world's population, but has access to only about 4% of global freshwater resources. Rapid urbanisation and changing weather patterns will place increasing pressure on these resources in the coming decades.

Today's investments, therefore, are not merely developmental expenditures; they are long-term investments in national resilience. The progress achieved over the past decade demonstrates the immense potential unlocked when selfless leadership, responsive governance, and active public participation come together in pursuit of a shared national vision.

The road ahead requires sustained effort. The government will strive to improve water-use efficiency, promote recycling, strengthen water governance, and encourage citizen participation.

Water Security

India → 18% of population
freshwater → 4%

scarcity

Context

- Water is not merely a utility service but a critical determinant of:
 - • Public health
 - • Economic growth
 - • Agricultural productivity
 - • Environmental sustainability
 - • Human dignity and gender empowerment

- Water scarcity is an Issue

Govt's agenda

- **Integrated water management approach** encompassing:

- Drinking water
- Sanitation ✓
- River rejuvenation ✓
- Groundwater recharge ✓
- Wastewater management ✓
- Climate resilience

- **Significance**

- Reflects the principles of **Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)**.
- Aligns with **SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation)**.

Jal Jeevan Mission

- Rural households with tap water increased from **3.23 crore (2019)** to **15.8 crore+ (2026)**.
- Rural tap-water coverage increased from about **17% to over 81%**.

Socio-economic Impact

→ Labour ; hard work.

- Reduced **drudgery** for women.
- Saved more than **5.5 crore person-hours daily**.
- Improved:
 - • School attendance
 - • Women's participation in economic activities
 - • Health outcomes
 - • Household productivity



Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)

TSC

- Massive toilet construction.
- Reduction in open defecation.
- WHO estimates over **3 lakh diarrhoeal deaths averted (2014-2019)**.

Broader Benefits

- Improved dignity and safety for women.
- Better sanitation behaviour.
- Transition toward:
 - Solid waste management & Liquid waste management under SBM-Grameen 2.0.

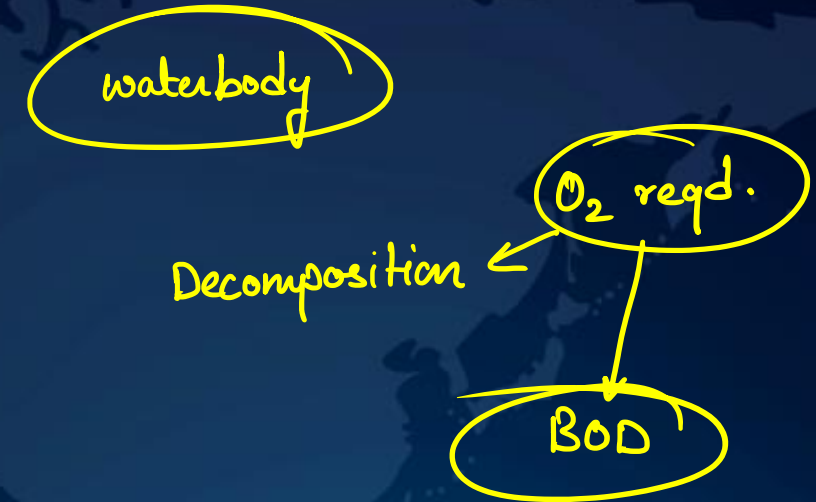
Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari Initiative

- More than **1.55 crore rainwater harvesting and recharge structures** reportedly created.
- Important because:
 - India is the world's largest groundwater user.
 - Nearly 60% irrigation and 85% rural drinking water depend on groundwater.

↳ Groundwater recharge

Namami Gange

- Sewage treatment capacity increased to → **4,260 MLD.**
- Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) reduced significantly.
- Effluent discharge reduced substantially.



The RBI and its growing fiscal role

RBI's record ₹2.87 lakh crore surplus transfer to the Centre shows its growing fiscal significance, as earnings from reserve management and foreign assets support govt. finances; the trend raises questions about central bank independence, fiscal centralisation, and exclusion of such transfers from fiscal devolution to States

ECONOMIC NOTES

Deepanshu Mohan
Ankur Singh

Central banks occupy a peculiar position in modern democracies. Governments spend, tax, and borrow. Central banks manage inflation, preserve confidence in the currency, and safeguard financial stability. Their credibility rests on maintaining a degree of distance from the fiscal compulsions of the governments they serve.

Recent developments surrounding the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) invite a closer examination of that relationship.

Much of the recent discussion has focused on the RBI's management of foreign exchange reserves, interventions with respect to managing the rupee, including instances of reserve-rebalancing through gold sales, and increased foreign-currency holdings.

Yet, the more consequential story surrounding this is the extent to which the institution may be seen to be becoming more executive or fiscalised in its role to support the government.

In May, the RBI approved a record surplus transfer of ₹2.87 lakh crore to the Union government for FY26. While fully consistent with the Economic Capital Framework, its scale raises questions about the evolving role of the central bank within India's fiscal architecture.

A structural shift

Surplus transfers have been around the ₹30,000 crore to ₹65,000 crore level for the past few years. The tipping point was reached in 2019 after the implementation of the revised Economic Capital Framework.

The transfer is now at a record high of ₹2.87 lakh crore for FY26.

This move coincides with the phenomenal growth of the RBI's balance sheet. It increased by 20.6% in one year to ₹91.97 lakh crore by March 2026. Gross income increased by over 26% during the same period.

Traditionally, governments fund expenditure through taxation, borrowing,



The Reserve Bank of India continues to operate within a well-defined framework. REUTERS

and revenue growth. Political consent is needed for taxation. Borrowing is disciplined by markets and future repayment obligations. Economic growth requires real growth in productive capacity.

Central-bank transfers are different. They generate fiscal space without new taxes, new borrowing, or commensurate growth in economic production. The latest transfer alone is bigger than the annual budgets of several Indian States.

This is not a bad practice to make such transfers. However, it does pose an interesting question. When does a stabilising institution start to act as a fiscal instrument?

The evolution of the RBI's reserve management is a good example.

The RBI may have sold almost \$12 billion worth of gold and bought foreign-currency assets by about \$7.5 billion in the face of rupee pressures, according to recent reports.

These are standard reserve-management decisions when looked at superficially. Central banks are constantly adjusting their portfolios based on market conditions. Gold is a strategic reserve asset. Foreign-currency assets are the source of liquidity for intervening in exchange-rate markets.

However, the management of reserves has become a financial issue.

The recent surplus transfer included a significant portion of gains from foreign

assets, foreign exchange transactions, and interest earned on securities holdings. The activities are mainly being carried out to ensure monetary and financial stability, but are also producing increasingly significant fiscal revenues for the sovereign.

This is where the discussion transcends accounting. The RBI's balance sheet is now at ₹92 lakh crore. The composition of reserves, intervention in the exchange rate, and asset allocation decisions now impact not just monetary stability, but also the economy's overall health. They are becoming more and more important for fiscal results as well.

The experience of India is different from that of the advanced economies, where central banks became entangled with fiscal policy by engaging in quantitative easing and buying a large number of bonds. In this case, the link has come about because of the increasing significance of the fiscal value of central-bank earnings.

The federal blind spot

The least talked about part of this debate is fiscal federalism.

The total amount of ₹2.87 lakh crore transfer is non-tax revenue and hence it is a Union government gain. It is not part of the divisible pool of income tax collections or GST revenues which are subject to Finance Commission formulas. There is no automatic share to the States.

States still have significant spending obligations. Concurrently, they have restrictions on borrowing under Article 293 and have much less fiscal flexibility than the Union government.

However, one of the biggest transfers of resources from the public sector in recent years is still not part of fiscal devolution.

The point isn't whether States have a legal claim to RBI profits. They do not. The question is whether a central institution acting on behalf of the monetary union as a whole should indirectly support fiscal centralisation, without any mention of accountability, transparency or federal balance.

Dividend transfers, cesses, surcharges and borrowing restrictions are all considered to be individual policy instruments when viewed individually. Together, they show a progressive shift in the fiscal landscape of India towards the centre.

An evolving institution

The debate over the RBI's record surplus transfer is therefore not ultimately about the dividend itself. It is about how modern states finance themselves.

The central bank has evolved from being primarily a guardian of monetary stability into an increasingly important source of fiscal capacity. The latest transfer may have eased borrowing pressures and strengthened the government's fiscal position, but it also underscores how closely monetary institutions and fiscal outcomes have become intertwined.

The RBI continues to operate within a well-defined framework and retains substantial operational autonomy. Yet central bank independence is not merely a matter of legal design. It is also a question of institutional distance.

As surplus transfers become larger and fiscal pressures intensify, preserving that distance may become more difficult. It may also become more important.

(Deepanshu Mohan is Dean and Professor of Economics at O.P. Jindal Global University. He is currently Visiting Professor at LSE and a Visiting Research Fellow at University of Oxford. Ankur Singh is a Research Analyst with Centre for New Economics Studies)

THE GIST

▼ The RBI's balance sheet increased by 20.6% in one year to ₹91.97 lakh crore by March 2026, while gross income rose by over 26% during the same period.

▼ The RBI may have sold almost \$12 billion worth of gold and bought foreign-currency assets by about \$7.5 billion in the face of rupee pressures, with the recent surplus transfer including gains from foreign assets, foreign exchange transactions and interest earned on securities holdings.

Bimal Jalan committee (2018)

ECF → 2019

Capital transfer (surplus)

RBI → Govt.

Context

- Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) transferred a record surplus of ₹2.87 lakh crore to the Union Government for FY26.

- RBI is increasingly becoming a significant contributor to government finances, raising questions about:

- Central bank independence
- Fiscal centralisation ✓
- Federalism and fiscal devolution
- The evolving role of the RBI in India's fiscal architecture



Why significant?

- The transfer exceeds the annual budgets of several Indian States.
- It provides substantial fiscal space to the Union Government without:
 - Raising taxes,
 - Borrowing more,
 - Cutting expenditure.



Source of earnings

Foreign Exchange Operations

- Purchase and sale of foreign currency.
- Gains from exchange-rate movements.

Reserve Management

- Large holdings of foreign assets.
- Gold reserves.

Interest Income

- Earnings from government securities.
- Investments in foreign bonds and assets.



- RBI balance sheet increased to approximately **₹91.97 lakh crore by March 2026**.
- Increase of over **20% in one year**.
- Gross income grew by more than **26%**.
- RBI may have sold nearly **\$12 billion worth of gold**. Purchased approximately **\$7.5 billion in foreign currency assets** during reserve rebalancing.

Cause for concern

• Excessive dependence on central bank earnings may blur the distinction between:

- Monetary policy,
 - Fiscal policy.
- Question of federalism

non-tax revenue

[RELOS]

What does the India-Russia logistics agreement allow?

What is RELOS, and does it allow India and Russia to station troops on each other's territory?

Dinakar Peri

The story so far:

The India-Russia bilateral Logistics Support Agreement (LSA), termed the Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS), which had been dragging on for several years, was operationalised in January this year. There was a flutter on social media recently with claims that it allows the stationing of 3,000 Russian troops on Indian soil or vice versa, painting it as a military alliance. However, it is like any LSA, the likes of which India has signed with other countries.

What are Logistics Support Agreements?

A logistics agreement is a foundational military cooperation agreement between

countries for administrative purposes that enables the reciprocal use of each other's bases and ports for supplies, repair, and fuel. The agreement also stipulates the occasions on which this can be utilised, generally for exercises, joint training, port calls, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief situations. As defence cooperation and military-to-military engagement become vital in international relations, the agreement simplifies essential administrative procedures and reduces bureaucracy.

For instance, the agreement with the U.S., Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) signed in 2016, the first such, provides a framework for reciprocal provision of logistic support, supplies and services for activities such as joint exercises, training, or humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. "It does not provide for the establishment of any

bases or basing arrangements," Minister of State for Defence Subhash Bhamre said in a written reply in the Parliament in February 2017.

If the hyperbole is to be believed, India and Russia can station troops on each other's territory, then by convention, it also means that India and the U.S. can do the same under the LEMOA. But that is grossly incorrect, as clarified by the Minister, and is so for any LSA.

What are the existing agreements?

India has signed a series of logistics support agreements since the LEMOA in 2016. Currently, India has similar agreements with nine countries – the U.S., the U.K., France, Vietnam, Japan, Australia, Singapore, and Russia – concluded on similar lines, which provide logistics support and technical aid. The basic template and purpose for all these

remain the same. There is also one with Oman covered under the overarching defence cooperation agreement.

What is the agreement with Russia?

Like other agreements, RELOS defines procedures for supporting military formations, port calls of warships, and the use of airspace and airfield facilities by military aircraft of both countries and the organisation of logistics and technical support of military formations of warships, military aircraft, and other equipment.

The agreement was signed in Moscow on February 18, 2025, and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed the federal law ratifying it on December 15, 2025. According to the Kremlin, the purpose of the agreement is to define the procedures for the deployment of military formations, port calls by warships, and the use of airspace and airfield infrastructure by military aircraft of the two countries.

Broadly, RELOS covers joint military exercises, training, HADR missions, port and repair services, medical support, as well as delivery of food and technical resources and reciprocal access to military facilities, including airbases and ports, to support ship and aircraft personnel.

The agreement stipulates a maximum


of 3,000 troops, representing a broad upper limit that takes into account the size of contingents and the number of ships or aircraft that may visit during engagements mutually agreed upon by both sides. It is valid for a period of five years, allowing for revisions later to reflect changing circumstances and requirements. The time frame for positioning of assets and personnel would be subject to the visit mutually agreed upon by both parties, one official said.

In fact, the scale of bilateral and multilateral relations between India and other countries is much larger. Indian armed forces exercise with the U.S. now.

Also, the agreement does not confer any provision for permanent basing of assets, and the agreement shall be exercised during joint exercises, port calls, or visits mutually agreed by both nations based on provisions of the agreement, officials clarified. "No permanent or long-term stationing has been agreed upon as part of the Agreement."


One important aspect is that RELOS gives access to Russian military facilities in the Arctic as both countries expand cooperation there, as new navigation routes open up, a fallout of global warming.

(Dinakar Peri is Fellow, Security Studies at Carnegie India)



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Prelims

India to meet 3% compressed biogas blending goal for FY27

Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

The Centre is on track to meet the goal of blending 3% compressed biogas (CBG) with CNG and domestic piped natural gas for FY27 with the blending percentage having already nearly doubled to about 2% at present, officials told *The Hindu*.

They added with more CBG plants under varied stages of construction, this would provide a fillip towards achieving the target.

India's present consumption of natural gas for domestic PNG and CNG in transport combined is



A biogas Plant at Bengaluru in the State of Karnataka.

about 34-35 million metric standard cubic metre per day (MMSCMD).

"In April, CBG sales were approximately 0.66 mmscmd and about 0.63 mmscmd in May," they

stated, explaining that at the present rate of consumption they amount to nearly 2% of blending.

More plants

According to the Petroleum Ministry's Gobardhan portal, construction of 324 CBG/bio-CNG plants are under progress while construction work is yet to start on 1,261 plants.

Suresh N.S., senior research scientist, Strategic Initiatives Group at think-tank CSTEP said geopolitical developments underscore urgency of boosting India's domestic energy security and reducing dependence on imported fuels.

CNG

PNG

2%

3%

India, U.K. announce July 15 as trade deal implementation date

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

India and the United Kingdom have overcome last-minute differences over steel import duties to finally announce July 15 as the implementation date for the trade deal between the two countries, the two governments announced on Wednesday.

The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) was signed by the two countries in July 2025 and was all set to be implemented by April or early May 2026.

However, a fresh regulation by the U.K. announced in May and applicable to all countries cut the quota for duty-free steel imports by 60% and doubled the tariff on above-quota imports to 50%. These new rules are to come into effect from July 1, 2026.

These tariffs and quotas were not part of the trade deal negotiations and suddenly halted the implementation process.

According to Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal, a team from India has been in the U.K. over the last few days to move things along.

"Delighted to note that the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement will enter into force on 15th July 2026," Prime Minister Narendra Modi posted on X following the announcement. "This agreement will significantly boost our bilateral trade and investment."

The implementation of the trade deal, under which the U.K. will remove



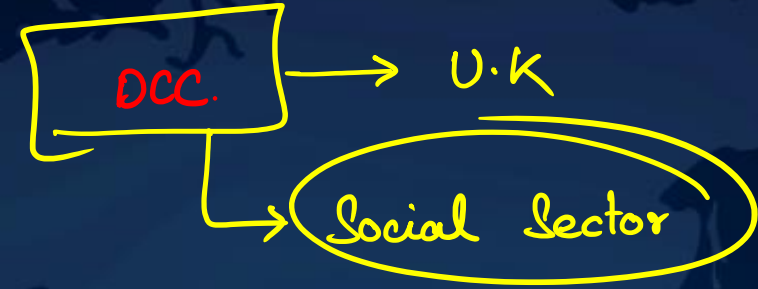
PM Modi with his British counterpart Keir Starmer during the G7 Summit.

tariffs on 99% of its product lines, will be accompanied by the implementation of the Agreement on Social Security, also referred to as the Double Contribution Convention (DCC), on July 15. It further said that such protections would be through a mix of country-specific quotas, residual quotas and access under an Authorised Use Scheme (AUS).

'Landmark consensus'

"Demonstrating the collaborative strength of the India-U.K. Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CETA), India and the United Kingdom have successfully reached a landmark consensus to safeguard and promote bilateral steel trade," the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said in a release.

Without revealing details on what exactly the solution to the U.K. steel tariff issue would entail, the release added that "both sides mutually agreed to protect commercial interests, minimise market disruptions, and ensure an overall balanced and stable trading environment for exporters".



Peace deal: cautious Indian shipowners seek govt. help

Indian govt. to evacuate 34 ships, including 16 fertilizer vessels from Persian Gulf; Naval escorts being planned for safety, as shipowners expect that stability may take more than a month

M. Kalyanaraman
CHENNAI

Though the announcement of the U.S.-Iran peace agreement has been welcomed as good news, Indian shipowners were cautious, just as international shipping companies.

"It's too early to say anything. We have to wait for the agreement to be signed, and then clarity has to emerge on the terms and conditions," says Anil Develi, CEO of Indian National Shipowners Association, adding uncertainty continues.

Mr. Devli said if things go well, it would take another 30 to 60 days for full normalcy. "We hope and expect the government to facilitate getting the vessels back," he said.

Meanwhile, the Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool, that came with a sovereign guarantee of \$1.4 billion for providing re-insurance, has been a non-starter, says Mr. Devli. He added that one Indian shipowner had received a quote from a public sector company and it turned out to be more than London rates, despite the government offering to bear re-insurance costs. Blaming the situation on lack of trust and transparency on the part of both shipowners and Indian insurance companies, Tony Fernandez, who has nearly 50 years of experience in insurance, says it was quite possible that, be-



In transit: In total, 539 Indian seafarers are on Indian-flagged vessels, including 325 in the Persian Gulf region. AP

cause of audit fears, the public sector insurer could have transferred even the remaining risk to other parties, thereby increasing the cost of insurance. Mr. Fernandez said that this has been an old problem in the insurance industry and has plagued the current effort to mitigate war-risk insurance too. Meanwhile, the government has identified 34 vessels of Indian interest carrying various flags. These include 16 vessels carrying fertilizers, including one Indian-flagged ship, Jag Arnav. Fertilizer supplies are critical for the ongoing kharif season.

Nine energy supply vessels have been identified by the government for evacuation - three are Indian-flagged and six are foreign-flagged.

The government has also been keen on LNG ships, since natural gas is a key component in making fertilizers domestically. The Marshall Islands-flagged LNG carrier Al

Ghashamiya transited the Strait of Hormuz on June 16. The vessel is bound for Dahej, carrying more than 90,000 tonnes.

For the purpose of evacuation of these vessels, the government is considering naval escorts and other protective measures for safe exit. Thirteen Indian-flagged vessels are still in the Persian Gulf, west of the Strait of Hormuz; nine are in the Gulf of Oman; three in the Gulf of Aden; and eight in the Red Sea area. These include five crude oil carriers, one LPG carrier, three bulkers, and two container ships.

In total, 539 Indian seafarers are on Indian-flagged vessels (325 in the Persian Gulf region west of the Strait of Hormuz and 214 in the Gulf of Oman). So far, more than 3,600 Indian seafarers have been evacuated by various shipping companies from the Gulf region.

Indian-flagged vessels have faced four incidents,

while 19 incidents involving Indian-crewed vessels were reported. So far, seven confirmed Indian seafarer deaths have been reported. Four have been injured, and one is presumed dead. According to the latest assessment of the government, a substantial volume of cargo is currently stranded or awaiting evacuation across ports. At major ports, the volume comprises 11,299 TEUs of containers and 1,771 TEUs of perishable cargo. At non-major ports, including Mundra, Pipavav, and Hazira, 28,891 TEUs of containers and 1,368 TEUs of perishable cargo are awaiting evacuation.

In total, more than 43,000 TEUs of cargo, including over 3,100 TEUs of perishable goods, remain affected. The government has put in place several measures to reduce congestion at ports due to shipping delays.

Additional storage has been allocated for cargo handling requirements, along with extended support for stacking cargo within the port area to avoid unnecessary movement and minimize additional costs for customers.

The relief measures are expected to provide immediate operational and financial support to the trade community while helping ports manage congestion, preserve time-sensitive cargo, and maintain the smooth flow of maritime commerce.

DFS Launches 'Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool' of USD 1.5 billion, with a sovereign guarantee of USD 1.4 billion/₹12,980 crores to facilitate continuous maritime insurance coverages, in the background of current Middle East tensions

Restrictions or withdrawal of insurance cover in high-risk areas or sanctioned environments can disrupt shipping operations and critical trade flows. Due to sanctions, foreign re/insurers can withdraw support for any insurance policy that covers cargo or vessel carrying cargo, from the sanctioned country. Another area of concern is dependence of Indian vessels on International Group (IG) Protection and Indemnity (P&I) Club for P&I insurance. P&I insurance covers third-party liabilities like Oil pollution liability, Wreck removal, Cargo damage, Crew injury and repatriation, Collision liabilities. The pool with sovereign guarantee will be able to provide sufficient underwriting capacity to cover the risks adequately and enable the country to increase sovereign control over maritime trade.

A Governing Body has been constituted to oversee the functioning of the pool, including approvals regarding the invocation of the sovereign guarantee. In addition, an Underwriting Committee (UC) responsible for ensuring prudent, consistent and technically sound underwriting of risks ceded to the pool has been formed. GIC Re is the pool administrator, which will submit the returns, details of re-insurance arrangement, and statements on performance of the pool.

Policies will be issued by domestic insurers that are Pool members, using the combined underwriting capacity of the Pool. These risks would then be reinsured by all Pool members, in proportion to their capacity commitment in the Pool.

For claims arising upto USD 100 million, the pool will service the claim using its own capacity and for claims beyond USD 100 million, the sovereign guarantee will be invoked to service claims as a contingent backstop of last resort, after complete exhaustion of the pool's accumulated reserves, member contributions and reinsurance arrangements.

The pool will enable the country to strengthen sovereign control over maritime trade and ensure continuity of trade even in the event of withdrawal of re/insurance coverage due to sanctions or geopolitical tensions. This would strengthen India's maritime risk protection framework and support secure global trade operations in future, promoting India's financial sovereignty.



PIB

World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought Celebrated Across WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Project Areas in the Country

Posted On: 17 JUN 2026 8:49PM by PIB Delhi

The **World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought** was celebrated with great enthusiasm on **17 June 2026** across 813 project areas under the Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY 2.0) throughout the country.



The Watershed Management Division, Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development, is implementing WDC-PMKSY 2.0 to promote soil and water conservation, restore degraded lands, and enhance the resilience of rainfed agriculture through sustainable watershed development interventions. Under the WDC PMKSY scheme, works like check dams, percolation tanks, and farm ponds are undertaken, which enable farmers in rainfed areas to undertake second or third crop, leading to higher income for farmers.

Progress of Area Coverage under Kharif Crops as on 12.06.2026

Posted On: 17 JUN 2026 6:21PM by PIB Delhi

Area: In lakh hectare

S. No.	Crop	Normal (2020-21 2024-25)	Area to	Final Area Coverage 2025	Area Sown		Increase (+) / Decrease (-) over 2025
					2026	2025	
1	Rice	412.00		446.70	4.98	3.88	1.09
2	Pulses	123.64		118.97	1.55	2.73	-1.18
a	Arhar	44.32		44.60	0.09	0.21	-0.12
b	Urdbean	29.60		21.26	0.27	0.35	-0.07
c	Moongbean	35.48		37.45	0.69	1.54	-0.86
d	Kulthi	1.48			0.08	0.06	0.02
e	Mothbean	9.69			0.00	0.00	0.00
f	Otherpulses*	3.07		15.66	0.41	0.57	-0.16
3	ShriAnnacumCoarsecereals	182.63		192.12	4.77	4.32	0.45
a	Jowar	14.44		12.10	0.73	0.80	-0.07
b	Bajra**	70.94		63.80	1.15	0.24	0.91
c	Ragi	12.01		13.46	0.31	0.30	0.01
d	Smallmillets	4.47		4.15	0.31	0.39	-0.08
e	Maize	80.77		98.61	2.28	2.59	-0.32
4	Oilseeds	200.08		196.38	3.51	3.54	-0.02
a	Groundnut	46.79		50.29	2.57	2.27	0.30
b	Soybean	128.71		123.86	0.70	0.90	-0.20
c	Sunflower	1.20		0.88	0.16	0.22	-0.06
d	Sesamum**	12.88		9.63	0.05	0.11	-0.06
e	Niger	1.01		0.83	0.00	0.00	0.00
f	Castor	9.49		10.89	0.00	0.01	0.00
g	OtherOilseeds	0.00			0.03	0.03	0.00
5	Sugarcane	54.20		58.84	54.08	54.29	-0.21
6	Jute&Mesta	6.40		6.06	6.18	6.09	0.10
7	Cotton	125.51		115.20	9.53	13.19	-3.66
	Total	1104.46		1134.27	84.60	88.04	-3.44

*Other pulses (Other pulses – Kulthi & Mothbean).**Average of 2022-23 & 2023-24)

Union Minister Shri Pralhad Joshi Launches Green Hydrogen Certification Portal to Enhance Transparency in Green Hydrogen Sector

Six States Notify Dedicated Green Hydrogen Policies, Seven Integrate Hydrogen into Existing Frameworks, Four More in Pipeline: Shri Joshi

Ministry of New and Renewable Energy organises workshop on National Green Hydrogen Mission marking 12 Years of Decisive Achievement of the Government of India

Posted On: 17 JUN 2026 7:09PM by PIB Delhi

The Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy and Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Shri Pralhad Joshi, launched the Green Hydrogen Certification Portal of India (GHCI) during the National Workshop on “Strengthening the National Green Hydrogen Mission: Through State Policies, Hubs & Infrastructure” organised by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy here today. Developed by MNRE, the portal will facilitate transparent certification and regulatory compliance under the Green Hydrogen Certification Scheme of India.

Speaking on the theme “Strengthening the National Green Hydrogen Mission: Through State Policies, Hubs & Infrastructure”, Shri Joshi requested States to actively participate in advancing the National Green Hydrogen Mission. He said six states have already notified dedicated Green Hydrogen Policies, while seven others have integrated hydrogen into their existing industrial and renewable energy policy frameworks. He added that four more States are in the process of finalising their policies.

Highlighting efforts to strengthen domestic manufacturing, he stated that financial incentives have been awarded to 15 companies to establish 3,000 MW per annum of indigenous electrolyser manufacturing capacity, reducing dependence on imported supply chains.

In the refinery sector, Shri Joshi noted that contracts have been awarded for the supply of 30,000 MTPA of green hydrogen to IOCL, BPCL, HPCL, and NRL. He further highlighted that ₹84 crore has been sanctioned for pilot projects testing 100% hydrogen injection in the steel sector.

On clean mobility, he stated that nearly ₹208 crore has been allocated to support 37 hydrogen-fuelled vehicles and 9 strategic refuelling stations, complemented by an investment of ₹193.35 crore across seven national testing facilities.

