

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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केंद्रीय वित्त मंत्री निर्मला सीतारमण ने हाल ही में कहा कि देशों के लिए स्थिरकॉइन (Stablecoins) की अनदेखी करना संभव नहीं है और उन्हें इसके साथ जुड़ने की तैयारी करनी होगी। कौटिल्य आर्थिक सम्मेलन (2025) में उन्होंने यह स्पष्ट किया कि क्रिप्टोकॉइन्स में नवाचार न केवल मुद्रा और पूंजी प्रवाह को बदल रहे हैं, बल्कि वैश्विक वित्तीय व्यवस्था को भी नया आकार दे रहे हैं। यह भारत की मौद्रिक नीति, वित्तीय स्थिरता और सामरिक स्वायत्तता पर सीधे असर डालता है।

Nations must prepare to deal with stablecoins: Sitharaman

Innovations in cryptocurrency are transforming landscape of money and capital flows, and they may force nations to adapt to new monetary architectures or risk exclusion, says Finance Minister; India's economic leverage is evolving, Minister adds

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

Hinting at a possible shift in India's cryptocurrency policy, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday said countries would have to "prepare to engage" with stablecoins whether they welcome the change or not.

"Innovations like stablecoins are transforming the landscape of money and capital flows," Ms. Sitharaman said in her inaugural address at the Kautilya Economic Conclave here.

Scale of transformation
"These shifts may force nations to make binary choices: adapt to new monetary architectures or risk exclusion," she said.

What is a stablecoin?

A stablecoin is a crypto asset that aims to maintain a stable value relative to a specified asset, or a pool of assets

■ These assets could be a monetary unit of account such as the dollar or euro, a currency basket, a commodity such as gold, or unbacked crypto assets

■ This stability can also be achieved only if a centralised institution is in charge of issuing (minting) and redeeming (burning) these crypto assets



SOURCE: IMF

"Such developments underscore the scale of the transformation under way. They also remind us that no nation can insulate itself from systemic change. Whether we welcome these shifts or not, we must prepare to engage with them."

Stablecoins are a type of cryptocurrency that at-

tempt to maintain stable prices as they are pegged to an underlying asset, such as a basket of currencies or precious metals.

The remarks come at a time when the Finance Ministry and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have both voiced their reservations about private cryptocurrencies, also referred to

as virtual digital assets.

India has not legalised these products in terms of regulation, but it does tax transactions that involve them.

The RBI, on the other hand, has lobbied hard to ban virtual digital assets outright, while simultaneously launching pilot projects of its own Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC).

Legal backing

CBDCs are cryptocurrencies issued by central banks and have the same legal backing as official currency.

The Finance Minister said India's capacity to absorb external shocks was strong and that its economic leverage was evolving. "Wars and strategic rival-

ries are redrawing the boundaries of cooperation and conflict," Ms. Sitharaman said.

"Alliances that once appeared solid are being tested, and new coalitions are emerging. For India, these dynamics highlight both vulnerability and resilience."

However, despite this reliance, she also cautioned that there was no time for complacency. "Just as eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, eternal performance is the price of strategic independence," she said.

"There is no room for complacency or self-congratulation beyond a quiet confidence in our abilities to take the right decisions and execute them," the Finance Minister added.

Static Context

1. क्रिप्टोकॉइन्स और स्थिरकॉइन

- क्रिप्टोकॉइन्स: डिजिटल/आभासी मुद्रा जो क्रिप्टोग्राफी से सुरक्षित होती है और प्रायः विकेंद्रीकृत होती है।
- स्थिरकॉइन (Stablecoins): ऐसी क्रिप्टोकॉइन्स जो अपनी कीमत स्थिर रखने के लिए किसी मुद्रा (जैसे डॉलर), सोना या अन्य परिसंपत्ति से जुड़ी होती है। (उदा.: USDT, USDC)

2. क्रिप्टोकॉइन्स से जुड़ी चिंताएँ

- अत्यधिक अस्थिरता।
- मनी लॉन्ड्रिंग और आतंकी वित्तपोषण का खतरा।
- राष्ट्र की मौद्रिक संप्रभुता को चुनौती।

- नियामक ढाँचे का अभाव।

3. केंद्रीय बैंक डिजिटल मुद्रा (CBDC)

- केंद्रीय बैंक द्वारा जारी डिजिटल मुद्रा, जिसे कानूनी दर्जा प्राप्त होता है।
- निजी क्रिप्टोकॉइन्स के सुरक्षित विकल्प के रूप में विकसित।
- भारत में RBI ने डिजिटल रुपया (पायलट परियोजनाएँ – खुदरा और थोक) शुरू किया है।

4. वैश्विक परिप्रेक्ष्य

- G20 और IMF वैश्विक सहयोग पर जोर देते हैं।
- यूरोपीय संघ (EU) ने MiCA – Markets in Crypto Assets Regulation लागू किया।
- अमेरिका और चीन भी नियमन और तकनीकी ढाँचे विकसित कर रहे हैं।

वर्तमान संदर्भ

• वित्त मंत्री की चेतावनी:

- स्थिरकॉइन वैश्विक मौद्रिक व्यवस्था को नया आकार दे रहे हैं।
- देशों के सामने दो विकल्प: अनुकूलन या बहिष्करण का जोखिम।
- भारत को भी तैयार रहना होगा, भले ही RBI ने निजी क्रिप्टो पर आपत्ति जताई हो।

• भारत की नीतिगत स्थिति:

- कानूनी मान्यता अभी नहीं, लेकिन लेन-देन पर कर (30% लाभ पर टैक्स, 1% TDS) लगाया गया।
- RBI निजी क्रिप्टो पर प्रतिबंध चाहता है, साथ ही CBDC पर काम कर रहा है।

• सामरिक प्रभाव:

- युद्ध और प्रतिद्वंद्विता वैश्विक गठबंधनों को नया आकार दे रहे हैं।
- डिजिटल मुद्रा व्यापार निपटान, प्रतिबंधों और वित्तीय स्वतंत्रता में अहम भूमिका निभा सकती है।
- भारत के लिए यह चुनौती और अवसर दोनों हैं।

UPSC के लिए उपयोगिता

Prelims बिंदु:

- Stablecoins और CBDC की परिभाषा।
- डिजिटल रुपया पायलट के तथ्य।
- भारत की कर व्यवस्था (30% टैक्स + 1% TDS)।
- MiCA (EU) और IMF की भूमिका।

Mains बिंदु

- वैश्विक वित्त में स्थिरकॉइन की भूमिका।
- भारत की मौद्रिक संप्रभुता के लिए चुनौतियाँ।
- प्रतिबंध बनाम नियमन की बहस।
- सामरिक स्वायत्तता से जुड़ा आर्थिक दृष्टिकोण।

निष्कर्ष

वित्त मंत्री की टिप्पणी स्पष्ट करती है कि स्थिरकॉइन को नज़रअंदाज़ करना अब संभव नहीं है। भारत के सामने सबसे बड़ी चुनौती यह होगी कि वह ऐसा संतुलित नियामक ढाँचा तैयार करे जो वित्तीय स्थिरता को सुरक्षित रखे, दुरुपयोग (मनी लॉन्ड्रिंग, आतंक वित्तपोषण) पर रोक लगाए और साथ ही नवाचार को प्रोत्साहित भी करे। वैश्विक समन्वयित नियमन के साथ-साथ भारत का डिजिटल रुपया (CBDC) इस दिशा में संतुलित मार्ग बन सकता है। बदलते भू-राजनीतिक समीकरणों में डिजिटल मुद्राएँ भविष्य की वित्तीय संप्रभुता और रणनीतिक स्वतंत्रता तय करेंगी।

UPSC Prelims Practice Question

Ques: "Stablecoins" शब्द हाल ही में समाचारों में था। निम्नलिखित में से कौन-सा इसका सबसे उपयुक्त वर्णन है?

- (A) ऐसा क्रिप्टो टोकन जो किसी देश के केंद्रीय बैंक द्वारा जारी किया जाता है।
- (B) ऐसा क्रिप्टो एसेट जिसकी कीमत किसी वास्तविक परिसंपत्ति जैसे मुद्रा, सोना या अन्य कमोडिटी से जुड़ी होती है।
- (C) ब्लॉकचेन आधारित पेमेंट सिस्टम जो केवल केंद्रीय बैंक द्वारा नियंत्रित होता है।
- (D) ऐसा डिजिटल टोकन जो किसी विशेष स्टॉक मार्केट इंडेक्स से जुड़ा हो।

Ans : b)

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Ques: "Stablecoins और अन्य निजी क्रिप्टोकॉरेंसी वैश्विक वित्तीय प्रणाली में नए अवसर और नई चुनौतियाँ दोनों लेकर आए हैं।" भारत के संदर्भ में इसकी विवेचना कीजिए। (250 Words)

मई 2025 के भारत-पाकिस्तान गतिरोध (ऑपरेशन सिंदूर) के बाद ध्यान अब हवाई क्षेत्र से समुद्री क्षेत्र की ओर शिफ्ट हो गया है। दोनों देशों की नौसेनाओं की गतिविधियाँ, क्षमता प्रदर्शन और आधिकारिक बयानों से संकेत मिलता है कि आने वाले संकट का अगला चरण समुद्र में हो सकता है। यह परिदृश्य भारत की सामरिक स्वतंत्रता, निवारण (deterrence) और हिंद-प्रशांत रणनीति के लिए अहम है।

The maritime signalling after Operation Sindoor

While the standoff with Pakistan in May 2025 culminated in engagement in the air domain, subsequent developments have shifted attention to the maritime theatre, as seen in key naval movements, capability demonstrations and official statements from both India and Pakistan, with their navies recalibrating posture and signalling readiness for potential escalation.

On October 2, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, citing the 1965 war, warned Pakistan of a "resounding response" that could alter its "history and geography" should any misadventure occur in the Sir Creek area – Pakistan is expanding military infrastructure in the region, a development that has been ongoing since 2023. Historically, Pakistan has had a perceived military edge in the area. This follows the statement in August by the Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Dinesh Tripathi, that the service would be the first to take action against Pakistan in any future conflict. Operation Sindoor itself was described as designed for a naval forward deterrent posture, highlighting a readiness for a 'more active role' than during the standoff in May. Induction of the first indigenously designed diving support vessel, *INS Nistar*, and India's first joint patrols with the Philippines in the South China Sea reflect both capacity-building and alignment with a wider Indo-Pacific strategy, where a Chinese presence at Karachi and Gwadar remains a key factor.

Pakistan has also reinforced its maritime signalling. In May, it dispersed assets from Karachi to Gwadar to mitigate vulnerability. Since then, it has launched the Chinese-built Hangor-class submarine, *PNS Mangro*, and showcased the domestically developed P282 ship-launched ballistic missile. In the months after, there have also been overlapping NOTAMS, missile tests and live-fire drills – at times just 60 nautical miles apart – sustaining a cycle of alerts and operational friction in the Arabian Sea.

Strategic weight of naval signalling

The surge of naval activity following Operation Sindoor raises a fundamental question of whether these parallel exercises are mere routine activities or a calculated show of force implying a shift in the India-Pakistan deterrence equation in the naval domain. The answer matters because the current crisis, while resolved in the air domain, has left behind a residue of strategic uncertainty at sea. India and Pakistan appear to be recalibrating their naval postures, preparing not just for deterrence but also for the possibility that the next phase of confrontation could unfold in the maritime theatre.

This shift must also be understood against the broader balance of capabilities. Much like the air domain, the maritime balance can no longer be assumed to mirror the asymmetries of Kargil in



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1999, or India's decisive superiority of 1971. India retains numerical and geographical advantages, but its naval fleet is aging, raising modernisation concerns. Pakistan is steadily expanding capabilities, inducting Chinese-designed submarines and Babur-class corvettes from Türkiye. With advanced radar, electronic warfare suites, and versatile anti-air and anti-surface weaponry, these assets are significant.

Acknowledging this shift, India's Navy Chief had also pointed to the "surprising growth" of Pakistan's naval fleet. While India's edge may still endure, the gap is narrowing, complicating assumptions of uncontested dominance in the Indian Ocean. Taken together, these developments are important for three reasons: escalation control, external involvement and shifting doctrines on both sides.

First, escalation control is far harder at sea. Unlike aerial skirmishes that may be calibrated and walked back, any naval engagement (ship-on-ship or ship-on-land) would carry a higher risk of crossing the war threshold. Memories of 1971, when Indian naval operations decisively tilted the conflict, add extra sensitivity – even limited maritime action is associated with existential risk in Pakistan's strategic imagination. Since then, Pakistan's core maritime concern has been to avert a recurrence of its vulnerability to Indian naval operations, seen in its pursuit of anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) capabilities and gradual articulation of a doctrine oriented toward deterrence-by-denial.

The development of Gwadar under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor framework must also be understood within this deterrence logic. Pakistan's decision-makers have for long said that Gwadar's origins lay in Islamabad's own strategic calculations than in Beijing's. Thus, Gwadar and Karachi seem more than operational or economic hubs – they are also psychological pressure points. Against this backdrop, should the Indian Navy be drawn into direct operations in future, space for coercion short of war would shrink drastically, with India also having to consider the presence and stakes of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN).

External dimension

Second, parallel exercises and missile tests by both sides may reflect more than isolated drills, pointing to deliberate efforts to demonstrate readiness and complicate the adversary's planning cycle. For India, the pattern may suggest an effort to maintain pressure and shape the post-crisis narrative, reflecting unease with how the post-Sindoor outcome has been perceived. Pakistan has sought to underscore the point that its Navy is no longer the vulnerable force of 1971 and is signalling preparedness to deter coercion and complicate Indian operational planning in the maritime domain. India appears intent on retaining the initiative through visible

demonstrations of capability and risk acceptance. This parallelism suggests that both sides may signal preparedness and also be actively invested in shaping a future "conflict-template" at sea.

Third, the external dimension is sharpening. Chinese involvement in the Karachi and Gwadar ports erodes India's assumed dominance by raising the spectre of PLAN support to Pakistan in crisis. Türkiye's emerging role, even if limited to supply or training, adds another layer of uncertainty.

These shifts matter because they change how coercion and deterrence work. It has been reported that Indian deployments had forced Pakistan to disperse its fleet from Karachi, demonstrating dominance and imposing psychological costs without triggering escalation, but that playbook may no longer work. At the same time, projections of recent procurements and high-profile inductions may have fuelled expectations of a more prominent naval role in the future, creating a dilemma – the coercive option may be narrowing, but the pressure to use it is increasing.

Finally, there may also be the problem of strategic drift. Both militaries appear to be operating on precedents from past crises, even as new capabilities from hypersonic missiles to drones are altering the escalatory ladder. If crisis decision-making remains anchored in outdated assumptions, the risk of miscalculation grows. In effect, the maritime theatre is becoming the space where this cognitive gap will be tested.

The broad view

The naval element of the next India-Pakistan crisis is unlikely to remain peripheral. Both sides may not just be testing platforms but also signalling thresholds at sea, where risks of miscalculation are qualitatively different from the air domain. Unlike air skirmishes, naval deployments linger, continuously, shaping perceptions of intent and resolve.

Yet, paradoxically, this very pattern may also carry stabilising effects. By testing and observing each other's tactics, manoeuvres, and novel applications of capability, both navies are building mutual awareness that may, over time, reduce the fog of war. In this sense, the Indian Navy may be acquiring insights into its Pakistani counterpart in a way the Air Force arguably could not prior to Operation Sindoor.

For India, the challenge will be to decide whether to treat the maritime theatre as an arena for early signalling or hold it back as a reserve domain of escalation. The commissioning of stealth frigates, emphasis on joint patrols in the wider Indo-Pacific, and drive for indigenous capacity suggest that New Delhi is preparing for both possibilities: an expanded regional role and a crisis-specific coercive lever. The question then remains whether the Navy will be drawn into frontline operations earlier than in the past.

In the tensions between India and Pakistan after May 2025, the frontiers are shifting from airspace to sea

Static Context

1. भारत-पाकिस्तान समुद्री महत्व

- 1971 युद्ध में भारतीय नौसेना ने कराची बंदरगाह की नाकेबंदी कर निर्णायक बढ़त बनाई।

- पाकिस्तान की ऐतिहासिक कमजोरी समुद्र में रही है, इसीलिए उसने A2/AD (Anti-Access/Area-Denial) रणनीति पर ज़ोर दिया।
- सर क्रीक विवाद आज भी संवेदनशील क्षेत्र है।

2. भारत की नौसेना क्षमता

- हिंद महासागर क्षेत्र की सबसे बड़ी नौसेना।
- INS विक्रमादित्य, INS विक्रान्त जैसे विमानवाहक पोत, स्कॉर्पीन पनडुब्बियाँ, परमाणु-संचालित पनडुब्बियाँ (अरिहंत-श्रेणी)।
- चुनौती: पुराना बेड़ा, आधुनिकीकरण की धीमी गति।

3. पाकिस्तान की नौसैनिक रणनीति

- ऐतिहासिक रूप से कमजोर, लेकिन बाहरी सहयोग पर निर्भर।
- चीन से हैंगोर-श्रेणी की पनडुब्बियाँ, तुर्की से बाबर-श्रेणी के कॉर्वेट्स।
- मुख्य ध्यान: निवारण-बाय-डिनायल (Deterrence by denial)।

4. बाहरी खिलाड़ी

- चीन: कराची और ग्वादर में मौजूदगी (CPEC ढांचे में)।
- तुर्की: जहाज़ आपूर्ति और प्रशिक्षण सहयोग।
- अमेरिका/काड: हिंद-प्रशांत में शक्ति संतुलन।

वर्तमान संदर्भ (ऑपरेशन सिंदूर के बाद की घटनाएँ)

1. भारत के कदम

- रक्षामंत्री का सर क्रीक पर सख्त बयान (अक्टूबर 2025)।
- नौसेना प्रमुख का घोषणा: भविष्य के संघर्ष में नौसेना अग्रणी भूमिका लेगी।
- INS निस्तार (स्वदेशी डाइविंग सपोर्ट वेसल) का induction।
- फिलीपींस के साथ दक्षिण चीन सागर में संयुक्त गश्त।

2. पाकिस्तान के कदम

- कराची से जहाज़ों को ग्वादर शिफ्ट करना।
- PNS मंग्रो (हैंगोर पनडुब्बी) का लॉन्च।
- P282 जहाज़ से छोड़ी जाने वाली बैलिस्टिक मिसाइल का परीक्षण।
- बार-बार NOTAMs और लाइव-फायर ड्रिल्स – कई बार भारतीय अभ्यास से केवल 60 नॉटिकल मील की दूरी पर।

3. रणनीतिक निहितार्थ

- एस्केलेशन नियंत्रण कठिन: समुद्री संघर्ष जहाज़-से-जहाज़ टकराव को जन्म दे सकता है, जो युद्ध की दहलीज़ पार कर सकता है।
- बाहरी दखल: चीन की PLAN (पीपल्स लिबरेशन आर्मी नेवी) और तुर्की का रोल भारत की बढ़त को चुनौती दे रहे हैं।
- डॉक्ट्रिनल ड्रिफ्ट: दोनों देश पुराने पैटर्न पर चल रहे हैं, जबकि नई तकनीक (हाइपरसोनिक मिसाइल, ड्रोन) खतरा बढ़ा रही है।
- मनोवैज्ञानिक दबाव: कराची और ग्वादर पाकिस्तान के लिए संवेदनशील बिंदु बने हुए हैं।

UPSC से प्रासंगिकता प्रिलिम्स हेतु बिंदु

- ऑपरेशन ट्राइडेंट (1971), ऑपरेशन पाइथन।
- सर क्रीक विवाद।
- A2/AD (Anti-Access/Area-Denial)।
- हैंगोर-श्रेणी (चीन-पाक), बाबर-श्रेणी (तुर्की-पाक)।

मेन परीक्षा हेतु बिंदु (GS-2, GS-3)

- भारत-पाकिस्तान प्रतिद्वंद्विता में समुद्री डोमेन का बदलता स्वरूप।
- बाहरी खिलाड़ियों (चीन, तुर्की) की भूमिका।
- एस्केलेशन और मिसकैल्कुलेशन का जोखिम।
- भारत की रणनीति: निवारण, हिंद-प्रशांत साझेदारी, स्वदेशी क्षमता-विकास।

निष्कर्ष

ऑपरेशन सिंदूर के बाद स्पष्ट है कि आने वाले संकट में समुद्री क्षेत्र हाशिये पर नहीं रहेगा। भारत के पास भौगोलिक व संख्यात्मक बढ़त है, लेकिन पाकिस्तान की चीनी व तुर्की मदद से हो रही आधुनिकीकरण प्रक्रिया अंतर को घटा रही है। समुद्री टकराव की प्रकृति जटिल है और युद्ध की दहलीज़ पार करने का खतरा अधिक है।

भारत के लिए चुनौती यह तय करना होगी कि नौसेना को प्रारंभिक संकेत (early signalling) के लिए उपयोग करना है या इसे एस्केलेशन के अंतिम विकल्प के रूप में सुरक्षित रखना है। हिंद-प्रशांत में सक्रिय भूमिका और स्वदेशी क्षमता-विकास दर्शाते हैं कि भारत दोनों संभावनाओं के लिए तैयार है।

UPSC Prelims Practice Question

Ques: "A2/AD (Anti-Access/Area-Denial)" शब्द हाल ही में समाचारों में था। इसका सही संदर्भ है:

- (A) अंतरिक्ष प्रौद्योगिकी से जुड़ा एंटी-सैटेलाइट हथियार
- (B) समुद्री सुरक्षा रणनीति जिसमें शत्रु की पहुँच और संचालन क्षमता को सीमित किया जाता है
- (C) परमाणु हथियार अप्रसार संधि से जुड़ा प्रावधान
- (D) साइबर सुरक्षा में प्रयुक्त एक प्रकार का एन्क्रिप्शन

Ans: (b)

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Ques: भारत-पाकिस्तान के बीच हालिया संकट के बाद समुद्री क्षेत्र में बढ़ते संकेत न केवल द्विपक्षीय प्रतिद्वंद्विता को बल्कि बाहरी शक्तियों की भूमिका को भी दर्शाते हैं। विश्लेषण कीजिए। (150 Words)

27 सितम्बर 2025 को तमिलनाडु के करूर ज़िले में अभिनेता से नेता बन विजय की पार्टी (तमिलनाडु वेत्ति कझगम - TVK) की रैली में भयानक भगदड़ हुई। इसमें 41 लोगों (10 बच्चे सहित) की मौत और 100 से अधिक घायल हुए। यह भारत में पहली बार किसी राजनीतिक रैली में बड़े पैमाने पर भगदड़ का मामला है, जो भीड़ प्रबंधन, राजनीतिक जवाबदेही और राज्य की आपदा-प्रबंधन क्षमता पर गंभीर प्रश्न उठाता है।



A stampede broke out during an election campaign rally for Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam, led by the actor-turned politician Vijay, in Karur. The incident claimed 41 lives, 10 children.

In Karur, where there was no way out

On September 27, thousands of people gathered in Karur, Tamil Nadu, to attend a rally by actor-turned-politician Vijay. As the chief of the Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam party arrived hours late, the crowd swelled and surged towards his vehicle, triggering a stampede that killed 41 people and injured over 100.

C. Iaisankar and Nachinarkkinnayan M. report on the tragedy, caused by many factors, including poor planning and alleged security lapses

L all, a 32-year-old homemaker, is consumed by guilt. She is unable to shake off the feeling that she failed to save her nephew, Tharuvishnu, from being crushed to death at a political rally last week. On the evening of September 27, a Saturday, Lalli carried the infant in her arms and walked to the venue of the rally in Karur, a textile hub in Tamil Nadu. Her husband and their two children went as well. They were excited to hear the popular actor, Vijay, address the crowd as president of his fledgling political party, Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK). The rally was part of the actor-turned politician's State-wide tour. Tamil Nadu is scheduled to have Assembly elections in 2026.

At the venue, the crowd kept swelling despite the heat. Vijay arrived several hours late, and there was allegedly little security in place. Many people fainted, while others tried to get closer to Vijay's vehicle. Chans erupted and the resulting crowd crush left 41 people dead, including 10 babies, and injured more than 100 people. Most of the adult victims were aged 18-30.

"I thought I could save him," says Lalli, who is sitting with family members in Tharuvishnu's house. The cries of the family echo through the house in Vadivel Nagar in Velusampuram, located barely 50 metres from where Vijay addressed the crowd.

Lalli's brother Vimal, a 25-year-old daily wage worker, and his wife Matheswari, 22, had Tharuvishnu two years after getting married. On the morning after the stampede, the couple performed the last rites of their 22-month-old son. He was the youngest to die in the stampede.

A deadly cocktail For the people of Velusampuram, where houses and textile shops can be found on both sides of the roads, the rally has left deep scars. Many residents insist that the disaster was neither accidental nor unforeseeable, and that it was the outcome of poor planning and official neglect.

Crowds had begun to gather at the spot of the rally, scheduled to begin at 3 p.m. on September 27. From the previous night, long men roared the stretch putting up posters, stringing banners, and blaring TVK songs on loudspeakers.

By around 10 a.m. on Saturday, many people had already arrived. By 3 p.m., traffic could not move through this road. And by evening, there was simply no space for anyone to even turn, says S. Sifharan, a resident.

Many believe that the timing of the rally was poor. "Saturday evening is when textile workers collect their wages in Karur. There is already some rush at that time. If you hold a large political rally in such a congested pocket at the same time, you're asking for trouble," says R. Rishuany, another resident.

Vijay arrived late, say residents. "Had he kept to the schedule, people would have left early, but he arrived after 7 p.m. The town was overflowing with people by then," says V. Rajaji, a textile worker from Govenduram in Karur town.

Residents also allege that they had little access to basic needs, especially drinking water. Karur has a hot, semi arid climate and while September

marks the end of the hottest season, temperatures during the day can soar to 37-38°C. "People stood in the sun for hours. I saw children faint, and boys climbing transformers just to catch a glimpse of Vijay," says G. Chitra, a homemaker and resident of Velusampuram. "There was only one hotel nearby, which was open. But the food there was too expensive for workers and daily-wage families. In the surrounding shops, there was no food available."

Lalli recalls the moments before the stampede occurred. "When Vijay began to speak, there was a power cut, and the mic failed. The crowd grew restless. I was holding Tharuvishnu in one hand and my daughter in the other when someone shoved us. I fell and he slipped from my arms."

For two hours, a hapless Lalli, who was inured herself, searched the lanes, before being admitted to the Karur Medical College Hospital. She learned only the next morning that her nephew had been found dead. Tharuvishnu's father, Vimal, had recognised him in TV footage from the government hospital. He had rushed to the spot to find his son's small body on a stretcher.

A descent into chaos

Karur residents draw parallels with other recent political gatherings, including by the two main parties in the State - the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and the All India Anna Dravida

K. Veeramani, a resident of Velusampuram, says, "The DMK's Mappuram Vela drew a much larger crowd. [Mappuram Vela is a festival held in honour of icons of the Dravidian movement, such as Periyar and party founder C.N. Annadurai]. But it was held near the ring road, where there is space. Even the Opposition leader, Edappadi Palaniswami [of the AIADMK], addressed a meeting here two days earlier without incident. Why did this collapse into chaos?"

Participants say trouble began when Vijay's vehicle started moving through the crowd on one of the carriageways of the road with a median. His vehicle inched its way to the selected spot, where he was to address the gathering.

As people, including those who had been waiting since morning, tried to get closer to the vehicle, a major commotion broke out. People were pushed back and many lost their balance and fell on the road, say residents. Minutes after Vijay climbed on a makeshift stage atop his vehicle, frantic people tried to leave the area any which way, to save their lives.

Amid this confusion, Vijay delivered a few minutes of his speech. The atmosphere turned electric when he broke into a jangle, targeting former State Minister V. Senthilbalaji in connection with a money-laundering case.

Photos and videos that emerged later show people throwing footwear towards the campaign vehicle while Vijay was speaking. Some video clips showed lathi-wielding policemen charging at some people in the crowd. On hearing the frantic cries of people in the crowd, Vijay tossed water bottles at them. A video also showed the actor pausing his speech when he saw ambulances struggling to make their way through the crowd.

It was only when he seemed to realise the magnitude of the situation that Vijay cut short his speech. He quickly left the venue, went to Tiruchirappalli, which is nearly two hours away by road, and flew to Chennai on a chartered plane. This drew a lot of criticism. He ignored journalists at the airport. Hours later, the actor posted on X, expressing grief over the incident and offering condolences to those killed.

According to officials of the Karur Medical College Hospital, 30 of the victims were brought in dead, while two others died later. A senior doctor says the primary cause of death was compressive asphyxia, triggered by intense pressure on the chest during the crowd surge. "Many people collapsed within minutes of being caught in the crush," the doctor says, adding that in some cases, he found rib and spinal fractures.

The First Information Report (FIR) registered by the Karur town police on September 27 says Vijay's arrival was deliberately delayed so more people could come to the rally. It says the police warned TVK leaders of the police's behaviour, but their warnings were not heeded. It also says that while the organisers had stated that 10,000 people would come, more than 25,000 people turned up at the rally.

The people, who waited in large numbers for several hours without food, water, and medical assistance, became fatigued due to the heat and crowding, which consequently led to a crush resulting in multiple deaths, the FIR adds.

The police charged TVK's Karur (west) district secretary V.R. Mathiyazhagan, party general secretary A. Theerthi, and State joint general secretary C.T.R. Nirmal Kumar and others under Sections 105 (culpable homicide), 109 (attempt to commit culpable homicide), 223 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by a public servant), and 125 (endangering life of others) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and section 3 of the Tamil Nadu Property Preservation of Damage and Loss Act, 1982. They have arrested Mathiyazhagan and central town secretary M.C. Pournaj and remanded them in judicial custody.

Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK).

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The blame game

The tragedy, believed to be the first of its kind in a political rally in India, drew nationwide attention. As soon as news of a broke, President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi,

Only a few policemen were standing along the side of the road. Many of the policemen were posted in the outer ring of the meeting spot, only to regulate the traffic.

KARUR: A stampede broke out during an election campaign rally for Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam, led by the actor-turned politician Vijay, in Karur. The incident claimed 41 lives, 10 children.

Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi, and leaders of various political parties expressed grief and shock over the tragedy.

The State government responded swiftly, arranging medical aid and overnight autopsies, and promptly handed over the bodies to the grieving families. It also constituted a one member Commission of Inquiry by retired High Court Judge Aruna Jagadeesan to probe the tragedy.

Hours after the tragedy, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin flew down to Tiruchi and drove to Karur past midnight, to console the bereaved families and call on the injured. The government directed doctors and specialists to the Karur Government Medical College Hospital, to take care of the people who continued to arrive in ambulances until late at night.

He later gave a statement saying, "No political party leader would ever wish for his followers or innocent civilians to die. When political parties and public organisations conduct such events, it is the duty of all of us to establish rules on how to act responsibly in the future."

The next day, AIADMK general secretary Palaniswami and a host of leaders of various political parties also visited the injured at the hospital. Palaniswami blamed the police for failing to provide adequate security. Terming the probe panel an "eyeswash", he demanded an inquiry by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The TVK has moved the Madras Bench of the Madras High Court, also seeking a CBI inquiry into the tragedy.

The BJP constituted an eight member delegation of Members of Parliament (MP) of the National Democratic Alliance, led by MP Hema Malkin, to study the reasons for the stampede. The police visited Karur on September 30 and interacted with the survivors. They demanded an impartial probe led by a sitting judge of the Supreme Court. Malini said reporters that the venue was "inappropriate" for a rally held for thousands of people. "In the history of politics, such a tragedy has not happened," she said, adding that both the organisers and the administration should be held accountable. A day before the team visited the district, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also visited Karur and consoled families who had lost their loved ones.

The incident has emerged as a rallying point for the TVK and the main Opposition parties, including the AIADMK and the BJP, to hold the DMK government responsible for the tragedy. The State government has strongly refuted the charges made against it.

Vijay, who has not yet visited the grieving families or the injured being treated in hospitals, issued a video statement three days after the tragedy. "As a human being, how could I leave the place when so many people were affected? I chose not to go there immediately only to avoid the risk of any further unforeseen incidents," he said. He also addressed the Chief Minister and told him with a dramatic flourish to "take revenge against him, and spare the TVK cadre".

What the police say

The police say Vijay's arrival was identified by political parties as a location for public meetings. According to S. Davasivatham, Deputy Additional District General of Police, Law and Order, the organisers had applied for a permit for the rally at the Light House Roundabout. This was denied on the grounds that it was not a suitable location to hold a meeting. A day later, they sought permission at Uzhavar Sandhal. They were denied permission again, on the grounds that the location was narrow. Finally, they were allotted Velusampuram, and the organisers consented to this.

Kariback from Erode district, who is one of the survivors, is critical of the police. "Only a few policemen were standing along the side of the road. Many of the policemen were posted in the outer ring of the meeting spot, only to regulate the traffic," he says. "Only around 10-15 policemen were walking alongside or in front of the vehicle. The tragedy could have been prevented if more policemen had been posted at the meeting spot and a large venue had been provided."

Dismissing the accusations, Davasivatham says there was adequate security in place. The police deployment was in a ratio of 120 (police/public), he says. As the crowd swelled, Davasivatham says more policemen were called in from the neighbouring districts.

A policeman on the condition of anonymity says the situation caused panic, even among the police. "I saw a person try and get a glimpse of the actor and slip and fall near his vehicle. The crowd trampled over him. Many people, who became tired and dehydrated, fell down on the road, only to be crushed by others. No one came forward to save the injured. Everybody was focused only on catching a glimpse of Vijay," he says.

While some blame the DMK and others blame Vijay for the tragedy, for many people, grief has not turned into anger against the actor. Sanjay, who lost his 7-year-old brother, K. Rishuany, in the crowd crush, feels the actor cannot be held fully responsible. "Thalapathy [the homonymous name popularly used for Vijay] would never have wanted this for us. If it had been in his control, he would have stopped it. He would never allow something like this to happen to any of us," he says.

Neel, Tharuvishnu's aunt, says, besides Matheswari. She says the mother, who suffers a speech and hearing impairment, is in shock. She says, "The pain in her eyes says it all."

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Static Context**1. भीड़ प्रबंधन (Crowd Management)**

- भारत में धार्मिक, खेल और राजनीतिक आयोजनों में हर वर्ष कई मौतें होती हैं।
- पूर्व की घटनाएँ: सबरीमाला (2011), गोदावरी पुष्करम (2015), हाथरस (2016), मुंबई स्टेशन (2017)।
- कारण: अधिक भीड़, अव्यवस्थित निकासी मार्ग, सुरक्षा बलों की कमी, चिकित्सा इंतज़ाम का अभाव।

2. कानूनी व संस्थागत ढाँचा

- आपदा प्रबंधन अधिनियम, 2005 : बड़े आयोजनों को संभावित आपदा मानकर पूर्व तैयारी अनिवार्य।
- NDMA गाइडलाइन : जोखिम आकलन, आपातकालीन निकासी मार्ग, पर्याप्त पुलिस, चिकित्सा इकाइयाँ।
- भारतीय दंड संहिता / भारतीय न्याय संहिता (2023) : आयोजकों पर लापरवाही से हुई मौतों का आपराधिक मुकदमा चल सकता है।

3. राजनीतिक रैली एक उच्च जोखिम आयोजन

- धार्मिक आयोजनों की तरह भीड़ का अनुमान आसान नहीं।
- राजनीतिक दल अक्सर भीड़ बढ़ा-चढ़ाकर दिखाने की कोशिश करते हैं → सुरक्षा संकट।

वर्तमान सन्दर्भ (करूर घटना)**1. मुख्य कारण**

- अत्यधिक भीड़ : अपेक्षित 10,000 की जगह 25,000 से अधिक लोग पहुँचे।
- विलंब : विजय के देर से आने से लोग घंटों धूप में खड़े रहे।
- संकीर्ण जगह : गलीनुमा स्थल; वैकल्पिक निकास मार्ग नहीं।
- मूलभूत सुविधाओं का अभाव : पानी, छाया और बैठने की व्यवस्था नहीं।
- सुरक्षा कमी : पुलिस बल कम, चेतावनियों को आयोजकों ने नज़रअंदाज़ किया।
- ट्रिगर : वाहन की हलचल, माइक/बिजली कट → अफ़रा-तफ़री → दबकर मौतें।

2. राजनीतिक/प्रशासनिक प्रतिक्रिया

- राज्य सरकार : CM स्टालिन का दौरा, न्यायमूर्ति अरुणा जगदीशन आयोग गठित।
- पुलिस : आयोजकों पर आपराधिक मामला दर्ज।
- विपक्ष (AIADMK, BJP) : CBI जांच की मांग, DMK पर सुरक्षा विफलता का आरोप।
- केंद्र : NDA सांसदों ने स्थल का दौरा किया।
- विजय : घटना के बाद तुरंत चले गए; बाद में वीडियो संदेश से शोक व्यक्त।

3. प्रभाव

- पहली बार राजनीतिक रैली में बड़े पैमाने पर मौतें।
- 2026 के तमिलनाडु चुनावों से पहले राजनीतिक बहस का मुद्दा।
- जनता और नेताओं के बीच विश्वास संकट।

UPSC विश्लेषण (मुख्य आयाम)**1. शासन व जवाबदेही**

- आयोजक और पुलिस दोनों जिम्मेदार।
- राजनीतिक नेताओं की कानूनी जवाबदेही तय होनी चाहिए।

2. आपदा प्रबंधन सबक

- बड़े आयोजनों में भीड़ प्रवाह का पूर्व आकलन, सुरक्षा अभ्यास, वैकल्पिक निकासी मार्ग ज़रूरी।
- NDMA गाइडलाइन का कड़ाई से पालन।

3. नैतिक/राजनीतिक प्रश्न

- राजनीतिक दलों का प्रदर्शन पर जोर, सुरक्षा की अनदेखी।
- नेतृत्व नैतिकता: नेता को पीड़ितों के साथ रहना चाहिए।

4. वृहद निहितार्थ

- भविष्य में चुनावों और स्टार-राजनीति के कारण ऐसी घटनाओं का जोखिम बढ़ेगा।
- ज़रूरत: अनिवार्य सुरक्षा ऑडिट, स्थल उपयुक्तता प्रमाणन, आयोजकों पर सख्त दायित्व।

निष्कर्ष

करूर त्रासदी यह दर्शाती है कि लोकतंत्र का उत्सव, नागरिकों की सुरक्षा की कीमत पर नहीं होना चाहिए। राजनीतिक रैलियों को धार्मिक आयोजनों की तरह ही पेशेवर भीड़ प्रबंधन और आपदा-पूर्व तैयारी की आवश्यकता है।

राजनीतिक नेतृत्व के लिए यह सबक है कि करिश्मा (charisma) और भीड़ जुटाना सुरक्षा का विकल्प नहीं है। यदि हर घटना के बाद केवल शोक संदेश दिए जाएंगे और ठोस सुधार नहीं होंगे, तो लोकतंत्र का सबसे बड़ा उत्सव – जनता की भागीदारी – लोगों की जान लेता रहेगा।

UPSC Prelims Practice Question

Ques: भारत में बड़े आयोजनों में सुरक्षा और आपदा प्रबंधन के लिए कौन सा अधिनियम लागू है?

- A) आपदा प्रबंधन अधिनियम, 2005
- B) भारतीय दंड संहिता, 1860
- C) मोटर वाहन अधिनियम, 1988
- D) नागरिक सुरक्षा अधिनियम, 2010

Ans: (a)

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Ques: बड़ी सार्वजनिक सभाओं में सुरक्षा और आपदा जोखिम को कम करने के लिए कौन-कौन से तकनीकी और प्रशासनिक उपाय प्रभावी हैं? (150 Words)

नवीन और नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा मंत्रालय (MNRE) ने एजेंसियों को निर्देश दिया है कि वे उन सौर परियोजना टेंडरों को रद्द और पुनः जारी करें, जो कथित तौर पर घरेलू सौर मॉड्यूल और सेल्स के उपयोग का नियम दरकिनार करने के उद्देश्य से जल्दबाजी में जारी किए गए थे। यह भारत की ऊर्जा आत्मनिर्भरता और स्थानीय सामग्री नियमों (Local Content Norms) के पालन की दिशा में उठाया गया कदम है।

India tells renewable energy units to cancel rushed solar tenders

Reuters

NEW DELHI

India's renewable energy ministry has asked clean energy agencies to cancel and reissue tenders for government projects that were rushed through in an attempt to circumvent certain rules, according to a Friday circular posted on its website.

Most Indian companies use cheaper China-made solar cells, but, starting June 1, rules under India's clean energy policy require developers of government projects to use only locally-made modules and cells.

Renewable energy agencies act as intermediaries between the government and private players and issue tenders for projects. Once the projects are built,

the electricity is sold to state power utilities.

Some agencies gave companies only seven days to submit bids, the Ministry said in the circular, without providing details on which agencies were involved or the values of such projects.

Short window

This short window may have been used to avoid a rule that requires government-backed solar projects to use domestic solar cells, the ministry said.

The agencies have been given 15 days to report back on the action taken.

India should be largely self-sufficient in solar cells only by March 2027, and effective production could be lower in the initial quarters, SBI Caps said in a research note in August.

Static Context**1. भारत में सौर ऊर्जा**

- भारत की स्थापित सौर क्षमता (2025) 60 GW से अधिक है; सरकार का लक्ष्य 2030 तक 500 GW अक्षय ऊर्जा।
- परियोजनाएं नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा एजेंसियों द्वारा जारी टेंडरों के माध्यम से लागू की जाती हैं; उत्पादन की बिजली राज्य विद्युत उपकृतियों को बेची जाती है।

2. घरेलू निर्माण नियम

- स्थानीय सामग्री आवश्यकता (LCR): सरकारी परियोजनाओं में भारतीय निर्मित मॉड्यूल/सेल्स का उपयोग अनिवार्य (1 जून 2025 से प्रभावी)।
- उद्देश्य: चीन निर्मित सौर सेल्स पर निर्भरता कम करना।

3. नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा नीति ढांचा

- MNRE नीति और परियोजना अनुमोदन की देखरेख करता है।
- PLI (Production Linked Incentive) योजना घरेलू निर्माण को प्रोत्साहित करती है।
- टेंडर महत्वपूर्ण उपकरण हैं जो बाजार आवंटन और परियोजना कार्यान्वयन में भूमिका निभाते हैं।

वर्तमान संदर्भ**1. जल्दबाजी में जारी टेंडरों की समस्या**

- कुछ एजेंसियों ने केवल 7 दिन का समय दिया।
- यह समय सीमा LCR नियम को दरकिनार करने के लिए हो सकती थी, जिससे सस्ते आयातित चीनी सेल्स का उपयोग संभव होता।
- MNRE ने एजेंसियों से 15 दिनों में कार्रवाई की रिपोर्ट देने को कहा है।

2. घरेलू उत्पादन की चुनौतियाँ

- भारत मार्च 2027 तक सौर सेल्स में आत्मनिर्भर होने की उम्मीद है।
- प्रारंभिक तिमाहियों में घरेलू आपूर्ति सीमित होने के कारण नियम पालन और परियोजना समय-सीमा प्रभावित हो सकती है।

3. रणनीतिक महत्व

- यह कदम आत्मनिर्भर भारत (Energy Security) के अनुरूप है।
- चीन पर निर्भरता कम होती है।
- यह भारत के जलवायु लक्ष्य और आर्थिक विकास, साथ ही घरेलू रोजगार सृजन को भी प्रोत्साहित करता है।

UPSC के लिए प्रासंगिक बिंदु**प्रारंभिक परीक्षा (Prelims):**

- सौर ऊर्जा नीति, LCR, PLI योजना।
- MNRE की प्रमुख पहलें और अक्षय ऊर्जा लक्ष्य।
- चीन पर सौर आयात निर्भरता।

मुख्य परीक्षा

- अक्षय ऊर्जा में ऊर्जा सुरक्षा और आत्मनिर्भरता।
- बड़े पैमाने पर परियोजनाओं में नीति क्रियान्वयन और शासन चुनौतियाँ।
- घरेलू निर्माण नियमों का आर्थिक और रणनीतिक महत्व।
- तेजी से अक्षय ऊर्जा विकास और वैश्विक व्यापार संबंधों में संतुलन।

निष्कर्ष

MNRE का निर्देश यह दर्शाता है कि सरकार स्थानीय सामग्री नियमों के पालन और घरेलू सौर निर्माण को प्रोत्साहन देने के लिए गंभीर है। भारत संक्षिप्त आपूर्ति बाधाओं का सामना कर सकता है, लेकिन नियमों का पालन करने से ऊर्जा क्षेत्र में दीर्घकालिक मजबूती, रोजगार सृजन और आयात निर्भरता में कमी सुनिश्चित होगी। यह कदम दर्शाता है कि तेज अक्षय ऊर्जा कार्यान्वयन और रणनीतिक निर्माण प्राथमिकताओं के बीच संतुलन बनाए रखना आवश्यक है।

UPSC Prelims Practice Question

Ques : भारत में सौर ऊर्जा परियोजनाओं के लिए PLI (Production Linked Incentive) योजना का उद्देश्य क्या है?

- (A) आयातित सौर मॉड्यूल्स पर सब्सिडी देना
- (B) घरेलू सौर निर्माण क्षमता बढ़ाना
- (C) केवल राज्य सरकारों के लिए टेंडर जारी करना
- (D) सौर ऊर्जा उत्पादन को सीमित करना

Ans: b)

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Ques : भारत में ऊर्जा आत्मनिर्भरता सुनिश्चित करने के लिए स्थानीय सामग्री नियमों और PLI योजनाओं की भूमिका स्पष्ट कीजिए। (150 Words)

अगस्त 2019 के बाद, जम्मू-कश्मीर के विभाजन के बाद, लद्दाख एक केन्द्रशासित प्रदेश (UT) बन गया है जिसमें विधानमंडल नहीं है। यह कदम प्रशासन और सुरक्षा के लिए उठाया गया था, लेकिन स्थानीय लोग राजनीतिक रूप से असशक्त महसूस कर रहे हैं, उन्हें कानून और नीति निर्माण में सीमित भूमिका मिली है। 24 सितंबर 2025 की हिंसा और चार मौतों के बाद राज्यकादर्जा और संवैधानिक सुरक्षा की मांग फिर से जोर पकड़ रही है। इसके पीछे प्रमुख आवाजें हैं लेह एपेक्स बॉडी (LAB) और कारगिल डेमोक्रेटिक एलायंस (KDA)।

Should Ladakh get statehood?



Sajjad Kargili
Member of the
Kargil
Democratic
Alliance



Rangarajan R.
Former IAS
officer and
author of
'Courseware on
Quality
Simplified'

PARLEY

In September 24, when protesters in Ladakh clashed with the police, four people died in the violence. Two days later, climate activist and educator, Sonam Wangchuck, who had been spearheading a hunger strike with 15 others, was detained under the National Security Act, 1980, and taken to Jodhpur Central Jail in Rajasthan. The Union government has accused him of instigating the violence, a charge that he has denied. Ladakh, which was turned into a Union Territory (UT) in 2019, has been protesting for statehood and tribal status under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. The government has been in talks with two civil society groups – the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), representing the Leh and Kargil regions, respectively – for three years. Should Ladakh get statehood? Rangarajan R. and Sajjad Kargili discuss the question in a conversation moderated by **Vijaita Singh**. Edited excerpts:

Should Ladakh get statehood?

Sajjad Kargili: When Ladakh was part of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), we had representation in the J&K Assembly, a voice, and some powers to elect the Chief Minister of the State. After becoming a UT, Ladakh has become voiceless. Bureaucrats come here for two years and try and impose policies according to their own wishes, without the consent of the people. Second, as far as land is concerned, we don't have any safeguards. Earlier, we had safeguards under Article 370 and Article 35A of the Constitution. The BJP promised to include Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, but it is not fulfilling that promise. For the last six years, not a single person from Ladakh has been recruited for gazetted posts and there is no Public Service Commission. Ladakh has been disempowered for six years. So yes, we need statehood, democracy, and a voice. The idea of making Ladakh a UT has failed to address the aspirations of the people.

Rangarajan R.: The decision of bifurcating J&K into two UTs was a sensitive matter. The Supreme Court upheld that decision, so there is nothing more to discuss about that. But it is true that people had very serious apprehensions about the way in which it was done.

There is still a Member of Parliament from Ladakh, so Ladakh does have democratic representation. Ladakh has a unique landscape. It is vast, but the population is limited and is primarily concentrated in Leh, Kargil, and a few other places. Including Ladakh under the Sixth



Two of the four people who lost their lives during the September 24 violence in Leh were cremated under tight security. ANI

Schedule would be a logical first step (towards constitutional safeguards) and would offer its population – about 3.5 lakh according to the 2011 Census – some protection over land. Statehood is something which has to be deliberated further considering the population size. Ladakh should start with (demanding) Sixth Schedule status because that, if provided, will give Ladakhis more financial power, democratic representation, and protection for tribal and land-related rights in that region.

The 2020 Chinese aggression and incursion happened when Ladakh became a UT, not when it was part of J&K. Many States share international borders, so why have a different yardstick for Ladakh?

RR: I am not getting into the security angle. The border areas are secured by the armed forces, and that will be the case irrespective of whether Ladakh is a UT or a State. Punjab, Uttarakhand, Sikkim are full-fledged States, but the Army is always present in those regions. That is not the point here. Various criteria are considered for Statehood: the area, sensitivity of the area, the population size... The people on the ground have reasons (for demanding statehood) and the administrators also have valid reasons for why (granting statehood) is not appropriate at this point in time. I am not saying that I am against it. But as someone who has been observing the situation and who understands the Constitution, I feel it has to be a staggered approach.

Also, the Sixth Schedule or even Statehood is not a panacea for all ills. Ultimately, it also depends on how well these things are implemented. There are areas with Sixth Schedule status in Assam; the State still has grievances. Meghalaya and Mizoram also fall under the Sixth Schedule, but they still don't get autonomy, as rights have not been granted fully.



Statehood is something which has to be deliberated further considering the population size. Ladakh should start with (demanding) Sixth Schedule status because that, if provided, will give Ladakhis more financial power, democratic representation, and protection for tribal and land-related rights in the region

R. RANGARAJAN

The LAB and KDA have announced that they are not going ahead with any talks with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), but the MHA has said it is open to dialogue. The MHA has also stated that the high-powered committee on Ladakh has yielded positive outcomes, including increased reservations for Scheduled Tribes, provision of women's reservation in the Hill Councils, and steps towards protecting local languages. It also said that the recruitment process for 1,800 government posts in the UT has begun. How true is this statement? And if it is true, shouldn't you give the government adequate time to keep up with the promises?

SK: We have four demands: Sixth Schedule status, statehood, a Public Service Commission, and separate Lok Sabha seats for Leh and Kargil regions. We never demanded 33% reservation for women. They proposed it; we didn't oppose it. The same goes for protecting languages. The government is not discussing the real agenda of the LAB and KDA. The reservation policy and the domicile law they brought in are executive orders, not constitutional guarantees. They can be amended or abolished any time. That is why we want constitutional guarantees for these reservations.

Second, Ladakh is a peaceful region. The dialogue should be held in a dignified manner, not by arresting our youth and by imposing draconian laws. We hope that the government will conduct a judicial probe as to what happened on September 24.

I don't agree with Mr. Rangarajan that we should start with Sixth Schedule status. The Lieutenant Governor (LG) administration is ignoring our elected representatives. Till now, the LG has not called a meeting with the elected bodies. So, you can imagine the extent of lack of democracy. The Hill Councils and the UT administration have failed to establish business rules.

Ladakh has two hostile powers on the either side – Pakistan and China – and the people of Ladakh are patriotic. But today, the government

is supporting lobbies and organisations which are trolling Ladakhis, calling them anti-national, pro-Chinese and pro-Pakistan. That is unfortunate. The people of Ladakh have given blood to save these frontiers.

Also, when Sikkim was granted statehood, it had nearly the same population that Ladakh has today. The Government of India announced five new districts for Ladakh and in some of the regions, the population is just 5,000-7,000. So, I don't think population is the only criteria. The absence of governance and democracy should be the criteria for granting statehood. The government will also gain more trust from the people; today the people feel betrayed.

RR: I also take Mr. Sajjad's data point at face value – his point that ever since the State was converted into a UT, not one or not a significant number of people have been recruited from the region into public service. That needs to be addressed. Ladakh is such a vast region that it would make sense to create maybe even separate Class A and Class B services just for the area. Since it's a UT, the UPSC (Union Public Service Commission) could handle recruitment.

Some members of the LAB and KDA also believe that the autonomous councils should be strengthened more. Could you settle for more empowered autonomous councils rather than demanding statehood?

SK: We have seen this happen before – even in Delhi – where the elected government had to sit in protest outside the LG's office every day, because of constant interference from the LG in matters that should have been handled by the elected government. A UT with a legislature is worse than a UT without a legislature. We have Hill Councils and the Act (Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council Act, 1995) mentions that the Chief Executive Councillor (CEC) will have the power and protocol of a Cabinet Minister of a State and the Executive Councillors would have the power and protocol of a Minister of State. But in Ladakh, business rules have not been defined yet. That is why the CEC or the Council Chairman is compelled to visit the Chief Secretary's office for routine matters. The government has a budget of ₹6,000 crore for Ladakh but only ₹600 crore for Ladakh's Hill Councils. We get a small chunk from the Centre, while a large amount, nearly 80%, is utilised by the bureaucrats through the LG administration.



To listen to the full interview
Scan the code or go to the link
www.thehindu.com

Static Context

1. केंद्रशासित प्रदेश बनाम राज्य

- UT: लॉफ्टिमेंट गवर्नर (LG) द्वारा प्रशासन, सीमित विधायी शक्तियां।
- राज्य: चुनिंदा विधानमंडल, राज्य सरकार और लोक सेवा आयोग, स्थानीय निर्णय और स्वायत्तता।

2. संविधान की छठवीं अनुसूची

- आदिवासी क्षेत्रों को स्वायत्तता और संसाधन नियंत्रण।
- मुख्य रूप से असम, मेघालय, मिजोरम, त्रिपुरा में लागू।
-

3. लोकतंत्र और प्रतिनिधित्व

- लद्दाख के पास केवल एक सांसद है, कोई विधानमंडल नहीं।
- लोक सेवाओं में भर्ती सीमित, जिससे स्थानीय सशक्तिकरण प्रभावित।

वर्तमान संदर्भ

1. स्थानीय मांगें

- LAB और KDA की चार मुख्य मांगें:
 - राज्यकादर्जा
 - छठवीं अनुसूची की स्थिति
 - लोक सेवा आयोग
 - लेह और कारगिल के लिए अलग लोकसभा सीटें
- कार्यकारी आदेशों (महिला आरक्षण, भाषा संरक्षण) को संवैधानिक गारंटी नहीं।

2. सरकारी प्रयास

- उच्चस्तरीय समिति ने:
 - अनुसूचित जनजाति आरक्षण बढ़ाया
 - 1,800 सरकारी पदों की भर्ती प्रक्रिया शुरू की
 - हिल काउंसिलों में महिला आरक्षण और भाषा सुरक्षा प्रस्तावित
- प्रशासन धीरे-धीरे सुधार की नीति पर जोर दे रहा है।

3. प्रशासनिक चुनौतियाँ

- हिल काउंसिलों का बजट कम: ₹600 करोड़ (काउंसिल) बनाम ₹6,000 करोड़ (UT प्रशासन)।
- नियमों के अनुसार हिल काउंसिलों और CEC को सीमित अधिकार।
- LG प्रशासन के तहत अधिकतर निर्णय केंद्रशासित अधिकारियों द्वारा।

4. सुरक्षा और रणनीतिक महत्व

- चीन और पाकिस्तान के सीमा क्षेत्र में स्थित।
- सुरक्षा सशस्त्र बलों द्वारा सुनिश्चित, राज्यhood या छठवीं अनुसूची का संबंध मुख्यतः शासन और लोकतंत्र से।

विश्लेषण

1. प्रशासन और लोकतंत्र

- UT की स्थिति में केंद्रित निर्णय और स्थानीय आवाज़ की कमी।
- राज्यकादर्जा से लोकतांत्रिक वैधता, लोक सेवाओं में स्थानीय भर्ती और नीति स्वायत्तता सुनिश्चित।

2. संवैधानिक सुरक्षा

- छठवीं अनुसूची भूमि, संस्कृति और आदिवासी अधिकारों की सुरक्षा।
- कार्यकारी आदेश पर्याप्त नहीं, संवैधानिक गारंटी आवश्यक।

3. सामाजिक और राजनीतिक दृष्टि

- सिखिम की तुलना (उस समय की आबादी लगभग समान) → आबादी एकमात्र मानदंड नहीं।
- स्थानीय पहचान और राजनीतिक प्रतिनिधित्व की कमी राज्यकादर्जा या स्वायत्तता की मांग को न्यायसंगत बनाती है।

4. चुनौतियाँ और सावधानियाँ

- राज्यकादर्जा या छठवीं अनुसूची लागू करने में संसाधनों का सही वितरण, प्रशासनिक अधिकारों की स्पष्टता और राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा के साथ तालमेल सुनिश्चित करना जरूरी।
- अनुभव से पता चलता है कि स्वायत्त परिषदाओं के अधिकारों का पूर्ण क्रियान्वयन आवश्यक।

निष्कर्ष

लद्दाख की राज्यकादर्जा और संवैधानिक सुरक्षा की मांग राजनीतिक असशक्तता, प्रशासनिक प्रभुत्व और प्रतिनिधित्व की कमी से उत्पन्न हुई है। छठवीं अनुसूची एक पहला कदम हो सकता है, लेकिन राज्यकादर्जा, स्वायत्त शासन और लोक सेवा आयोग जैसी सुधारात्मक उपायों से ही स्थानीय लोकतंत्र और विकास मजबूत होंगे। लद्दाख की सांस्कृतिक, भौगोलिक और रणनीतिक विशेषताओं को ध्यान में रखते हुए, सतत, संवैधानिक और लोकतांत्रिक दृष्टिकोण अपनाना आवश्यक है।

UPSC Prelims Practice Question

Ques: छठा अनुसूची (Sixth Schedule) किस प्रकार के क्षेत्रों को स्वायत्तता प्रदान करता है?

- (A) आदिवासी और पहाड़ी क्षेत्र
- (B) सभी केंद्र शासित प्रदेश
- (C) सभी राज्यों के शहरी क्षेत्र
- (D) सीमावर्ती क्षेत्र केवल

Ans : a)

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Ques: लद्दाख में राजनीतिक प्रतिनिधित्व और प्रशासनिक स्वायत्तता की कमी ने स्थानीय समुदायों में किस प्रकार के असंतोष को जन्म दिया है? भारत के अन्य UTs और पहाड़ी राज्यों के अनुभवों से तुलना करते हुए उत्तर दीजिए। (150 Words)

This clean energy rise needs climate finance expansion

India's clean energy transition is gaining momentum. In 2024, India added 24.5 gigawatts (GW) of solar energy capacity, making it the third largest contributor globally after China and the United States, making it a key player in the global shift towards renewables.

The United Nations Secretary-General's 2025 Climate Report recognises India, alongside Brazil and China, as a leading developing country in scaling solar and wind energy. In 2023, the renewable energy sector employed over a million people, contributing to 5% of GDP growth. Of this, off-grid solar alone employed over 80,000 people in 2021. India's leadership in establishing the International Solar Alliance (ISA) is laudable.

The critical gap

But this impressive momentum needs a consistent push. Beneath the headlines lies a critical gap – the financial scaffolding that is needed to sustain and scale this transition. Without a dramatic expansion of climate finance, India will struggle to meet its climate targets.

The economic case for clean energy has solid basis. According to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), if India follows a 1.5°C-aligned pathway, it could achieve average annual GDP growth of 2.8% through 2050, more than double the G-20 average. Battery-integrated renewables, decentralised grids and green hydrogen technologies are all creating new opportunities for inclusive, future-ready growth. Yet, this momentum hinges on the missing piece of climate finance.

The size of India's climate finance gap is wide. Recent estimates indicate a requirement of \$1.5 trillion by 2030 to stay on a 1.5°C pathway, while the Ministry of Finance places the figure at over \$2.5 trillion by 2030 to meet national targets. This includes capital for expanding renewables, strengthening the electricity grid, deploying



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Without this, India will struggle to meet its climate targets

battery storage, scaling up green hydrogen, and transitioning to sustainable transport and agriculture. The current flow of climate finance falls well short of this target.

By December 2024, India's cumulative aligned green, social, sustainability and sustainability-linked (GSS+) debt issuance had reached \$55.9 billion, representing a 186% increase since 2021, with green bonds accounting for 83% of total aligned issuance. The trajectory remains strong, with green bond investment in India crossing \$45 billion in 2025, and sustainable finance targets aiming for \$100 billion by 2030, indicating robust private sector engagement.

However, the challenge of expanding beyond large corporates remains valid. While the private sector was responsible for 84% of the total green bond issuance, access for micro, small, and medium enterprises, agri-tech innovators, and local infrastructure developers continues to need enhancement through concessional finance and risk-sharing mechanisms. India's successful solar energy auctions under the Solar Park Scheme have been cited as one initiative in support of attracting private financing. Similarly, India's issuance of sovereign green bonds and the success of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)-regulated social bonds have channelled private capital into climate action, education and health care.

Changes to strategy

To unlock this gap in finance, India must diversify and deepen its climate finance strategy, starting with public finance. National and State governments can use Budget allocations and fiscal tools to attract private capital and de-risk green investments.

Blended finance can bridge this divide. While concessional finance and risk-sharing mechanisms are often referenced, there is a need

to examine how they work across sectors, scales and investor profiles. Credit enhancement instruments such as partial guarantees or subordinated debt can improve the risk-return profile of green projects, making them more attractive to private lenders. Similarly, performance or loan guarantees can unlock finance for mid-sized clean energy infrastructure in Tier II and III cities, where governance and delivery risks may deter investors.

Scaling such models will require unlocking domestic institutional capital, from pension funds, insurers and sovereign wealth funds. India, too, can unlock similar potential by enabling its institutional investors such as the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation or the Life Insurance Corporation, to allocate a portion of their portfolios to climate-aligned investments. This would require regulatory reforms such as clearer environmental, social, and governance investment guidelines, risk mitigation instruments and long-term green project pipelines.

Tap carbon markets

Policy and institutional support are critical. Carbon markets offer another avenue. India's new Carbon Credit Trading Scheme could unlock new finance streams if it is transparent, well regulated and equitable. Equally urgent is financing for adaptation and loss and damage.

India must lead not just on clean energy but also on climate finance innovation, with visible, scalable breakthroughs. This can be through blockchain for tracking climate finance, Artificial Intelligence-driven risk assessment for green portfolios, or tailored blended finance models that reflect India's unique social, environmental and economic realities.

The views expressed are personal

GS. Paper 03– Environment

UPSC Mains Practice Question: भारत में नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा संक्रमण में जलवायु वित्त की

भूमिका का विश्लेषण कीजिए। (150 Words)

Context :

भारत ने सौर ऊर्जा क्षमता में 2024 में 24.5 GW जोड़कर वैश्विक स्तर पर तीसरा स्थान प्राप्त किया। यह देश नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा क्षेत्र में रोजगार (1 मिलियन से अधिक) और जीडीपी (5%) में योगदान के माध्यम से महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा रहा है। भारत ने अंतर्राष्ट्रीय सौर गठबंधन (ISA) की स्थापना में भी नेतृत्व दिखाया है। हालांकि, इस संक्रमण को स्थायी और व्यापक बनाने के लिए मजबूत जलवायु वित्त व्यवस्था आवश्यक है, अन्यथा भारत अपने नेट-जीरो और नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा लक्ष्यों को पूरा करने में असफल हो सकता है।

Static Context

1. जलवायु वित्त (Climate Finance)

- विकासशील देशों में मिटिगेशन और अनुकूलन उपायों के लिए निवेश।
- इसमें सार्वजनिक वित्त, निजी निवेश, मिश्रित वित्त (Blended Finance), ग्रीन बॉन्ड और कार्बन बाजार शामिल हैं।

2. नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा लक्ष्य

- भारत का लक्ष्य: 2030 तक 500 GW नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा।
- पेरिस समझौते के 1.5°C मार्ग के अनुसार, निवेश आवश्यकता: \$1.5–2.5 ट्रिलियन।

3. मिश्रित वित्त और उपकरण

- क्रेडिट एन्हांसमेंट, गारंटी, सबोर्डिनेटेड डेब्ट निवेशकों के जोखिम को कम करते हैं।
- यह MSME, स्थानीय आधारभूत संरचना और टियर II/III शहरों में निवेश को आकर्षक बनाता है।

वर्तमान संदर्भ

1. निजी क्षेत्र की भागीदारी

- ग्रीन बॉन्ड जारी: \$55.9 बिलियन (2024), 2021 से 186% वृद्धि।
- निजी क्षेत्र का योगदान: 84%; MSME और छोटे नवप्रवर्तकों के लिए वित्त की कमी।

2. नीतिगत उपाय

- सॉवरेन ग्रीन बॉन्ड, SEBI-संशोधित सामाजिक बॉन्ड, सोलर पार्क योजना निवेश आकर्षित कर रहे हैं।
- घरेलू संस्थागत पूंजी (LIC, EPFO, पेंशन फंड) को नियमक सुधार और ESG दिशानिर्देशों के माध्यम से निवेशित किया जा सकता है।

3. कार्बन बाजार और नवाचार

- भारत की नई कार्बन क्रेडिट ट्रेडिंग योजना वित्त प्रवाह बढ़ा सकती है यदि यह पारदर्शी और सुव्यवस्थित हो।
- ब्लॉकचेन और AI जैसे तकनीकी समाधान वित्तीय निगरानी और जोखिम मूल्यांकन में मदद कर सकते हैं।

विश्लेषण

1. आर्थिक और विकास लाभ

- स्वच्छ ऊर्जा निवेश: GDP वृद्धि, रोजगार सृजन और औद्योगिक नवाचार।
- ग्रीन हाइड्रोजन, बैटरी-इंटीग्रेटेड नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा, और डीसेंट्रलाइज्ड ग्रिड विकास के लिए अवसर।

2. वित्तीय चुनौतियाँ

- 2030 तक \$1.5–2.5 ट्रिलियन का वित्तीय अंतर।
- MSME और स्थानीय परियोजनाओं के लिए सीमित वित्तीय पहुंच।

3. रणनीतिक नीति दृष्टिकोण

- मिश्रित वित्त (Blended Finance) निवेशकों के जोखिम को कम कर सकता है।
- संस्थागत निवेशकों को ग्रीन प्रोजेक्ट्स में निवेश करने के लिए नियामक सुधार आवश्यक।
- अनुकूलन, हानि और नुकसान, और कार्बन बाजार पर विशेष ध्यान।

4. वैश्विक और राष्ट्रीय महत्व

- भारत की नेतृत्व क्षमता वैश्विक जलवायु लक्ष्यों में योगदान।
- नवाचारी वित्त मॉडल भारत को विकासशील देशों के लिए मॉडल बना सकते हैं।

निष्कर्ष

भारत की नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा वृद्धि प्रभावशाली है, लेकिन स्थायी वित्त पोषण आवश्यक है। सार्वजनिक-निजी साझेदारी, मिश्रित वित्त, कार्बन बाजार और संस्थागत निवेश के माध्यम से जलवायु वित्त बढ़ाकर भारत अपने राष्ट्रीय और वैश्विक जलवायु लक्ष्यों को हासिल कर सकता है। रणनीतिक निवेश और वित्तीय नवाचार से यह संक्रमण सभी के लिए समावेशी, टिकाऊ और आर्थिक रूप से लाभकारी बन सकता है।
