



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

14th June 2025



Decoding Centre-State Fiscal Tug of War

CONTEXT: Karnataka CM meets Finance Commission, highlights concerns and suggests reform measures.

Indian Constitution – ‘Quasi-Federal’

- Centre/Union – Primacy
- Financial Sphere
- States – ‘Real Implementers’
- ASYMMETRY
- Structural Authority v. Functional Responsibility

Centre as a ‘Dominant’ Construct

- Dominant Tax Handles:** The 7th Schedule – constitutional and financial dominance; Union List – **most buoyant revenue sources** – high-yield taxes
- Fiscal Transfers:** Finance Commission – devolution and grants; Centre – implementation and timing.
- Dominance in GST Council:** Centre – 1/3rd voting power
- Cesses and Surcharges:** Articles 269 and 270; proceeds – exclusively to the Centre
- Borrowing Powers (Article 292):** Union – extensive borrowing powers – CFI
- Emergency Provisions (Article 360):** Financial Emergency – Centre – direct states

Chart 1: The amount in ₹ each State got for every rupee they contributed to Central taxes in 2021-22*

Customs and union excise duties have not been considered in the calculation as State wise data is not maintained

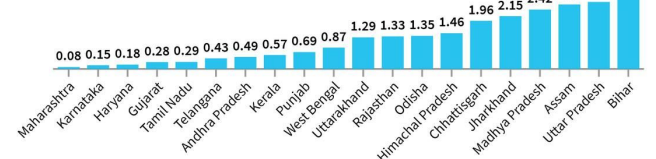
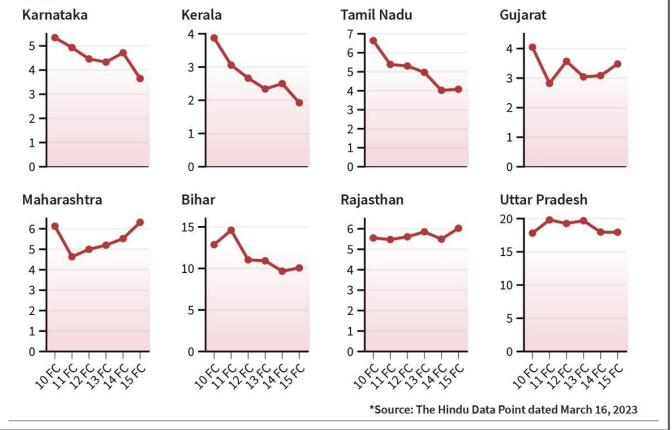


Table 1: The criteria for horizontal devolution among States over the last five FCs

Criteria	11th FC 2000-05	12th FC 2005-10	13th FC 2010-15	14th FC 2015-20	15th FC 2021-26
Income Distance	62.5	50	47.5	50	45
Population (1971 Census)	10	25	25	17.5	-
Population (2011 Census)	-	-	-	10	15
Area	7.5	10	10	15	15
Forest cover	-	-	-	7.5	-
Forest and ecology	-	-	-	-	10
Infrastructure index	7.5	-	-	-	-
Fiscal discipline	7.5	7.5	17.5	-	-
Demographic performance	-	-	-	-	12.5
Tax effort	5	7.5	-	-	2.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Chart 2: The share of States in the divisible pool of taxes over the last six FCs*



Chegg

GST COUNCIL COMPOSITION

VOTING STRENGTH

Centre
1/3 VOTE IN COUNCIL

States
2/3 WEIGHT IN COUNCIL

DECISIONS NEED
75% VOTE SUPPORT

GST COUNCIL

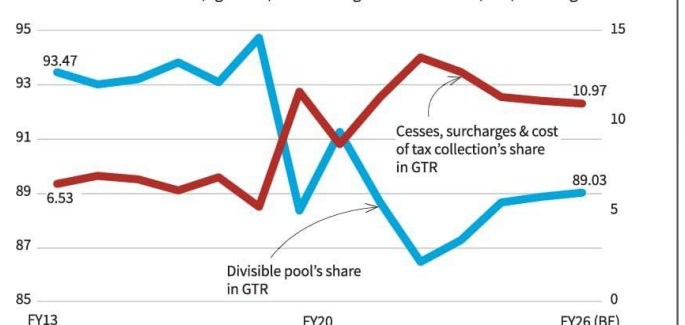
Chairperson
Union finance minister

Other Member From Centre
Minister of state for finance

Vice-chairperson
One of the state finance ministers

Members
State finance ministers

Chart 1: The chart shows the share of the divisible pool (left axis) and cesses, surcharges & the cost of tax collection (right axis) in Centre's gross tax revenue (GTR). Both figures in %



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States as Real Arenas of Governance and Economic Activity

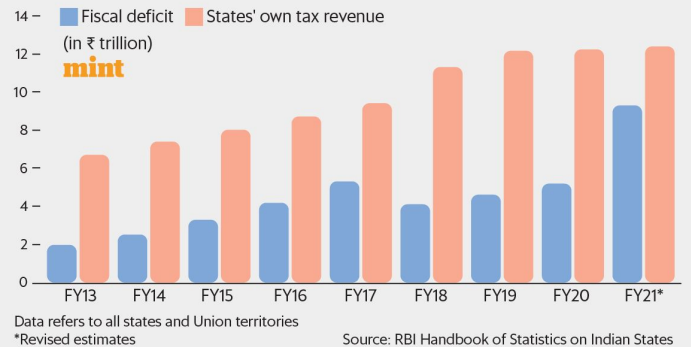
- **Extensive Expenditure Responsibilities:** Core welfare and developmental functions
- **Grassroots Implementation:** Central schemes – MGNREGS, PMAY, Jal Jeevan Mission; Implementation – state-led
- **Democratic Accountability:** State elections – local development, jobs, amenities, and welfare – establish states – primary arenas

Concerns in Centre-State Financial Relations

- **Erosion of State Autonomy:** Excessive use – CSSs – conditionalities limits – discretion.
- **Vertical Fiscal Imbalance:** Mismatch – Centre's revenue and States' expenditure responsibilities – creates dependency
- **Regional Disparities:** States allege – Finance Commission – do not adequately reflect their financial needs; Concerns – fairness and transparency in allocation
- **Borrowing Restrictions:** Article 293 – permits states to borrow; requirement for central approval
- **Uncertainty in GST Revenue Sharing:** timely and adequate revenue distribution

State finances

States' fiscal deficit shot up in FY21 as tax revenue receipts stayed steady and expenses mounted.



EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, JUNE 13

KARNATAKA CHIEF Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday met the 16th Finance Commission in Delhi and is learnt to have "highlighted a stark imbalance in fiscal returns", telling the Commission that "for every rupee Karnataka contributes to Union taxes, it receives only 15 paise in return".

A statement issued after the meeting by the CM's office said that Siddaramaiah "pointed out that the reduction in Karnataka's share under the 15th Finance Commission from 4.713% to 3.647% resulted in a cumulative loss of over Rs 80,000 crore during the award period".

The overall share allocated to all states from central taxes was reduced to 41% for 2021-26, as against 42% in the previous cycle, primarily due to the creation of Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Siddaramaiah demanded a larger allocation for the state from the central tax pool for the five-year period beginning April 1, 2026.

According to the statement, Karnataka "proposed that the share of taxes devolved to states (vertical devolution) be increased to at least 50% (from April 1, 2026), and that cesses and surcharges be capped at 5%". "The state also recommended

including Union non-tax revenues in the divisible pool."

"For sharing funds among states (horizontal devolution), Karnataka suggested that each state retain about 60% of what it contributes, with 40% going to less-developed states, ensuring both growth and equity," it said.

Siddaramaiah told the Commission that "to make the formula fairer, Karnataka has proposed reducing the weight of the income-distance criterion and giving more weight to a state's economic contribution, so that high-performing states are not penalised, but encouraged," said the statement.

The state also called for "critical reforms" to make the fiscal devolution system "more growth-oriented, predictable, and fair" and highlighted three "key issues" – the growing disparities in per capita devolution; the flawed design of revenue deficit grants, and the unpredictable nature of state-specific grants.

During the meeting, the CM told the Commission that the state recommends replacing discretionary special grants with a formula-based allocation of 0.3% of Gross Union Receipts.

The CM also sought support for Rs 1.15 lakh crore investment to strengthen Bengaluru's infrastructure, given its major role in Karnataka's economy, said the statement.



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Way Forward

Way forward

- **Enhance Resource Devolution:**
Though the 15th FC - vertical devolution to 41%, states demand - further increase
- **Strengthen Fiscal Decentralisation :**
greater autonomy - taxation and expenditure decisions - Local needs; Canada
- **Reframe the Centre's Role in Joint Schemes:** States - equal visibility and credit - joint initiatives; current model - fiscal dependency & political friction.
- **Reconstruct Fiscal Federalism**
Philosophy: Centre - constitutional facilitator; real delivery - states and panchayats; GST Council & ISC
- **Adopt a True Partnership Model:**
Fiscal planning, revenue sharing, and scheme design - cooperative federalism - equal stakeholders
- **Transparent Revenue-Sharing Mechanisms:** fair and predictable resource revenue-sharing; GST Council - inclusivity, greater fiscal transparency

Mains Practise Question

"The evolving nature of Centre-State financial relations in India has significant implications for cooperative federalism." Critically examine this statement in the context of recent trends in fiscal devolution and suggest measures to strengthen fiscal federalism.

(15 Marks, 250 words)



Tribes: The Guardians of the Green

CONTEXT: In a first since the FRA came into being in 2006, the Union government has started funding structural mechanisms to “facilitate” the implementation of the law meant to give forest rights to STs and forest-dwelling communities.

Definition of ‘Tribes’

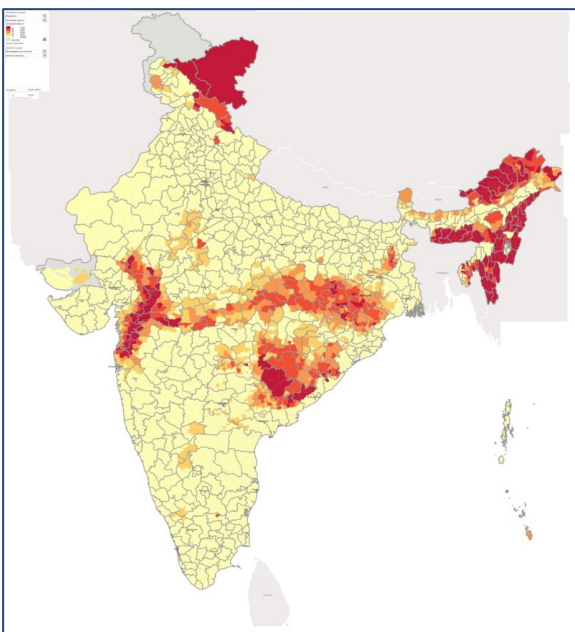
- Primitive Agricultural Practices, Lack of Infrastructure and Geographical Isolation
- ‘Scheduled Tribes’
- Article 342(1)
- Article 342(2)

Criteria for specification of a community as a ST

- Constitution is silent
- Traits – Primitiveness, geographical isolation, shyness and social, educational & economic backwardness
- Definitions of tribal Communities adopted in the 1931 Census

ST Population

- Approximately 8.6% of population
- Over 730 Scheduled Tribes
- Geographical expanse



Tribal Issues

- **Demographic Changes**
 - Alleged illegal migration from Bangladesh; Forced Religious Conversions
- **Land Alienation and Displacement**
 - Loss of livelihood, Environmental degradation, Social dispossession
- **Lack of Basic Amenities and Infrastructure**
 - Health issues, Limited education, Poor healthcare access
- **Exploitation and Marginalization**
 - Vulnerability to trafficking, Debt bondage, Social exclusion
- **Resource Depletion and Environmental Degradation**
 - Loss of biodiversity, Livelihood insecurity
- **Inadequate Governance and Representation**
 - Lack of voice, Ineffective implementation of policies

Government Interventions

- Constitutional Safeguards – 5th & 6th Schedule
- Special Component Plans and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP)
- Educational Development – Schemes – EMRS and scholarships
- Economic Development – Initiatives like TRIFED, Skill development programs
- Land Rights and Forest Management – The Forest Rights Act, 2006



Tribes: The Guardians of the Green



CONTEXT: In a first since the FRA came into being in 2006, the Union government has started funding structural mechanisms to “facilitate” the implementation of the law meant to give forest rights to STs and forest-dwelling communities.

Ways to reduce Tribal Vulnerabilities and Promote their Development

- Strengthening of existing laws
- Community-driven planning
- Focus on sustainable livelihoods
- Improve infrastructure and quality of education
- Minimizing their displacement
- Transparency in the allocation and utilization of funds

Mains Practise Question

“The tribes in India suffer from various forms of deprivation and marginalisation. Elaborate. Also highlight the measures taken by the Government for their growth & development.”

(15 Marks, 250 words)



Israel attacks Iran

SYLLABUS: GS 2: International Relations

Newspaper : The Indian Express, Page No : EXPLAINED, Page 17

In what is its most ambitious military operation in recent years, Israel launched a series of air strikes against Iran on Friday, targeting nuclear sites, missile facilities and other military infrastructure. The attack killed some of the country's key military and civilian personnel as well.

Why now?

These strikes came after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors on Thursday passed a resolution declaring Iran as being non-compliant with its non-proliferation obligations — the first such resolution in two decades. The resolution came on the back of a recent IAEA investigation that found Iran was conducting “secret nuclear activities” at three locations.

Explaining Israel's “pre-emptive strikes”, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Iran had “taken steps that it has never taken before... to weaponise enriched uranium,” and “if not stopped, Iran could produce a nuclear weapon in a very short time,” perhaps even “within a few months.”

Israel has always considered a nuclear Iran to be an existential threat; preventing Tehran from developing an atomic weapon has been Netanyahu's signature platform for decades. Notably, this latest development comes while Tehran and Washington are negotiating a deal that would prevent Iran from developing atomic weapons in exchange for sanctions relief.

What did Israel target?

In its attack on Friday early morning, Israel claims to have deployed 200 aircraft — around a third of its active fleet — to hit more than 100 targets across Iran, including both strategic infrastructure and key personnel.

NATANZ NUCLEAR FACILITY: This is Iran's main uranium enrichment facility, where the country produces most of its nuclear fuel. Located in the central province of Isfahan, the Natanz facility is “the beating heart of the Iranian nuclear programme,” analysts say.

Reviewing satellite images taken before and after Friday's attack, *The New York Times* reported Israeli airstrikes had caused severe damage to the facility, and that “several buildings and critical energy infrastructure either destroyed or heavily damaged”. It is still unclear whether these strikes damaged the all-important centrifuge halls, where uranium is enriched, that are buried deep under the Persian desert and protected by metres of reinforced concrete.

The IAEA on Friday afternoon said Israel had not yet struck Iran's other major nuclear enrichment plant at Fordow in the northern province of Qom. This facility, unlike Natanz, is entirely underground, and much harder to hit, according to analysts. One expert told *The NYT*, “If you don't get Fordow... you haven't eliminated [Iran's] ability to produce weapons-grade material.” On Friday



Israel attacks Iran



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evening, however, Iranian media reported explosions at Fordow.

KEY PERSONNEL: Israeli strikes in Tehran took out Iran's top military leadership. Among those killed were Maj Gen Mohammad Bagheri, chief of staff of the

armed forces, and Gen Hossein Salami, chief of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, arguably the most powerful institution in the country.

While Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei has already announced replacements for the two top commanders, these deaths, along with

those of more than a dozen others, leave a vacuum in Iran's military leadership ahead of what may be a protracted regional conflict.

Israel also killed top nuclear scientists, including Fereydoun Abbasi, the former head of Iran's atomic agency, and Mohammad Mehdi Tehranji. This is not the first time Israel has gone after Iranian nuclear scientists. It is, however, the first time that it has done so through conventional military means and not covert operations.

Another significant casualty on Friday early morning, especially in the light of ongoing Iran-US nuclear talks, was Ali Shamkhani, one of Iran's top politicians who was appointed by Khamenei to oversee negotiations with Washington. Shamkhani's killing could severely jeopardise the possibility of a deal in the near future.

MILITARY INFRASTRUCTURE: Israel also targeted a number of military sites across Iran. These include a nuclear research centre and two military bases in Tabriz in northern Iran; the missile development and production facilities in Bid Kaneh, on the southern edge of Tehran; a missile base in Kermanshah in central Iran; and multiple military bases in and around Tehran.

Note that this is not an exhaustive list, and Israel has maintained that its attack is "ongoing". Friday evening saw a fresh wave of strikes on Tabriz and Tehran.

What now?

For Iran, this is possibly the gravest threat ever to the Islamic regime. In a letter to the UN Security Council, Iran Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Israel had "now crossed every red line," and that it would "deeply regret this reckless aggression".

But as things stand, Israel has painted a rather sorry picture of Iran's military strength, raising serious questions on both its defensive and retaliatory capabilities.

While Iran did send more than 100 drones towards Israel on Friday, there has been no reported casualty or damage thus far. Some analysts say Israeli strikes against Iran's missile facilities may have seriously hurt its ability to strike back.

The biggest question now is how Tehran will strike back. Put simply, Iran is caught between a rock and a hard place. It can, as it has done in the past, activate its proxies and even launch more drone and missile attacks. But Israeli attacks over the years, and rather muted responses from Tehran, have repeatedly exposed Iran's limitations in this regard.

While Israel claims that the Islamic regime in Iran poses an "existential threat" to the Jewish nation, the opposite might be more true. At the end of the day, Tel Aviv stands with steady support from Washington, which establishes a fundamental asymmetry between itself and Iran on the battlefield.

US President Donald Trump on Friday said Israel's "next already planned attacks" could be "even more brutal," and warned that Tehran "must make a deal, before there is nothing left."



Israel attacks Iran

SYLLABUS: GS 2: International Relations

Newspaper : The Indian Express, Page No : EXPLAINED, Page 17



SYLLABUS: GS 1: Women

GS 2: Social Sector

Newspaper : The Indian Express, Page No : 13

THE UNITED NATIONS Population Fund (UNFPA) has released its State of the World Population Report 2025, which focuses on "Real fertility crises: The pursuit of reproductive agency in a changing world". As fertility rates decline worldwide, the crisis lies not in population numbers but in unmet reproductive aspirations of women and couples. It specifically refers to the gap between an individual's or couple's desires regarding children and family size and the social, cultural, or policy-driven expectations placed on them. Concerns about population shifts are driving demographic anxiety that is undermining the reproductive autonomy of women globally, including in India.

Global demographics are transforming at a whirlwind pace. Fertility rates are declining, and the world's population is projected to peak this century. The global fertility rate has decreased from around 5 in 1960 to 3.3 in 1990 and 2.2 in 2024, though significant regional variations exist. Fertility rates less than 2 are becoming the norm, with more than half of the world's countries — accounting for more than two-thirds of the global population — having a fertility rate below 2.1 births per woman (World Fertility Report 2024). Globally, it is projected that all countries will have a fertility level less than 4 by 2054.

In India, the national fertility rate declined from 2.9 in 2005 to 2.0 in 2020 (SRS, 2020) although large inter-state variations exist. The overall population of children under five peaked in 2004, followed by a peak in the number of children and adolescents under 15 in 2009. These large cohorts of young people, combined with increasing life expectancy and declining mortality rates, will continue to drive population growth for some time, with India's population projected to reach its peak in the middle of this century.

As part of the report, the UNFPA and YouGov conducted an online survey of over 14,000 adults across 14 countries to better understand people's reproductive experiences and challenges. A central finding was widespread unmet reproductive aspirations: Many individuals face obstacles both in avoiding unintended pregnancies and in having children when they want to. In India, over 36 per cent of respondents reported an unintended pregnancy, while over 30 per cent were unable to have a child when they wished to. This reflects a dual challenge: Underachieved fertility, where people have fewer children than desired, and over-achieved fertility, where they have more children than they intended. National data

from NFHS-5 underscores this, with 9.4 per cent of currently married women aged 15–49 reporting an unmet need for family planning. Among 14,000 respondents who reported having or wanting children, the most commonly cited challenges were economic, ranging from financial insecurity and unemployment to inadequate housing and limited access to quality childcare.

These are compounded by social norms and unequal relationship dynamics. Increasingly, women report difficulty in find-

ing a suitable partner and negotiating equitable division of household and caregiving responsibilities. Marriage in India continues to place a burden on women, who are expected to manage cooking, child-rearing, and other domestic duties. The lack of supportive workplace policies such as paid parental leave, flexible hours, and childcare facilities further discourages women from balancing careers with family life. There is also the fear of career setbacks or discrimination due to pregnancy. For many women in the informal sector, these supportive policies do not exist. A growing number of women and couples are also expressing hesitation about raising children in a difficult global environment.

It is important to address infertility, an issue stigmatised in India, where marriage is often equated with childbearing. Despite advances in healthcare, many women still face barriers in accessing maternal care and reproductive health information. For couples struggling with infertility, the options are often limited, expensive, or poorly regulated. Treatments are dominated by private players, and high costs, combined with lack of insurance coverage, make the experience prohibitively expensive for most.



SYLLABUS: GS 1: Women

GS 2: Social Sector

Newspaper : The Indian Express, **Page No : 13**

Reproductive agency is further constrained by widespread reliance on sterilisation. Encouraging access to reversible, modern contraception methods, not just for birth control but also to preserve choice, is essential to ensure people can plan families on their own terms.

Another challenge lies in changing patterns of childbearing. Early childbearing is on the decline, with more women choosing to have children later in life (World Fertility Report, 2024). In India, many educated, working individuals from higher income groups are marrying in their late 20s or early 30s and having their first child soon after. However, when it comes to a second child, spacing practices — critical for maternal, child and societal health — are overlooked. According to NFHS-5, 4 per cent of currently married women aged 15–49 report unmet needs for spacing. This is shaped by social norms that discourage contraceptive use and a preference for male children. These factors undermine women's reproductive autonomy. The stigma around family-planning conversations needs to be dismantled urgently.

The global conversation around population shifts is filled with alarmist narratives, with blame often directed toward women. This rising demographic anxiety stems not from unforeseen developments but from a failure of planning and policy foresight. The discourse is dominated by concerns about an ageing population, declining fertility rates, and, in some cases, overpopulation. Yet, what people themselves want for their fertility, families, and futures continues to be ignored.

The moment calls for a proactive perspective to engage women, families and communities around their reproductive autonomy through informed choices. The future lies in building a country's capacity to anticipate, adapt to, and take advantage of demographic changes within a human rights framework. By centring reproductive policies on people's aspirations rather than controlling their choices, we can move toward a model of demographic resilience and a future rooted in dignity, equity, and reproductive autonomy.

What Is UNFPA?

- **Mandate & Mission:** UNFPA is the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency, founded in 1969 (originally as the UN Fund for Population Activities, officially renamed in 1987)
Its mission: "Every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled"
- **Core Domains:**
 - Family planning & contraceptive access – leading global provider of donated contraceptives.
 - Maternal health – working to achieve zero preventable maternal deaths.
 - Gender-based violence & harmful practices – including child marriage, FGM, with a goal of zero.
- **Global Reach:** Currently operates in over 150 countries, with ~75 % of staff stationed directly in the field.

Key Milestones & Structure

- **Historic Roots:** Born in 1969; guided strongly by the 1994 Cairo ICPD principles emphasizing rights-based population policies.
- **Governance & Funding:**
 - Reports to the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board and ECOSOC
 - Fully funded by voluntary contributions from governments, foundations, private sector and individuals—not through the regular UN budget
- **Leadership:** Currently led by Dr. Natalia Kanem, the first Latin American Executive Director, in office since 2017
- **New Fertility Report 2025**



SYLLABUS: GS 3: Environment, Pollution
Newspaper : The Indian Express, **Page No : 3**

SOPHIYA MATHEW
NEW DELHI, JUNE 13

DELHI IS set to expand its air quality monitoring infrastructure with the installation of six new Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS), targeting areas not typically associated with high pollution.

The expansion, led by the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC), is part of ongoing efforts to develop a more granular understanding of pollution patterns across different urban environments, Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa told *The Indian Express*. He said the government is aiming to have these stations operational by August, before winter sets in, when the city is hit by severe air pollution.

"It is a crucial step for holistic data on pollution in all areas," he said. He emphasised the need to shift focus from only known pol-

WHERE WILL THE NEW STATIONS COME UP

- JNU, IGNOU campuses in South Delhi
- ISRO Earth Station near Malcha Mahal in Ridge
- Delhi Cantonment in New Delhi
- West Campus, Netaji Subhash University of Technology in



Southwest Delhi

- Commonwealth Sports Complex in Central Delhi

lution corridors to areas that are often assumed to be clean. "It is a myth that so-called green areas are not polluted. Vehicular pollution is a cause of concern throughout the city. So, it is necessary that we get pollution data for such areas too, not just the usual hotspots," he said.

At present, Delhi has 40 CAAQMS and 7 manual stations. Of these, 26 have been set up by

the DPCC, while others by the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

The new stations would improve geographic coverage and bring under observation several areas that are not traditionally seen as pollution hotspots, said Sirsa.



सत्यमेव जयते



Central Pollution Control Board
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Government of India



SYLLABUS: GS 3: Environment, Pollution
Newspaper : The Indian Express, Page No : 3

About National Air Quality Index

1. Air Quality Index is a tool for effective communication of air quality status to people in terms, which are easy to understand. It transforms complex air quality data of various pollutants into a single number (index value), nomenclature and colour.
2. There are six AQI categories, namely Good, Satisfactory, Moderately polluted, Poor, Very Poor, and Severe. Each of these categories is decided based on ambient concentration values of air pollutants and their likely health impacts (known as health breakpoints). AQ sub-index and health breakpoints are evolved for eight pollutants (PM_{10} , $PM_{2.5}$, NO_2 , SO_2 , CO, O_3 , NH_3 , and Pb) for which short-term (upto 24-hours) National Ambient Air Quality Standards are prescribed.

AQI Category	AQI	Concentration Range*							
		PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$	NO_2	O_3	CO	SO_2	NH_3	Pb
Good	0-50	0-50	0-30	0-40	0-50	0-1.0	0-40	0-200	0-0.5
Satisfactory	51 - 100	51-100	31-60	41-80	51-100	1.1-2.0	41-80	201-400	0.5-1.0
Moderately Polluted	101-200	101-250	61-90	81-180	101-168	2.1-10	81-380	401-800	1.1-2.0
Poor	201-300	251-350	91-120	181-280	169-208	10-17	381-800	801-1200	2.1-3.0
Very Poor	301-400	351-430	121-250	281-400	209-748*	17-34	801-1600	1200-1800	3.1-3.5
Severe	401-500	430+	250+	400+	748+*	34+	1600+	1800+	3.5+

* CO in mg/m^3 and other pollutants in $\mu g/m^3$; 24-hourly average values for PM_{10} , $PM_{2.5}$, NO_2 , SO_2 , NH_3 , and Pb, and 8-hourly values for CO and O_3 .



SYLLABUS: GS 2: International Relations
Newspaper : The Hindu, Page No : 12

Suhasini Haidar

NEW DELHI

India abstained from a UN General Assembly resolution calling for a ceasefire in Gaza for the fourth time in three years, indicating a growing trend in the Modi government's policy not to vote on statements critical of Israel's bombardment of Gaza, in which 55,000 have been killed. India had voted in favour of a UNGA resolution for ceasefire in December 2024, making the latest move a significant departure from India's position just six months ago.

India's vote came in even as External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is in Paris for bilateral talks with French Foreign Minister Barrot, who is expected to request a high-level participation from India for a UN conference on creating conditions for a "Two-State solution", that France is organising jointly with Saudi Arabia. Diplomatic sources for both countries said they have not so far heard about In-

dia's participation at the conference dated June 17-20, or if India would be represented by the Permanent Mission of India in New York. The MEA did not comment on the issue.

According to a leaked demarche reported by U.S. media, the Trump administration has "warned" partner countries not to join the conference or to make pledges for the recognition of Palestine. India recognised Palestine in 1988, and is among 147 of 193 UNGA countries that have already recognised the Palestinian state.

19 abstentions

The resolution at the UNGA on Thursday evening was introduced by Spain, and applause broke out in the assembly as it was passed with more than 4/5ths of all countries voting for it. India was one of 19 abstentions on the vote along with Albania, Dominica, Ecuador, Kiribati, Malawi and other countries, while 149 of 180 countries voted for the resolution entitled "Protec-

tion of civilians and upholding legal and humanitarian obligations". The United States voted with Israel and 10 other countries against the resolution. India was the only country in South Asia, BRICS or the SCO groupings to abstain.

Explaining the vote, India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Parvathaneni Harish said that India was "deeply concerned" about the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, but

that it decided to abstain "in continuation" of previous votes in December 2022 criticising Israel for human rights violations and in December 2024 that referred the Israeli bombardment of Gaza to the International Court of Justice. India had also abstained from a vote calling for a ceasefire in October 2023 and two other resolutions pertaining to human rights investigations in 2023-2024.

"Our vote today is in

continuation of [these votes], in the belief that there is no other way to resolve conflicts but through dialogue and diplomacy," Mr. Harish said. The single exception in the recent past, was on December 13, 2024, when India joined 158 countries at the UNGA that demanded an immediate ceasefire at the time.

'Facilitate aid to Gaza'

The resolution passed at the UNGA had called on Israel and Hamas to comply with international law obligations, and an "immediate and permanent facilitation of full, rapid, safe and unhindered entry of humanitarian assistance at scale in Gaza, including food and medical supplies, fuel, shelter and access to clean drinking water".

In their explanation, the U.S. Acting Ambassador Dorothy Shea criticised the resolution for not being critical of Hamas, although it called for the immediate return of the remaining hostages. However, Russian Ambassador Vasily Nebenzya said the death

toll from Israel's bombardment and blockade of Gaza restricting humanitarian aid into the enclave was unacceptable and a ceasefire was necessary immediately. In the past three months since Israel cancelled the ceasefire, UN agencies, including WHO, estimate that dozens of children have died due to malnutrition effects, while about half a million of the two million people in Gaza face a "catastrophic situation of hunger, acute malnutrition, starvation, illness and death".

"There was a time when the world was still horrified that the number of those killed in the Gaza Strip was approaching 15, 20- or 30,000 people," Mr. Nebenzya said. "Now that number is almost twice that – 55,000."

All eyes are now on the French-Saudi conference that will bring together all members of the UNGA to discuss how to implement a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine beginning June 17, just after the G-7 summit in Canada.



SYLLABUS: GS 2: Regulatory Bodies
Newspaper : The Indian Express, Page No : 1

At crash site, flight data recorder found, likely to provide leads for probe

**SUKALP SHARMA
& RITU SHARMA**
NEW DELHI, AHMEDABAD,
JUNE 13

ONE OF the black boxes of the Air India Boeing 787-8 aircraft has been recovered from the crash site in Ahmedabad by the on-site team of the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB), which is leading the investigation into the worst aviation disaster involving an Indian airline in decades.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



भारत सरकार | नागर विमानन मंत्रालय
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA | MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION



वायुयान दुर्घटना अन्वेषण ब्यूरो
AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BUREAU

Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau, India (AAIB, India) is an attached office of the Government of India, Ministry of Civil Aviation. AAIB has the responsibility to fulfil the obligations of the State under Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation signed at Chicago on the 7 December 1944 as amended from time to time.

In accordance with the 'Standards and Recommended Practices' (SARPS) contained in Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation and Government of India's 'State Safety Programme' (SSP); Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India established Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) on 30 July 2012.

AAIB, India is responsible for classification of 'Safety Occurrences' involving aircraft operating in the Indian Airspace into Accidents, Serious Incidents and Incidents. All Accidents and Serious Incidents involving aircraft with AUW more than 2250 Kgs or Turbojet aircraft are investigated by AAIB. AAIB may investigate serious incidents or incidents to aircraft apart from the ones mentioned above, if it appears expedient to hold an investigation into the circumstances of such serious incident or incident. As per the Rule 3 of Aircraft (Investigation of Accidents and Incidents) Rules, 2017 the sole objective of the investigations carried out by AAIB is prevention of accidents and incidents and not to apportion blame or liability.

After completion of Investigation and acceptance of the same by the Director General, AAIB, the Investigation Reports are made public and published by AAIB on its website. The accepted 'Final Investigation Reports' are also forwarded to International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the States participating in the investigation.

AAIB also conducts safety studies from time to time. The recommendations made in the Investigation Reports and Safety Studies are forwarded to the DGCA, India or Civil Aviation Regulatory bodies of other ICAO Contracting States for their implementation and follow up.

AAIB also facilitates the investigation and administrative work of Court or Assessors appointed by the Central Government as per Rule 12 of Aircraft (Investigation of Accidents and Incidents) Rules, 2017.



Q1. Regarding the Scheduled Tribes (STs), consider the following statements:

1. The Constitution of India explicitly defines the criteria for recognizing a Scheduled Tribe.
2. Traits like geographical isolation, social and educational backwardness, and shyness are considered while identifying STs.
3. Scheduled Tribes constitute around 25% of the Indian population.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

Answer: a

Q2. Which of the following countries share a border with Iran?

1. Turkey
2. Azerbaijan
3. Turkmenistan
4. Kazakhstan
5. Afghanistan

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

- a) 1, 2, 3 and 4 only
- b) 1, 3 and 4 only
- c) 2, 4 and 5 only
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 5 only

Answer: d

Q3. Consider the following statements regarding UNFPA:

1. It is the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency, founded in 1969.
2. Its mission includes ensuring accessible family planning, and contraceptive access.

Which of the statements given above is/ are correct?

- a) 1 Only
- b) 2 Only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: c

Q4. Regarding the National Air Quality Index (AQI), consider the following statements:

1. The AQI classifies air quality into six categories, including Satisfactory and Severe.
2. It covers eight pollutants including PM10, NO₂, and ozone.
3. It measures long-term exposure to pollutants like lead and ammonia.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) All of the above

Answer: a

Q5. Consider the following statements regarding the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) of India:

1. It functions under the Ministry of Civil Aviation as an attached office.
2. It fulfils India's obligations under the International Civil Aviation Convention.
3. It is responsible for classifying events like Accidents, Serious Incidents, and Incidents involving aircraft.
4. It also monitors air pollution levels for aircraft emissions in Indian airspace.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) Only Three
- d) All Four

Answer: c





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