

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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Edition : International Table of Contents

Page 03 Syllabus : GS 2 : International Relations/ Prelims	भारत और कनाडा के बीच संबंधों में सुधार के साथ, राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा सलाहकारों ने सुरक्षा सहयोग पर बातचीत की
Page 03 Syllabus : Prelims	ओडिशा के पारादीप बंदरगाह पर गश्ती जहाज अदम्य का जलावतरण
Page 06 Syllabus : GS 2 : International Relations / Prelims	सऊदी-पाकिस्तान समझौता एक संदिग्ध बीमा पॉलिसी है
Page 06 Syllabus : GS 2 : Social Justice / Prelims	'केवल अधिकार ही गलत को रोक सकते हैं'
Page 10 Syllabus : GS 3 : Environment / Prelims	एकल-उपयोग वाले प्लास्टिक पर प्रतिबंध एक खोखला वादा बना हुआ है
Page 06 : Editorial Analysis Syllabus : GS 2 & 3 : International Relations & Environment	भारत से सीख लेकर एक जलवायु-स्वास्थ्य दृष्टिकोण

भारत और कनाडा के संबंध साझा लोकतांत्रिक मूल्यों, कॉमनवेल्थ सदस्यता तथा 16 लाख से अधिक भारतीय मूल की प्रवासी आबादी से गहरे जुड़े हैं। फिर भी, कनाडा में खालिस्तानी गतिविधियों को लेकर द्विपक्षीय संबंधों में तनाव बना रहा है। हाल ही में राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा सलाहकार (NSA) अजित डोभाल और उनकी कनाडाई समकक्ष नाथाली डूइन के बीच नई दिल्ली में हुई वार्ता इस तनावपूर्ण दौर के बाद संबंधों को फिर से पटरी पर लाने का एक प्रयास है।

As India and Canada reset ties, NSAs hold talks on security cooperation

MEA describes meeting held in Delhi as opportunity to take forward discussion by Modi and Carney in June; Ajit Doval and his Canadian counterpart Nathalie Drouin focus on counter-terrorism and extradition of Khalistani activists wanted in India

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Indian and Canadian National Security Advisers (NSAs) and security teams held talks on enhancing bilateral cooperation in Delhi on Thursday, two years after bilateral ties were ripped apart by Ottawa's allegation that Indian government officials were linked to the killing of Khalistani activist Harjeet Singh Nijjar.

"This is part of the regular bilateral security consultations that happen between the two countries," said Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal. "It was also an opportunity and occasion for them to follow up on the discussions that happened between Prime Minister [Narendra Modi] and [Canadian] Prime Minister [Mark] Carney in Kananaskis on the sidelines of G-7 in Alberta [in June this year]," he added.



Warming ties: Narendra Modi greets Mark Carney during the G-7 Summit in Kananaskis, Canada, on June 17. REUTERS

Sources told *The Hindu* that the day-long talks between NSA Ajit Doval and Nathalie Drouin, the Canadian National Security and Intelligence Adviser, did not focus on the Nijjar case, which is now in trial court. Instead, they discussed moving ahead on sharing information and counter-terror cooperation, as well as India's requests for the extradition of a number of Khalistani activists wanted in cases registered in India.

The Canadian delega-

tion included Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs David Morrison, Royal Canadian Mounted Police Commissioner Mike Duheme, and senior diplomats from Global Affairs Canada.

Significantly, many officials on both sides of the table had been part of the stormy meetings held in 2023, when Canada had claimed it had "credible evidence" that Indian government agents were connected to the assassination of Nijjar who was shot

dead outside a Toronto-area gurudwara in June 2023.

In particular, a meeting in Singapore between Mr. Doval and his previous counterpart had ended with both sides trading charges, and subsequently expelling each other's diplomats for espionage.

The repairing of ties began only earlier this year, after Mr. Carney invited Mr. Modi to the G-7 summit, and both sides decided to restore their High Commissioners and restart the trade talks suspended by Canada two years ago.

Khalistani threats

The talks in Delhi came a day after a Khalistani group laid "siege" to the Indian Consulate in Vancouver, to protest what it called "espionage and surveillance by Indian diplomats" and also targeted the newly arrived Indian High Commissioner to Canada, Dinesh Patnaik, on posters. Mr. Patnaik and Cana-

da's High Commissioner to India Christopher Cooter took charge of their missions last week, and are expected to present their credentials in Ottawa and Delhi later this month.

Asked whether India had taken up the latest threats with the visiting Canadian delegation, Mr. Jaiswal said that the security of diplomatic missions is the responsibility of the host government.

"As and when there is a concern, we do take it up with our [counterparts] in Canada to ensure that there is adequate security of our diplomatic premises," Mr. Jaiswal said.

On Friday, Mr. Morrison also held talks with MEA Secretary (East) P. Kumaran on resuming all dialogue mechanisms suspended since 2023, including on trade, defence and other issues and address the problems for visas due to the downsizing of diplomatic staff strength.

वर्तमान संदर्भ

1. सुरक्षा वार्ता (सितंबर 2025):

- वार्ता का केंद्र बिंदु रहा आतंकवाद-रोधी सहयोग, सूचना साझा करना और भारत में वांछित खालिस्तानी कार्यकर्ताओं का प्रत्यर्पण।
- यह बैठक जून 2025 में जी-7 सम्मेलन के दौरान प्रधानमंत्री मोदी और प्रधानमंत्री मार्क कार्नी के बीच हुई चर्चा की कड़ी मानी गई।
- निज्जर हत्याकांड (2023) से जुड़े मुकदमे को वार्ता में शामिल नहीं किया गया ताकि संवाद बाधित न हो।

2. राजनयिक संबंधों की बहाली:

- दोनों देशों ने अपने उच्चायुक्तों की पुनर्नियुक्ति की।
- दो साल से रुकी हुई व्यापार वार्ता और अन्य संवाद तंत्रों को पुनः शुरू करने पर सहमति।
- कनाडाई प्रतिनिधिमंडल में वरिष्ठ सुरक्षा अधिकारी और कूटनीतिज्ञ शामिल रहे।

3. चुनौतियाँ शेष:

- कनाडा में खालिस्तानी समूह लगातार भारतीय दूतावास और राजनयिकों को निशाना बना रहे हैं (जैसे वैकूवर वाणिज्य दूतावास की घेराबंदी)।
- भारत की मुख्य चिंता है कि कनाडा इन गतिविधियों को रोकने में प्रभावी नहीं रहा।

स्थैतिक सन्दर्भ

- प्रवासी कारक: कनाडा में भारत के बाहर सबसे बड़ी सिख आबादी है, जो वहाँ की आंतरिक राजनीति को प्रभावित करती है।
- संस्थागत ढाँचा: 2005 से रणनीतिक साझेदारी, 2010 में परमाणु ऊर्जा सहयोग समझौता।
- आर्थिक संबंध: 2022-23 में लगभग 8 अरब डॉलर का द्विपक्षीय व्यापार। CEPA (व्यापक आर्थिक भागीदारी समझौता) और FIPA (निवेश संरक्षण समझौता) पर वार्ता जारी।
- बहुपक्षीय सहयोग: G-20, UN, कॉमनवेल्थ, आर्कटिक काउंसिल इत्यादि मंचों पर सहयोग।

विश्लेषण

- **भारत के लिए महत्व:**
 - कनाडा से यूरेनियम आपूर्ति, तकनीकी सहयोग और आर्कटिक क्षेत्र में रणनीतिक भूमिका।
 - भारत चाहता है कि कनाडा खालिस्तानी गतिविधियों पर नियंत्रण करे और प्रत्यर्पण संधि को मजबूत करे।
- **कनाडा के लिए महत्व:**
 - भारत एक बड़ा आर्थिक और रणनीतिक भागीदार, सप्लाई चेन विविधीकरण तथा इंडो-पैसिफिक रणनीति के लिए अहम।
 - लेकिन घरेलू राजनीति और अभिव्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता के मुद्दे बाधा बनते हैं।
- **कूटनीतिक संतुलन:**
 - निज्जर मामले को वार्ता से अलग रखना यह दर्शाता है कि दोनों देश बड़े मुद्दों को प्राथमिकता देना चाहते हैं।
 - फिर भी, बार-बार की चरमपंथी गतिविधियाँ भरोसे को चुनौती देती हैं।

निष्कर्ष

नई दिल्ली में हुई भारत-कनाडा सुरक्षा वार्ता दोनों देशों के संबंधों को पुनः प्रगति पर लाने का संकेत है। आतंकवाद-रोधी सहयोग और प्रत्यर्पण जैसे मुद्दे कठिन अवश्य हैं, परंतु व्यापार, रक्षा और रणनीतिक हितों को देखते हुए संवाद बनाए रखना आवश्यक है। दीर्घकालिक स्थिरता इस पर निर्भर करेगी कि कनाडा भारत की सुरक्षा चिंताओं का समाधान कैसे करता है और दोनों देश अपने साझा लोकतांत्रिक मूल्यों को सहयोग के आधार पर कैसे आगे बढ़ाते हैं।

UPSC Prelims Practice Question

Ques: भारत-कनाडा संबंधों के संदर्भ में CEPA और FIPA किससे संबंधित हैं?

- (a) रक्षा सहयोग
- (b) निवेश एवं व्यापार सहयोग
- (c) आर्कटिक अनुसंधान सहयोग
- (d) परमाणु ऊर्जा सहयोग

Ans: (b)

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Ques: भारत-कनाडा संबंधों में प्रवासी भारतीय समुदाय (Indian Diaspora) की भूमिका की समीक्षा कीजिए। क्या यह शक्ति (asset) है या चुनौती (liability)? उदाहरण सहित स्पष्ट कीजिए। (250 Words)

भारतीय तटरक्षक बल (Indian Coast Guard – ICG) भारत की 7,500 किमी लंबी तटरेखा और विशिष्ट आर्थिक क्षेत्र (EEZ) की सुरक्षा में अहम भूमिका निभाता है। ओडिशा के पारादीप बंदरगाह पर आद्यम्य-श्रेणी की पहली फास्ट पेट्रोल वेसल आद्यम्य का कमीशन होना तटीय सुरक्षा को मज़बूत करने और “मेक इन इंडिया” पहल को आगे बढ़ाने की दिशा में एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम है।

वर्तमान परिप्रेक्ष्य

1. तकनीकी विशेषताएँ:

- लंबाई: 51 मीटर; विस्थापन: लगभग 320 टन।
- दो डीज़ल इंजन (3000 KW) से संचालित; अधिकतम गति 28 नॉट्स।
- सहनशक्ति: 1,500 नॉटिकल मील।
- स्वदेशी कंट्रोलैबल पिच प्रोपेलर (CPP) और गियरबॉक्स से सुसज्जित।

2. स्वदेशीकरण:

- 60% से अधिक स्वदेशी सामग्री का उपयोग।
- आत्मनिर्भर भारत व रक्षा स्वदेशीकरण नीति के अनुरूप उपलब्धि।

3. रणनीतिक महत्व:

- निगरानी, खोज एवं बचाव (SAR), तस्करी-रोधी, अवैध मछली पकड़ने-रोधी तथा प्रदूषण नियंत्रण कार्यों में उपयोगी।
- बंगाल की खाड़ी और पूर्वी तट की सुरक्षा में वृद्धि।

स्थैतिक परिप्रेक्ष्य

- भारतीय तटरक्षक बल (ICG): 1977 में स्थापित, रक्षा मंत्रालय के अधीन। मुख्य कार्य – तटीय सुरक्षा, समुद्री कानून प्रवर्तन, पर्यावरण संरक्षण, मानवीय सहायता।
- बेड़े की शक्ति: वर्तमान में ~150 पोत और ~65 विमान; लक्ष्य 2030 तक 200 पोत और 100 विमान।
- पारादीप बंदरगाह: पूर्वी तट का प्रमुख बंदरगाह; ऊर्जा आयात (कोयला, कूड) और औद्योगिक गतिविधियों के लिए महत्वपूर्ण।
- समुद्री सुरक्षा: भारत का EEZ लगभग 23.7 लाख वर्ग किमी है; तटरक्षक बल का योगदान मछली पालन, समुद्री यातायात तथा गैर-पारंपरिक खतरों (समुद्री डकैती, तस्करी, आतंकवाद) से निपटने में अहम।



Keeping watch: The Indian Coast Guard ship *Adamya* was commissioned at Paradip Port. X/@IndiaCoastGuard

Patrol ship *Adamya* commissioned at Odisha's Paradip Port

The Hindu Bureau
BHUBANESWAR

Indian Coast Guard ship *Adamya*, the first in a series of eight *Adamya*-class fast patrol vessels, was commissioned at Paradip Port on Friday. According to the Coast Guard, the 51-metre-long vessel has more than 60% indigenous content, strengthening India's maritime might under the Make in India initiative.

“The ship displaces ap-

proximately 320 tonnes and is propelled by two 3,000 KW diesel engines to attain a maximum speed of 28 Knots. She has an endurance of 1,500 nm at economical speed,” the Coast Guard said. “*Adamya* is the first ICG ship fitted with indigenously developed two Controllable Pitch Propellers and gearboxes offering superior manoeuvrability, operational flexibility and enhanced performance at sea,” it added.

विश्लेषण

- रणनीतिक बढ़त: आदम्य का कमीशनिंग भारत की समुद्री डोमेन जागरूकता (MDA) को मज़बूत करता है और नौसेना की गहरे समुद्र की क्षमताओं को तटीय सतर्कता से पूरक करता है।
- स्वदेशी प्रगति: CPP और गियरबॉक्स जैसे स्वदेशी उपकरण आयात पर निर्भरता घटाते हैं।
- क्षेत्रीय सुरक्षा: पूर्वी समुद्री तट की क्षमता बढ़ाना भारत की Act East Policy और हिंद-प्रशांत क्षेत्र में समुद्री मार्गों की सुरक्षा से जुड़ा हुआ है।

निष्कर्ष

आईसीजीएस आदम्य का कमीशनिंग भारत की समुद्री शक्ति और रक्षा स्वदेशीकरण की दिशा में महत्वपूर्ण उपलब्धि है। यह पोत न केवल तटीय सुरक्षा बल्कि गैर-पारंपरिक समुद्री खतरों से निपटने में भी उपयोगी सिद्ध होगा। दीर्घकाल में ऐसे जहाज़ भारत को हिंद महासागर क्षेत्र में "नेट सिक्योरिटी प्रोवाइडर" बनने के लक्ष्य की ओर अग्रसर करेंगे।

UPSC Prelims Practice Question

Ques: ICGS Adamya के संदर्भ में निम्नलिखित कथनों पर विचार कीजिए:

1. यह भारतीय तटरक्षक बल की पहली Adamya-class फास्ट पेट्रोल वेसल है।
2. इसमें स्वदेशी कंट्रोलैबल पिच प्रोपेलर (CPP) और गियरबॉक्स लगे हैं।
3. इसका अधिकतम विस्थापन लगभग 3,200 टन है।

उपर्युक्त में से कौन-सा/से कथन सही है/हैं?

- (a) केवल 1 और 2
- (b) केवल 2 और 3
- (c) केवल 1 और 3
- (d) 1, 2 और 3

Ans: (a)

17 सितंबर, 2025 को सऊदी क्राउन प्रिंस मोहम्मद बिन सलमान और पाकिस्तान के प्रधानमंत्री शाहबाज शरीफ ने Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) पर हस्ताक्षर किए। यह समझौता दोनों देशों के बीच सैन्य सहयोग को औपचारिक रूप देने का प्रयास है। हालाँकि यह क्षेत्रीय सुरक्षा की बदलती परिस्थितियों में, जैसे कि अमेरिका की विश्वसनीयता में गिरावट और ईरान-इज़राइल तनाव के मद्देनज़र, एक रणनीतिक कदम है, इसके प्रभावशीलता और स्थायित्व पर सवाल बने हुए हैं।

The Saudi-Pakistan pact is a dodgy insurance policy

The signing of the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) in Riyadh, on September 17, 2025, by the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Pakistani Premier Shahbaz Sharif, with Field Marshal Asim Munir in attendance, is a victory of future hope over past experience. Sunni majority Saudi Arabia and Pakistan share several commonalities. But they also have significant differences, restricting their past defence cooperation. Moreover, they have mutually dissenting threat perceptions.

All this prompts questions about whether the recent agreement would be effective and sustainable, and its granular impact on South West Asia.

The highs and the lows

The bilateral defence links date back to 1951, and their golden period was during 1979-89 when a nearly 20,000-strong Pakistani military contingent was deployed in Saudi Arabia to protect the Holy Harams and Al-Saud in addition to acting as the bulwark against Iran and Yemen. However, mutual differences soon clouded the equation.

At the perceptual level, while the Saudi leadership treated the Pakistani contingent as paid Praetorian Guards, Pakistani top brass, used to commanding back home, bristled at being ordered around. Saudi insistence against the exclusion of Shia troops among the Pakistan contingent was often a deal breaker. By 1990, the entire contingent was sent back. During the subsequent threats faced by the Kingdom – from the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 to the Yemeni civil war in 2015 – Pakistan declined Saudi call for deployment, much to the Saudi chagrin. Pakistan avowedly limited their military involvement to defending the kingdom's two Holy Harams against foreign invasion.

The Pentagon has traditionally underpinned the Saudi-Pakistani defence alliance, albeit in an over-the-horizon manner. In the current case, too, the chronology suggests United States involvement. On June 7, Mr. Sharif and Field Marshal Munir met the Saudi Crown Prince in Riyadh to announce the bilateral “strategic cooperation”. On June 22, with the Israel-Iran air war raging, U.S. President Trump hosted a “private lunch” at the White House for Field Marshal Munir, without any previous acquaintance. Circumstantial evidence suggests that the Saudi Crown Prince used his proximity to Mr. Trump to arrange a brainstorming of Pakistan's role in defending Saudi Arabia and other pro-Western regional countries.

Subsequent bromance between the Trump administration and General Headquarters Rawalpindi was presumably under the conviction that Pakistan had the smart keys to the western geostrategic piquancy in West Asia, ranging from a backdoor to Iran to anchoring Gulf Cooperation



Mahesh Sachdev

is a retired Indian Ambassador specialising in West Asia and oil affairs

Council (GCC) security through “boots on the ground.” The SMDA was a Hobson's choice for the Saudi Crown Prince. He is known to have demanded that the U.S. fulfil three prerequisites for Saudi recognition of Israel: a binding bilateral Defence Agreement, access to nuclear technology and state-of-the-art American weapon systems. The U.S., in turn, wanted Saudi Arabia to recognise Israel first to enable the passage of the proposed pact through the Congress. However, this delicate choreography was upended by the Hamas blitz on Israel, on October 7, 2023, and the subsequent Israeli invasion of Gaza. The death and destruction in Gaza has caused massive opprobrium and vitiated the political ambience in the Arab Islamic Ummah, forcing the Kingdom, which hosts Islam's two holiest shrines, to postpone the move indefinitely. Thus, the SMDA became a distant consolation prize for Riyadh.

The September 9 Israeli air attack on Hamas's office in Doha added an air of urgency to the SMDA process: it was the first Israeli military attack on a GCC member, viz., Qatar, which hosts the largest U.S. military base in West Asia and has a defence agreement with the U.S. While Washington conceded to having been pre-informed by Israel, it did not defend the country, as obligated, and lamely offered assurance that such attacks would not be repeated. The episode dented the credibility of the U.S.'s security assurances to the GCC States, including Saudi Arabia.

The calculations

Historically, Riyadh has avoided stationing any Arab military contingents on its soil to avoid a political pollination of its masses. It has also chosen not to have troops from Türkiye, the former colonial master. The deployment of non-Muslim U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization troops in the Kingdom to defend Islam's holy shrines during the 1990-91 Kuwait war caused a serious religious rift in the powerful Saudi clergy. Thus, past reservations notwithstanding, Riyadh has narrowed down to the SMDA with Pakistan.

Four points need to be mentioned. First, the Kingdom has got along reasonably well without foreign forces on its soil since 1991, having survived al-Qaeda terrorism, the second Iraqi war and the Yemeni civil war. Riyadh has ordered nearly \$100 billion worth of advanced American weapons during Mr. Trump's visit earlier this year, further bolstering its defences. Second, Pakistan is now a declared nuclear weapons state, and the SMDA could come in handy in case Iran becomes one. Third, Pakistan's strategic tie-up with China, its “all-weather friend”, may be an obstacle in the way of an unmitigated military camaraderie. Last but not least, while a transfer of Pakistani nuclear weapons to Saudi Arabia under the SMDA is possible, it would be highly improbable, given Israeli red lines. It would be

recalled that during the June 2025 war, Pakistani generals reportedly promised to extend a nuclear umbrella to Iran against Israel, only to swiftly recant. However, given A.Q. Khan's precedent, a surreptitious transfer of technology for developing nuclear weapons and delivery systems cannot be ruled out. For these reasons, the SMDA is likely to presage smaller Pakistani footprints in Saudi Arabia than the past involvements.

Islamabad's calculations from the SMDA are likely to be quite asymmetrical to Riyadh's. It has no intention to fight Iran, Yemen or Israel at Saudi behest any more than Saudi would take an active adversarial military role against India or Afghanistan in a South Asian conflict. It would rather exploit the Saudi insecurity to its multiple advantages, keenly monetising the IOUs (“I owe you”) from Riyadh and Washington to get defence hardware, train on Saudi equipment and personal aggrandisement of its top brass. They would also hope that this trilateral axis would underwrite its intrinsic strategic disadvantage against India. Pakistan would also expect large dollops of Saudi funds and oil supplies to salvage its moribund economy.

Thus, on balance, unless the worst-case scenario pans out – when all bets are off – the SMDA is essentially for the optics and to ensure that Islamabad stays away from Tehran.

What it means for India

Where does the SMDA leave India? Here, India has few cards. India is the world's third-largest oil importer and the only large economy with rising oil consumption. It is traditionally Saudi Arabia's second-largest trading partner and crude buyer. Its diaspora, the Kingdom's largest, is preferred for competence and non-interference. Energetic diplomacy since 2014 has enabled India to bond well with Saudi Arabia, creating bilateral defence and intelligence-sharing ecosystems. Saudi Arabia plans to invest \$100 billion in India, although actual delivery is far short. Significantly, while announcing the SMDA, Reuters quoted an unnamed senior Saudi official as acknowledging the need to balance relations with Pakistan and India, “also a nuclear power”. He added, “Our relationship with India is more robust than it has ever been. We will continue to grow this relationship and seek to contribute to regional peace in whichever way we can.” An official Indian spokesman has also hinted that Riyadh took New Delhi into confidence over the SMDA negotiations. This not only shows that Riyadh needs all the friends it can get on board but also that India's strategic geoeconomic heft seems enough for the moment to “balance” tactical manoeuvring by Pakistan. The SMDA, nevertheless, enjoins India to be vigilant and create greater synergies across the Arabian Sea.

The views expressed are personal

ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ

- प्रारंभिक सहयोग (1951 onwards): पाकिस्तान के ~20,000 सैनिक 1979–89 में सऊदी अरब में तैनात थे, मुख्य रूप से पवित्र स्थलों और ईरान/यमन की चुनौतियों के खिलाफ।
- सहयोग में गिरावट: 1990 तक सभी सैनिक वापस बुला लिए गए; बाद में पाकिस्तान ने खाड़ी युद्ध (1990), इराक युद्ध (2003) और यमन गृहयुद्ध (2015) में तैनाती से इनकार किया।
- धारणा में अंतर: सऊदी नेतृत्व ने सैनिकों को भुगतान प्राप्त प्रिटोरियन गार्ड माना, जबकि पाकिस्तानी कमांडरों को आदेशों का पालन करना अस्वीकार्य लगा।

वर्तमान संदर्भ और गणना

1. सऊदी दृष्टिकोण:

- अमेरिकी सुरक्षा आश्वासन की विश्वसनीयता घटने के बाद सुरक्षा चिंता।
- ईरान के परमाणु खतरे के खिलाफ बीमा।
- सीमाएँ: पहले से ही \$100 बिलियन के अमेरिकी हथियार, पाकिस्तान-चीन गठबंधन और इज़राइल की परमाणु "रेड लाइन" की सावधानी।

2. पाकिस्तान की दृष्टि:

- ईरान, यमन या इज़राइल से युद्ध की कोई इच्छा नहीं।
- समझौते का उपयोग आर्थिक मदद, तेल और हथियार प्राप्त करने के लिए।
- सऊदी और अमेरिकी असुरक्षा का लाभ उठाकर भारत के खिलाफ रणनीतिक संतुलन।

3. अमेरिका का रोल:

- SMDA के पीछे अमेरिकी प्रोत्साहन, जैसा कि हाल की घटनाओं से संकेत मिलता है।

भारत पर प्रभाव

- ऊर्जा सुरक्षा: भारत दुनिया का तीसरा सबसे बड़ा तेल आयातक और सऊदी कूड का बड़ा खरीदार।
- प्रवास और व्यापार: ~2.2 मिलियन भारतीय सऊदी में, द्विपक्षीय व्यापार ~ \$50 बिलियन।
- रणनीतिक संतुलन: सऊदी ने स्पष्ट किया कि भारत के साथ संबंध मजबूत हैं।
- सुरक्षा: भारत को अरब सागर और IOR में सतर्क रहना होगा और सऊदी के साथ रक्षा व कूटनीतिक सहयोग को मजबूत करना होगा।

विश्लेषण

- प्रतीकात्मकता बनाम वास्तविकता: SMDA अधिक प्रतीकात्मक और सुरक्षा बीमा जैसी है, वास्तविक सैन्य गठबंधन नहीं।
- पारस्परिक अविश्वास: ऐतिहासिक विफलताओं और भिन्न खतरे की धारणा से सहयोग सीमित रहेगा।
- क्षेत्रीय भू-राजनीति: सऊदी अमेरिका, चीन, ईरान और भारत के बीच संतुलन बना रही है, जबकि पाकिस्तान आर्थिक और रणनीतिक लाभ तलाश रहा है।

निष्कर्ष

सऊदी-पाकिस्तान SMDA को सुरक्षा बीमा नीति के रूप में देखना उचित है। पाकिस्तान आर्थिक और सैन्य लाभ चाहता है, जबकि सऊदी अमेरिका की घटती विश्वसनीयता और ईरान-इज़राइल तनाव में प्रतीकात्मक आश्वासन चाहता है। भारत के लिए यह याद दिलाता है कि रणनीतिक सतर्कता, ऊर्जा और रक्षा सहयोग को मजबूत करना, और अरब सागर में प्रभाव बनाए रखना आवश्यक है।

UPSC Prelims Practice Question

Ques: Saudi Arabia और Pakistan ने हाल ही में किस समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर किए हैं?

- a) CEPA
- b) Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement
- c) FIPA
- d) GCC Security Pact

Ans : b)

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Ques: भारत के रणनीतिक और आर्थिक हितों के परिप्रेक्ष्य में SMDA की चुनौतियों और अवसरों का मूल्यांकन कीजिए। (150 Words)

कोलकाता का सोनागाछी भारत का सबसे पुराना और बड़ा रेड-लाइट जिला है, जहाँ लगभग 12,000 सेक्स वर्कर्स रहती हैं। दशकों से यह समुदाय सामाजिक कलंक, हिंसा, शोषण और मूलभूत अधिकारों की कमी का सामना कर रहा है, बावजूद इसके कि यह सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य जैसे HIV/AIDS रोकथाम में योगदान देता रहा है। दुर्बार महिला समन्वय समिति (DMSC), जो 30 साल पूरे कर रही है, सेक्स वर्कर्स और ट्रांसजेंडर समुदाय के श्रमिक अधिकार, सामाजिक मान्यता और सशक्तिकरण के लिए अग्रणी रही है।



An transgender sex worker poses on the eve of International Labour Day in 2022, in Sonagachi, Kolkata, where the community took part in a torch rally demanding about rights. ©: ILO/WHO

'Only rights can stop the wrongs'

Kolkata's Sonagachi is one of the largest and oldest red-light areas in India with over 12,000 workers. For decades, the community has fought social taboos, STDs, violence and more. As Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, a collective of sex workers, turns 30, **Shrabana Chatterjee** talks to the community about their lives, difficult working conditions, their long-sought demand to be recognised as workers, and the irony that the soil for the Durga Puja Idols comes from their part of town

Only rights can stop the wrongs', reads a poster inside the community centre at the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee (DMSC) office in Sonagachi, Kolkata, West Bengal's capital. The poster dates back to 2000, it still carries the weight of an unfinished fight in the red-light area. DMSC, an organisation working for the rights of sex workers, celebrated 20 years of existence on July 15.

DMSC began distributing condoms in 1992 to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic; its formation was based on a consensus HIV/AIDS survey by Dr. Samant Lal, who was commissioned by the World Health Organisation. At the time, high-risk populations were identified and covered into testing. Dr. Janta asked for the women's permission. Over time, DMSC, which includes transgender people, has emerged as a sex workers' rights organisation, refusing to let people see from their profession speak their truth.

Sonagachi, which translates to golden tree — from the amount of money men spent in these north Kolkata lanes — has no signboard. The area and its people still bear the load of stigma. Historically, sculptors have taken soil from Sonagachi to make the Durga idols but the sex workers are not allowed into regular pandals.

In 2011, they tried to start their own Durga Puja celebration but were met with violent resistance from people. They moved the Calcutta High Court and got their rights. Though held indoors, the joy of celebrating their own Durga Puja in their own locality was a victory.

About 12,000 women in the area live through the dense, layered history of Sonagachi. There are another 26,000 associated with DMSC across West Bengal.

In the folds of the night
On a cloudy morning on July 15, about 150 women of Sonagachi have gathered at a neighbourhood park to celebrate their 30-year-old journey. "Gor khariyehi chahi, somer khariyehi chahi" (I work hard for my bread, I demand workers' rights), a song streams in the background as the women prepare to play musical chairs and share a simple community lunch of rice, dal, and vegetable curry.

The women huddle together to catch up on daily gossip. Fatima Begum (name changed), 55, sits towards the back of the gathering that is facing a stage. She is pleasantly surprised to meet a friend from another part of Kolkata after 23 years. "I did everything for my parents, my family, I spent my whole life for them. What do I have left now? I am still alone," Fatima tells her friend.

She is now a field worker for DMSC and stopped sex work after her son got married. "I had to change my lifestyle so he could get social recognition," she says, adding that it's something she herself craves even though she has earned her own bread since she was a teenager.

As dusk descends, the women of Sonagachi are

beginning their workday. Located in the heart of Kolkata on one of the arterial roads of the city, Chittaranjan Avenue, the area starts bustling as the night progresses.

After her workday is done, an office-going woman comes onto her balcony in a multi-storied house in the area. A group of sex workers stands across the road. They are hardly 500 metres apart. They look at each other — that is as close as the women from the two worlds will get. The *bahon* (quarrel) line across both worlds.

Layered violence
Sonagachi is lined with hundreds of multi-storied buildings which have rooms stacked on each other like matchboxes, three or four floors high, and narrow, unadorned lanes and bylanes. Many of these houses are centuries old, some constructed way before the British arrived.

The sex workers of Sonagachi have lived through various kinds of violence while building their lives in this area, in this profession. Workers point out that violent and intoxicated customers are one of their 'biggest problems'.

"Boobs get drunk or high on substances, get angry, and rule it out on us. Other girls have to intervene when the violence gets out of hand," a young woman from Sonagachi says. Most women say they are used to a certain level of violence and verbal abuse — it is extreme violence they fear.

Through the years, they have fought to get the basics, like ration cards, Aadhaar cards, bank ac-

counts. When they were discriminated against, they started the USHA Cooperative, one of the first financial cooperatives in Asia that helps women control their own money.

"It is a misconception that every sex worker is trafficked. The authorities and society use this narrative to discriminate against us," says Bisakha Laskar, secretary of DMSC. In her late 40s, Bisakha says many women join the sex trade to earn a living and feed their families. She insists that the only way to stop trafficking is to de-stigmatised sex work. "Trafficking is there in every sector of society, even daily wage labourers are trafficked," Bisakha adds.

To address the trafficking issue, DMSC has started a group where both sex workers and external members owned any new woman coming into the trade. They say they have rescued and rehabilitated over 2,000 girls who did not come in voluntarily.

In her office, Bisakha remembers her own journey in Sonagachi as she spells out each letter and slowly signs her name on official documents. She has learnt to read and write under the guidance of her teacher, Nargis Mukherjee, who has taught many women in the area. "We used to sit on plastic sheets for our classes. Whatever I have learnt, I have learnt from Sir," she adds.

Owning the journey
Rima Mondal (name changed) came to Sonagachi from Murshidabad with just 120 when she was 15. She has spent 23 years as a sex worker even though many had advised her in her early days that she was too young to get into this business.

But she came from an impoverished family and did not have other employment options to feed her family. "That one single phrase, 'omiser' (poor) — the time I got the salt, the rice was over."

Rima's family could not afford to pay ₹7,000 for her dowry, but through sex work she got her older brother married, retaining to take dowry from her sister-in-law. "No one came to feed me when I was struggling to eat empty stomach. They have no right to judge my life choices now," says Rima, who does field work for the DMSC during the day and returns to her regular job at night.

One reason she does not want to be photographed is that her daughter has married a man from Sonagachi, and she fears her daughter's in-laws may feel ashamed of her profession. In the last three decades, she has only managed to open up about her daughter's in-laws fought for her dignity and respected her choice, saying that she did not cheat anyone to earn a wage and did things on her own terms. She beams with pride while saying this, hoping her daughter's life will be less precarious than hers.

It is the evening. Rain lashes Kolkata, washing

the dust off trees and turning the city into a poor, clear canvas. In Sonagachi, the smell of old chips, rotting, pungent alcohol, and fried food is now mixed with the smell of fresh rainwater. Women try to duck from the rain, running into her building. She climbs up the dingy, dark, narrow serpentine stairs of the building she has lived in for the past 28 years, she is home.

Kima sits in her 4x4 ft. room on the fourth floor. She remembers that when she came into the trade, things were different. "From forced sex to violence by customers and neighbourhood goons, we have seen it all. During one of our trips to raise awareness and distribute condoms, brothel owners poured hot water on us because they thought we will force women to stop working and they would lose business," she says. "Over the years, the violence has reduced as women have become empowered to say no to customers who refuse to use condoms or ask for things which they do not want to do."

She sits on her bed, catching a moment of rest before she prepares her dinner and her customers arrive at night. Her kitchen spills over to the balcony. A single almirah and refrigerator hold all her belongings; everything has a place. There are two netted windows that barely allow light or air into the room, but keep the pests away.

On the green wall hang her awards and certificates, reminders of battles fought and milestones achieved. Hundreds of such rooms crowd these lanes, each reflecting the lives of its residents, the Didi, as locals call them.

Rights and wrongs
Priyanka Kar (name changed), in her 50s, calls herself a daughter of Sonagachi because her mother was said to be the sex partner in a police officer in the area. Kar is married and says that she has been doing sex work since she was a teenager. "I cannot be one of the inner room girls standing on the road here because my in-laws' house is also here. So I had to take and go to other places to do my work," Priyanka says, adding that her husband knew about her profession. She laughs and adds that she has always been "naughty", and never asked away from taking lovers because it was this work that helped her sustain her family.

Over time, her husband became abusive because of her profession. "I tried to kill myself when my family questioned my morality and work," she says. She found social recognition when her daughter's in-laws fought for her dignity and respected her choice, saying that she did not cheat anyone to earn a wage and did things on her own terms. She beams with pride while saying this, hoping her daughter's life will be less precarious than hers.

At a DMSC conference this January, Kingkha Sarkar, an assistant professor at the Centre for Management who had worked for the West Bengal government as a labour administrator, had said that the lack of acceptance of sex work as work causes problems in getting workers' rights and benefits. He insisted that sex workers need to be included in India's existing labour laws to normalise their work and stop human rights violations. "We all use our body parts to do work, then why is sex work different? And why are some body parts stigmatised?" said Sarkar.

The women of Sonagachi echo this, adding that they will also be protected by law if there is violence or harassment at the workplace. They can access public services without discrimination or stigma, and be included in other workers' schemes in the country.

Down the lanes of Sonagachi, there are at least a dozen different posters and banners of the local M.A. Shashi Parja, the Minister of Women and Child Development and Social Welfare of West Bengal. She is a regular at DMSC events, taking away some of the stigma.

The women though, refuse for their real names to be published or their photographs taken. They know the fallout could be severe.

shrabana.chatterjee@tribuneindia.com



The sex workers of the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee in Kolkata took their 'movement demanding workers' rights to the Parliament in Delhi in 2010. ©: ILO/WHO/UNESCO

वर्तमान संदर्भ

1. सामुदायिक संगठन और सशक्तिकरण:

- DMSC ने 1992 में WHO के सहयोग से कंडोम वितरण शुरू किया और धीरे-धीरे स्वयं-निर्देशित अधिकार आधारित संगठन बन गई।
- समुदाय ने राशन कार्ड, आधार, बैंक खाते और श्रमिक लाभ पाने के लिए संघर्ष किया।
- USHA Cooperative जैसी सहकारी समितियों के माध्यम से वित्तीय साक्षरता और मानव तस्करी से बचाव के प्रयास किए गए।

2. सांस्कृतिक भागीदारी और मान्यता:

- सेक्स वर्कर्स को ऐतिहासिक रूप से दुर्गा पूजा में शामिल होने से रोका गया, जबकि मिट्टी स्वयं उनके क्षेत्र से आती थी।
- कानूनी लड़ाई के बाद सीमित भागीदारी संभव हुई, जो सामाजिक मान्यता की दिशा में एक कदम है।

3. मुख्य चुनौतियाँ:

- ग्राहकों और दलालों से हिंसा और दुर्व्यवहार, सामाजिक बहिष्कार और आर्थिक असुरक्षा।
- कानूनी अस्पष्टता: भारत में सेक्स वर्क पूरी तरह से डिक्रिमिनालाइज नहीं है, जिससे मानवाधिकारों की सुरक्षा सीमित रहती है।
- पारिवारिक और सामाजिक दबाव: कई लोग अपने पेशे को छुपाते हैं।

स्थैतिक संदर्भ (UPSC के लिए)

- कानूनी ढांचा:
 - IPC की धारा 354A, 370, 372 शोषण को अपराध मानती हैं, लेकिन वयस्क स्वेच्छिक सेक्स वर्क को स्पष्ट रूप से अपराध नहीं मानती।
 - सुप्रीम कोर्ट के फैसले (जैसे Budhadev Karmaskar vs West Bengal, 2011) ने सेक्स वर्कर्स की गरिमा और स्वायत्तता पर जोर दिया।
- श्रम और सामाजिक सुरक्षा:
 - सेक्स वर्कर्स श्रम कानूनों के तहत शामिल होने, न्यूनतम वेतन, स्वास्थ्य सुविधाएँ, मातृत्व अधिकार और सामाजिक योजनाओं का लाभ पाने की मांग करती हैं।
- सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य:
 - DMSC जैसी सामुदायिक पहल HIV/AIDS रोकथाम और सुरक्षित यौन व्यवहार को बढ़ावा देने में केंद्रीय रही हैं।

विश्लेषण

- संगठन के माध्यम से सशक्तिकरण: DMSC दिखाती है कि स्वयं प्रतिनिधित्व आवश्यक है; बाहरी लोग अक्सर वास्तविकता को गलत तरीके से प्रस्तुत करते हैं।
- अधिकार और श्रम का संयोजन: सेक्स वर्क को वैध श्रम मान्यता मिलने पर कानूनी सुरक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, सामाजिक सुरक्षा और वित्तीय समावेशन सुनिश्चित हो सकता है।
- सामाजिक कलंक बनाम नीति: दशकों की सक्रियता के बावजूद सामाजिक पूर्वाग्रह जारी है, जिससे आर्थिक और मानसिक असुरक्षा रहती है।

- लिंग और जाति का आयाम: अधिकांश वर्कर्स हाशिए पर समुदायों से हैं; सशक्तिकरण योजनाओं में लैंगिक न्याय और आर्थिक समानता शामिल होनी चाहिए।

निष्कर्ष

सोनागाछी की कहानी यह स्पष्ट करती है कि अधिकारों की पहचान ही शोषण और अत्याचार को रोक सकती है। DMSC की 30 वर्षीय यात्रा ने दिखाया कि सामुदायिक नेतृत्व, कानूनी लड़ाई और सामाजिक जागरूकता में परिवर्तन की शक्ति है। भारत के लिए यह संदेश है कि हाशिए पर रह रहे समुदायों की गरिमा, स्वास्थ्य और आर्थिक अधिकारों की सुरक्षा सामाजिक न्याय, सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य और समावेशी विकास के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है। सेक्स वर्क को डिक्रिमिनालाइज करना और श्रम कानूनों में शामिल करना अगले कदम होने चाहिए ताकि "केवल अधिकार ही गलतियों को रोक सकें।

UPSC Prelims Practice Question

Ques : DMSC (Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee) के बारे में सही कथन चुनें:

- a) यह केवल ट्रांसजेंडर समुदाय के लिए काम करता है।
- b) यह सामुदायिक नेतृत्व वाली संस्था है जो सेक्स वर्कर्स के अधिकारों के लिए काम करती है।
- c) यह 2010 में WHO के सहयोग से HIV-AIDS रोकथाम कार्यक्रम शुरू किया।
- d) यह केवल वित्तीय सहायता प्रदान करता है।

Ans: b)

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Ques : भारतीय श्रम कानूनों में सेक्स वर्कर्स को शामिल करने के फायदे और चुनौतियाँ चर्चा कीजिए। (150 Words)

कर्नाटक भारत का पहला राज्य था जिसने 2016 में एकल-उपयोग प्लास्टिक (SUPs) पर कानून बनाया। बावजूद इसके, फल, चाय, कटोरी, प्लेट आदि में प्लास्टिक का उपयोग आम जीवन में लगातार जारी है। यह समस्या मुख्य रूप से कमजोर प्रवर्तन, नागरिक उदासीनता और आर्थिक लाभ के कारण बनी हुई है। SUPs न केवल पर्यावरण को नुकसान पहुंचाते हैं, बल्कि मानव स्वास्थ्य और पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र पर गंभीर प्रभाव डालते हैं।



Banned but omnipresent: A view from K.R. market in Bengaluru. The KSPCB and municipal bodies inspected 1,05,964 establishments, seizing 1,012 tonnes of plastic in the last three years. ALLEN EDWARDS

Ban on single-use plastic remains a flimsy promise

Though Karnataka was the first State in India to pass a law against the use of single-use plastics, it continues to thrive in the face of poor enforcement and civic apathy, finds Chetan B.C.

In the streets of Bengaluru, single-use plastic (SUP) is everywhere. Fruit vendors hand over items in plastic bags, roadside tea stalls serve piping hot beverages in disposable cups, and even canteens rely on plastic cutlery. Despite a ban that has been in place for years, these banned plastics continue to dominate daily life. Like other States in India, Karnataka is struggling with the SUP menace, fuelled both by civic indifference and the lucrative profits for industries producing it. Environmental activists blame civic bodies and the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) for a lack of enforcement, even though Karnataka was the first State in India to pass a law against the use of plastic. In 2016, the forest, Ecology, and Environment Secretariat imposed a ban on the manufacture, supply, sale, and use of SUP under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Five years later, the Union Ministry followed with a blanket ban. Items such as carry bags, banners, flex, flags, cutlery, cling films, thermocol, balloons, invitation cards, straws, and PVC banners were prohibited. Yet, these items remain in everyday use.

According to the United Nations, 2,000 garbage trucks worth of plastic ends up in oceans, rivers, and lakes every day. Globally, 19 to 23 million tonnes of plastic leak into aquatic ecosystems annually.

Karnataka produces an average of 3.6 lakh tonnes of plastic waste each year, about 1,000 tonnes daily, according to the State Pollution Control Board. Between 2021 and 2024, annual production ranged from 3.45 lakh tonnes to over 5.28 lakh tonnes. Yet, only 10% of this waste reaches processing and recycling units, according to a senior KSPCB officer. In Bengaluru alone, of the 500 tonnes of SUP used daily, just 200 tonnes is processed, and the rest either reaches landfills or breaks down into microplastics.

Hazards of SUPs

A 2021 study published in *Environmental International* revealed, for the first time, the presence of microplastics in human placenta, highlighting the infiltrating strength of plastic.

Meenakshi Bharath, a Bengaluru-based gynaecologist and environmental activist, stressed the health risks posed by SUPs. "Often, people pour or store hot food in a plastic bag or box, which leads to microplastics mixing with the food and ultimately reaching the human body. Microplastics deposit inside the body and cause a multitude of health complications, including hypothyroidism, inflammation, respiratory issues, and more," she said.

She pointed out that plastics in landfills degrade into microplastics (particles smaller than 5 mm), which seep into soil and water, mix with plants and organisms, and eventually enter the human body when we consume greens.

A.N. Vellappa Reddy, former Forest Secretary and administrator, noted that plastic travels with wind and rains, eventually breaking down into smaller units. "When plastic reduces to micro-

For us, it's about business. Many people don't bring their own bags, and demand one. If we refuse, they move on to another seller. It's about customer convenience."

A fruit seller in Jayanagar



PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

plastics, it affects microbial ecosystems and dismantles them. When such ecosystems are damaged, it negatively impacts larger ecosystems, destabilising environmental balance," he explained.

Mr. Reddy further said that urban cattle and other animals consume plastic, with deadly consequences, as nanoparticles pass through the bloodstream and deposit in cells and organs.

Shadow market

While the ban exists, plastic for packaging is permitted under strict guidelines through Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). It mandates producers, importers, and brand owners (PBOs) to register on a centralised EPR platform.

In Karnataka, there are 134 registered brand owners, 353 producers, and 785 importers. For all the waste produced by these registered agencies and illegal SUPs, there are only 125 registered companies to recycle their output. The installed capacity for processing plastic waste in Karnataka is 2.29 lakh tonnes per annum. However, most of these units do not operate at full capacity, and many remain shut down.

A well-placed source in Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Ltd. (BSWML) said that under this cover, many industries continue to produce and import SUPs illegally.

"While there are a handful of registered industries, more than 3,000 illegal plastic-producing units

are operating in Bengaluru. All they need is a 10x10 ft. space for a machine and 10 kWh to 20 kWh of power," said Rajesh Babu, a city-based sustainable entrepreneur. "Even the raw materials and chemicals are easily available. So, a makeshift setup brings huge profit for people running such illegal SUP manufacturing units," he added.

Virgin plastic granules, titanium dioxide, red oxide, colourants, calcium carbonate, and other chemicals are used to manufacture SUP.

Karee Gowda, CEO, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Ltd., confirmed that some backdoor industries were found to be manufacturing SUP during their recent inspections. "Not just manufacturers, during our recent raids, we found importers bringing SUP from other States. There are distributors as well who deliver SUP," Mr. Gowda said, hinting at a crack down on these networks.

A KSPCB source listed hotspots for such manufacturing units: Peenya Industrial Area, Dasarahalli, Kamashipalya, J.C. Road, S.P. Road, and pockets of the peri-urban in central Bengaluru. Further, some dealers imported stock from Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.

Ground challenges

To understand the situation, this reporter visited Kamashipalya disguised as a bulk buyer and acquired around industrial pockets. After asking at

six places, one dealer finally gave the address of a producer. When approached, the producer denied having any stock and claimed no dealers operated nearby.

M.G. Yateesh, Senior Environmental Officer at KSPCB, explained that this is the challenge they face when acting on tip-offs. "Even with the slightest suspicion, such dealers back off. They only sell to people within their trusted network," he told *The Hindu*.

A BSWML source said that just two days before this reporter's visit, they had raided the same location. BSWML's records corroborate the prevalence of illegal SUP. Between September 3 and 16, 5,581 establishments were raided, and 30,421 kg of plastic was seized and 162.57 lakh in fine was collected.

Why are SUPs in demand?

Economics drives demand. Mr. Rajesh says producing 1 kg of SUP costs ₹50 to ₹80, while it sells at ₹200. Alternatives such as cloth or cotton bags cost ₹2 per piece at production and ₹4 to ₹5 at sale. Retailers and wholesalers prefer SUP, as it's cheaper and convenient.

A fruit seller in Jayanagar, requesting anonymity, explained, "For us, it's about business and competition. Many people don't bring their own bags, especially in the evenings while returning home from work, and demand one. If we refuse, they move on to another seller. It's about customer convenience."

When questioned, four of seven people in the same market in Jayanagar either thought the ban on plastic had been lifted or were unaware of it. V. Ramprasad, an expert in solid waste management, stresses that lack of enforcement has allowed SUP to flourish. "These agencies act only when they receive a tip-off. This menace is multi-layered, with stakeholders at every level," he says.

Mr. Ramprasad's concerns are reflected in enforcement data. Across Karnataka, KSPCB and municipal bodies inspected 1,05,964 establishments, seizing 1,012 tonnes of plastic in the last three years.

Although the numbers look substantial, enthusiasm for enforcement declined within a year after the Centre passed the law. Officials raided 1,25,804 establishments in 2022-23, immediately after the ban. Raids dropped to 22,132 in 2023-24 and further to 18,111 in 2024-25.

However, M.G. Yateesh, Senior Environmental Officer at KSPCB, maintained that they actively act on tip-offs in addition to surprise checks.

Another KSPCB official noted that enforcement is particularly challenging in rural areas, which explains the fewer raids. "Usually, people in rural areas carry bags, as the sandle (weekly market) system is still active. However, they rarely cooperate during raids," he said. "There's also a severe shortage of field staff. One person is doing the work of four," he added.

Policy gaps

Nalini Shekar, co-founder of Hatturi Dala, said that proper segregation of solid waste would improve the amount of plastic reaching processing units, stressing the critical role of ragpickers.

Mr. Karee Gowda agreed that there is a lack of policy to complete the cycle of waste collection, segregation, and processing. This issue would be addressed, he noted.

Mr. Vellappa Reddy added that the absence of awareness drives contributors to continued SUP use. Civic bodies, he said, should conduct awareness campaigns, educate children, and strengthen existing laws by adding stricter punishments for offenders.

Meanwhile, after the formation of five new corporations in Bengaluru, the new Commissioner has stressed regular inspections and drives against SUPs. BSWML has formed 27 teams under senior officers to conduct checks, with support from marshals.

It remains to be seen whether a new administrative set-up for Bengaluru can beat the challenge that its predecessors failed to.



Karnataka produces an average of 3.6 lakh tonnes of plastic waste each year, about 1,000 tonnes daily, according to the State Pollution Control Board. AL N. VELLAPPA REDDY

वर्तमान संदर्भ

1. प्रभाव और मात्रा:

- कर्नाटक में सालाना लगभग 3.6 लाख टन प्लास्टिक कचरा उत्पन्न होता है, जिसमें से केवल ~30% रिसाइक्लिंग इकाइयों तक पहुँचता है।
- SUPs सूक्ष्म प्लास्टिक (microplastics) में टूटकर मिट्टी, पानी, पौधों और मनुष्यों में पहुँचते हैं, जिससे हाइपोथायरायडिज़्म, सूजन, श्वसन रोग जैसी समस्याएँ उत्पन्न होती हैं।
- शहरी जानवर प्लास्टिक खाते हैं, जिससे पारिस्थितिकी पर भी नकारात्मक प्रभाव पड़ता है।

2. प्रवर्तन की चुनौतियाँ:

- 1,65,964 संस्थानों की जांच और 1,012 टन प्लास्टिक जब्त करने के बावजूद, प्रवर्तन कर्मचारी कमी, प्रशासनिक ढील और ग्रामीण सहयोग की कमी के कारण कमजोर है।
- अवैध उत्पादन इकाइयाँ और राज्य-आधारित सप्लाई नेटवर्क सक्रिय हैं।
- SUPs की उच्च मुनाफाखोरी और सुविधा, विकल्पों को कमजोर करती है।

3. नीति और अवसंरचना की कमी:

- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) मौजूद है लेकिन रीसाइक्लिंग क्षमता अधूरी और अक्सर अयोग्य है।
- जनता में जागरूकता अभियान की कमी और अपूर्ण कचरा पृथक्करण अनुपालन में बाधा डालते हैं।
- ग्रामीण बाजार और "सांथे" प्रणाली प्रवर्तन से बाहर हैं।

स्थैतिक संदर्भ

• कानूनी ढांचा:

- पर्यावरण (संरक्षण) अधिनियम, 1986 राज्यों को हानिकारक पदार्थों पर नियंत्रण का अधिकार देता है।
- केंद्रीय SUPs प्रतिबंध (2019-21) ने निर्माण, आयात और बिक्री को सीमित किया।

• अंतर्राष्ट्रीय प्रतिबद्धताएँ:

- UN SDG 12 और UNEA प्रस्ताव प्लास्टिक प्रदूषण कम करने का लक्ष्य रखते हैं।

• तकनीकी उपाय:

- रीसाइक्लिंग, बायोप्लास्टिक, वेस्ट-टू-एनर्जी आदि उपाय हैं, पर उनका उपयोग कम है।
- कचरा संग्रहण में सामुदायिक सहभागिता महत्वपूर्ण है।

विश्लेषण

- नीति और कार्यान्वयन का अंतर: कानून होने के बावजूद कमी, कर्मचारी अभाव और भ्रष्टाचार SUPs को बढ़ावा देते हैं।
- आर्थिक कारण: उच्च लाभ और सुविधा SUPs की मांग बनाए रखते हैं।
- स्वास्थ्य और पर्यावरण: microplastics प्रदूषण मानव और पर्यावरण स्वास्थ्य के बीच अटूट संबंध दर्शाता है।
- बहु-हितधारक जिम्मेदारी: निर्माता, वितरक, नगर निकाय और नागरिक—सभी को भूमिका निभानी होगी; केवल EPR पर्याप्त नहीं है।

निष्कर्ष

कर्नाटक का SUP प्रतिबंध दिखाता है कि शीर्ष-नीति मात्र पर्याप्त नहीं है। प्रभावी समाधान के लिए आवश्यक है:

- EPR फ्रेमवर्क को मजबूत करना,
- विकल्पों को प्रोत्साहित करना,
- जागरूकता अभियान चलाना,
- प्रवर्तन और निरीक्षण बढ़ाना,
- कचरा पृथक्करण और रीसाइक्लिंग अवसंरचना सुधारना।

यदि यह प्रणालीगत सुधार नहीं होंगे, तो SUP प्रतिबंध प्रतीकात्मक ही रह जाएगा, जो पर्यावरण और सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य पर प्रभावी नियंत्रण में असफल रहेगा।

UPSC Prelims Practice Question

Ques: "Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)" का मुख्य उद्देश्य क्या है?

- a) कचरा प्रबंधन में उद्योगों की जिम्मेदारी सुनिश्चित करना
- b) नागरिकों को प्लास्टिक उपयोग से रोकना
- c) प्लास्टिक के विकल्प विकसित करना
- d) सरकार को अतिरिक्त कर राजस्व देना

Ans: a)

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Ques: माइक्रोप्लास्टिक प्रदूषण मानव स्वास्थ्य और पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र के लिए गंभीर खतरा है। इस कथन का पर्यावरण और स्वास्थ्य दृष्टिकोण से विश्लेषण करें। **(150 Words)**

A climate-health vision with lessons from India

On July 29-31, 2025, Brazil hosted the 2025 Global Conference on Climate and Health, with delegates from 90 countries shaping the Belém Health Action Plan. Set to be launched at COP30 to be held in November 2025, this plan will define the global agenda on climate and health. India was not officially represented – a significant missed opportunity to emerge as a global exemplar, given its developmental approach offers lessons for implementing the Belém Plan.

Insights from India's welfare programmes

For countries in the Global South seeking synergistic policies that advance multiple developmental goals, India's intersectoral welfare programmes offer valuable insights. Consider the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN), India's flagship nutrition scheme covering over 11 crore children across nearly 11 lakh schools. Its accomplishment lies in also connecting the dots between health, education, agriculture and food procurement systems. By promoting millets and traditional grains, it addresses malnutrition and also builds climate-resilient food systems.

Similarly, the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan has tackled sanitation, public health, human dignity and environmental sustainability, while MNREGA's environmental works have improved rural livelihoods while restoring degraded ecosystems. And with Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), the switch to clean cooking fuel has reduced household air pollution, a major cause of respiratory illness, while cutting carbon emissions.

None of these initiatives was designed explicitly as "climate policies", yet they have had significant health and climate co-benefits. These policies demonstrate a critical insight: non-health interventions can generate substantial health co-benefits while addressing climate challenges. Each intervention has also proved that intentional, intersectoral action can multiply impact. India's experience has takeaways for operationalising an integrated climate-health



Neethi V. Rao

is Fellow, Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP)



Priyanka Tomar

is Research Associate, Centre for Social and Economic Progress

India's non-health interventions are a model that can generate substantial health co-benefits and also address climate challenges

vision. First, strong political leadership makes a difference. PMUY and Swachh Bharat gained benefits from direct Prime Ministerial involvement, ensuring cooperation across Ministries. When political leaders frame climate action as a health emergency rather than just an environmental issue, it commands attention across government departments and receives wider public support.

Second, community engagement is a vital ingredient. Swachh Bharat leveraged cultural symbolism, invoking Mahatma Gandhi's vision of cleanliness. PM POSHAN built grass-root support through parent-teacher associations and school committees. Similarly, climate action needs cultural anchoring, linking environmental protection to societal values of health and prosperity.

Third, past policies succeeded by building on existing institutions rather than creating parallel structures. Climate action must be embedded in existing social and institutional frameworks. Accredited Social Health Activists, self-help group members, municipal bodies and panchayat representatives can become powerful advocates, especially when they internalise the interlinks between environmental changes and community well-being.

Some challenges

However, experience also reveals fundamental constraints in implementing intersectoral policy through siloed administrative machineries. As policies progress from providing proximal outputs to delivering associated outcomes, divergent responsibilities and institutional mandates of various sectors begin to reassert themselves. For instance, high LPG refill costs under PMUY persist, partly due to oil marketing business interests outweighing beneficiary needs. Further, social and cultural barriers will continue to hinder utilisation and equitable access in the absence of sustained reinforcing mechanisms. These challenges show that climate solutions must also address structural inequities through institutionalised mechanisms that measure

outcomes, not just outputs. India's experience points toward a framework for institutionalised, health-anchored climate governance, built on three pillars.

The first is strategic prioritisation by political leaders through framing climate policies in terms of immediate health rather than abstract future risks. Just as PMUY succeeded by positioning clean cooking as women's empowerment, climate impact assessments into all climate-relevant policies. Just as environmental clearances are now standard for major projects, health considerations should be mandatory for policies affecting energy, transport, agriculture and urban planning.

The second is procedural integration across government departments by embedding health impact assessments into all climate-relevant policies. Just as environmental clearances are now standard for major projects, health considerations should be mandatory for policies affecting energy, transport, agriculture and urban planning.

Third, participatory implementation that leverages health as a mobilising force. Communities understand the health benefits of cleaner air, safer water and nutritious food more intuitively than carbon accounting. Local health workers can become climate advocates when they see direct connections between environmental changes and health outcomes in their practice.

A clear choice

The choice is clear. India can continue fighting climate change and health challenges separately, with limited success and mounting costs. Or, it can leverage the institutional wisdom embedded in its welfare policies and deepen its international engagement to create a new model of governance that treats these challenges as interconnected problems requiring coordinated solutions. The stakes are high, the costs of inaction devastating, and the potential for transformative impact immense. India and the world cannot afford anything less than a bold, intersectoral, whole-of-society approach.

The views expressed are personal

GS. Paper 02 & 03 – International Relations & Environment

UPSC Mains Practice Question: ग्लोबल साउथ देशों के लिए भारत का विकासात्मक दृष्टिकोण जलवायु-स्वास्थ्य नीति के संदर्भ में क्यों महत्वपूर्ण है? (150 Words)

Context :

ब्राज़ील में आयोजित 2025 ग्लोबल कॉन्फ्रेंस ऑन क्लाइमेट एंड हेल्थ ने बेलेम हेल्थ एक्शन प्लान को आकार दिया, जिसमें वैश्विक स्तर पर जलवायु और स्वास्थ्य नीति को एकीकृत करने की आवश्यकता पर बल दिया गया। भारत, अपने कल्याणकारी कार्यक्रमों के माध्यम से जो अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से जलवायु और स्वास्थ्य में सह-लाभ लाते हैं, सम्मेलन में अनुपस्थित रहा। फिर भी, इसका अनुभव अंतरसंगठित, स्वास्थ्य-आधारित जलवायु कार्यान्वयन के लिए महत्वपूर्ण सबक प्रदान करता है।

वर्तमान परिप्रेक्ष्य

1. अंतरसंगठित कार्यक्रम और सह-लाभ:

- प्रधानमंत्री पोषण शक्ति निर्माण (PM POSHAN): कुपोषण को रोकने के साथ जलवायु-प्रतिरोधी अनाज को बढ़ावा देता है और स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा, कृषि को जोड़ता है।
- स्वच्छ भारत अभियान: स्वच्छता, सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य और पर्यावरणीय स्थिरता में सुधार।
- प्रधानमंत्री उज्ज्वला योजना (PMUY): स्वच्छ ईंधन, घर में वायु प्रदूषण कम करता है और कार्बन उत्सर्जन घटाता है।
- मनरेगा के पर्यावरणीय कार्य: ग्रामीण आजीविका सुधारते हुए पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र का संरक्षण।

2. सफलता के प्रमुख कारक:

- राजनीतिक नेतृत्व: उच्च स्तरीय समर्थन से मंत्रालयों में समन्वय और सार्वजनिक समर्थन बढ़ता है।
- सामुदायिक भागीदारी: सांस्कृतिक प्रतीकों और Grassroots समर्थन से नीतियों को अपनाना आसान होता है।
- संस्थागत आधार: मौजूदा संस्थाओं (आशा कार्यकर्ता, स्वयं सहायता समूह, पंचायत प्रतिनिधि) का उपयोग, द duplicacy को रोकता है।

3. मुख्य चुनौतियाँ:

- अलग-अलग विभागीय ढांचे से अंतरसंगठित कार्यान्वयन बाधित।
- आर्थिक और सांस्कृतिक बाधाएँ समान पहुँच में रुकावट डालती हैं (जैसे PMUY में रिफिल लागत)।
- परिणामों पर ध्यान देना आवश्यक है, सिर्फ आउटपुट तक सीमित नहीं रहना चाहिए।

स्थैतिक और सैद्धांतिक संदर्भ

- SDG लिंक: SDG 3 (अच्छा स्वास्थ्य और कल्याण), SDG 13 (जलवायु कार्रवाई), SDG 2 (भूख मिटाना)।
- वैश्विक जलवायु शासन: बेलेम प्लान में जलवायु-स्वास्थ्य रणनीतियों के एकीकरण पर जोर।
- नीति उपकरण: स्वास्थ्य प्रभाव मूल्यांकन, सामुदायिक जागरूकता, अंतर-मंत्रालयी समन्वय।

विश्लेषण

- एकीकरण बनाम पृथक्करण: भारत के कार्यक्रम दिखाते हैं कि गैर-स्वास्थ्य नीतियाँ भी स्वास्थ्य में सह-लाभ और पर्यावरणीय सुधार ला सकती हैं।
- शासन शिक्षा: रणनीतिक प्राथमिकता, प्रक्रियात्मक समेकन, और सहभागिता कार्यान्वयन जलवायु-स्वास्थ्य शासन के तीन प्रमुख स्तंभ हैं।
- वैश्विक संदर्भ में महत्व: भारत का दृष्टिकोण Global South देशों के लिए मॉडल है, जहाँ विकास, स्वास्थ्य और जलवायु लक्ष्यों को साथ-साथ संबोधित किया जा सकता है।

निष्कर्ष

भारत का अनुभव स्पष्ट करता है कि जलवायु और स्वास्थ्य चुनौतियाँ आपस में जुड़ी हैं, जिन्हें समन्वित, अंतरसंगठित और समग्र सामाजिक दृष्टिकोण से ही हल किया जा सकता है। कल्याणकारी योजनाओं, संस्थागत अनुभव और सामुदायिक भागीदारी के माध्यम से गुणात्मक और दीर्घकालिक परिणाम प्राप्त किए जा सकते हैं। COP30 के दृष्टिकोण से भारत को यह अवसर है कि वह स्वास्थ्य-आधारित जलवायु शासन का वैश्विक उदाहरण प्रस्तुत करे।