

# DAILY PT POINTERS

31<sup>th</sup> August, 2024



## The Hindu-Geography(GSI)-Page 1

### Cyclone Asna forms over Kutch; rain lashes Gujarat

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Cyclone Asna has formed over the Kutch coast in Gujarat and adjoining areas of Pakistan, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Friday. The cyclonic storm – a rare land-originating one in August and headed to the Arabian Sea – is expected to move further away from the western coast in the next 48 hours.

On the back of the cyclone, light to moderate rainfall occurred at most places in Gujarat and heavy to very heavy rainfall was reported at isolated places in Kutch and adjoining districts of Saurashtra on Friday, the IMD noted.

This is the first cyclonic storm in the Arabian Sea in August since 1976. The name Asna, meaning “the one to be acknowledged or praised”, has been given by Pakistan. Between 1891



Emergency services personnel work on removing water from a flooded underpass on the outskirts of Ahmedabad. AFP

clonic storms formed in the Arabian Sea in August (in 1976, 1964, and 1944), according to IMD.

**Low pressure off A.P.** Simultaneously, a well-marked low pressure area – a very early precursor to a cyclone – has formed in the Bay of Bengal off north Andhra Pradesh and south Odisha. It is likely to move further west-northwestwards towards north A.P. and adjoining south Od-

to a depression during the next 36 hours. The IMD has forecast light rain over both States.

The build-up from cyclone Asna resulted in torrential rainfall in Gujarat this week. Rain-related incidents in Gujarat claimed 32 lives since Sunday. More than 18,000 people have been relocated, and around 1,200 rescued from flood-affected areas.

**CONTINUED ON**

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- The cyclonic storm — a rare land-originating one in August and headed to the Arabian Sea — is expected to move further away from the western coast in the next 48 hours.
- This is the first cyclonic storm in the Arabian Sea in August since 1976. The name Asna, meaning “the one to be acknowledged or praised”, has been given by Pakistan. Between 1891 and 2023, only three cyclonic storms formed in the Arabian Sea in August (in 1976, 1964, and 1944)
- Cyclones are caused by atmospheric disturbances around a low-pressure area distinguished by swift and often destructive air circulation. Cyclones are usually accompanied by violent storms and bad weather. The air circulates inward in an anticlockwise direction in the Northern hemisphere and clockwise in the Southern hemisphere.

The Hindu –Governance(GSII)-Page 1

## Senior bureaucrat T.V. Somanathan takes charge as Cabinet Secretary

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Veteran bureaucrat T.V. Somanathan took over as the Cabinet Secretary on Friday following the superannuation of Rajiv Gauba.

Mr. Somanathan, a 1987-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer from the Tamil Nadu cadre, holds a PhD in Economics from Calcutta University. He has also completed the Executive Development Program of Harvard Business School, and is a Chartered Accountant, Cost Accountant, and Company Secretary.

He has served as Joint Secretary and Additional



**At the helm:** T.V. Somanathan after taking over as the new Cabinet Secretary in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office. Prior to his joining as the Cabinet Secretary, he was holding the charge of Finance Secretary, and Secretary, Department of Expenditure.

In Tamil Nadu, he served many key positions such as Managing Director of Chennai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd., and Secretary to the Chief Minister. He was also the Additional Chief Secretary and Commissioner of Commercial Taxes during the crucial phase of roll-out of the Goods and Services Tax.

Mr. Somanathan has also served at multiple levels in the World Bank, including as Director between 2011 and 2015. He has published over 80 papers and articles in journals and newspapers on economics, finance and public policy, and is the author of three books.

- Veteran bureaucrat T.V. Somanathan took over as the Cabinet Secretary following the superannuation of Rajiv Gauba.
- The Cabinet Secretariat functions directly under the Prime Minister. The administrative head of the Secretariat is the Cabinet Secretary who is also the ex-officio Chairman of the Civil Services Board. The business allocated to Cabinet Secretariat under Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961 includes (i) Secretarial assistance to the Cabinet and Cabinet Committees; and (ii) Rules of Business.
- This Secretariat provides Secretarial assistance to the Cabinet and its Committees, and also assists in decision-making in Government by ensuring Inter-Ministerial coordination, ironing out differences amongst Ministries/ Departments and evolving consensus through the instrumentality of the standing/ adhoc Committees of Secretaries. Through this mechanism new policy initiatives are also promoted.

The Hindu –Governance(GSII)-Page 5

## Education Ministry asks T.N. to sign PM-SHRI MoU to get Samagra Shiksha funds

After repeated requests State responded with a modified MoU, where a key paragraph referring to the implementation of the NEP-2020 has been dropped in its entirety, says Dharmendra Pradhan

Maitri Porecha  
NEW DELHI

Responding to Chief Minister M.K. Stalin's letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking the release of funds under the Samagra Shiksha scheme for FY 2024-25, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has said that Tamil Nadu is required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the PM-SHRI scheme aimed at developing exemplar schools that would offer leadership to other schools in the neighbourhood.

### Fund release

Mr. Pradhan said in his letter that the Centre had released all the four instalments for 2023-24,



Tamil Nadu gave an undertaking on March 15, 2024, indicating willingness to sign the PM SHRI MoU in 2024-25. After receiving the undertaking, the Ministry sent a draft MoU to Tamil Nadu.

**DHARMENDRA PRADHAN,**  
Union Education Minister

amounting to ₹1,876 crore, under Samagra Shiksha, an integrated scheme that envisages education as a continuum from pre-school to Class XII. Further, for 2024-25, ₹4,305.66 crore had been approved for Tamil Nadu, he said.

"In September 2022, PM-SHRI was launched

with an aim to develop more than 14,500 selected schools as exemplar schools that offer leadership to other schools in the neighbourhood, showcasing all the initiatives of the National Education Policy (NEP)-2020. Every State/Union Territory is required to sign an MoU with the Mi-

nistry of Education, and so far, 32 States/Union Territories have signed [the MoU] and have been onboarded on the scheme's platform," he said.

He said that the Ministry had made repeated requests to Tamil Nadu to sign the MoU since September 2022. "Tamil Nadu gave an undertaking on March 15, 2024, indicating willingness to sign the PM-SHRI MoU in 2024-25. After receiving the undertaking, the Ministry of Education sent a draft MoU to Tamil Nadu. However, I was surprised to see that the State responded with a modified MoU, *vide* letter dated July 6, where a key paragraph referring to the implementation of the NEP-2020 has been dropped in its entirety," he said.

- Responding to Chief Minister M.K. Stalin's letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking the release of funds under the Samagra Shiksha scheme for FY 2024-25, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has said that Tamil Nadu is required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the PM-SHRI scheme aimed at developing exemplar schools that would offer leadership to other schools in the neighbourhood.
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## The Hindu-Economy(GSIII)

# Core sectors grew 6.1% in July

Growth in electricity generation eased to a 6-month low pace of 7% last month, while natural gas production contracted for the first time in well over a year; Index of Core Industries lifted by 6.6% jump in refinery products, fastest rise in 8 months

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Output at India's eight core sectors grew 6.1% in July, rebounding from June's five-month low pace of 5.1%, data from the Commerce and Industry Ministry showed on Friday.

The Ministry had earlier pegged June's core sector growth at 4%, the lowest in 20 months, and the revision was largely driven by a sharp upgrade to steel output numbers, which now reflect 6.7% growth compared with a 27-month low

### Narrow rebound

The Index of Core Industries showed growth in the 8 key sectors was spurred by refinery products, fertilizers, cement and steel

■ Fertilizer output growth hit a seven-month high of 5.3% in July

■ Steel and cement production also gathered momentum last month



■ Coal output growth slowed to 6.8%, at least a 13-month low

■ Steel rose to a three-month high pace of 7.2%, cement hit a four-month peak of 5.5%

of 2.7% estimated earlier. Electricity generation numbers were also revised for June to show a 8.6% rise, compared with 7.7%

estimated earlier. In July, electricity generation growth slid to a 6-month low of 7%, while natural gas production

contracted for the first time in over a year, shrinking 1.3%. Coal output growth eased to 6.8%, the least in at least 13 months.

Crude oil output dropped for the third straight month, with the year-on-year decline deepening to 2.9%. Despite these weakening trends, the Index of Core Industries (ICI) was lifted by a 6.6% jump in refinery products, the fastest rise in eight months, and fertilizer output growth hitting a seven-month high of 5.3%.

Steel and cement production also gathered mo-

mentum, rising at a three-month high rate of 7.2% and a four-month peak of 5.5%, respectively.

Most economists noted that July's core sector rebound was not broad-based. "The key segments that have driven the growth of core output in July are the oil refineries, fertilizers and steel," said Suman Chowdhury, ED and chief economist Acuité Ratings & Research. "We expect core sectors' growth to average between 5.5% and 6% this year, given the pickup in public capital expenditure."

- Growth in India's eight core sector industries slowed to 6.1 per cent in July compared to 8.5 per cent in the same month last year, according to government data released
- The core sector comprises coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement, and electricity.
- Increase in the growth rate of four sectors — refinery products, fertilisers, steel and cement, was higher than June.
  - The Eight Core Industries comprise 40.27 percent of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

## Indian Express-Governance(GSII)-page 8

### UCC will be a measure to ensure justice for women: Vice President Dhankhar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 30



V-P Jagdeep Dhankhar in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

STRESSING ON the importance of a zero-tolerance approach towards crime against women, Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Friday said that implementing a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) would be a step forward to ensure justice for women.

Addressing students at Delhi University's Bharati College, the V-P reiterated President Droupadi Murmu's recent expression on violence against women and said "enough is enough".

"When you make a girl or a

woman a victim, you are injuring our civilisation. You are injuring sublimity. You are behaving like a monster. You are exemplifying barbarity to an extreme, draconian level. Nothing should come in the way. I want everyone in the country to heed the same sage and timely caution by the President of India," Dhankhar said.

Mentioning that the UCC was in the Directive Principles of State Policy, the V-P said: "...the UCC, which has been on the shelf for too long, is a small measure of justice for your segment. Look

around and see what it means. It will help in several ways, but mainly it will help your gender."

Further, urging young women students to become financially independent, Dhankhar said: "It is quintessentially important for you to unleash your energy and potential". "Girls are the most important stakeholders in the development of the nation. They constitute the backbone and spinal strength of the rural economy, agro-economy, and informal economy."

- A UCC seeks to create a uniform set of laws to replace the distinct personal laws of every religion pertaining to subjects such as marriage, divorce, adoption, and inheritance. This stems from Article 44 of the Constitution, which mandates that the state "shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India." The provision is a part of the Directive Principles of State Policy (Part IV of the Constitution), which although not enforceable, play a pivotal role in the country's governance.
- Several judicial precedents such as the Supreme Court's judgment in *Minerva Mills v. Union of India* (1980), have ruled that striking a balance between fundamental rights and Directive Principles of State Policy was part of the basic structure of the Constitution.

Indian Express-Economy(GSIII)Page 13

## DGTR recommends anti-dumping duty on aluminium foils imported from China

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 30

THE DIRECTORATE General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on Friday recommended the imposition of an anti-dumping duty on aluminium foils imported from China, after observing that Chinese imports had captured 30 per cent of the Indian market despite sufficient domestic capacity.

This follows a request for an inquiry from Hindalco, one of India's largest aluminium manufacturing companies, on the grounds of injury to domestic companies. Other applicants included Shyam Sel & Power Ltd, Venkateshwara

Electrocast Pvt. Ltd, and Ravi Raj Foils Ltd.

Anti-dumping investigations are conducted by countries to determine whether domestic industries have been harmed due to a surge in cheap imports. The Ministry of Finance makes the final decision on whether to impose duties. The DGTR stated that imports of "aluminium foil up to 80 microns, excluding aluminium foil below 5.5 microns for non-capacitor applications," are undercutting the prices of the domestic industry. This price undercutting has forced the domestic industry to reduce its selling price below the cost of production, the DGTR said. The foil is used as a packaging material for the conservation and preservation of edible and food

**EXPLAINED**  
**E** Curbing imports from China

DESPITE SEVERAL efforts to curb imports from China, goods are increasingly making their way into India. Chinese imports have already crossed \$60 billion during the first seven months of 2024.

products. The recommended duty ranges between \$619 per tonne and \$873 per tonne.

"The combined capacities and production of these domestic producers during the period of inves-

tigation (POI) were 1,32,140 MT and 69,572 MT, respectively, against known Indian capacity and production of 2,89,735 MT and 1,26,495 MT. These companies thus collectively command about 45 per cent of capacity and 54 per cent of production in the POI," the order dated August 30 read. Notably, other companies, in their views submissions to the DGTR, warned against the "creation of a monopoly". "If duties are imposed, it will adversely affect downstream producers and lead to an inability to source the subject goods with good product quality and lead times, impacting the ability of downstream producers to meet customer demands," the industries' submission to the DGTR stated.

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# HEADLINES OF THE DAY



## PIB-Defense(GSIII)

Ministry of Defence

INDIAN ARMY LAUNCHES PROJECT NAMAN: SPARSH-CENTRIC COMMON  
SERVICE CENTRES ESTABLISHED ACROSS INDIA

Posted On: 30 AUG 2024 6:48PM by PIB Delhi

- The Indian Army launched the first phase of Project NAMAN, in presence of General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Army Staff along with Mrs Sunita Dwivedi, President Army Wives Welfare Association (AWWA).
- A project designed to provide dedicated support and services to Defence Pensioners, Veterans and their families, Project NAMAN is centred around the implementation of the SPARSH (System for Pension Administration Raksha), digital pension system, which streamlines pension related processes for Defence Pensioners, addressing the critical need for accessible facilitation points for Veterans and Next of Kin (NOK) across the country.



# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

## PIB-Economy(GSIII)



- India and Malaysia have very close political, economic and socio-cultural relations. To further strengthen this relationship, India and Malaysia have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Tourism, Government of Republic of India and the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Government of Malaysia for strengthening co-operation in the field of tourism.

The main objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding, among others, are:

- promotion and marketing of tourism products and services;
- expansion in the field of tourism research, training and development, including exchange programmes;
- encourage investment in tourism infrastructure, facilities, products and services;
- exchanging information in the field of medical tourism and encouraging stakeholders to promote the product;
- business tourism, which includes meetings, incentives conferences exhibitions (MICE):

# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

## Air-Economy(GSIII)

### PM Modi Lays Foundation Stone Of Vadhvan Port In Palghar



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of Vadhvan Port in the Palghar district of Maharashtra
- The cost of this project is around 76,000 crore rupees. It aims to establish a world-class maritime gateway that will boost the country's trade and economic growth by catering to large container vessels, offering deeper drafts, and accommodating ultra-large cargo ships. Vadhvan Port, located near Dahanu town in Palghar district, will be one of India's largest deep-water ports and will provide direct connectivity to international shipping routes, reducing transit times and costs.