

# DAILY PT POINTERS

30<sup>th</sup> September, 2024



## The Hindu-Governance(GSII)-Page 1

# 92% of workers cleaning urban sewers, septic tanks belong to SC, ST, OBC groups, finds survey

Abhinav Lakshman  
NEW DELHI

### Skewed shares

The caste-wise share (in %) of the workers engaged in cleaning of sewers and septic tanks across the country



Source: Government data tabled in Parliament



In a first-of-its-kind attempt to enumerate people engaged in the hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks in India's cities and towns, government data gathered from over 3,000 urban local bodies in 29 States and Union Territories shows that 91.9% of the 38,000 workers profiled so far belong to Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), or other backward class (OBC) communities.

Of the profiled workers, 68.9% were SC, 14.7% were OBC, 8.3% were ST, and 8% were from the general category.

at least 377 people across the country have died from hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks, according to government data tabled in Parliament.

**Hazardous cleaning**  
The profiling of sewer and

is being carried out by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment as part of its NAMASTE programme, a scheme to mechanise all sewer work and prevent deaths due to hazardous cleaning work. In 2023-24, this scheme was

Self-Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS).

The Union government's rationale is that manual scavenging as a practice has ended across the country and what needs to be fixed now is the hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks. It draws this distinction based on a technical difference in how manual scavenging and hazardous cleaning are defined in the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act.

The NAMASTE programme targets "workers directly associated with sewer and septic tank cleaning including drivers

pers, machine operators and cleaners", the Ministry says.

Its goal is to profile such workers in a nationwide enumeration exercise, give them safety training and equipment, and offer capital subsidies that could turn sewer and septic tank workers into "sanipreneurs", or sanitation entrepreneurs.

Since the scheme began a year ago, 3,326 urban local bodies (ULBs) have begun the process and profiled around 38,000 SSWs. So far, 283 ULBs have reported zero SSWs, and 2,364 ULBs have reported less than 10 SSWs each.

CONTINUED ON

- In a first-of-its-kind attempt to enumerate people engaged in the hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks in India's cities and towns, government data gathered from over 3,000 urban local bodies in 29 States and Union Territories shows that 91.9% of the 38,000 workers profiled so far belong to Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), or other backward class (OBC) communities. Of the profiled workers, 68.9% were SC, 14.7% were OBC, 8.3% were ST, and 8% were from the general category. Between 2019 and 2023, at least 377 people across the country have died from hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks
- The profiling of sewer and septic tank workers (SSWs) is being carried out by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment as part of its NAMASTE programme, a scheme to mechanise all sewer work and prevent deaths due to hazardous cleaning work. In 2023-24, this scheme was brought in to replace the Self-Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS).

## The Hindu-Governance(GSII)-Page 12

### PM urges participation in 'Create in India' challenges, says it is a huge platform

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that with changing times, the nature of jobs was also changing and new sectors, including gaming, animation, reel- and film-making were emerging. He encouraged people to participate in the 25 challenges under the 'Create in India' theme launched recently by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry to promote talent and creativity.

"If you can perform well in any of these skills, your talent can get a very big platform. If you are a part of a band or working for community radio, then too here is a huge opportunity for you," Mr. Modi said in his monthly *Mann Ki Baat* radio programme.

He said that some of the



Narendra Modi

tion, and even on anti-piracy. "There are many professional organisations associated with this aim and are providing full support to these challenges. In order to participate, you can log in to [wavesindia.org](http://wavesindia.org). I specially urge the creators in the country to ensure participation and bring their creativity to the fore," Mr. Modi said.

Describing the episode

would be completing 10 years on October 3, the first day of Navratri. He said the programme had proved how hungry the people of the country were for positive information. He added that September 2024 also marked 10 years of the 'Make in India' campaign that benefited the poor, the middle-class and the micro, small, and medium enterprises, turning India into a manufacturing powerhouse.

The country had also seen a spike in foreign direct investment inflows, he said.

He urged people to promote and buy local products during the forthcoming festive season, citing an initiative in Maharashtra's Bhandara, where over 50 self-help groups were working to preserve the old textile tradition of Bhandara.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that with changing times, the nature of jobs was also changing and new sectors, including gaming, animation, reel- and film-making were emerging. He encouraged people to participate in the 25 challenges under the 'Create in India' theme launched recently by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry to promote talent and creativity.
- some of the 'Create in India' challenges focussed on music, education, and even on anti-piracy. "There are many professional organisations associated with this aim and are providing full support to these challenges. In order to participate, you can log in to [wavesindia.org](http://wavesindia.org). I specially urge the creators in the country to ensure participation and bring their creativity to the fore,"

The Hindu –IR(GSII)-Page 12

## Navy chief holds talks on strategic ties with officials in Greece

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

India and Greece discussed avenues for cross-training in niche technologies and advanced courses, as well as ways to strengthen strategic and operational ties, during Navy chief Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi's just-concluded visit to Greece.

Adm. Tripathi, who was in Greece from September 26 to 29, held talks with General Dimitrios Choupi, Chief of the Hellenic National Defence General Staff, at the Salamis Naval Base. "Discussions focused on strengthening strategic and operational ties, enhancing bilateral military cooperation, and tackling evolving maritime challenges through a collaborative approach towards a stable and secure Mediterranean and Indian Ocean Region," the Navy said in a statement.

His talks with Greece's

fence Ioannis Kefalogianis focused on the criticality of open sea trade routes. They laid the groundwork for advancing Indo-Greek defence collaboration with a focus on strategic naval opportunities, capacity building, shared training initiatives, and enhancing interoperability, the Navy added.

The Navy chief was received in Athens by Vice-Adm. Dimitrios E. Kataras, Chief of the Hellenic Navy General Staff, with a ceremonial Guard of Honour at the Papagos Camp and also held talks with Vice-Adm. Polychronis Koulouris, Commander-in-Chief of the Hellenic Fleet. "Discussions focused on enhancing operational interactions and interoperability. He was also briefed on the Hellenic Fleet's capabilities and evolving security challenges, reinforcing the shared commitment to maritime security," the Na-

- India and Greece discussed avenues for cross-training in niche technologies and advanced courses, as well as ways to strengthen strategic and operational ties, during Navy chief Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi's just-concluded visit to Greece
- Discussions focused on strengthening strategic and operational ties, enhancing bilateral military cooperation, and tackling evolving maritime challenges through a collaborative approach towards a stable and secure Mediterranean and Indian Ocean Region
- Discussions focused on enhancing operational interactions and interoperability

## The Hindu –Governance(GSII)

### NPS, a 'rising star' in retirement planning

Srivats K.R.

The National Pension System (NPS) has emerged as a transformative force in India's retirement planning.

What started in 2004 as pension reform for government employees has evolved into a comprehensive, voluntary savings vehicle, attracting participants from both government and private sectors.

While the progress has been significant, more needs to be done to build awareness and drive wider adoption.

With 7.77 crore subscribers, as of September 2024, the combined assets of NPS and Atal Pension Yojana

cade, NPS assets have registered a remarkable 37% compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) to reach ₹2.76 lakh crore, driven largely by the 58 lakh non-government subscribers. Their number is expected to cross 66 lakh by March 2025, according to the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recently highlighted the growing interest from the private sector – as against the 8% growth in NPS investment from the government sector between March 2020 and March 2024, the private sector raced ahead with

**With the right policy initiatives, National Pension System is poised to lead India's pension revolution**

ning. Yet, this growth still falls far short of the latent potential and can be redoubled through broader reforms and incentives to spur more investment from the private sector.

**Opening doors wider**

NPS was initially targeted at new government recruits under a defined contribution (DC) model, replacing the older defined benefit (DB) pension sys-

tem. As of September 2024, NPS's government sector assets reached ₹10.1 lakh crore, with state government employees holding ₹6.53 lakh crore and Central government employees ₹3.57 lakh crore.

The non-government assets grew to ₹1 lakh crore by October 2015, ₹5 lakh crore by October 2020, and ₹10 lakh crore by August 2023.

As of September 2024, only 17,633 companies were registered under NPS, pooling 21.07 lakh subscribers. This includes 8.4 lakh subscribers cumula-

tion. TeamLease RegTech, a company that develops compliance management software, believes that additional tax incentives can spur more corporate participation in NPS.

This includes raising the personal tax deduction limit and added corporate tax benefits, he says.

Pointing out that NPS offers flexibility, a range of investment options, tax advantages, and cost efficiency in the retirement space, Rahul Bhagat, CEO of DSP Pensions, advocates making NPS adoption mandatory for corporates, similar to the 401(k) system in the U.S., to drive significant growth. This, in turn, can

taxable, must be taxed more lightly like mutual funds to attract more investors, he says.

Furthermore, expanding the investment options beyond the BSE-200 companies will give pension fund managers more flexibility in delivering higher returns, he adds.

With the right policy initiatives, NPS is poised to lead India's pension revolution, offering millions of citizens a secure financial future post retirement.

India's aspiration to become a pensioned society is gradually taking shape. However, the growth trajectory of NPS in the private sector, though promis-

- The National Pension System (NPS) has emerged as a transformative force in India's retirement planning.
- What started in 2004 as pension reform for government employees has evolved into a comprehensive, voluntary savings vehicle, attracting participants from both government and private sectors.
- NPS was initially targeted at new government recruits under a defined contribution (DC) model, replacing the older defined benefit (DB) pension system. In 2009, it was opened to all citizens for voluntary participation.
- With 7.77 crore subscribers, as of September 2024, the combined assets of NPS and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) — the government-backed pension scheme for the unorganised sector — have reached ₹13.31 lakh crore. Over the past decade, NPS assets have registered a remarkable 37% compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) to reach ₹2.76 lakh crore, driven largely by the 58 lakh non-government subscribers.

# HEADLINES OF THE DAY



Indian Express –Science and Tech(GSIII)-Page 1

## RUSSIA INTERESTED IN COLLABORATING Small nuclear reactors get traction: Private players offer captive sites for power projects

Small Modular Reactors seen as key for countries to achieve energy transition

ANIL SASI  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 29

INDIA'S PLANS TO get into the manufacturing value chain of Small Modular Reactors is yielding some positives with a handful of private players learnt to have shown interest in deploying these at their captive site. Since the talks are sensitive, sources said disclosing names may not be appropriate at this stage.

SMRs — with a capacity of 30MWe to 300 MWe per unit — are increasingly seen as important for nuclear energy to remain a commercially competitive op-

### EXPLAINED E What sets SMRs apart

SMRS ARE small reactors offering 30-300 MWe power output per unit, and are seen as effective in not just producing base load power (where thermal is seen as important), but also amongst renewables as a more carbon-neutral source.

tion in the future. India is pushing for a leadership slot in this  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

- India's plans to get into the manufacturing value chain of Small Modular Reactors is yielding some positives with a handful of private players learnt to have shown interest in deploying these at their captive site. Since the talks are sensitive, sources said disclosing names may not be appropriate at this stage.
- SMRs — with a capacity of 30MWe to 300 MWe per unit — are increasingly seen as important for nuclear energy to remain a commercially competitive option in the future. India is pushing for a leadership slot in this small reactor space, both as a way of fulfilling its commitment to clean energy transition, and bundling SMRs as a technology-led foreign policy pitch.
- The government's push comes at a time when two countries that have already taken a lead in SMRs — Russia and China — are finding it difficult to do business outside of their respective geographies.

### Cadaver donations: need, rules and challenges

ANONNA DUTT  
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 29

CPI (M) LEADER Sitaram Yechury, who died on September 12, donated his body to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).

This is not a decision that a lot of people in India make, but perhaps many more should. Here's why.

#### What are cadavers used for?

Cadaver donation sees a person donate their entire body (rather than individual organs) to science after death.

Generally, cadavers are used to train doctors by helping them better understand human anatomy and practice surgery. Although dummies can be used for training, cadavers provide the most realistic experience of performing surgery on a human being. Apart from training, cadavers can also be used for developing new medical devices, and studying the physiological impact of diseases.

#### Who can donate their body?

Anyone over the age of 18 years can

legally consent to become a cadaver donor. In case they are not registered as one at the time of death, their guardian or next of kin can still donate their body.

Although those who have died of chronic illnesses are eligible donors, the bodies of those with infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, sepsis, or HIV are unlikely to be accepted. Same is the case with bodies of organ donors.

Lastly, medical colleges may also refuse to accept bodies of persons who have died due to unnatural reasons, and are subjects of any medico-legal cases.

#### How to donate one's body?

There is no national organisation to track whole body donations (unlike organ donation). Usually, anatomy departments of medical college hospitals are directly in-charge of the process. Thus, one has to go to the specified department where one wants to donate one's body and sign requisite forms. After death, the donor's next of kin have to contact the department to process the donation.

#### How many cadavers are donated in India?

Not enough. Although no consolidated estimates exist, medical institutes have often reported shortages.

Currently, undergraduate medical colleges require one cadaver for every 10 students they admit. The AIIMS Delhi, where

Yechury donated his body, has received 70 cadavers in the last two years, enough for its batch size of 132. But the story elsewhere is very different.

Situated right across the road from the AIIMS, the Safdarjung Hospital and its affiliate Vardhaman Mahavir Medical College (VMMC) has received only 24 donated cadavers in the last five years. The Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital and its associated Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Medical Sciences (ABVIMS) have received 18 cadavers since the inception of its MBBS course in 2019. VMMC has a UG batch size of 150 (with 170 students permitted for the upcoming session). ABVIMS admits 100 MBBS students annually.

Notably, both these institutes are located in

the national capital – the situation is likely to be worse in most other parts of India.

#### So, how do medical colleges make do?

Given the shortages, medical colleges are forced to use unclaimed dead bodies, as per the provisions of their state's Anatomy Act. Although the specifics can vary, all these acts allow for the use of unclaimed bodies for science. Most laws state that the body of a deceased has to be claimed by relatives within 48 hours or "with least practicable delay".

A 2020 study published in the journal *BMC Medical Ethics* said that the rise in the number of medical institutes over the past 25 years, and exponential increase in the number of students studying medicine has led to the requirement of cadavers shooting up. Unclaimed bodies have traditionally been the major source of cadavers for medical institutes, the study further says.

However, there are major ethical issues here as most unclaimed bodies are of the poor, destitute, and other marginalised people. Many countries require explicit consent for cadavers to be accepted, some even require wills signed in presence of lawyers.

EXPLAINED  
SCIENCE

- CPI (M) leader Sitaram Yechury, who died on September 12, **donated his body** to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). This is not a decision that a lot of people in India make. But perhaps they should. Here is why.
- **What are cadavers used for?**
- Cadaver donation sees a person donate their entire body (rather than individual organs) to science after death.
- Generally, cadavers are used to train doctors by helping them better understand human anatomy and practice surgery. Although dummies can be used for training, cadavers provide the most realistic experience of performing surgery on a human being.
- Apart from training doctors, cadavers can also be used for developing new medical devices and studying the physiological impact of various diseases.

# HEADLINES OF THE DAY



## PIB-Culture(GSI)



- The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the first edition of Bharatiya Kala Mahotsav at Rashtrapati Nilayam, Secunderabad today (September 28, 2024). The eight-day-long festival is being organised by Rashtrapati Nilayam in collaboration with the Ministry of Development of the North-East Region and the Ministry of Culture.
- This festival aims to present the rich and diverse cultural heritage of North-Eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura before the visitors.



# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

## Air-Governance(GSII)

### Two-Day 'National Knowledge Sharing Workshop' To Begin In Bhopal Under STARS Project



- The Ministry of Education, Government of India is running the Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States means STARS project with the support of World Bank for the betterment of the schools of the country. A two-day 'National Knowledge Sharing Workshop' is being organized in Bhopal from today under the STARS project.
- The STARS project is being run in 6 states of the country – Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh and Maharashtra