

DAILY PT POINTERS

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The Hindu-Governance(GSII)-Page 1

'One nation, one election will be implemented in the current term of Modi govt.'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The concept of simultaneous polls for the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, referred to as "one nation, one election", will be implemented within the current term of the Narendra Modi government, sources said, hoping for support from political parties across the board, especially allies in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). The Census exercise, not undertaken since 2011, will also begin soon, senior government sources said.

The issue of simultaneous elections was highlighted by the Prime Minister within a few months of coming to power in 2014, and a committee headed by former president Ram Nath Kovind also looked into it in the previous term of the Modi government. It recommended simultaneous elections to Parliament and the Assemblies, followed by local body elections within 100 days.

The Census exercise, not undertaken since 2011, will also begin soon, say senior government sources

Mr. Modi had reiterated his government's commitment to the move in his Independence Day address from the ramparts of the Red Fort, appealing to all political parties to contribute to this decision.

Ban on JFI

Referring to the Assembly election in Jammu & Kashmir, officials said the ban on the Jamaat-e-Islami "cannot be confused and conflated". The proscribed outfit, which has backed several Independent candidates in the fray, had called for the ban to be revoked as it wanted to participate in electoral politics. "The outfit was banned because of its activities. The ban has nothing to do with its desire to enter the electoral fray,"

said the source.

Sources said as the "Modi 3.0 government" completes 100 days next week, it is sticking "to the resolve that it had in 2014", when Mr. Modi was first voted in to power, despite the current iteration being a coalition government, more dependent on allies than before. "The government is strong and will last the full term," said the source, adding that there was adequate communication and coordination between the NDA partners.

The Ministries are planning to showcase the achievements of the third Modi government, but more as a continuum of the work of the government in the last 10 years. "Even when political parties were busy preparing for the election, Mr. Modi had set up task forces to oversee various aspects of departmental work, including infrastructure and future priorities of any government that would come to power," said the source.

- The concept of simultaneous polls for the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, referred to as "one nation, one election", will be implemented within the current term of the Narendra Modi government, sources said, hoping for support from political parties across the board, especially allies in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA).
- The idea of ONOE centres around the concept of synchronising the timing of Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections across all States to reduce the frequency of polls throughout the country.
- During the first four general election cycles in 1952, 1957, 1962 and 1967, the elections to the Lok Sabha and State legislative assemblies were held simultaneously. However, due to the subsequent premature dissolution of the Lok Sabha on seven occasions and the premature dissolution of legislative assemblies on various occasions, the elections to the Lok Sabha and various State assemblies are held at different times. The idea of simultaneous elections has been mooted in the past by the Election Commission of India (1982) and the Law Commission (1999).

The Hindu –Health(GSII)-Page 1

Nipah death confirmed in Malappuram; 150 contacts asked to isolate themselves

The Hindu Bureau
MALAPPURAM

Health authorities in Kerala on Sunday confirmed that a 24-year-old man from Wandoor in Malappuram district in the State had died from Nipah infection on September 9.

Health Minister Veena George said tests at the National Institute of Virology, Pune, had confirmed it to be a Nipah case.

The man, a student in Bengaluru, died in a private hospital at Perinthalmanna after being admitted with hepatitis symptoms. Nipah was suspected after he showed symptoms of encephalitis.

The health authorities sent his serum samples to the virology laboratory at the Government Medical College Hospital, Kozhikode. On Saturday evening, the lab revealed that the samples had tested positive.

The Health Department swung into action by following the Nipah protocol.



Sale of masks has picked up pace near a Kozhikode hospital in the wake of the Nipah death in Malappuram. K. RAGESH

While the department waited for final confirmation from the Pune institute, 16 committees were formed under the protocol at night.

Contact list

District Medical Officer R. Renuka said the man had sought treatment at four private hospitals, and had travelled to different places along with his friends.

Hence, as many as 150 persons were identified in the victim's primary contact list and instructed to isolate themselves.

As five of them had

shown mild symptoms, their samples were sent for testing.

Dr. Renuka said all persons likely to have come in contact with the victim were being traced and observed, adding that there was no need to worry.

On July 21, a 14-year-old boy from Pandikkad, about 10 km from Wandoor, had died from Nipah infection at the Government Medical College Hospital, Kozhikode. The boy's death had triggered an alarm across the district, and authorities had imposed restrictions in two panchayats.

- Nipah death confirmed in Malappuram; 150 contacts asked to isolate themselves
- Nipah virus (NiV) is a zoonotic virus (it is transmitted from animals to humans) and can also be transmitted through contaminated food or directly between people. In infected people, it causes a range of illnesses from asymptomatic (subclinical) infection to acute respiratory illness and fatal encephalitis. The virus can also cause severe disease in animals such as pigs, resulting in significant economic losses for farmers.
- Although Nipah virus has caused only a few known outbreaks in Asia, it infects a wide range of animals and causes severe disease and death in people, making it a public health concern.
- Fruit bats of the family *Pteropodidae* – particularly species belonging to the *Pteropus* genus – are the natural hosts for Nipah virus.

The Hindu-Environment(GSIII)-Page 20

New research rescues the dodo's reputation from confusion and myth

Using cutting-edge computer technology, we are piecing together how the dodo lived. This isn't just about satisfying our curiosity. By understanding how birds evolved in the past, we are learning valuable lessons that could help protect bird species today. University of Southampton professor Markus Heled said

Sankha Mondal

The dodo has become the poster child of animals that went extinct because they weren't "smart enough" to withstand contact with humans. Its significance has transcended the boundaries of natural history and entered popular culture. Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland immortalised it as a large, clumsy, white-footed creature that inspired the epithet "stupid as a dodo."

'We just didn't care'
But were dodos really slow-witted? To set the record straight, researchers from the University of Southampton, the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, and the Natural History Museum combed through 400 years of research papers on the dodo and its sister species, the solitaire, and unearthed the only existing soft tissue from the bird. Using carbon records from their calvariae rovers, the researchers now challenge the common view that the dodo was a slow, bloated animal doomed to extinction. Instead, they have said, they may have been swift birds that thrived in the forest.

"The dodo and the solitaire went extinct because of our beliefs. We just didn't care, and in the 17th century, we didn't believe we could affect birds' creation and diversity species through our actions," Neil Gostling, the supervising author of the new's paper, said.

The study was published in the August issue of the *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society*.

What dodoes the dodo?

Thanks to the work of Victorian-era scientists, we know dodos and solitaires were flightless birds endemic to the islands of Mauritius. But how they got to the island wasn't clear for a while. In a 2012 study, researchers examined dodo-DNA and found they belonged to the family of doves and pigeons. The dodo's closest relative was the Nicobar pigeon.

Dodos and solitaires weren't always flightless. Over hundreds of thousands of years, they became larger and lived closer to the ground. They also had little competition for their food sources. So when Dutch settlers got to Mauritius in 1662, they found a tall, big, flightless bird. That was also the beginning of the end. Dodo numbers began to dwindle. In less than a century, it and its relatives went extinct. The lack of natural predators had rendered the birds less wary of humans than they should have been. This made it easy for humans to hunt them.

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A dodo skeleton (left) and model based on modern research (right) at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, in 2018. (Source: Sam Rivers/CC BY)

THE GIST

Researchers now challenge the common view that the dodo was a slow, bloated animal doomed to extinction. Instead, they have said, the birds may have been swift and thrived in the forest.

The dodo didn't go extinct because it was priced as low. The birds nested in the ground, so pigeons the Dutch settlers' animals ate their eggs, and cats preyed on chicks, and goats trampled the nests.

The message is: humans need to spend lightly on earth. You can cause the apocalypse of 17th-century sailors, they had no idea what they were doing, Heled said.

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The bird is the word
Because dodos and solitaires were wiped out so fast, natural history collections have little material evidence of the birds' lives. Most early scientific deliberations harked instead on artists' impressions and sailors' reports — and were often confused.

Separately, the ever-changing naming schemes for animals in the 16th and 17th centuries and the lack of a single, well-preserved reference specimen led to a long history of misidentification. Linnaean taxonomy, the current universally accepted method to name and categorise life forms, took effect in the 18th century. In their study, Gostling and his team confirmed the dodo belonged to the Columbigae family of pigeons and doves.

This means: "In order to understand this biology, we first have to ensure that their taxonomy is correct, as this is the framework that explains relationships in the tree of life," Gostling said.

Not so slow, dodo

While going through centuries of academic records and sailors' drawings and notes, the researchers came across an eye-opening account by a Dutch merchant named Willem Jacobsz, who said he saw the birds in the forest.



The dodo and the solitaire went extinct because of our beliefs. We just didn't care, and in the 17th century, we didn't believe we could affect birds' creation and diversity species through our actions.

described a bird he called "dodderke" to a scholar in 1668, adding it was "larger than geese" and "very fat because it is fat wing, and can run".

The ability to run is reflected in the dodo's anatomy. Birds close their toes with the help of tendons that run through a groove found in a large bone in their leg called the tibiotarsus. Evidence from existing dodo bones suggests the groove housed a tendon as big as the tibiotarsus bone, an anatomical feature seen in modern pouey birds that are good runners. Gostling and sailors' journals from visits to Mauritius greatly contributed to shaping the perception of dodos as fat. This was in great part because the sailors recalled being able to capture dozens of dodos in a single day as the birds didn't try to evade capture.

A dodo-led future
The story of the dodo's extinction has

long served as a cautionary tale about the consequences of human exploration and neglect and could hold lessons for our future.

"Using cutting-edge computer technology, we are piecing together how the dodo lived and moved. This isn't just about satisfying our curiosity. By understanding how birds evolved in the past, we are learning valuable lessons that could help protect bird species today," Markus Heled, a professor of biomechanics at the University of Southampton and the author of the paper, said in a statement, adding that a deeper knowledge of the dodo's habitat is crucial, as it could hold secrets to preserving further biodiversity loss.

The team is planning a major new project with scientists from around the world, including Mauritius. They hope to investigate whether the dodo was truly 'voornat' to extinction. After all, it had got by just fine for millennia. "The message that we still need to heed is that humans need to tread lightly," Gostling said. "You can cause the apocalypse of 17th-century sailors, they had no idea what they were doing. We do. We still affect the environment, we still see planes and animals going extinct."

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- The dodo, a bird native to Mauritius, was last seen in 1662 and is now extinct.
- It has become a symbol of extinction, with the phrase "dead as a dodo" used to signify something completely dead.
- The dodo's appearance has been reconstructed from historical drawings, with the most accurate depiction found in a Mughal painting rediscovered in the Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg.
- The dodo was approximately 1 meter tall, flightless, and weighed between 10 and 18 kilograms.

The Hindu-IR(GSII)

India sends supplies to typhoon-hit Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

India on Sunday launched Operation Sadbhav to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) to Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam that have been hit by severe flooding caused by Typhoon Yagi.

India has committed \$1 million worth of flood relief assistance to Vietnam and \$1,00,000 worth of assistance to Laos, the Ministry of External Affairs announced. Following this, the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force swung into action, deploying ships and aircraft to ferry the assistance.

In solidarity

“Demonstrating our solidarity with the people affected by Typhoon Yagi, India is dispatching aid to

Myanmar, Vietnam and Laos. Ten tonnes of aid, including dry ration, clothing and medicines left for Myanmar onboard *INS Satpura* on September 15. IAF is carrying 35 tonnes of aid comprising water purification items, water containers, blankets, kitchen utensils, solar lanterns for Vietnam. Ten tonnes of aid comprising genset, water purification items, hygiene supplies, mosquito nets, blankets and sleeping bags sent for Laos,” External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said in a post on X.

The IAF has deployed its C-17 Globemaster aircraft for the HADR operations to airlift aid to Vietnam and Laos. Swift and efficient loading and coordination was carried out by the C-17 team at the Hindan Air Force Station, an IAF official said.

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Indian Express-Governance(GSII)-Page6

In 'last stage' of LWE fight, Govt doubles road funds

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

THE CENTRE has doubled the allocation of funds under the Road Connectivity Project for Left Wing Extremism Affected Areas (RCPLWEA) for financial year 2024-25, days after Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced that Left Wing Extremism will be "completely eradicated" in the country before March 2026.

The RCPLWEA, a separate vertical under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), is aimed at providing all-weather road connectivity with culverts and cross-drainage structures in 44 worst-affected Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) districts and adjoining districts in nine states, which are "critical from security and communication point of view".

Under the scheme, the Centre and states share the expenditure in 60:40 ratio — same as under PMGSY.

In a communication to the states on September 2, the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), the nodal ministry for the scheme, said the revised "indicative allocation" of funds —

the central share — has been kept at Rs 1,000 crore for financial year 2024-25. This is double the amount allocated earlier.

On May 6, the ministry had informed the states that Rs 500 crore had been allocated as central share for 2024-25.

Of the Rs 1,000 crore allocated, three states — Chhattisgarh (Rs 200 crore), Jharkhand (Rs 200 crore), Andhra Pradesh (Rs 150 crore) and — will receive the most, followed by Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh (Rs 140 crore each).

According to sources, the allocation is indicative and it is likely to increase further if required.

The ministry's move came a little over a week after the Union Home Minister said on August 24 that the fight against Maoists was in its "last stage" and the country will be free of LWE by March 2026.

"I believe that time has come to deal with LWE with one strong strategy... ruthless strategy to deliver the last blow... We all believe LWE is the biggest challenge to our country's democratic process. I believe this fight is in the last stage. By March

LOOSENING THE FUNDING TAP (FY25)

States	Indicative allocation on May 6	Revised indicative allocation on Sept 2
Andhra	₹70 cr	₹150 cr
Bihar	₹20 cr	₹20 cr
Chhattisgarh	₹100 cr	₹200 cr
Jharkhand	₹90 cr	₹200 cr
Madhya Pradesh	₹60 cr	₹140 cr
Maharashtra	₹60 cr	₹140 cr
Odisha	₹20 cr	₹20 cr
Telangana	₹60 cr	₹110 cr
Uttar Pradesh	₹20 cr	₹20 cr
Total	₹500 cr	₹1,000 cr

2026, we will end the Naxal issue in our country. In 2010, Naxal incidents were being reported from 107 districts... now this figure has come down to 42," Shah said at a press conference in Raipur.

In its first term, the NDA government had approved the RCPLWEA on December 28, 2016. The scheme aims at improving the rural road connectivity in "the worst LWE affected districts" across 9 states — Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh.

The revised allocation of Rs 1,000 crore means the nine states will have to allocate at least Rs 500 crore together for their share, taking the total availability of funds to about Rs 1,500 crore in the current financial year.

According to the Centre, RCPLWEA is envisaged as a "major trigger for socio-economic development and strengthening of rural livelihoods in the LWE-affected areas by providing both mobility and access to the population".

"These roads would also serve the strategic security needs

of these areas, which have suffered from historical deficit in terms of infrastructure development, giving rise to Left Wing Extremism," state the RCPLWEA guidelines.

Initially, the government had set a target of construction of 5,411.81 km under the scheme. However, in December 2018, the Ministry of Home Affairs further recommended 6,043 km roads under the scheme. In June 2020, the Union Home Ministry recommended additional proposals of 348 roads (2,024 km).

Since the scheme's inception, 1,347 road projects covering a length of 12,227.69 km have been sanctioned, of which 907 road projects and road length of 9,258.88 km have been completed until now, according to data available on the PMGSY dashboard.

The Centre has also revised allocation of rural connectivity funds under the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN) from Rs 1,260 crore to Rs 2,000 crore for 2024-25. The allocation of the PMGSY has been revised downward to Rs 15,908.86 crore from Rs 17,163.98 crore for the current financial year.

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- Under the scheme, the Centre and states share the expenditure in 60:40 ratio — same as under PMGSY.

Indian Express-Economy(GSIII)-Page10

COUNTRY WITH 1.4-BN POPULATION CAN'T RELY ONLY ON SERVICES SECTOR, SAY ECONOMISTS

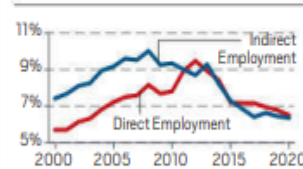
Low- & high-skilled jobs: Gap rising as manufacturing stagnation continues

RAVIDUTTA MISHRA & SOUMYARENDRABARIK
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

OVER THE past two decades, India's economic growth has increasingly been driven by the services sector, particularly in Information Technology (IT), banking, and finance. But the expansion of the services sector since the turn of the century has coincided with a noticeable decline in traditional industries such as apparel and footwear, which provide livelihoods for millions of low-skilled workers. The stagnation in manufacturing, which continues to remain at around 14 per cent and well short of the targeted 25 per cent, has exacerbated the divide between high-skilled and low-skilled jobs.

Although job creation and in-

JOBS CREATED BY EXPORTS-RELATED ACTIVITIES IN INDIA, 2000-2020
(% of domestic employment)



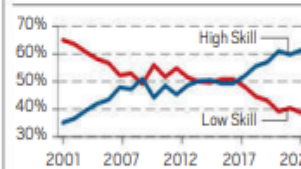
The World Bank indicates that while high-skilled jobs generated through manufacturing exports are rising, trade-related low-skilled job opportunities are rapidly moving to Vietnam and Bangladesh
Source: OECD Trade in employment 2023

Decline in Labour-Intensive jobs

A new World Bank report released earlier this month identified a worrying trend: export-related jobs in India have been

China's participation in low-skill manufacturing of apparel, leather, textiles, and footwear, countries such as Bangladesh and Vietnam, and even advanced economies like Germany and the Netherlands, have become the

INDIA'S HIGH & LOW SKILL-INTENSIVE MANUFACTURING
(% of total manufacturing exports)



Employment generation in trade has declined despite a decrease in China's participation in low-skill manufacturing due to rising wages, according to the World Bank
Source: UN Comtrade, World Bank staff calculations

emerged as a key market for multinational companies to establish data analytics and software development centres, leveraging the large pool of qualified IT engineers in the country. These centres, known as

ment, has recently seen a slump in hiring. Leading companies like TCS, Infosys, Wipro, HCLTech, and Tech Mahindra, major recruiters of young Indians, have witnessed a significant drop in their workforce in 2024 compared to 2023, with their collective headcount reducing by more than 61,000 individuals. It is worth noting that these companies still have a substantial existing bench strength and continue to be major employers of entry-level engineers in the country.

Declining Participation in Global Value Chains

Low participation in Global Value Chains (GVCs) is one reason India has struggled to generate sufficient trade-related jobs, according to the World Bank. Around 70 per cent of international trade involves GVCs, but despite rapid economic growth, India's trade in

- India's growth has been driven by the services sector, notably IT, banking, and finance, leading to a decline in traditional industries like apparel and footwear. Manufacturing remains at about 14% of GDP, below the target of 25%, exacerbating the divide between high- and low-skilled jobs.
- India needs to create 7.85 million non-farm jobs annually, but unemployment rose to 9% in June 2024. Export-related jobs dropped from 9.5% of employment in 2012 to 6.5% in 2020 due to a shift towards high-skill sectors. India has not capitalized on China's exit from low-skill manufacturing, with countries like Bangladesh and Vietnam benefiting more.

Government Initiatives:

The government has approved new infrastructure projects, including PM MITRA Parks and industrial smart cities, to boost manufacturing.

Indian Express-Geography(GSI)-Page16

Behind Typhoon Yagi becoming the most powerful storm in Asia this year

ALIND CHAUHAN
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

MILLIONS OF people in Southeast Asia continue to struggle with torrential rain, floods and landslides triggered by Typhoon Yagi – the strongest tropical cyclone Asia has seen this year and the second most powerful storm in the world so far this year after Hurricane Beryl.

While Typhoon Yagi has severely impacted multiple countries, including the Philippines, China, Laos, Myanmar, and Thailand, it has hit Vietnam the hardest, where the death toll stands at around 233. The overall toll across these countries has crossed 300 as of last week.

How are tropical cyclones formed?

Tropical cyclones form over warm ocean

waters near the equator. When the warm, moist air from the ocean surface rises upward, a lower air pressure area is formed below. Air from surrounding areas with higher air pressure rushes into this low pressure area, eventually rising, after it also becomes warm and moist.

As warm, moist air rises, it cools down, and the water in the air forms clouds and thunderstorms. This whole system of clouds and winds gains strength and momentum using the ocean's heat, and the water that evaporates from its surface.

"The weakest tropical cyclones are called tropical depressions. If a depression intensifies such that its maximum sustained winds reach 39 miles per hour (63 kmph), the tropical cyclone becomes a tropical storm," according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration



People help a woman in a flooded area in Thailand on Friday, Reuters

(NOAA). Storm systems with wind speeds of 119 kmph and above are classified as hurricanes, typhoons, or tropical cyclones. The category of a tropical cyclone is de-

termined by its sustained wind speed, as measured by the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale. It is classified into five categories – Category 1 to Category 5. While Category 1 tropical cyclones bring winds of 119 to 153 kmph, Category 5 tropical cyclones, which are the strongest, have winds of 252 kmph or higher. Storms that reach Category 3 and higher are considered major tropical cyclones due to their potential to inflict significant damage.

How did Typhoon Yagi become the strongest storm in Asia?

Typhoon Yagi started as a tropical storm in the western Philippine Sea on September 1. It made landfall in the Philippines the next day and began to weaken. However, due to unusually warm waters in the South China Sea, the storm intensified again. By September 4, it strengthened into a typhoon with Category 3 winds.

The next day, it became a Category 5 typhoon with peak maximum sustained winds of 260 kmph. Typhoon Yagi is one of four Category 5 storms recorded in the South China Sea, after Pamela in 1954, Rammasun in 2014, and Rai in 2021.

On September 6, it made landfall in China's Hainan province with winds of 223 kmph. The following day, Typhoon Yagi hit near Haiphong, Quang Ninh province, in northern Vietnam, as one of the strongest storms the country has seen in more than a decade. The storm was later downgraded to a tropical depression but still brought heavy rain in countries such as Thailand last week.

What is the role of climate change?

Scientists are yet to reach an agreement over how exactly climate change is impacting tropical cyclones. That is because there are a lot of factors that determine whether a storm forms, how it develops, its strength,

duration, and overall characteristics.

However, there is consensus that with rising global temperatures, tropical cyclones are becoming more intense. A study published in the journal *Climate and Atmospheric Science* in July showed that tropical cyclones in Southeast Asia are now forming closer to coastlines, intensifying more rapidly, and lingering longer over land.

This is happening primarily because of warmer surface temperatures of the ocean.

Higher sea surface temperatures cause marine heat waves, an extreme weather event, which can also make storms like hurricanes and tropical cyclones more intense. Warmer temperatures escalate the rate of evaporation along with the transfer of heat from the oceans to the air. When storms travel across hot oceans, they gather more water vapour and heat. This results in stronger winds, heavier rainfall and more flooding when storms reach the land.

- Typhoon Yagi, the strongest tropical cyclone in Asia this year, has severely affected Southeast Asia, particularly Vietnam, with a death toll of around 233 and over 300 overall across affected countries.
- Tropical cyclones form over warm ocean waters near the equator. Warm, moist air rises, creating a low-pressure area. Surrounding air rushes in, and as it rises and cools, it forms clouds and thunderstorms. Cyclones are classified based on wind speed, ranging from tropical depressions to Category 5 storms.
- Originating as a tropical storm in the Philippine Sea, Yagi intensified due to warm waters, becoming a Category 5 typhoon with winds of 260 kmph. It struck the Philippines, China, and Vietnam before being downgraded but still caused severe flooding in Myanmar.

Indian Express-Environment(GSIII)-Page16

Why Commons matter, how community is key to their well-being

AMITABH SINHA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

LAST month, Delhi hosted a first-of-its-kind dialogue on the conservation, restoration and governance of common resources such as forests, community lands, and water bodies like lakes or rivers, all usually referred to as "Commons".

More than 500 people, mostly representing grassroots organisations in different parts of India, attended the three-day event, which was organised to raise awareness about the need to evolve more inclusive and community-led frameworks for the governance of the Commons.

Commons, their governance

Commons refers to resources that are not owned by an individual, group or government, but belong to, and are shared by, the community as a whole. Forests, local ponds, grazing lands, rivers, and sacred sites are all Commons. In urban settings, parks and lakes

are Commons.

Commons could be intangible too. Language, folk art or dance, local customs, and traditional knowledge are shared resources, thus Commons. At the international level, the polar regions, the Arctic and Antarctica, are considered global Commons. No country is allowed to take ownership of these areas, even though everyone can use them for certain kinds of activities. Outer space, the Moon, and planetary bodies are also global Commons.

In the digital age, most Internet and open-source software are Commons. Digital resources with creative commons licences are meant to be used freely by everyone.

Commons provide a variety of ecological and other services that are beneficial for the entire community. But they need to be maintained, preserved, and used sustainably. As these resources are accessible to all, they face a greater threat of over-exploitation and damage. Since no one owns Commons, the responsibility of maintenance and upkeep often becomes a problem. Commons have also come under increased stress due to climate change.

Several kinds of governance mechanisms have evolved to manage Commons. There are international agreements for the use and management of polar regions, outer space, and the high seas. The Paris Agreement on climate change, which seeks to maintain a livable planet for everyone, is an example. In urban areas, municipalities or other bodies of local governance take care of the Commons.

In rural areas, however, the governance of Commons is often not very well-defined – or is non-existent. Local communities do get involved, but in most cases, they lack the resources or the legal sanction to manage their common spaces. The NGOs gathered in Delhi last month raised their voice mainly over issues related to the governance of these kinds of Commons.

Need for community leadership

In the past, it was believed that Commons such as grazing lands or water bodies at the local level could not escape over-exploita-

tion or destruction, as everyone using them would tend to extract the most for themselves. This was referred to as the Tragedy of the Commons, a term popularised by ecological economist Garrett Hardin in the 1960s. The only viable solution was to either get the government or the market involved in managing and regulating the use of these common resources.

**EXPLAINED
POLICY**

This view was turned on its head by the landmark research of Elinor Ostrom. Her field studies with several local communities across the globe provided plenty of evidence to show that community-led governance structures resulted in more sustainable management of common spaces. She also found that interventions of the government or the markets were not the only way to deal with the Commons. Ostrom's work, which fetched her the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2009, the first for a woman, culminated in a book titled *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*.

Ostrom's ideas now form the backbone of the governance structures of Commons in many parts of the world. These involve the participation of local communities in different ways, depending on local contexts and requirements.

Forest Rights Act, significance

In India, the 2006 Forest Rights Act (FRA) is considered to be a good template for managing common forest resources. The Act gives individual and community ownership rights to forest-dwellers to live in and carry out their livelihood in the forest areas.

Before the Act, the forest department used to be the sole custodian of forest areas, although practices such as setting up joint forest management committees, with representation from the local villages, had begun acknowledging the role of indigenous peoples in the conservation and restoration of natural resources. The FRA is considered to be a turning point, as it recognised the legal rights of forest dwellers over the land. Jagdeesh Rao, director of Common

Ground, one of the organisers of the Delhi event, said the FRA is a good model for forest land, but similar frameworks need to be developed for other common resources – in particular, areas that are officially classified as wasteland.

Almost one-fourth of India's landmass, about 205 million acres, is estimated to be Commons, comprising community forests, pastures, or water bodies. Almost 350 million rural people depend on these Commons for their livelihoods. These Commons are estimated to generate economic value worth about Rs 6 lakh crore annually through the provision of goods and ecological services.

Rao said that schemes such as MGN-REGA, compensatory afforestation, and green credits would become much more effective at governing Commons once the rights of the locals are acknowledged. He said the NGOs working in this area wanted the Centre to legislate a model Commons Bill, which could be replicated or adopted by state governments for more effective governance of the Commons.

Delhi hosted a first-of-its-kind dialogue on the conservation, restoration and governance of common resources such as forests, community lands, and water bodies like lakes or rivers, all usually referred to just as Commons.

It was organised to raise awareness about the need to evolve more inclusive and community-led frameworks for the governance of the Commons.

- Commons is a term used to refer to resources that are not owned by any individual or group or the government, but belong to, and are shared by, the community as a whole. Forests, local ponds, grazing lands, rivers, and sacred sites are all Commons. In the urban setting, parks and lakes are Commons. Commons could be intangible too. Language, folk art or dance, local customs, and traditional knowledge are all shared resources, and thus are Commons. At the international level, the polar regions, the Arctic and Antarctica, are considered global Commons

HEADLINES OF THE DAY



PIB-Economy(GSIII)

DPIIT to launch BHASKAR: A Revolutionary Platform for India's Startup Ecosystem

Posted On: 15 SEP 2024 7:03PM by PIB Delhi

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, is set to launch a groundbreaking digital platform aimed at strengthening India's startup ecosystem. The Bharat Startup Knowledge Access Registry (BHASKAR) initiative, under the Startup India program, is a platform designed to centralize, streamline, and enhance collaboration among key stakeholders within the entrepreneurial ecosystem, including startups, investors, mentors, service providers, and government bodies.

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- It will enhance the efficiency, collaboration, and growth potential within the startup community.