

DAILY PT POINTERS

23 September, 2024



The Hindu-IR(GSII)-Page 1

Quad launches maritime, health initiatives; condemns aggression in disputed regions

Sriram Lakshman
WILMINGTON (DELAWARE)

Leaders of the Quad group of countries – Prime Minister Narendra Modi, U.S. President Joe Biden, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida – met at their sixth summit-level meeting at Archmere Academy, Mr. Biden's former school in Claymont, Delaware, to announce a broad range of outcomes. These included the launch of a new coast guard exercise, a logistics network, expansion of maritime surveillance, and a project to combat cervical cancer.

In terms of positions, the Quad strongly condemned aggression in the



(From left) Anthony Albanese, Narendra Modi, Joe Biden, and Fumio Kishida at the 'Cancer Moonshot' event in Delaware. ANI

East and South China Sea and expressed alarm over the war in Ukraine, noting that all four leaders had visited the country.

The 'Quad Cancer Moonshot' will involve contributions from all four countries to combat cervi-

cal cancer. India will commit \$10 million towards screening for the disease. Vaccine manufacturer Serum Institute of India and Gavi will provide up to 40 million vaccines for the region, "subject to approvals"

The countries announced the Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission in 2025 to improve interoperability and maritime safety. Future coast guard missions are planned for after 2025. A logistics network pilot project was also launched, which will involve Quad countries sharing airlift capacity to support disaster response.

MAITRI workshop

A Maritime Initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific (MAITRI) to train Quad partners "to monitor and secure their waters, enforce their laws, and deter unlawful behaviour" was also announced. India will host the first MAITRI workshop in 2025.

logue has been launched to support actions to uphold the rules-based order, the statement said.

Quad members condemned maritime aggression, with pointed references to situations involving China, which is currently embroiled in tensions with the Philippines, most recently over the latter's coast guard presence on the Sabina shoal, 150 km off its west coast. "We are seriously concerned about the situation in the East and South China Seas," they said, as they expressed concern about the militarisation of disputed features and intimidation in the South China Sea.

CONTINUED ON

key outcomes from the sixth summit of the Quad leaders:

- Launch of a Quad Cancer Moonshot to combat cervical cancer, with India committing \$10 million for screening and Serum Institute of India and Gavi to provide up to 40 million vaccines (pending approvals).
- Announcement of the Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission planned for 2025 to enhance maritime safety and interoperability.
- Launch of a pilot logistics network project for shared airlift capacity in disaster response.
- Introduction of the Maritime Initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific (MAITRI) to train partners in monitoring and securing waters, with India hosting the first workshop in 2025.
- Establishment of a maritime legal dialogue to uphold a rules-based order, condemning maritime aggression, particularly referencing tensions in the East and South China Seas involving China.

The Hindu –Economy(GSIII)-Page 8

On the pitfalls of estimating GDP

The ongoing GDP series is due for revision. The official agency is considering using GST data to estimate value addition. However, the agency should be careful to not apply unverified datasets and shaky methodologies without adequate testing and validations for GDP estimation

ECONOMIC NOTES

R. Nagaraj

Gross Domestic Product, or GDP, is the most significant measure of a country's economic size. It is also a universal denominator for comparing indicators across countries and regions or for sizing up tax burdens or welfare expenditures. GDP is usually more meaningful at "constant" prices or in "real" terms – netting out the effect of price changes. The real GDP is estimated for the "base year", requiring a variety of datasets on output, prices, and employment. Every 5-10 years, the GDP base year is revised to account for changes in relative prices and output composition. The National Statistical Office (NSO) is tasked with "revising" the GDP series, usually drawing upon expertise from many fields.

The ongoing GDP series with the base year 2011-12 is due for revision. 2020-21 is the proposed new base year. All required major datasets are said to be available except for Census data. The NSO is considering using the goods and services tax (GST) data to estimate value addition, replacing the currently used Ministry of Corporate Affairs' MCA-21 database for the Private Corporate Sector (PCS), which accounts for about 38% of GDP.

Why the change?

After all, the MCA-21 database was brought in only in the last revision, with 2011-12 as the base year. Previous to that, the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) was the long-standing workhorse for estimating factory manufacturing value-added. The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) small sample of large companies, with the majority paid-up capital of PCS, was used to estimate the non-financial corporate sector output. The statistical agency changed it to the MCA-21 database as the ASI claimed to miss out on value addition outside of factory premises in a



(ETW IMAGES)

RBI sample was inadequate to account for the rapidly growing PCS. Moreover, the availability of the extensive and up-to-date MCA-21 data, obtained from the mandatory filing of corporate annual returns and quarterly corporate results – it was contended – would enable fuller capturing of the corporate output.

The 2011-12 base year GDP (replacing the 2004-05 base year series) showed a marginally smaller absolute GDP size and a faster growth rate. But for the manufacturing sector in 2013-14 at constant prices, the annual growth rate was (+) 5.4% in the new series, compared to (-) 1.00% in the earlier series. Such a sharp divergence in the rate and direction of industrial growth by the two GDP series was a surprise. Moreover, the upward revision of the industrial growth rate didn't square with related macro aggregates, such as bank credit growth or

widespread scepticism of the new GDP estimates. Statistical investigations zeroed in on an untested or inadequately vetted MCA database as the source of the overestimation problem.

The official agency, however, defended its new estimates, claiming they capture value addition more completely, using a much more extensive database, improved estimation methods, and following the latest template of international best practices. Critics, however, wondered if a bigger dataset is necessarily a better data set. And if the new estimates were better or overestimates. The statistical dispute remained unresolved as the government refused to make the MCA data available for independent scrutiny or reveal its estimation methodology for verification.

Systematic overestimation

With time, however, it has become noticeable

Added (GVA) in the manufacturing sector as per GDP series (in the National Accounts Statistics) and by the ASI – based on production accounts of registered factories – for a reasonably long period. We compared (i) GVA and (ii) Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) (fixed investment) at constant prices for 2012-13 to 2019-20 as reported by the NAS and ASI. The results were startling. The average annual growth rate of GVA in NAS was 6.2%, while it was only 3.2% in ASI. The difference was much sharper in GFCF: 4.5% by NAS and 0.3% by ASI, respectively. These comparisons show a systematic overestimation in NAS estimates (based on the MCA-21 database) compared to the ASI-based estimates, vindicating the doubts raised about the integrity of the GDP estimates.

The evidence presented here is a cautionary tale for the proposed use of GST data for GDP estimation. It's a stark reminder of the need for the official agency to guard against the hasty application of unverified datasets and shaky methodologies without adequate testing and validations for GDP estimation. NSO must initiate pilot studies to verify the GST dataset's suitability for value addition estimation of specific industries, sectors, and States. Such validation is crucial to ensure the estimation's truthfulness and instil confidence in the integrity of the GST data. Alternatively, NSO could explore reverting to ASI to estimate GDP manufacturing, as the database is now available with a shorter time lag.

GST data can be a game changer for GDP estimation in the proposed revision. It is a large and up-to-date database, however, its details are in a black box, as it has not been open for policy research. Without systematic analyses and cross-validation disaggregated by production and institutional sectors and regions by independent agencies, the validity of GDP estimates on GST data will be hard to establish.

R. Nagaraj is with the Centre for Liberal

THE GIST

Gross Domestic Product, or GDP, is the most significant measure of a country's economic size. It is also a universal denominator for comparing indicators across countries and regions or for sizing up tax burdens or welfare expenditures.

For the manufacturing sector in 2013-14 at constant prices, the annual growth rate was (+) 5.4% in the new series, compared to (-) 1.00% in the earlier series. Such a sharp divergence in the rate and direction of industrial growth by the two GDP series was a surprise.

The evidence presented here is a cautionary tale for the proposed use of GST data for GDP estimation.

- Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a key measure of a country's economic size, typically assessed in "real" terms to account for inflation. The National Statistical Office (NSO) is set to revise the GDP series, moving from the 2011-12 base year to a proposed 2020-21 base year. While most datasets are ready, Census data is pending, and the NSO is considering using Goods and Services Tax (GST) data to replace the Ministry of Corporate Affairs' MCA-21 database for estimating value addition in the Private Corporate Sector (PCS).
- The MCA-21 database was adopted in the last revision due to its comprehensiveness, but concerns arose about overestimation of GDP growth rates compared to previous methods like the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI). Critics have questioned the accuracy of the new estimates, noting significant discrepancies between the growth rates reported by the National Accounts Statistics (NAS) and those from ASI. For example, the average annual growth rate of Gross Value Added (GVA) in NAS was 6.2%, while ASI reported only 3.2%.

The Hindu-Social Justice(GSII)-Page 12

U.P., Rajasthan, M.P. top in cases of atrocities on Dalits: report

Of the 51,656 cases registered under the law for SCs in 2022, Uttar Pradesh accounts for 23.78%, followed by Rajasthan, 16.75%, and Madhya Pradesh, 14.97%. Similarly, of the 9,735 cases filed for STs, Madhya Pradesh reports the highest 30.61%

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Nearly 97.7% of all cases of atrocities against Scheduled Castes in 2022 were reported from 13 States, with Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh recording the highest number of such crimes, according to a new government report.

According to the latest report under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act by the Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry, the majority of atrocities against Scheduled Tribes (STs) were also concentrated in 13 states, which reported 98.91% of all cases in 2022.

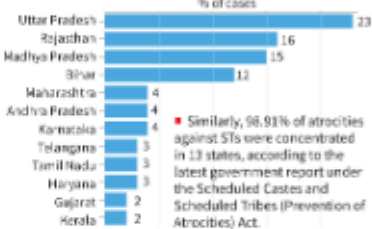
Of the 51,656 cases registered under the law for Scheduled Castes (SCs) in 2022, Uttar Pradesh accounted for 23.78% of the total cases with 12,287, followed by Rajasthan with 8,651 (16.75%) and Madhya Pradesh with 7,732 (14.97%). Other States with a significant number of cases of atrocities against SCs were Bihar with 6,799 (13.16%), Odisha with 3,576 (6.93%), and Maharashtra

Atrocities on Dalits, tribal people

The chart shows the States accounting for 97.7% of total cases of atrocities against members of Scheduled Castes during the year 2022.



Source: Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment



with 2,706 (5.24%). These six States accounted for nearly 81% of the cases.

"Thirteen states, cumulatively accounting for 97.7% (51,656) of the total cases (52,866) relating to offences of atrocities against members of SCs, registered under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, in conjunction with the Indian Penal Code, during the year 2022," the report said.

Similarly, the majority of cases of atrocities against STs were concentrated in 13 states. Of the 9,735 cases registered under the law for STs, Madhya Pradesh reported the highest number at 2,979 (30.61%), the report said.

Rajasthan had the second highest number of cases at 2,498 (25.66%) while Odisha recorded 773 (7.94%). Other States with a significant number of cases included Maharashtra with 691 (7.10%) and Andhra Pradesh with 499 (5.13%). The data also provided insight into the status of investigations and charge-sheeting under the Act.

Among the SC-related cases, 60.38% led to charge sheets being filed while 14.78% were concluded with final reports due to reasons such as false

claims or lack of evidence. By the end of 2022, investigation was pending in 17,166 cases.

For ST-related cases, 63.32% resulted in charge sheets being filed while 14.71% ended with final reports. At the end of the period under review, 2,702 cases involving atrocities against STs were still under investigation.

One of the most concerning trends highlighted in the report is the declining conviction rate for cases under the Act. In 2022, the conviction rate dropped to 32.4% from 39.2% in 2020. Moreover, of 498 districts in 14 States

only 194 had established special courts to expedite trials in these cases.

The report also identified specific districts particularly prone to atrocities with only 10 States and Union Territories declaring such districts. It emphasised the need for targeted interventions in these districts to curb the caste-based violence and ensure stronger protection for vulnerable communities.

SC/ST protection cells had been set up in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, NCT of Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh and Puducherry, according to the report.

Special police stations for registration of complaints of offences against SCs and STs have been set up by Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh.

- Nearly 97.7% of atrocities against Scheduled Castes (SCs) in 2022 were reported from 13 states, with Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh having the highest cases.
- Scheduled Tribes (STs): 98.91% of atrocities against STs were also concentrated in 13 states, with 9,735 total cases reported.
- Highest ST Cases: Madhya Pradesh led with 2,979 cases (30.61%), followed by Rajasthan with 2,498 (25.66%) and Odisha with 773 (7.94%).
- Investigation and Charge-Sheeting: For SC cases, 60.38% resulted in charge sheets; 14.78% concluded without evidence. For ST cases, 63.32% led to charge sheets, and 14.71% were closed for similar reasons.
- Pending Investigations: By end of 2022, 17,166 SC cases and 2,702 ST cases were still under investigation.
- Declining Conviction Rate: The conviction rate for SC/ST cases dropped to 32.4% in 2022 from 39.2% in 2020.

The Hindu-Environment(GSIII)-Page 12



'Assam records 86% drop in rhino poaching since 2016'

Kaziranga and other protected habitats of the one-horned rhinoceros in Assam recorded an 86% drop in poaching of the herbivore since 2016, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said. In a statement marking the celebration of World Rhino Day on Sunday, the Chief Minister attributed the turnaround – poachers killed 190 rhinos between 2000 and 2021 – to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "commitment to promoting and preserving" an animal that has been "synonymous to the identity" of Assam. The Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve has 233 anti-poaching camps, each manned by three to five personnel.

- Kaziranga and other protected habitats of the one-horned rhinoceros in Assam recorded an 86% drop in poaching of the herbivore since 2016.
- The greater one-horned rhino (or "Indian rhino") is the largest of the rhino species.
- It has excellent senses of hearing and smell, but relatively poor eyesight.
- They primarily graze, with a diet consisting almost entirely of grasses as well as leaves, branches of shrubs and trees, fruit, and aquatic plants.

Habitats: Tropical and Subtropical Grasslands, Savannas, and Shrublands

Distribution: It is commonly found in Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, and Assam, India.

It is confined to the tall grasslands and forests in the foothills of the Himalayas.

Conservation Status:

IUCN: Vulnerable

-

The Hindu-Governance(GSII)-Page12

Only 16% of land reclaimed under Swachh project to rid urban areas of legacy waste

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

Launched with much fanfare, the legacy waste management project of Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 has been a slow starter, with only 470 out of 2,424 dumpsites completely remediated and an area of 16% reclaimed, three years since the mission was rolled out.

Legacy waste dumpsites are places that contain solid waste that has been collected and stored for years in an unscientific and uncontrolled manner.

With almost no installed facility in India for handling solid waste, the Municipal Corporations, Councils and Nagar Panchayats have traditionally opted to create man-made garbage hills.

While the Swachh Bha-

Dumpsites of legacy waste store solid waste, collected and stored for years in an unscientific manner

rat Mission had been launched on October 2, 2014, its second phase (2.0) was launched on October 1, 2021 for a period of five years, up to October 1, 2026, with a vision of achieving “Garbage-Free Status” for all cities through 100% source segregation, door-to-door collection, and scientific management of all fractions of waste, including safe disposal in scientific landfills.

It aimed at remediation of all legacy dumpsites and converting them into green zones. Action plans amounting to ₹3,226 crore

of Central Share (CS) assistance on remediation of legacy waste dumpsites have been approved so far.

According to the Mission’s website, out of the 2,424 dumpsites having more than 1,000 tonnes of legacy waste identified across the country, remediation has been completed in 470, and approved and ongoing in 1,224, while 730 have been left untouched.

With regard to the area covered, of the total 28,460.33 acres, 16% or 4,552.34 acres have been reclaimed and 84% or 23,908 acres are yet to be reclaimed.

Tamil Nadu has the maximum area reclaimed from dumpsites at 837 acres (42%). Gujarat is the best performing State with 75% area (698 of 938 acres) of landfills reclaimed.

- Launched with much fanfare, the legacy waste management project of Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 has been a slow starter, with only 470 out of 2,424 dumpsites completely remediated and an area of 16% reclaimed, three years since the mission was rolled out. Legacy waste dumpsites are places that contain solid waste that has been collected and stored for years in an unscientific and uncontrolled manner.
- the Swachh Bharat Mission had been launched on October 2, 2014, its second phase (2.0) was launched on October 1, 2021 for a period of five years, up to October 1, 2026, with a vision of achieving “Garbage-Free Status” for all cities through 100% source segregation, door-to-door collection, and scientific management of all fractions of waste, including safe disposal in scientific landfills.

Indian Express-IR(GSII)Economy(GSIII)-Page1

Bangladesh clears export of 3,000 tonnes of Hilsa to India as Puja nears

HILSA IMPORTS FROM BANGLADESH

(in tonnes)



HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 22

THE BANGLADESH government has approved the export of up to 3,000 tonnes of Hilsa to India, ending the uncertainty over the availability of the fish for Durga Puja which begins on October 9.

Bangladesh's Ministry of Commerce Saturday approved the exports, citing the festival and letters from the country's Foreign Ministry. The order

- Bangladesh has approved the export of up to 3,000 tonnes of Hilsa to India, ensuring availability for Durga Puja starting October 9. The Ministry of Commerce made the decision, citing the festival and directives from the Foreign Ministry. Export Permits: Exporters must apply for permits by September 24. Export Ban: Hilsa exports are generally banned in Bangladesh, but small shipments are allowed during Durga Puja as a goodwill gesture by the Awami League government. Uncertainty: The arrangement faced uncertainty after the interim government took over in August.

Indian Express-IR(GSII)-Page9

IN A FIRST, US MILITARY TO PARTNER WITH INDIA ON HIGH-VALUE TECH

India, US ink pact to set up semiconductor fab for national security, next-gen telecom

Biden, Modi hail 'watershed arrangement'; fabrication plant to focus on 'advanced sensing, comms'

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 22

INDIA AND the US have entered into an agreement to set up a semiconductor fabrication plant to make chips for use in "national security, next generation telecommunications and green energy applications", according to the Indo-US joint fact-sheet.

Both US President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the "watershed arrangement", the first such project where the US Military has agreed to a partnership on highly valued technology with India.

The fab, focused on "advanced sensing, communication and power electronics", will be enabled by support from the India Semiconductor Mission as



President Biden, PM Modi in Delaware, Saturday. AP/PTI

well as a strategic technology partnership between Bharat Semi, 3rdiTech, and the US Space Force, the statement said. "It will be established with the objective of manufacturing infrared, gallium nitride and silicon carbide

semiconductors," it added. Drawing a parallel with the Indo-US civil nuclear deal, sources said the fab titled "Shakti", or power, would not only be the first technology partnership between Indian businesses and the US

Space Force but also a first in the Quad, a 4-member strategic security forum also comprising Japan and Australia.

They said it will focus on three essential pillars for modern war fighting: advanced sensing, advanced communications and high voltage power electronics. These three areas also have huge growing needs for commercial sectors such as railways, telecom infrastructure and data centres and green energy, sources said.

The infrared, gallium nitride and silicon carbide semiconductors fall under the category known as compound semiconductors. According to sources, India's current imports bill for these semiconductors for national security alone is USD 1 billion a year

Describing the new arrangement as "glass-ceiling broken" in

tech diplomacy, a source said: "India and US have signed multiple cooperation focused on critical tech with a special focus on semiconductors — from ICET to commerce MoU to the strategic trade dialogue... This became the first true India-US semiconductor fab project. Other projects in the past have included testing and assembly... but this is raising the game and going into true chip fabrication, the holy grail of semiconductors," the source said.

After this technology partnership, India will join a handful of elite nations with the capability and knowhow to manufacture these types of semiconductors on shore, sources said, adding that India will be a stable trusted supply chain in the most critical of national security technology.

- India and the US have announced an agreement to establish a semiconductor fabrication plant for chips related to national security, telecommunications, and green energy applications. This project, hailed as a "watershed arrangement" by US President Joe Biden and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, marks the first US military partnership on advanced technology with India.
- The plant will specialize in advanced sensing, communication, and power electronics, manufacturing infrared, gallium nitride, and silicon carbide semiconductors.

Indian Express-Environment(GSIII)-Page13

Why Azerbaijan's new climate fund may not be enough to plug finance gap

AMITABH SINHA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 22

AZERBAIJAN, THE host of this year's climate change conference, COP29, has proposed to launch a new climate fund for developing countries. The fund can be financed through "voluntary" contributions from fossil-fuel producing countries and companies, according to Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan's proposal comes at a time when negotiation on a climate finance agreement is struggling to make progress. Finalising this finance agreement is the main agenda before COP29, which is scheduled to run from November 11 to 22 in Baku. The agreement is supposed to include a decision on the amount of money that developed countries must be asked to raise in the post-2025 period to help developing countries fight climate change. The rich and industrialised countries are currently under an obligation to mobilise at least \$100 billion annually for developing countries. The

Paris Agreement, however, mandates that this amount must be increased after 2025 and every five years thereafter.

The new fund proposed by Azerbaijan, though well-intentioned, is unlikely to make a substantial difference to the availability of climate finance for developing countries.

An agreement on finance

Negotiations on the agreement have been ongoing for months. The idea is not to just replace the \$100 billion figure with a higher amount but to finalise a more comprehensive agreement that would bring clarity and transparency to financial flows for climate action.

Currently, there are strong differences over even definitions of climate finance. Bhupinder Yadav, India's Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, said last week that to achieve the goal of tackling climate change, an exact definition of climate finance – and what it should entail – must be arrived at.

Developing countries often complain of double-counting and innovative accounting, and say that the actual amount of money flowing in for climate action is significantly lower than the claims made by developed countries.

The other complaint relates to the neglect of adaptation activities. Most of the climate finance flows are directed at mitigation projects, the ones that lead to emissions reductions.

This is because mitigation brings global dividends. Any emission reduction anywhere in the world benefits the entire planet. On the other hand, adaptation has local benefits. Donor countries are less inclined to invest in projects that only benefit the recipients. Developing countries have been demanding that adaptation should receive at least 50% of climate finance, much more than the less than 20% that has gone into it so far. Even this amount has reduced in absolute terms in the last couple of years, according to a 2023 UN re-

port. The finance agreement is supposed to ensure a more healthy balance.

The most important element of the finance agreement, however, is a decision on the new quantum of climate finance, over and above the \$100 billion figure. Several assessments have shown that the money required for climate action now runs into trillions of dollars every year. The revised amount – known as the New

EXPLAINED CLIMATE
Cumulative Quantitative Goal on finance (NCQG) – must reflect this changed reality.

Several developing countries, including India, have made formal proposals on the NCQG amount. The figures are mostly between \$1 trillion and \$1.5 trillion annually – about 1% of the combined GDP of the OECD countries, most of which are part of the group that are obligated to provide climate finance. But countries, which failed to meet even the \$100 billion targets can hardly be expected to agree to such a large amount. As a result, little progress has been made on working out

the contours of the finance agreement.

Expanding the donor base

Many countries which were in the low- or middle-income group when the responsibility for providing climate finance was assigned through provisions of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in the early 1990s, have now emerged as large economies with high incomes. Developed countries argue these countries too must be asked to contribute.

For instance, China, today the world's second-largest economy, South Korea, and the oil-rich Gulf nations such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar do not have any financing obligations under the UNFCCC.

The demand for expanding the donor base is not without merit, but it is a separate discussion. Moreover, the developed countries have never met their obligations, either relating to emissions reductions or finance. They did not meet their \$100 billion commitments any year – a figure they had proposed without any discussion or needs as-

essment. The argument for expanding the donor base is, therefore, used mainly to continue to evade responsibilities under the international climate framework.

Azerbaijan's fund

Azerbaijan's proposed fund is supposed to be financed by oil and gas producing countries, and corporations, but in a voluntary manner. This has raised questions over the amount of money it can attract as even funds to which countries are obligated to contribute have remained undercapitalised. For instance, the Loss and Damage Fund – created at COP27 in Egypt, in 2022, after years of negotiation – has so far received pledges of just \$800-700 million.

Azerbaijan's fund, even if created, would not have the same status. It has not come through negotiations but at the initiative of a host country. Primarily, it is an effort towards making the COP outcomes more meaty and leaving a legacy, much like similar initiatives by previous COP presidencies in the past.

- While countries are still struggling to come to an agreement over the quantum of finance that developed nations must mobilise in the coming years to fight climate change, Azerbaijan, the host of this year's climate conference, has decided to launch a new fund to finance climate action in the developing world. The Climate Finance Action Fund (CFAF) would seek "voluntary" contributions from fossil-fuel producing countries and companies, with Azerbaijan, itself a petroleum economy, making the initial contribution. It is not clear how much money this new fund is hoping to raise.
- The CFAF is part of a large package of proposals that Azerbaijan has prepared for inclusion in the final outcome of COP29 (29th edition of the Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change), which is to be held in the country's capital, Baku, from November 11 to 22. climate change.

India signs IPEF's clean, fair economy agreements

Govt: Agreements to catalyse investments in green tech

RAVIDUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 22

INDIA ON Sunday signed the US-led 14-member Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) bloc's agreements on a clean and fair economy. The agreements signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the US are aimed at facilitating development, access, and deployment of clean energy and climate-friendly technologies. They also aim to strengthen anti-corruption measures and promote tax transparency within member countries.

The Commerce and Industry Ministry said that the agreement on clean economy intends to accelerate efforts of IPEF partners towards energy security, GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions mitigation, developing innovative ways of reducing dependence on fossil fuel energy and promoting technical cooperation. "India signed and exchanged the first-of-its-kind agreements focused on Clean Economy, Fair Economy, and the IPEF overarching arrangement under Indo-Pacific

India signed and exchanged the first-of-its-kind agreements focused on Clean Economy, Fair Economy, and the IPEF overarching arrangement under Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) for prosperity ... "

— COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTRY

Summit," the ministry said.

The agreement on a fair economy intends to create a more transparent and predictable business environment, which can spur greater trade and investment in the markets of member countries, the ministry said, adding that the agreements focus on enhancing information sharing among partners, facilitating asset recovery, and strengthening cross-border investigations and prosecutions.

"IPEF also provides platforms for technical assistance, concessional funding, and viability gap funding. The IPEF Catalytic Capital Fund, with an initial grant of \$33

\$300 million from the United States International Development Finance Corporation," the ministry said.

Ajay Srivastava, former Indian Trade Service officer and head of economic think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), however, expressed concern over the deal as IPEF negotiations have mostly been conducted in secrecy with limited public input. "In the Clean Economy Pillar, the hope is that India has not agreed to a non-derogation clause, which would prevent the government from easing domestic regulations for projects of national importance. Such flexibility is essential for India to pursue key infrastructure projects without being hindered by rigid international commitments," Srivastava said.

He added that most standards and regulations being discussed in IPEF are already in place in the US and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. "If India adopts these standards without adequate preparation, it risks being pushed into compliance not only in IPEF but also in future trade deals with the EU, UK, and others. India must

- India signed the US-led 14-member Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) bloc's agreements on a clean and fair economy. The agreements signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the US are aimed at facilitating development, access, and deployment of clean energy and climate-friendly technologies. They also aim to strengthen anti-corruption measures and promote tax transparency within member countries.
- India signed and exchanged the first-of-its-kind agreements focused on Clean Economy, Fair Economy, and the IPEF overarching arrangement under Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) for prosperity, on September 21, 2024 at Delaware USA, in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi who is on 3-day visit to the US for the Quad Summit," the ministry