



DAILY PT POINTERS

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The Hindu-Economy(GSIII)-Page 1

ADB projects India's GDP growth in 2024-25 at 7%

Retail inflation to ease to 4.6% this year and food inflation to cool to 5.7% if farm output returns to usual, says lender; revival expected in rural consumption, but exports, FDI inflows still seen muted

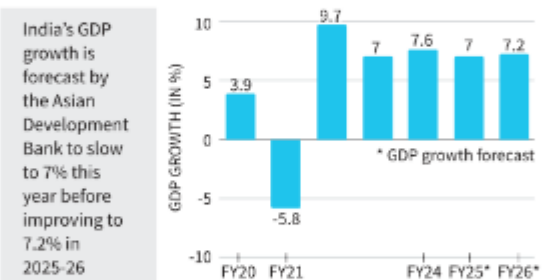
Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

India's economy is expected to remain robust over the next two years, even though headline growth in the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is forecast to slow from 7.6% in 2023-24 to 7% this year, before improving to 7.2% in 2025-26, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said.

As per its Asia Development Outlook report released on Thursday, the bank expects retail inflation to ease to 4.6% this year and 4.5% in 2025-26. India's "persistent" food inflation is expected to drop to 5.7% as farm output returns to normal trends this year.

With the U.S. reporting a resurgence in inflation in

Projected slowdown



March, dimming prospects of much-anticipated interest rate cuts from the Federal Reserve, the ADB noted that a 'higher for longer' interest rate regime would have some impact on Asia's inflation outlook, with a slightly smaller dent in growth.

However, this impact would be "more pronounced and persistent"

for India, given the higher sensitivity of its inflation pace to exchange rate fluctuations, and its greater reliance on imported goods, it said. Moreover, if the spike in shipping costs triggered by the strife in the Red Sea persists, it could add to inflation pressures across developing Asia.

A projected normal monsoon this year will also

help revive rural consumption, which was muted last year due to erratic rainfall affecting the farm sector with greater demand for work under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act scheme signalling the resurgent stress.

"In India, growth is forecast to remain strong as rising consumption complements continued investment growth," said Abdul Abiad, director of ADB's macroeconomics research division. As India accounts for 80% of South Asia's GDP, it is still the fastest-growing sub-region with improving domestic demand as prices moderate in most economies, he noted.

CONTINUED ON
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Do you know?

ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. Established in 1966, it is owned by 68 members—49 from the region.

The Hindu-History(GSI)-page 3

Statue of Valour watches over battle for Ahom pride in Jorhat

Rahul Karmakar
JORHAT

rated after completion," said one of his neighbours.

Pranab Barpatragohain plans to start a restaurant on his plot opposite the entrance gate of an under-construction park sporting Meleng-Hollongapar's newest landmark – the Statue of Valour.

The 125-foot statue depicts Lachit Borphukan, the iconic Ahom general revered for leading the Battle of Saraighat in 1671 to prevent the Mughal army from occupying Assam. The park encompasses the *maidam*, or earthen pyramid, where he was buried after

Divided opinions

Opinions about the Statue of Valour, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 9, are perhaps as divided as the support for the two top candidates – BJP's Topon Kumar Gogoi, who is eyeing a second successive term; and challenger Gaurav Gogoi of the Congress. The latter had won the 2019 Lok Sabha election from the adjoining Kaliabor seat, which metamorphosed into Kaziranga after the 2023 delimitation exercise.



The 125-foot statue of Ahom general Lachit Borphukan was inaugurated by the Prime Minister on March 9. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

NH-715 as the Sukhapha Samannay Kshetra is from its western edge. Dedicated to Swargadeo (or emperor) Sukapha, who came from China's

Kshetra is associated with the Congress. Former CM and Mr. Gaurav's father, the late Tarun Gogoi, laid its foundation in December 2015.

six communities demanding Scheduled Tribe status, is crucial for political parties, especially as the Sivasaagar and Charaideo districts form half the constituency. These districts comprised the core of the erstwhile Ahom kingdom.

Understandably, the BJP and the Congress have both fielded Ahom candidates from Jorhat. Of the remaining two in the fray, Independent Arun Chandra Handique is also an Ahom.

The second largest chunk of Jorhat voters are the Adivasis or tea planta-

sis have gravitated toward the BJP. "The voters know that we unite people, and that we stand for a dignified brand of politics," he said.

The Congress is aware of the damage two of its former local leaders – Sushanta Buragohain, an Ahom; and Rupiyoti Kuri, an Adivasi – could inflict. Both won the 2021 Assembly election on Congress tickets, but then quit to be re-elected as BJP legislators.

The BJP has pulled out all stops to prevent the Congress from reclaiming the Jorhat seat after 20

- Lachit Borphukan (24th November 1622 — 25th April 1672) was the famous General of the Royal Army of the Ahom Kingdom of Assam who defeated the Mughals and successfully halted the ever-expanding ambitions of the Mughals under Aurangzeb.
- Lachit Borphukan inspired the Assamese soldiers in the Battle of Saraighat fought in 1671, and delivered a crushing and humiliating defeat on the Mughals.
- The heroic fight of Lachit Borphukan and his army remains one of the most inspiring military feats of resistance in the history of our country.

The Hindu-Space (GSIII)-Page 10

ISRO's 'zero orbital debris' milestone

How did ISRO ensure practically zero debris left in earth orbit after the PSLV-C58/XPoSat mission? What is the purpose and function of the PSLV Orbital Experimental Module-3 (POEM-3)? How does it contribute to space debris mitigation efforts? What are the risks space debris poses to space assets?

EXPLAINER

Suchitra Karthikeyan

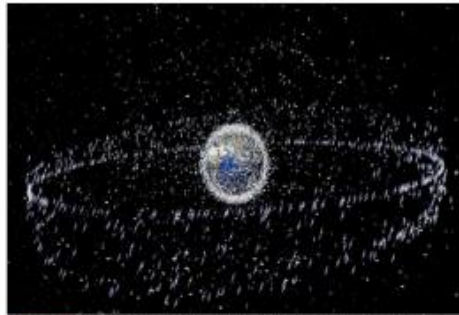
The story so far:

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has said its PSLV-C58/XPoSat mission has practically left zero debris in earth orbit. The space agency explained that the last stage of the Polar Satellite Launch vehicle (PSLV) used in the mission was transformed into a kind of orbital station – called the PSLV Orbital Experimental Module-3 (POEM-3) – before it was left to re-enter the earth's atmosphere instead of floating in orbit once its mission was completed. ISRO said that after it completed the primary mission of injecting all satellites into their target orbits, the fourth stage of the PSLV was transformed into the POEM-3. It was subsequently de-orbited from 650 km to 350 km, rendering it more susceptible to being pulled towards the earth and burning up in the atmosphere. ISRO also said it "passivated the stage," meaning dumped its fuel, to avoid an explosion that could have flung small pieces of debris into orbit.

What is POEM?

Developed by the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) as an inexpensive space platform, POEM uses the spent fourth stage of a PSLV rocket as an orbital platform. Used for the first time in the PSLV-C53 mission in June 2022, ISRO had POEM orbit the earth to perform in-orbit scientific experiments with various payloads onboard.

POEM is powered by solar panels mounted on the fuel tank of the rocket's fourth stage and a lithium-ion battery. It has a navigation, guidance, and control (NGC) system to stabilise its altitude along with helium control thrusters. The NGC system has four Sun sensors, a magnetometer, and gyroscopes, and links to ISRO's NavIC satellite constellation for navigation. POEM also has a telecommand system to communicate with the ground station.



Orbital threat: With the rise in the number of satellites in orbit around the earth, space debris has become a pressing issue. APF

ISRO first demonstrated the reuse of the spent fourth stage of its rocket in its PSLV C-44 mission in 2019. After satellites were injected into the target orbits, the fourth stage, carrying a student payload called KalamSat-V2, was moved to a higher circular orbit of 443 km and stayed there, facilitating the payload's requirements.

What has POEM-3 achieved?

ISRO launched the PSLV C-58 mission from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota on January 1. After deploying the XPoSat satellite in its desired orbit of 650 km, the fourth stage, now called POEM-3, was lowered to a 350 km high circular orbit. The lower a satellite is in orbit around the earth, the more drag it experiences and the more energy it needs to expend to stay in orbit.

POEM-3 featured nine payloads: two each from VSSC and Bellatrix Aerospace Pvt Ltd, one each from the start-ups TakeMe2Space, Irespace Space Labs Pvt Ltd., Dhruva Space, and from IISc Institute of Technology, IIT Bombay Institute of Technology, and ISRO's Physics Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad.

It completed 400 orbits around the

earth by its 25th day. The payloads were operationalised to perform their experiments at this time. ARKA200, RUDRA, and LEAP TD completed their respective experiments while the data from WsAT, RSEM, and DEX were collected after every orbit for further analysis on the ground. Two fuel cells from VSSC demonstrated their ability to generate power. By January 27, 2024, all of POEM-3's payload objectives were completed.

For two months, POEM-3 prepared for its re-entry while ISRO tracked it with its Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network stations in Bengaluru, Lucknow, Mauritius, Sriharikota, Port Blair, Thiruvananthapuram, Brunei, and Bisk (Indonesia) and the Multi Object Tracking Radar (MOTR) at Sriharikota. On March 21, POEM-3 re-entered the earth's atmosphere, meeting its fiery end.

Why is this significant?

With the rise in the number of satellites in orbit around the earth, space debris has become a pressing issue. Space debris in the low earth orbit (LEO) mainly comprises pieces of spacecraft, rockets, and defunct satellites, and the fragments of objects that have deteriorated

explosively as a result of anti-satellite missile tests. This debris often flies around at high speeds of up to 27,000 km/hr. Due to their sheer volume and momentum, they pose a risk to several space assets.

The LEO extends from 100 km above the earth's surface up to 2000 km above. It includes satellites tracking intelligence data, encrypted communication, and navigation. According to ISRO's Space Situational Assessment Report 2022, the world placed 2,533 objects in space in 179 launches in 2022.

Debris also exists, but in smaller volumes, in the geosynchronous orbit (GEO) 36,000 km above the earth's surface. Currently, 7,000 operational satellites are orbiting the earth at different altitudes along with millions of pieces of space debris. The U.S. Space Command tracks and catalogues space debris larger than 10 centimetres in LEO and larger than 0.34 metres in GEO.

How are agencies dealing with debris?

The latest incident of space debris causing havoc was recorded on March 8 when a discarded battery pallet dropped by the International Space Station ripped through the roof of a house in Florida.

As more communication satellites/constellations are launched and more anti-satellite tests are conducted, more on-orbit breakup and collisions occur, producing smaller fragments in orbit. The number of space objects (debris or functional equipment) greater than 10 cm in size in LEO is expected to be about 60,000 by 2030, per ISRO estimates. Space debris can also create unstable debris of the orbit where too much debris has accumulated, and which can trigger a cascading avalanche of collisions that produce yet more, but smaller pieces of, debris.

Currently, there are no international space laws pertaining to LEO debris. Most spacefaring nations abide by the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines 2002 specified by the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC), which the U.N. endorsed in 2007.

THE GIST

ISRO successfully conducted the PSLV-C58/XPoSat mission, deploying the XPoSat satellite into orbit and subsequently transforming the last stage of the PSLV into the PSLV Orbital Experimental Module-3 (POEM-3).

Developed by the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), POEM utilizes the spent fourth stage of a PSLV rocket as an orbital platform for scientific experiments.

POEM-3 completed 400 orbits around the earth, operationalising nine payloads to conduct various experiments before re-entering the earth's atmosphere.

With the increasing number of satellites in orbit, space debris poses a significant risk to space assets.

- Developed by the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) as an inexpensive space platform, POEM uses the spent fourth stage of a PSLV rocket as an orbital platform. Used for the first time in the PSLV-C53 mission in June 2022, ISRO had POEM orbit the earth to perform in-orbit scientific experiments with various payloads onboard.
- POEM is powered by solar panels mounted on the fuel tank of the rocket's fourth stage and a lithium-ion battery. It has a navigation, guidance, and control (NGC) system to stabilise its altitude along with helium control thrusters.
- POEM-3 was configured with a total of 9 different experimental payloads to carry out technology demonstrations and scientific experiments on the newly developed indigenous systems. Out of these, 6 payloads were delivered by NGEs through IN-SPACe. The mission objectives of these payloads were met in a month.

Is transparency lacking in candidate disclosure?

How has the Supreme Court addressed concerns about candidates with serious criminal charges contesting elections? What reforms have been proposed by the Law Commission and EC to address these issues?

Rangarajan. R

The story so far:

The Supreme Court recently held that candidates need not disclose every piece of information and possession in their election affidavit unless it is substantial in nature. In another development, the Election Commission of India (EC) has asked the Central Board of Direct Taxes to verify the declaration with respect to yearly income in the affidavit filed by Rajeev Chandrashekar, the BJP candidate from Thiruvananthapuram.

What does the law specify?

Section 33 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RP Act) read with rule 4A of election rules, requires every contesting candidate to file their nomination paper for elections along with an affidavit in a prescribed format. In *Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR) Vs Union of India (2002)*, the Supreme

Court held that voters have the right to know about the criminal antecedents, income and asset details of the candidate and his/her dependants and educational qualification of contesting candidates. This resulted in Section 33A being added to the RP Act that requires details of criminal antecedents to be part of the election affidavit.

Section 125A of the RP Act further provides that failure to furnish required information; giving false information or concealing any information in the nomination paper or affidavit shall be punishable with imprisonment up to six months or fine or both.

What are the issues?

In a recent case, an independent candidate from Arunachal Pradesh failed to declare three vehicles as assets in his election affidavit while contesting the Assembly election in 2019. His election was set aside by the Gauhati High Court. However, the Supreme Court reversed the

decision and held that non-disclosure of information that is not material or substantial cannot be treated as an attempt to unduly influence the voters. In the case of Mr. Chandrashekar, the complaint is about alleged concealment of his income and substantial assets in his election affidavit that can have a potential impact on the decision of the voters.

An even more significant issue relates to candidates with serious criminal charges contesting elections. Some candidates circumvented the requirement of rule 4A by leaving certain columns blank and filing incomplete affidavits. It once again required an order of the court in *Resurgence India Vs EC (2013)*, to ensure that all columns are filled appropriately. According to a report by ADR, 19% of candidates in the 2019 Lok Sabha election faced charges of rape, murder or kidnapping.

The Law Commission in its 244th report on 'Electoral Disqualifications' (2014) and EC in its memorandum on

'Electoral reforms' submitted in 2016 had provided certain recommendations. First, a conviction for filing a false affidavit should attract a punishment of a minimum of two years imprisonment and be a ground for disqualification. Second, the trials in such cases must be conducted on a day-to-day basis. Finally, persons charged by a competent court with offences punishable by imprisonment of at least five years should be debarred from contesting in the elections provided the case is filed at least 6 months before the election in question.

The Supreme Court in *Public Interest Foundation Vs Union of India (2018)* directed candidates as well as political parties to issue a declaration about criminal antecedents, at least three times before the election, in a newspaper in the locality and electronic media.

What can be the way forward?

Debarring chargesheeted candidates from contesting elections is likely to be misused by various ruling parties. However, the other recommendations with respect to increasing punishment for filing false affidavits and making it a ground for disqualification need to be implemented. The Supreme Court's order to provide wide publicity of criminal records should also be strictly implemented. This would enable a discerning voter to exercise a well-informed choice.

Rangarajan R is a former IAS officer and author of 'Polity Simplified'. Views expressed are personal

THE GIST

▼ The Supreme Court ruled that candidates are not obligated to disclose every detail in their election affidavits unless the information is substantial in nature.

▼ Instances of candidates failing to disclose assets and income have raised questions about the transparency and completeness of affidavits.

▼ While debarring candidates based on chargesheets could be misused, implementing stricter punishment for false affidavits and increasing transparency in disclosing criminal records are crucial steps. Ensuring voter awareness and informed choices through better disclosure mechanisms is essential for electoral integrity.

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HEADLINES OF THE DAY



Indian Express-S&T (GSIII)-Page 12



RUSSIA'S 1ST POST-SOVIET SPACE ROCKET

Angara-A5, Russia's first post-Soviet space rocket, blasts off from its launchpad in its test-launch at the Vostochny Cosmodrome in the far eastern Amur region, Russia, on Thursday. *Reuters*

- Russia test-launched its Angara-A5 space rocket for the first time from the Vostochny Cosmodrome in the Far East, successfully putting a test load in low orbit as part of an effort to develop a new post-Soviet launch vehicle.
- The test launch of the Angara-A5, Russia's first post-Soviet space rocket, was aimed at underscoring Moscow's ambition to be a major space power

Indian Express-IR(GSII)

India, Mauritius revise tax treaty, aim to plug evasion

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, APRIL 11

INDIA HAS signed a protocol amending the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) with Mauritius to plug treaty abuse for tax evasion or avoidance. The amended pact has included what is called the Principal Purpose Test (PPT), which essentially lays out the condition that the tax benefits under the treaty will not be applicable if it is established that obtaining that duty benefit was the principal purpose of any transaction or arrangement.

In the amended protocol, Article 27B has been introduced in the treaty defining the 'entitlement to benefits'. The PPT will deny treaty benefits, such as the reduction of withholding tax on interest royalties and dividends, where it is established that obtaining that treaty benefit is one of the principal purposes for the party engaged in the transaction.

The amendment to the India-

THE PRINCIPAL PURPOSE TEST

■ The amended pact has included what is called the Principal Purpose Test, which essentially lays out the condition that the tax benefits under the treaty will not be applicable if it is established that obtaining that duty benefit was the principal purpose of any transaction or arrangement

is yet to issue a clarification on the same.

The DTAA was a major reason for a large number of foreign portfolio investors (FPI) and foreign entities to route their investments in India through Mauritius. Mauritius remains India's fourth largest source of FPI investments, after the US,

reduced taxation through tax evasion or avoidance including through "treaty shopping arrangements" aimed at obtaining relief provided under this treaty for the indirect benefit of residents of third jurisdictions.

"After this change now, any Indian inbound or outbound cross-border structuring of investment routed through Mauritius should factor in the BEPS MLI (Multilateral Convention to Implement Tax Treaty Related Measures to Prevent Base Erosion and Profit Shifting) impact, especially if the structuring involves availing of tax treaty benefits (in India or Mauritius). Also, this amendment applies to all incomes such as capital gains, dividends, fee for technical services, etc," Yeeshu Sehgal, Head of Tax Market, AKM Global said.

While this amendment aims to curb tax treaty abuse and minimise avenues for tax avoidance or mitigation by integrating PPT into the said treaty, it may result in a rise in litigation. "...there

and tax planning strategies. "...the application of the PPT to grandfathered investments remains ambiguous, highlighting the need for explicit guidance from the CBDT. Furthermore, the omission of the phrase "for the encouragement of mutual trade and investment" in the treaty's preamble suggests a shift in focus towards preventing tax evasion over promoting bilateral investment flows," Rakesh Nangia, Chairman, Nangia Andersen India said.

The recent amendment reflects India's intent to align with global efforts against treaty abuse, particularly under the BEPS framework. Though India is yet to make any announcements regarding Pillar Two amendments in its domestic tax laws, tax experts said it is anticipated that developments may be announced in the budget in July 2024 after elections, experts said.

In October 2021, over 135 jurisdictions agreed to implement a minimum tax regime for multinationals under 'Pillar

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ADJUDICATING AUTHORITY (PMLA)

The ED's attachment of National Herald's assets has been confirmed. What happens now?

THE ADJUDICATING Authority under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA) has confirmed the attachment of assets worth Rs 751.9 crore of the Congress-promoted National Herald newspaper.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) had provisionally attached these properties in November 2023 in a case against Associated Journals Ltd (AJL) that publishes National Herald, and Young Indian (YI), which owns the newspaper. Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi hold 88% shares each in YI, which is being investigated after accusations that it acquired AJL and its assets for a "pittance" against an alleged loan extended by the Congress.

Adjudicating Authority

Section 5 of the PMLA provides for the attachment of any property that is suspected to have been acquired with the proceeds of crime. The attachment order is issued if the ED Director feels that "such proceeds of crime are likely to be concealed, transferred or dealt with in any manner which may result in frustrating any proceedings relating to confiscation of such proceeds of crime".

This provisional attachment order must be confirmed within 180 days by an

Adjudicating Authority appointed by the central government, failing which the property is automatically released. But there is hardly any attachment under PMLA that the Adjudicating Authority refuses to confirm. The accused can continue to enjoy the property until the Adjudicating Authority confirms the attachment.

What happens afterward

The accused can challenge the confirmation order at the PMLA's Appellate Tribunal within 45 days. If unsuccessful, the accused can then move the High Court.

Unless the property is released along the way, it remains out of bounds for the owner until the trial is completed. In case of a conviction, the trial court may order confiscation of the attached property, and vest its rights to the central government.

Attached properties may remain locked for years and start to decay and crumble. Attached vehicles are sent to warehouses owned by the Central Warehousing Corporation, where the ED pays to park the vehicle. As cases drag on, these vehicles too rot. In the end, neither the accused nor the ED recovers anything from the vehicle, with the agency often paying up more rent than the value of the vehicle. **ENS**

The Adjudicating Authority under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA) on Wednesday (April 10) confirmed the attachment of assets worth Rs 751.9 crore belonging to the Congress party-promoted National Herald newspaper.

What is the role of the Adjudicating Authority?

Section 5 of the PMLA provides for the attachment of any property that is suspected to have been acquired with the proceeds of crime in a case of any offence that is listed in the schedule of the law.

- The attachment order is issued if the ED Director feels that "such proceeds of crime are likely to be concealed, transferred or dealt with in any manner which may result in frustrating any proceedings relating to confiscation of such proceeds of crime".

Indian Express-Environment(GSIII)-page 14

Like chital in Andamans: How invasive species threaten natural ecosystems

NIKHIL GHANEKAR
NEW DELHI, APRIL 11

IN A bid to manage the teeming population of chital (spotted deer) in Ross Island, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands administration recently sought help from the Wildlife Institute of India. Native to mainland India, chital were brought to the Andamans by British game hunters in the early 20th century. Having no natural predators or competitors, the deer have spread across the islands.

Over the past two decades, studies have examined the herbivores' deleterious impact on the Andamans' native flora and fauna.

What are invasive alien species?

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) defines invasive alien species (IAS) as "species whose introduction and/or spread outside their natural distribution threatens

biological diversity". These include animals, plants, fungi, and microorganisms.

The CBD, the United Nations' global treaty on safeguarding biological diversity, sums up characteristics of IAS as follows: "arrive, survive and thrive". This means that these species are introduced either through natural or human intervention, survive on native food resources, reproduce at a fast rate, and eventually edge out native species.

In India, the legal definition of IAS under the Wildlife Protection

EXPLAINED BIODIVERSITY

Act, 1972 (amended in 2022) is narrower. They are defined as "species of animal or plant which is not native to India, and whose introduction or spread may threaten or adversely impact wildlife or its habitat." This leaves out species within India which might be invasive to a particular region – like the chital in Andamans.

What are some examples of IAS in India?

The list of invasive wildlife in India is



(From left) Red-bellied piranha, from South America; red-eared slider, from North America; and chital. Wikimedia Commons

dominated by certain fish species such as the African catfish, Nile tilapia, red-bellied piranha, and alligator gar, and turtle species such as red-eared slider.

The red-eared slider, for instance, is a favourite among India's exotic pet owners, and many have been abandoned in local water bodies. The turtle native to North America, edges out local freshwater species, owing to

their fast rates of reproduction, and subsequent competition for food.

Many invasive fish species, such as the African catfish, were introduced in India to cater to aquarium owners.

How do IAS impact native species?

K Sivakumar, a professor in the Department of Ecology and Environmental

Sciences, Pondicherry University, said that invasive species act as disruptors in the food chain and disturb the balance of the ecosystem. In habitats where there is no competition, invasive species can dominate the entire ecosystem, he added.

For instance, in Keoladeo Park, Bharatpur in Rajasthan, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site, the African catfish has been

known to prey on water fowl and migratory birds as well," Professor Sivakumar said.

Studies have shown that the proliferation of chital in the Andamans has affected the regeneration of native vegetation, as the deer are known to consume seeds and seedlings.

What are IAS economic impact?

In September 2023, the UN-founded Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) brought out a report on invasive species which showed that around 37,000 established alien species were introduced worldwide, with roughly 200 new alien species introduced each year.

The global economic cost of IAS was over \$423 billion annually in 2019. These costs arise out of the damage IAS inflict on an area's natural ecosystem. For example, as per India's National Biodiversity Authority, the cotton mealy bug (*Phenacoccus solenopsis*), an invasive species from North America, has severely affected cotton crops in the Deccan, leading to yield losses.

What are invasive alien species?

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) defines invasive alien species (IAS) as "species whose introduction and/or spread outside their natural past or present distribution threatens biological diversity". These include animals, plants, fungi, and even microorganisms, and can influence all kinds of ecosystems.

In India, the legal definition of IAS under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (amended in 2022), is narrower. They are defined as "species of animal or plant which is not native to India, and whose introduction or spread may threaten or adversely impact wildlife or its habitat."

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

PIB-IR(GSII)

Ministry of Commerce & Industry

7th round of the India-Peru Trade Agreement Negotiations concludes in New Delhi

Posted On: 11 APR 2024 8:39PM by PIB Delhi



- The seventh round of negotiations for the India-Peru Trade Agreement took place in New Delhi, India from April 8 to April 11, 2024. The discussions involved understanding priorities and concerns of each other and ensuring that the negotiations are rooted in mutual respect and benefit.
- Peru has emerged as the third-largest trading partner of India in Latin American & Caribbean Region. In the last two decades, the trade between India and Peru has increased from US\$ 66 million in 2003 to around US\$ 3.68 billion in 2023. The trade agreement under negotiations shall play a pivotal role in future collaboration in various sectors, creating avenues for mutual benefit and advancement.