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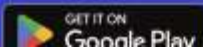


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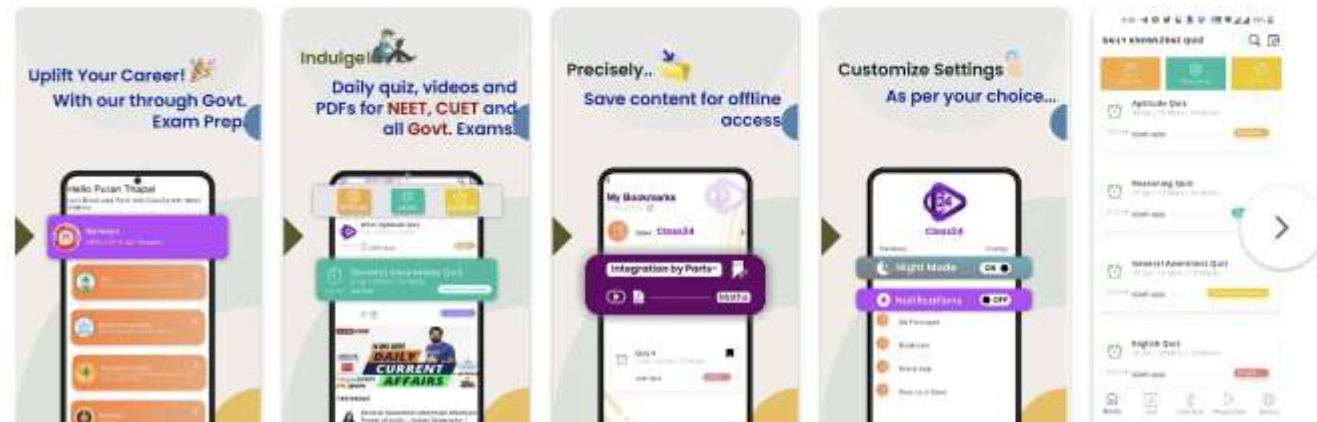
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Citizenship rulings must be 'fair, lawful': SC

Court sets aside 27 judgments by Gauhati HC on 'foreigners', asks tribunals to adjudicate afresh

Declarations on citizenship are not sustainable if 'procedure employed is mechanical', says court

The HC had dismissed appeals against tribunals since the appellants failed to appear for hearings

Aaratrika Bhaumik
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday held that the determination of citizenship and foreigner status must be undertaken through a "fair, lawful, and reasoned" process, as it set aside a batch of 27 Gauhati High Court judgments declaring the appellants to be foreigners, and remanded the cases to the Foreigners' Tribunals concerned for fresh adjudication.

A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta observed that while the state has a legitimate interest in ensuring that persons who are legally ineligible for an Indian citizenship do not obtain such a status through "false claims", the "grave consequence" of being declared a foreigner must follow a procedure that adheres to constitutional guarantees.

"A state action which is arbitrary cannot claim the protection of law merely because it is clothed in statutory form. A proceeding which may result in a person being declared a foreigner cannot be sustained if the procedure adopted is mechanical, one-sided, or devoid of application of mind," the judgment, authored by Justice Nath, said.

'Fair opportunity'

The Tribunal must examine whether the person had a "fair opportunity, whether the main grounds were disclosed, whether the evidence before it was capable of supporting the reference, and whether the conclusion follows from the material on record," it added.

The High Court had dismissed the appeals against the orders of the Foreigners' Tribunals declaring the appellants to be fo-



A state action which is arbitrary cannot claim the protection of law merely because it is clothed in statutory form. A proceeding which may result in a person being declared a foreigner cannot be sustained if the procedure adopted is mechanical, one-sided, or devoid of application of mind

SUPREME COURT JUDGMENT



reigners after noting that none of them had appeared before the tribunals despite having been served notices. It had observed that, in the absence of any written statement, documents, or evidence from the appellants, the tribunals had "no option" but to affirm the references.

The top court, however, clarified that the remand should not be construed as an affirmation of the appellants' claim to Indian citizenship.

The remand was intended solely to ensure that the serious civil consequences of being declared a foreigner flow only from an adjudication that is legally sustainable and consistent with the principles of fairness, the top court said.

Accordingly, the Bench set aside both the High Court judgments and the corresponding opinions of the Foreigners Tribunals concerned, directing the tribunals to decide the matters afresh without being influenced by their ear-

lier findings or those of the High Court. It said the fresh adjudication must involve an independent assessment of the evidence and the rival claims in accordance with law and should, as far as possible, be completed within six months.

The court further directed that no coercive steps be taken against the appellants until the Foreigners Tribunals render fresh opinions.

The top court also directed the appellants to appear before the tribunals within four weeks.

'Big legal consequence'

Justice Nath also acknowledged that questions of citizenship and foreigner status occupy a field of "high constitutional and legal significance", particularly because a declaration that a person is a foreigner carries far more than ordinary civil consequences. Such a

finding, the judge noted, may result in detention, deportation, separation from family and community, and even "statelessness".

The apex court further underlined that while Section 9 of the 1946 Act undoubtedly places the burden upon the proceedee to prove that he or she is not a foreigner, it does not absolve a Tribunal of its "obligation" to conduct a lawful adjudication so as to not proceed with a "mechanical" declaration.

The Bench also pointed out that the guarantees of equality before the law under Article 14 and the right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution extend to foreigners as well, and are not confined to Indian citizens.

"A person proceeded against before a Foreigners Tribunal may ultimately fail to establish Indian citizenship, but the process by

which such determination is made must still satisfy the constitutional requirements", the Bench said.

The principal contention before the apex court was whether a person could be declared a foreigner through *ex parte* proceedings solely on account of non-appearance, particularly where government records were available in support of the claim to Indian citizenship.

The dispute arose from an order dated May 9, 1997, by the Illegal Migrants (Determination) Tribunal, which declared Sabitri Dey and her husband, Sambhu Dey, to be illegal migrants after they failed to appear despite summons. The petitioners contended that they had no knowledge of the proceedings and that the tribunal's conclusion rested primarily on the inquiry officer's hearsay testimony rather than reliable substantive evidence.

2020)

The Supreme Court delivered an important judgment on **13 July 2026**, holding that **citizenship and foreigner status cannot be decided through a mechanical or one-sided process**. The Court set aside **27 Gauhati High Court judgments** that had upheld Foreigners Tribunals' decisions declaring individuals as foreigners and sent all the cases back for fresh hearings.  LawBeat +1

Case at a Glance

Particular	Details
Court	Supreme Court of India
Bench	Justice Vikram Nath & Justice Sandeep Mehta
Date	13 July 2026
State involved	Assam
Persons affected	27 appellants
High Court	Gauhati High Court
Decision	HC judgments set aside
Direction	Fresh adjudication by Foreigners Tribunals
Time limit	Preferably within 6 months

Interim protection	No coercive action until fresh decision
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Background of the Case

The appeals arose from Assam, where:

- Foreigners Tribunals had declared certain persons as foreigners.
- Gauhati High Court dismissed their appeals.
- In many cases, the appellants **did not appear before the tribunal**, leading to **ex parte (one-sided)** decisions.
- They argued before the Supreme Court that:
 - they never had a real opportunity to present their case,
 - evidence relied upon was weak,
 - and tribunals followed a mechanical process.

The Supreme Court agreed that such serious matters require strict procedural fairness.  Live Law +1

Why is this judgment important?

Being declared a foreigner can lead to:

- detention,
- deportation,
- separation from family,
- loss of voting rights,
- denial of government benefits,
- possible statelessness.

Because the consequences are so severe, the Court held that **the procedure itself must satisfy constitutional standards.**  The Times of India +1

Supreme Court's Major Observations

1. Fair procedure is mandatory

The Court held:

Citizenship cannot be determined through a mechanical, one-sided or mindless process.

Every person must receive:

- notice,
- adequate opportunity,
- meaningful hearing,
- reasoned decision.

 Live Law +1

2. Statutory power does not justify arbitrariness

The Court observed:

Even if an action is authorised by law, it cannot be arbitrary.

Simply following a statute is insufficient if the procedure violates fairness.

This reinforces the constitutional principle that **procedure must be just, fair and reasonable**.

3. Foreigners Tribunal cannot act mechanically

The Tribunal must independently examine:

- documents,
- witnesses,
- government records,
- defence evidence,
- rival claims.

It cannot merely endorse investigation reports.

 The New Indian E... +1

4. Ex parte orders require caution

The Court clarified that a person **cannot automatically be declared a foreigner merely because he or she did not appear**, especially where official records suggesting Indian citizenship exist.

Tribunals must still evaluate all available evidence before reaching a conclusion.  The Times of India +1

5. High constitutional significance

Questions of citizenship involve:

- identity,
- liberty,
- dignity,
- constitutional rights.

Hence they demand a much higher standard of judicial scrutiny than ordinary civil disputes.

Foreigners Act, 1946

The Supreme Court reaffirmed that under **Section 9 of the Foreigners Act, 1946**, the **burden of proving Indian citizenship lies on the person concerned**.

However, the Court emphasized that this does **not** relieve the Tribunal of its duty to conduct a lawful, evidence-based adjudication rather than a mechanical exercise.

 Legal Eagle Elite +1

Directions Issued by the Supreme Court

The Court ordered:

Direction	Details
Gauhati HC judgments	Set aside
Foreigners Tribunal opinions	Set aside
Fresh hearing	Yes
Independent assessment	Mandatory
Previous findings	Should not influence fresh decision
Fresh decision	Preferably within six months
Appearance by appellants	Within four weeks
Coercive action	No detention/deportation until fresh orders

What is a Foreigners Tribunal?

Foreigners Tribunals are quasi-judicial bodies constituted under the **Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964** to determine whether a person is a foreigner under the Foreigners Act, 1946.

They are used extensively in Assam due to long-standing concerns regarding illegal migration.

 [Wikipedia](#) +1

Historical Context: Assam Citizenship Issue

Year	Development
1979–1985	Assam Movement against illegal immigration
1985	Assam Accord signed
1983	IMDT Act enacted (Assam only)
2005	Supreme Court struck down the IMDT Act
2013	Supreme Court supervised NRC update
2019	Final NRC published in Assam
2019	Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) passed
2026	Supreme Court reiterates fair procedure in citizenship determinations

Issue

Gauhati High Court

Supreme Court

Non-appearance

Upheld tribunal decisions

Says non-appearance alone is insufficient

Tribunal assessment

Accepted findings

Fresh independent assessment required

Procedural fairness

Limited scrutiny

Central constitutional requirement

Evidence

Relied on tribunal findings

Requires detailed evaluation of evidence

Constitutional rights

Not emphasized

Articles 14 & 21 are central

SC stays Madras HC order banning cow slaughter

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday stayed a May 27 order of the Madras High Court that directed the Tamil Nadu government to enforce a State-wide prohibition on the slaughter of cows and calves.

A Bench comprising Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta was hearing a special leave petition filed by the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK)-led government challenging the High Court's order on the ground that the direction was contrary to the provisions of the Tamil Nadu Animal Preservation Act, 1958, which permits the slaughter of cows over 10 years of age if a competent authority declares them unfit for work and breeding.

The State also pointed

Slaughter rules

The Madras HC had observed in its May 27 order that slaughter of animals could take place only in licensed/designated places

T.N.'s CONTENTION IN SC:

- Order amounted to 'judicial lawmaking' and was internally inconsistent
- Several existing laws regulate slaughter without any blanket ban
- Necessary steps already taken to prevent the slaughter of animals in public places



out that laws such as the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960; the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Slaughter House) Rules, 2001; the Tamil Nadu Urban Local Bodies Act, 1998; and the Tamil Nadu Urban Local Bodies Rules, 2023, do not impose a blanket prohibition on slaughter, but instead regulates the manner and con-

ditions under which it may be carried out.

'Need for correction'

Observing that the impugned order required *prima facie* "correction", the Bench issued notice on the appeal filed by Tamil Nadu and stayed the operation of the High Court's order insofar as it directed the State to impose a complete

ban on cow slaughter.

The impugned order was passed by a Division Bench of Justices G.R. Swaminathan and V. Lakshminarayanan, which had directed the Chief Secretary and the Director-General of Police/Head of Police Force to ensure that no cow or calf was slaughtered anywhere in the State either on the eve of Bakrid on May 28, 2026, or on any subsequent day.

The petition, filed by the Secretary to the State government, arraigned as respondents K. Surya, youth wing secretary of the Indu Makkal Katchi, who had moved the original writ petition before the High Court, along with the Director-General of Police and other State officials.

The Tamil Nadu government apprised the top court that the High Court's order amounted to "judi-

cial lawmaking" and was internally inconsistent. It pointed out that while the High Court had correctly observed that slaughter could take place only in designated slaughterhouses or places notified under the law, it had simultaneously directed a complete prohibition on the slaughter of cows and calves.

The State further submitted it had already taken the necessary steps to prevent the slaughter of animals in public places and had consistently maintained that any animal sacrifice would be permitted only in enclosed spaces away from public view.

The High Court had observed that slaughter of animals could take place only in licensed slaughterhouses or places specifically designated by the competent authorities under the law.

This case concerns the **powers of the judiciary versus the legislature** and the **implementation of existing animal preservation laws**. The Supreme Court stayed a Madras High Court order that had effectively imposed a **state-wide prohibition on cow and calf slaughter in Tamil Nadu**, observing that the High Court's directions appeared to go beyond the existing law.

Case at a Glance

Particular	Details
Court	Supreme Court of India
Date	13 July 2026
Bench	Justice Vikram Nath & Justice Sandeep Mehta
State	Tamil Nadu
Challenged Order	Madras High Court order dated 27 May 2026
Petitioner	Government of Tamil Nadu
Respondents	K. Surya (Youth Wing Secretary, Indiya Makkal Katchi) & others
Supreme Court Decision	Stayed the operation of the Madras High Court order directing a blanket ban
Status	Final hearing pending

- **Background**

- Before **Bakrid (Eid-ul-Adha) 2026**, a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was filed before the **Madras High Court**, seeking strict enforcement of laws governing animal slaughter.
- The Madras High Court directed the Tamil Nadu Government to ensure:
 - No cow or calf is slaughtered anywhere in the State.
 - Strict implementation before Bakrid and thereafter.
 - Enforcement by the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police (DGP).
- The Tamil Nadu Government challenged this order before the Supreme Court.

Why did Tamil Nadu challenge the High Court order?

The State argued that the High Court had **gone beyond the law** by directing a complete prohibition that **does not exist in the Tamil Nadu Animal Preservation Act, 1958**.

Tamil Nadu's Arguments

Argument	Explanation
Judicial overreach	The High Court effectively created a new law instead of interpreting the existing law.
Existing law permits slaughter in certain cases	Cows above a prescribed age and certified as permanently unfit for work or breeding may be slaughtered under the Act.
Existing regulatory framework	Slaughter is already regulated through licensing and designated slaughterhouses.
Public slaughter already prohibited	The Government had already taken measures to prevent slaughter in public places.
Internal inconsistency	The High Court allowed slaughter only in licensed slaughterhouses but simultaneously directed a complete prohibition on cows and calves.

Law

Tamil Nadu Animal Preservation Act, 1958

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
(Slaughter House) Rules, 2001

Tamil Nadu Urban Local Bodies Act, 1998

Tamil Nadu Urban Local Bodies Rules,
2023

Purpose

Regulates slaughter of cattle; permits slaughter under specified conditions.

Prevents cruelty towards animals across India.

Prescribes standards for slaughterhouses.

Regulates municipal administration including slaughterhouses.

Licensing and regulation of slaughterhouses.

What does the Tamil Nadu Animal Preservation Act, 1958 provide?

The Act **does not impose a total ban.**

Instead, it permits slaughter in specific circumstances.

Category	Position under the Act
Healthy milch/working cattle	Protected
Cow declared permanently unfit for work/breeding by competent authority	Slaughter may be permitted
Licensed slaughterhouses	Allowed subject to legal conditions
Public places	Slaughter prohibited

Supreme Court's Observations

The Supreme Court made important **prima facie (initial)** observations:

1. High Court order requires correction

The Bench observed that the High Court order appeared to require **prima facie correction** because it effectively imposed a blanket ban not contemplated by the statute.

2. Courts cannot legislate

The State argued—and the Supreme Court considered—that courts should **interpret laws rather than create new prohibitions**, highlighting the constitutional principle of **separation of powers**.

3. Existing law already regulates slaughter

The Court noted that slaughter is already regulated through:

- licensing,
 - designated slaughterhouses,
 - municipal laws,
 - animal welfare legislation.
-

4. Stay granted

The Supreme Court stayed the High Court's direction **only to the extent that it imposed a complete statewide prohibition** on cow and calf slaughter, while the appeal is pending.

Difference Between the Madras High Court and Supreme Court

Issue	Madras High Court	Supreme Court (Interim View)
Cow slaughter	Directed statewide prohibition	Stayed blanket prohibition
Licensed slaughterhouses	Allowed slaughter only in designated places	Agreed regulation is necessary but questioned total ban
Nature of order	Broad preventive directions	Held the order may exceed the statutory framework
Status	Order stayed (partly)	Final decision pending

Constitutional Principles Involved

Principle	Relevance
Separation of Powers	Judiciary interprets laws; Legislature makes laws.
Rule of Law	Executive action must follow existing statutes.
Judicial Review	Courts can review executive action but generally should not legislate.
Federalism	States legislate on matters such as animal preservation under the State List, subject to constitutional limits.

Article

Subject

Article 48

Directive Principle directing the State to organize agriculture and animal husbandry and prohibit slaughter of cows, calves, and other milch and draught cattle.

Article 48A

Protection of environment and wildlife.

Article 51A(g)

Fundamental duty to have compassion for living creatures.

Article 246 & Seventh Schedule

Distribution of legislative powers between Parliament and States.

Article 21

Personal liberty; relevant where executive enforcement measures affect individuals.

Over the past 5 years, India has consistently ranked as one of the top 5 beef-exporting countries globally, with **total annual export volumes ranging between 1.2 and 1.5 million metric tonnes**. Total export earnings consistently hover around \$3 to \$4 billion USD.  Wikipedia +3

Here is the specific, localized breakdown of how India's meat exports have performed over the last five years:

- **Strictly Buffalo Meat:** By law, cow slaughter and the export of cow meat are strictly prohibited. Over 97% of India's beef exports consist of carabeef (buffalo meat), making it the foundation of this multi-billion-dollar trade.  Seair Exim Solutions +2
- **Global Standing:** India comfortably maintains its position as the world's 4th or 5th largest beef exporter, operating alongside top producers like Brazil, Australia, and the USA.  Wikipedia +1
- **Key Markets:** The primary destinations for these meat exports are Southeast Asia and the Middle East. **Vietnam** remains the top destination, while countries like **Iraq, UAE, Egypt, and Malaysia** have shown massive year-over-year import

SC rejects professor's anticipatory bail plea in suicide case

Anantika Bhambhani
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday rejected the anticipatory bail plea of a Kerala college teacher accused of abetting the suicide of a dental student, observing that such "inhuman conduct" deserved to be dealt with sternly.

"The message has to go that you cannot behave in this way with students... Inhuman is the only word that comes to mind. How does he address the student?" a bench of Justices Vikram Patil and Sandeep Khanna remarked while refusing anticipatory bail to M.K. Ram, former head of the Department of Dental Anatomy at Angarakandy Dental College.

Nithin Raj, a first year BDS student at the Kannur Medical College, Angarakandy, was found dead on the campus on April 10 in a suspected case of suicide. His family and several students alleged that he had taken the extreme step after harassment by Mr. Ram and another faculty member, Sangeetha Narthar.

Appearing for Mr. Ram, senior advocate D.K. Naidu said the alleged incident of harassment had occurred nearly a month before the student's death and was too remote in time to constitute the offence of abetment. He also said that Nithin had also harassed by loan recovery agent over an unpaid loan.

(*There is distress can dial tel: MANAS 14466*)

SC seeks Revanna's response on Karnataka govt. petition

State moves SC after High Court absolves JD(S) MLA of charge of use for force to outrage modesty of a woman, how can HC change charges after trial court has taken cognisance of offence, asks SC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to examine a plea filed by the Karnataka Government challenging a High Court order quashing the charge of assault or use of criminal force to outrage the modesty of a woman, against Janna Dal Goudar, legislator and former Karnataka Minister H.D. Revanna.

A Bench of Justices J.R. Pawar and K. Vinod Chandran issued notice on the State government's appeal and called upon Mr. Revanna to file his response.

Mr. Revanna is accused of sexually harassing a former hotelier help. The



The Bench has questioned the State government for its delay in challenging the HC order against H.D. Revanna. S.C. CHANDRA/ANI

complaint also alleged that his son, former BDS MP Praveen Revanna, had sexually harassed the woman, following which a first information report (FIR) was registered in April 2024. In an order on November 10, 2023 the High Court

trial court to consider afresh whether the delay of nearly three years in filing the complaint could be condoned before taking cognisance of the offence under section 354A.

On Monday, the imp court expressed reservations over the High Court's interference after the trial court had already taken cognisance of the offence. "How can the High Court change the charge?" the Bench remarked.

The Bench also questioned the Karnataka Government over the delay in challenging the High Court's order.

Mr. Revanna is the son of former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda and the elder brother of Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy.

DMK may move top court against TVK

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

DMK organising secretary K.K. Bhadraraj said on Monday that if Governor Rajendra Velamuri's alleged failure to take the party's complaint alleging harassment of MLAs by the ruling Tamil Nadu Vetri Kallagan (TVK), the Dravidian Front would approach the Supreme Court.

After submitting a peti-

tion to the Governor, Mr. Bhadraraj said the DMK had already submitted a representation on July 4, drawing the Governor's attention to MEME general secretary Vahar's claim that the TVK had approached two of his party's MLAs for sexual harassment. Mr. Bhadraraj said the DMK would approach the court for legal aid and urged them to switch allegiance on the promise that they would approach the court through the DMK recruitment process.

Karnataka Governor suspends PSC chief over daughter's selection for govt. job

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a first in the history of the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC), Governor Thawar Dasgupta, on Monday, suspended its Chairperson Chittaranjan Choudhary.

Mr. Dasgupta said the suspension was due to the alleged irregularities in the recruitment process.

The police had filed an FIR against the PSC for submitting a false income certificate and claiming a reserved post.

The Governor has recommended to the President to make a reference to the Supreme Court under Article 75(2) of the Constitution for an inquiry into the allegations.

The Governor has directed the senior-most member of the Com-

mission to function as the Acting Chairperson until further orders from the President. Dr. B. Padmanabhaiah is the senior-most member of the Commission.

Mr. Dasgupta has recommended to the President to make a reference to the Supreme Court under Article 75(2) of the Constitution for an inquiry into the allegations.

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The Governor has directed the senior-most member of the Com-

Kerala HC allows BJP councillor to take oath from prison

The Hindu Bureau
KOCCHI

The Kerala High Court on Monday allowed B. Sugathan, a BJP councillor in the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation, who is under a six-month preventive detention under the Kerala Anti-Social Activities (Prevention) Act, to take his oath of office inside the Vyyar Central Prison on Tuesday.

The oath-taking is to be arranged by the Superintendent of Vyyar Central Prison and administered by the Mayor of Thiruvananthapuram at 11 a.m.

Violation of norms Mr. Sugathan was among the 20 BJP councillors directed by the High Court to take oath after they had violated procedure during the original ceremony by taking oath in the names of local deities. Nineteen councillors retold oath, but Mr. Sugathan, who was detained, could not attend the ceremony.

Mr. Sugathan is named in 10 criminal cases.

He had contended that he did not retake oath by July 14, the majority held by the BJP in the Corporation would be lost.

The court stated that it had a duty to uphold democracy when "the very pulse of democracy is made to collapse over a solitary, disputed oath".

"The people's mandate cannot be massacred by a procedural lapse," the court held.

INDIAN



Centre offers help to protect rights of retrenched tech staff

The Union Ministry of Labour has offered "all possible help" to address the issues of more than 800 employees retrenched by U.S. technology firm CorroHealth Infosoft Private Limited from its Kochi and Kozhikode centres recently. Union Labour Minister Manuvel Maruduvai assured Kerala Labour Minister Binu Krishna that the Centre would stand for the "job and social security" of all workers. Mr. Krishna told The Hindu after the meeting that she had submitted a memorandum to the Minister on the issue.

Man accused of killing six found dead in Telangana

A POCSD case accused, who allegedly murdered six people in Telangana's Nizamat mandal on Friday, died by suicide after consuming a suspected herbicide, he police said on Monday. The police said they had recovered his mobile phone. "In a video he made at 4.05 p.m. on the day of the murders, he says that he had decided to kill the minor girl [who died a case against him under the POCSD Act], her mother and grandmother before killing his own family and taking his own life," the police said. (To overcome suicidal thoughts, seek help at 14466)

YouTuber's channel shut down over malicious content

The YouTube channel of social media personality Mohammed Nihal, popularly known as "Thoppu", has reportedly been shut down after a Kerala police report flagged malicious and obscene content. The 31-year-old Nihal had been booked for allegedly posting obscene videos through streaming platform, and registered a case against him on the night of June 26. He allegedly posted nude images of his friends on social media following a fallout with them. The police have since opposed his anticipatory bail plea before the court.

Ex-Minister's son surrenders in A.P.

The Hindu Bureau
GURGAU

Union YSRCP leader Revathi Appalaraju's son Arav surrendered at a police station in Andhra Pradesh on Monday over his involvement in a road accident, which claimed the life of a shepherd on July 10.

The accused surrendered after the police presented prima facie evidence of the accident on the old National Highway road of Kallugum in Srikalahasti district.

Mr. Appalaraju was a former State Minister. A tense situation prevailed at the Kallugum police station as YSRCP leaders and activists gathered

there and claimed that Arav was not involved in the accident.

On July 10, the 48-year-old shepherd died on the spot after he was hit by a two-wheeler. The police then arrested Revathi's friend, as the two-wheeler was registered in his name. The police later claimed that Mr. Arav was riding the two-wheeler. The police verified the CCTV footage and found that Mr. Arav was on the highway that night. However, there is no clear evidence of CCTV footage from the accident spot.

A tense situation prevailed at the Kallugum police station as YSRCP leaders and activists gathered there and claimed that Arav was not involved in the accident.

Peace pocket



Catching the first rays, visitors watch sunrise at the Ranganatha Thiruvengadam Betta, a series of hills, around 60 km from Bangalore city, on Monday. Situated along the Ranganatha Thiruvengadam Road, it is a favourite haunt of local tribes and travellers. S. KISHORE/ANI

Rainfall has major impact on elephant movement in southern Western Ghats

Hemant G.S.
BENGALURU

The Centre for Wildlife Studies (CWS), in a new study, found that rainfall in the southern Western Ghats region of Karnataka and Kerala has a major impact on elephant movement. The study found that rainfall was the strongest environmental factor linked to reported elephant occurrence in both States.

The study titled "Integrating Ecological Modelling and Local Knowledge to Understand Elephant Occurrence and Human-Elephant Interactions in the Western Ghats" examines where people and Asian elephants are most likely to overlap across the southern Western Ghats and how that overlap may shift by 2050.

In 2022, 507 community residents were interviewed across villages surrounding the Western Ghats National Parks and the Palakkad and Mannarkudi Wildlife Sanctuaries. The CWS said rainfall emerged as the single strongest environmental factor linked to reported elephant occurrence, and that the relationships were the strongest in the Western Ghats following simple straight lines. "Human land use and forest disturbance are much richer picture of where and why elephants move through these landscapes," said the CWS.

TID member objects to Shivakumar's offer

The Hindu Bureau
TIRUPATI

An offer by Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar to provide "Tirumala Nitya Harathi Darshan" to MLAs, public representatives, bureaucrats and judges from his State has raised eyebrows at the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), the custodian of the world's largest Hindu temple.

The Harathi is offered to the presiding deity (Mondavathi of Lord Venkateswara) in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple as a mark of respect.

Mr. Shivakumar had announced that the government would extend the same privilege to the state holders in the government as per their protocol, and on a priority basis. It is, however, not clear if the Karnataka government had held parleys with its counterparts in Andhra Pradesh.

Karnataka CM has offered to provide 'Tirumala Nitya Harathi Darshan' to MLAs, judges

Responding to the statement, TTD Trust Board member G. Bhadrakrishna Reddy condemned Mr. Shivakumar's unilateral offer, made without consulting the TTD management, as an "authoritative overreach".

Tamil poet and lyricist Vairamuthu conferred Jnanpith Award

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Tamil poet and lyricist R. Vairamuthu was on Monday conferred the 60th Jnanpith Award for the year 2025. He is the third Tamil literary figure to receive the award, after a gap of 24 years. Earlier recipients include the late writers Akilan and Jayakanthan. Mr. Vairamuthu won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2003 for *Kallikattu Ithikasam*.

The award was presented by politician and scholar Karan Singh at a ceremony in New Delhi. As part of the honour, Mr. Vairamuthu received a cash prize of ₹11 lakh, a bronze statue of Vagdevi (Goddess Saraswati), and a citation.

Delivering the keynote address, Mr. Singh emphasised the continuing rele-



Vairamuthu

vance of literature in the age of science and technology, and urged the younger generation to forge a deeper connection with Indian languages and literary traditions.

He dedicated the honour to the Tamil language and the wider fraternity of Indian literature. He said the recognition would encourage him to continue his creative pursuits.



Tamil poet, lyricist, novelist, and essayist R. Vairamuthu was conferred the **60th Jnanpith Award** for the year **2025**, India's highest literary honour. He became the **third Tamil literary personality** to receive the prestigious award after a gap of **24 years**.

At a Glance

Particular	Details
Award	60th Jnanpith Award
Award Year	2025
Recipient	<u>R. Vairamuthu</u>
Language	Tamil
Category	Literature
Award Presented By	<u>Karan Singh</u>
Venue	New Delhi
Cash Prize	₹11 lakh
Other Components	Bronze statue of Vagdevi (Goddess Saraswati) and a citation

Who is Vairamuthu?

Aspect	Details
Full Name	R. Vairamuthu
Profession	Poet, Lyricist, Novelist, Essayist
Language	Tamil
Birth	13 July 1953, Tamil Nadu
Literary Career	More than four decades
Film Career	One of India's most celebrated Tamil film lyricists
Genres	Poetry, Fiction, Essays, Lyrics

Why was he honoured?

The Jnanpith Award recognizes his:

- Outstanding contribution to Tamil literature.
- Rich poetic expression.
- Contribution to modern Tamil poetry.
- Literary works reflecting rural life, social change, human emotions, and Tamil culture.
- Influence on both literary and popular culture through poetry and film lyrics.

Major Literary Works

Work	Description
<i>Kallikattu Ithikasam</i>	Famous novel depicting the displacement of rural communities due to dam construction.
<i>Karuvachi Kaviyam</i>	Epic-style novel on rural Tamil society.
<i>Thanneer Desam</i>	Literary work on the relationship between humans and the sea.
Numerous Poetry Collections	Modern Tamil poetry covering social justice, love, nature, and human values.

Sahitya Akademi Award

Before receiving the Jnanpith, Vairamuthu had already won the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2003 for **Kallikattu Ithikasam**.

Previous Tamil Jnanpith Award Winners

Recipient	Year	Contribution
<u>Akilan</u>	1975	Historical novels and Tamil literature
<u>Jayakanthan</u>	2002	Social realism and modern Tamil fiction
<u>R. Vairamuthu</u>	2025	Poetry, novels, lyrics

Thus, Vairamuthu became the **third Tamil recipient** of the Jnanpith Award.

About the Jnanpith Award

Feature	Details
Instituted	1961
First Award	1965
Presented By	<u>Bharatiya Jnanpith</u>
Highest Literary Award	Yes
Eligibility	Indian citizen writing in any language listed in the Eighth Schedule (and English, as per current eligibility)
Frequency	Annual
Purpose	Lifetime contribution to literature

Selection Process

1. Language Advisory Committees recommend authors.
2. Expert committees evaluate literary contributions.
3. National Selection Board makes the final recommendation.
4. Bharatiya Jnanpith confers the award.

Feature	Jnanpith Award	Sahitya Akademi Award
Highest Literary Honour	Yes	No
Instituted	1961	1954
Awarded For	Lifetime contribution	Outstanding book published in recent years
Frequency	Annual	Annual
Scope	National lifetime recognition	Individual literary work
Cash Prize	₹11 lakh (currently)	Lower than Jnanpith (amount revised periodically by Sahitya Akademi)

Award

Jnanpith Award

Sahitya Akademi Award

Saraswati Samman

Vyas Samman

Bhasha Samman

Institution

Bharatiya Jnanpith

Sahitya Akademi

K.K. Birla Foundation

K.K. Birla Foundation

Sahitya Akademi

11

User data exposed due to flaws in UMANG portal: researchers

UAN of PF subscribers, LPG booking details, and Aadhaar numbers among the exposed data; IT Ministry acknowledges vulnerabilities, says necessary measures are being implemented; initial fixes do nothing to fix the system, says researcher

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

Multiple vulnerabilities in the UMANG, or Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance, portal that aggregates hundreds of public services offered by the Union and State governments are leaving data of potentially millions of Indians exposed across a variety of databases, including those from the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), according to two security researchers who shared their findings with *The Hindu*.

The vulnerabilities, which have likely existed for years, affect several services tested on the UMANG portal, which has onboarded over 2,400 services. It stems from the architecture of the portal itself, said the researchers, Akshay C.S. and Viral Vaghela. "Almost everything is broken by design," Mr. Vaghela said.

The data exposed included Unique Account Numbers (UAN) with the EPFO, LPG cylinder booking details with at least one major oil marketing com-



pany, and Aadhaar numbers across several services where a user's ID details are saved. The Aadhaar numbers were found across many services in plain text, though such storage is disallowed by the Aadhaar Act, 2016. The Aadhaar module itself within UMANG was not vulnerable.

The EPFO module is UMANG's most-used service, recording over 40 crore transactions over the past three months.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology acknowledged the vulnerabilities in a

statement to *The Hindu*. "Our development and security teams have carefully examined the observations and are implementing the necessary corrective and preventive measures," the Ministry said. "The plain-text information in the concerned APIs has been appropriately encrypted."

API review

The Ministry added that it has "reviewed the API transaction logs for the past three months" and found that "transaction volumes" were consistent and that it continued to keep a watch on activities on the

UMANG portal.

The Hindu is withholding the precise technical details of the vulnerabilities, as they remain active despite the above interventions. The encryption the IT Ministry referred to is "flawed and inadequate", Mr. Akshay said, adding that a simple workaround allowed it to be cracked anyway. At *The Hindu*'s request, the researchers shared their findings with Karan Saini, another independent security researcher, who termed the vulnerabilities "significant".

"Considering that rate limiting was implemented and the large number-space of EPFO UANs, it is unlikely that the vulnerability could have been exploited to mirror the entire EPFO database," Mr. Saini said, referring to the steps taken by the site to limit the number of requests a user can make. Still, he added, it "could potentially have been abused by cybercriminals in possession of UANs to siphon funds at scale by allowing for both changing of bank account details and initiating payouts, which is very concerning".

"The fixes initially im-

plemented following the disclosure appear to do nothing to secure the system and instead confuse obscurity with security, while also introducing another vulnerability in the process," Mr. Saini said.

Mr. Akshay and Mr. Vaghela reported both vulnerabilities to the IT Ministry and the Computer Emergency Response Team, India (CERT-In), which issues alerts and helps organisations across the country with fixes for vulnerabilities like these. Shortly after the pair reported the vulnerabilities, the EPFO took down its online portal for a "migration", and some services remained unavailable this week.

The researchers said they suspected this was in response to their alerts, which were also sent to the organisation. The Ministry of Labour and Employment did not respond to a request for comment.

"It is worth examining whether the fixes deployed on the UMANG portal were simultaneously deployed across the services for which UMANG acts as a proxy," Mr. Saini said.

Particular

Platform

Ministry

Developed By

Services on Portal

Issue Reported By

Nature of Issue

Government Response

Agencies Informed

Details

UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance)

Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY)

National e-Governance Division (NeGD) under MeitY

2,400+ Central & State Government services

Security researchers Akshay and Viral Vaghela

Multiple API and security vulnerabilities

Acknowledged vulnerabilities; corrective measures initiated

MeitY and CERT-In

What is UMANG?

Feature	Details
Full Form	Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance
Launch	November 2017
Ministry	MeitY
Implemented By	National e-Governance Division (NeGD)
Objective	Single platform for accessing government services
Platforms	Android, iOS, Web

Major Services Available

- EPFO
- Aadhaar services
- PAN-related services
- DigiLocker
- Passport services
- LPG booking
- Electricity bill payment
- Pension services
- Healthcare services
- State Government citizen services

What did the researchers find?

According to the researchers, vulnerabilities existed in the architecture of the UMANG portal that could expose user information across several government services.

Data reportedly exposed

Data	Description
UAN (Universal Account Number)	EPFO subscriber information
Aadhaar Numbers	Visible in plain text across several services
LPG Booking Details	Booking history and consumer information
User IDs	Identity details across multiple services
Other linked government service data	Information accessible through APIs

The researchers claimed the vulnerabilities had likely existed for **several years**.

EPFO Module

The report highlighted that:

- EPFO is among the most heavily used services on UMANG.
- Over **40 crore EPFO transactions** were recorded in the previous three months.
- After disclosure of the vulnerabilities, the online EPFO portal was temporarily taken down for "migration."

Nature of the Vulnerabilities

The article does not disclose the technical details to prevent misuse, but the researchers stated that:

- The portal architecture had weaknesses.
 - APIs were insufficiently secured.
 - Sensitive identifiers were accessible inappropriately.
 - Initial fixes did not fully address the underlying issues.
 - Some remedial measures reportedly introduced additional vulnerabilities.
-

Government Response

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY):

- Acknowledged the reported vulnerabilities.
 - Examined the researchers' observations.
 - Initiated corrective and preventive measures.
 - Stated that plaintext information in the concerned APIs had been encrypted.
 - Reviewed API transaction logs for the previous three months.
 - Continued monitoring portal activity.
-

Researchers' Concerns

The researchers argued that:

- Encryption alone was insufficient if the core vulnerability remained.
- The implemented fixes mainly obscured the issue instead of addressing its root cause.
- Rate limiting introduced after disclosure reduced exploitation risks but did not eliminate them.
- The vulnerability could potentially have been abused by cybercriminals if exploited at scale.

Possible Risks of Data Exposure

Risk	Impact
Identity Theft	Misuse of personal identity
Financial Fraud	Unauthorized banking or financial activities
Phishing	Targeted scams using personal information
Social Engineering	Manipulation using leaked personal data
Privacy Violations	Unauthorized disclosure of personal information
Account Takeover	Misuse of linked digital identities

Government Digital Infrastructure

Platform	Purpose
UMANG	Unified access to government services
DigiLocker	Secure digital document storage
Aadhaar	Digital identity
CoWIN	Vaccination services
GSTN	GST administration
National Single Window System	Business approvals

Cybersecurity Institutions in India

Institution	Function
CERT-In	National incident response
National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC)	Protection of critical information infrastructure
Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)	Cybercrime investigation and coordination
MeitY	Digital governance and cybersecurity policy
National e-Governance Division (NeGD)	Implementation of Digital India platforms such as UMANG

Timeline

Year	Development
2017	UMANG launched under Digital India
2023	Digital Personal Data Protection Act enacted
July 2026	Researchers disclosed vulnerabilities affecting UMANG; MeitY acknowledged the issues and initiated corrective measures

Text & Content

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Average crude oil production in Nigeria last month

1.56 million barrels per day. Nigeria's crude oil production reached a 16-month high last month, authorities said over the weekend, hitting an average of 1.56 million barrels per day. Africa's largest oil producer has increased production in recent years in part by cracking down on theft while also firing former militants who sabotaged pipelines to act as security.

Aid pledged by the EU to help Moldova's air defence system

120 million euros. "The Council adopted an assistance measure worth €120 million under the European Peace Facility in support of Armed Forces of the Republic of Moldova to enhance the country's air defence capabilities," said a statement from the Council of the EU. Moldova's relations with Russia have been soured by Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Decline in India's soybean meal exports in June 2026

69 per cent. India's soybean meal exports fell nearly 69 per cent to 35,000 tonnes in June amid high prices and weak demand in major importing markets, the India-based Soybean Processors Association of India (ISPA) said on Monday. According to data made available by ISPA, 37,000 tonnes of soybean meal was exported in June 2026.

Arrests ordered by Turkey ahead of coup anniversary

1,000 arrests. A decade after Turkey's failed 2016 coup, prosecutors ordered the arrest of nearly 1,000 suspects linked to an organisation that Ankara holds responsible, the Justice Ministry said on Monday. On July 15, 2016, a rogue military faction made a short-lived bid to overthrow the government of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Rate of increase in India's exports in June 2026

15.5 per cent. India's exports rose 15.5 per cent year-on-year to USD 41 billion in June, while the trade deficit widened in a 16-month high of USD 36.43 billion due to a surge in imports, driven mainly by higher crude oil prices. Crude oil imports jumped 40 per cent to USD 13.32 billion during the month.

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Can biogas aid India's energy security?

India, which imports nearly 85% of its crude oil needs, remains vulnerable to global energy shocks. Over the years, it has pushed several initiatives to promote compressed biogas. Despite these efforts, progress has been limited; government support and incentives could provide a boost to the sector.

EXPLAINER

K. Nivetha

Tensions in West Asia continue to keep global energy markets on edge. India imports nearly 85% of its crude oil needs, and supplies faced disruptions due to the Israel-U.S.-Iran war. While the government has diversified its crude oil suppliers, around 90% of India's LPG imports still transit through the Strait of Hormuz, making any instability in the region a potential risk to India's energy security.

Over the years, India has pushed several initiatives to promote alternate fuels like compressed biogas to reduce dependence on imported fuel, tackle agricultural waste and support rural income. But despite ambitious targets and policy support, progress has remained limited.

The search for an alternative fuel Biogas is a mixture of methane, CO₂ and small quantities of other gases produced by anaerobic digestion of organic matter. It can be processed and compressed to get Compressed Biogas (CBG). It is chemically identical to CNG, renewable, carbon-neutral and can be produced from waste. It can be used directly to produce electricity, heating or as an energy source for cooking.

India has also been trying to blend biogas into its gas supply for at least a decade. The push gathered pace in 2018, when the Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) initiative was launched with a target of establishing 5,000 plants by 2022. Only 132 are completed as of June 3, 2026.

The Centre launched the GOBARdhan (G.O.B.A.R.dhan Organic Bio-Agro Resource Dhan) scheme to increase CBG production. Under this 'waste to wealth' programme, the government offers grants of up to ₹70 lakh per district for



A biogas plant at the Waste-to-Energy unit in Karamangala in Bengaluru. A. Srinivasan

community biogas plants. ₹564 crore was earmarked for the purchase of biomass collection machinery, while ₹994 crore was allocated to build pipelines connecting biogas plants directly to the gas grid.

However, progress on the ground has remained limited. The lack of infrastructure, poor private investment, difficulties in accessing formal credit and high upfront cost of technologies have stalled progress. Financial support from the government can make biogas projects economically viable. Other incentives, like accelerated depreciation and tax holidays, would also help attract private players.

Impact on cultivation patterns

The development of biogas has been uneven across the world, with Europe, China and the United States accounting for 90% of global production.

Germany is one of the largest producers in Europe, along with France, Denmark and the U.S. The flip for the sector came in 2000, when Germany introduced the Renewable Energy Sources Act to incentivise production.

Over the years, it introduced schemes to guarantee income to producers, farmers to help operators increase their income and encouraged small-scale biogas plants. However, the country's push for biogas triggered a "corn mania", with maize cultivation rising sharply because it was highly profitable for farmers. Maize slowly started to replace other food crops. Over a decade later, the government was forced to step in and control this by introducing obligations on the use of maize in biogas plants.

This danger hits close to home. The Economic Survey 2026 noted that maize cultivation in India has increased sharply, potentially affecting crop diversity and food security. It noted that while the national maize yield increased from approximately 2.56 tonnes per hectare in FY16 to roughly 3.78 tonnes per hectare by FY25, the yields for soybeans, sunflower, rapeseed, peanuts and millets, among other crops, have either stagnated or declined.

While this trend could be attributed to technological advancements, ethanol pricing can be an important factor. The government faces administrative

per litre ethanol prices based on the feedstock used. The price for maize-based ethanol is higher, while the price for rice-based ethanol is lower. The price for molasses-based ethanol is fixed between the two. Between FY22 and FY25, the administered price of maize-based ethanol grew at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.7%, making maize more lucrative for farmers.

While maize's area under cultivation and production jumped between FY22 and FY25, pulse output declined, while oilseeds and other cereals registered only modest growth.

India imports large quantities of pulses and oilseeds to meet demand. Yet, instead of focusing on increasing production, the government's policy might inadvertently disincentivise farmers from cultivating them. Over time, this could increase India's dependence on imports and expose domestic food prices to greater volatility during supply shocks. Eventually, which is targeted to use only biomethane in its gas system by 2030, after a rollout. The government discouraged the use of crops as feedstock, and the primary source is livestock manure and agricultural waste.

Government's action plan

In 2023, the National Bioethane Coordination Committee approved a mandatory blending obligation. Piped gas distributors have been mandated to blend CBG into their supply from FY26. It would start at 6% and rise to 5% by FY29. In her budget speech in February 2024, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the phased blending of CBG in CNG for transport and Piped Natural Gas for domestic purposes "will be mandated."

To meet these targets, the government is ramping up the establishment of plants. The question is whether the government can replicate India's ethanol blending programme with CBG. In 2014, just 1.8% of petrol was blended with ethanol. By December 2020, it had hit 20%, five years ahead of the original 2020 target.

THE GIST

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What is the India-Australia uranium supplies agreement?

What do the administrative arrangements mean for India's nuclear energy sector?

Key highlights

The story so far

During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Australia last week, India and Australia finalised the "administrative arrangements" required to enable export of uranium from Australia to India. These exports will be "exclusively for peaceful purposes and under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards" under the Australia-India Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, 2015.

What does the latest development mean?

The finalisation of the "administrative arrangements" means that private Australian mining entities involved in uranium extraction will be able to conclude commercial deals with Indian private sector companies and joint ventures. The participation of private

Indian entities in uranium exports from Australia adds a new chapter to India's energy journey, which was recently boosted by the SHANTI Act passed in December 2025, opening the nuclear sector to private players.

The timing of the announcement is significant, as it has come at a time when India's energy sector is under severe stress due to the U.S.-based attack on Iran. India is being forced to diversify and source energy to cope with rising energy requirements by buying hydrocarbons from Russia, the United States, and Venezuela, while also planning for the future. The arrangements with Australia for uranium export are expected to help India meet its energy requirements in the future.

Why is this significant?

Australia holds more than a quarter of the global uranium reserves and has traditionally maintained a strict policy

regarding the supply or export of uranium to non-NPT member countries. According to the World Nuclear Association that have received Australia's uranium include the United States, Japan, South Korea, France, Sweden, Belgium, Finland, the United Kingdom, and Germany. India is among the non-signatories, which are countries that choose not to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Australia began exporting uranium to countries with which it has "bilateral safeguards agreements", as it maintains that support for nuclear non-proliferation is among its "paramount" considerations. The "administrative arrangements" can be interpreted as further firming up of "bilateral safeguards" that were part of the Australia-India Nuclear Cooperation Agreement 2015.

India has an unblemished nuclear supply chain record and an ambitious nuclear energy programme. Though it is

not a signatory to the NPT, it signed a safeguards agreement with the IAEA in 2008 and after India and the U.S. signed the nuclear deal, which was premised on by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George W. Bush. Subsequently, the 48-member Nuclear Suppliers Group made a major move by exempting India from the list of countries with which they are prohibited from engaging in nuclear-energy-related business, thereby opening the gates for nuclear-energy-related supplies to India. This exemption has been the basis of several civil nuclear agreements that India has signed with partner countries.

What negotiations made this arrangement possible in 2026? While Cuddeback and New Delhi have finalised the nuclear deal, which are among the non-signatories, which are countries that choose not to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Australia began exporting uranium to countries with which it has "bilateral safeguards agreements", as it maintains that support for nuclear non-proliferation is among its "paramount" considerations.

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resources. The two Prime Ministers also agreed that energy security concerns are best met by reconciling the long-term interests of both energy-producing and energy-consuming countries through a truly open and competitive energy market. Both sides also expressed their willingness to join efforts which promote a cooperative response to any global energy crisis. The same joint statement also mentioned mutual commitment to oppose nuclear weapons. These negotiations led to the Australia-India Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, which was signed in 2014 and came into force in 2015.

According to World Nuclear Association, the "administrative arrangements" between India and Australia was "finalised and became operational" after the signing of the Australia-India Nuclear Cooperation Agreement of 2014 and at least 300 tonnes of uranium were exported to India since 2018.

But it is understood, that uranium export was part of a vast drive as there were lingering concerns about Indian entities receiving Australian uranium. The latest announcement on the "administrative arrangements" and the emphasis on "exclusively peaceful purposes and under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards" indicates that the "test run" has paved the way for bigger commercial deliveries.

What is the India-Australia uranium supplies agreement?

What do the administrative arrangements mean for India's nuclear energy sector?

Kallol Bhattacharjee

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The timing of the announcement is significant, as it has come at a time when India's energy sector is under severe stress due to the U.S.-Israel attack on Iran. India is being forced to diversify and explore options to cope with short-term requirements by buying hydrocarbons from Russia, the United States, and Venezuela, while also planning for the future. The arrangements with Australia for uranium export are expected to help India meet its energy requirements in the future.

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What negotiations made this arrangement possible in 2026?

While Canberra and New Delhi have finalised the "administrative arrangements" now, negotiations between the two sides have been ongoing for nearly two decades. On November 12, 2009, during Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's visit to India, the two issues were addressed."

A joint statement issued during this visit said, "Mr. Rudd noted India's plans to meet its future energy requirements by exploring and developing all sources of energy, including nuclear, renewable and non-conventional resources. Both sides recognised the benefits of enhancing bilateral commercial exchanges of renewable and non-renewable energy

resources. The two Prime Ministers also agreed that energy security concerns are best met by reconciling the long-term interests of both energy-producing and energy-consuming countries through a truly open and competitive energy market. Both sides also expressed their willingness to join efforts which promote a cooperative response to any global energy crisis." The same joint statement also mentioned mutual commitment to oppose nuclear weapons. These negotiations led to the Australia-India Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, which was signed in 2014 and came into force in 2015.

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But it is understood, that uranium export was part of a 'test drive' as there were lingering concerns about Indian entities receiving Australian uranium. The latest announcement on the "administrative arrangements" and the emphasis on "exclusively peaceful purposes and under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards" indicates that the 'test run' has paved the way for bigger commercial deliveries.

The finalisation of the **administrative arrangements** between **India and Australia** marks an important step in India's clean energy transition. It enables **commercial exports of Australian uranium to Indian entities** under the **Australia–India Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (2015)** while ensuring that all uranium is used **only for peaceful civilian purposes** under **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** safeguards.

At a Glance

Particular	Details
Countries	India & Australia
Latest Development	Administrative arrangements finalised (2026)
Main Objective	Enable commercial export of Australian uranium to India
Agreement	Australia–India Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, 2015
Purpose	Peaceful civilian nuclear energy
Monitoring Agency	International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
Type of Uranium Use	Civilian nuclear power generation only

What are the "Administrative Arrangements"?

The **Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (2015)** created the legal framework for uranium trade.

The newly finalised **administrative arrangements** are the **operational guidelines** that specify:

- Which Indian entities can purchase uranium.
- Export licensing procedures.
- Verification and tracking mechanisms.
- End-use monitoring.
- Compliance with IAEA safeguards.
- Reporting and inspection procedures.

Thus, the agreement becomes **fully operational for commercial trade**.

Why is this important?

Earlier Situation

- Agreement existed.
- Uranium exports were limited.
- Commercial contracts with private entities were difficult.

After 2026

- Australian mining companies can sign commercial contracts.
 - Indian private companies and joint ventures can import uranium.
 - Nuclear fuel supply becomes more reliable.
-

Year	Development
1948	India establishes Atomic Energy Commission
1968	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) opened for signature (India did not join)
1974	Pokhran-I nuclear test
1998	Pokhran-II nuclear tests
2005	India–US Civil Nuclear Agreement announced
2008	India receives Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) waiver; signs India-specific IAEA Safeguards Agreement
2014	Australia–India Nuclear Cooperation Agreement signed
2015	Agreement enters into force
2018	Australia begins uranium exports to India (test consignments)
2026	Administrative arrangements finalised for full commercial implementation

How did India become eligible?

The major turning point came in 2008.

1. India–US Civil Nuclear Deal

The agreement separated India's:

- Civilian nuclear facilities
- Strategic nuclear facilities

Only civilian facilities would come under IAEA safeguards.

2. NSG Waiver (2008)

The **Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)** granted India a **special waiver**, allowing nuclear trade despite India not being an NPT signatory.

This enabled countries like:

- Australia
- France
- Russia
- Canada
- Kazakhstan
- Japan

to enter civilian nuclear cooperation with India.

3. India-Specific IAEA Safeguards Agreement

India agreed that imported uranium:

- will only be used in civilian reactors,
- will remain under IAEA inspection,
- cannot be diverted to military purposes.

What does Australia gain?

Benefit	Explanation
New export market	India is one of the world's fastest-growing energy markets.
Strong strategic partnership	Strengthens Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
Economic benefit	Increased uranium exports and mining revenue.
Indo-Pacific cooperation	Deepens cooperation with India in the region.

What does India gain?

Benefit	Explanation
Reliable uranium supply	Fuel for existing and future nuclear reactors.
Energy security	Diversifies fuel sources.
Reduced dependence	Less reliance on fossil fuels.
Net-zero goals	Supports low-carbon electricity generation.
Private participation	Supports reforms under the SHAKTI Act and wider private-sector participation in the nuclear ecosystem.

Why is uranium important for India?

India's electricity demand is rising rapidly.

Nuclear power:

- provides reliable **baseload electricity**,
- emits very low greenhouse gases,
- reduces dependence on imported coal and gas.

India has **limited high-grade uranium reserves**, making imports essential for expanding civilian nuclear energy.

Australia's Uranium Resources

Particular	Details
Global Rank	Among the world's largest uranium reserve holders
Share of World Uranium Reserves	More than 25%
Major Producing Regions	South Australia, Northern Territory, Western Australia
Major Companies	BHP, Rio Tinto, Boss Energy, others

India's Nuclear Energy Programme

Stage	Description
Stage I	Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) using natural uranium
Stage II	Fast Breeder Reactors using plutonium
Stage III	Thorium-based reactors (India's long-term strategy)

Australia's uranium mainly supports **Stage I civilian reactors**.

India's Civil Nuclear Cooperation Partners

Country	Status
Russia	Major supplier and reactor partner
France	Nuclear cooperation and reactors
United States	Civil nuclear agreement
Australia	Uranium supplier
Canada	Uranium exports resumed
Kazakhstan	Uranium supply
Uzbekistan	Uranium supply
Namibia	Uranium supplier

What is the IAEA?

Feature	Details
Full Form	International Atomic Energy Agency
Established	1957
Headquarters	Vienna, Austria
Parent Organisation	United Nations system (independent international organization)
Motto	"Atoms for Peace and Development"
Functions	Nuclear safeguards, safety, security, peaceful use of nuclear energy

Role in this Agreement

The IAEA ensures:

- imported uranium is used only for peaceful purposes,
- nuclear material is tracked,
- inspections are conducted,
- diversion to military use does not occur.

What is the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)?

Feature	Details
Established	1974 (after India's first nuclear test)
Members	48 countries
Objective	Prevent nuclear proliferation while enabling peaceful nuclear trade
India's Status	Not a member; received a special waiver in 2008

NPT vs NSG

Feature	NPT	NSG
Full Form	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty	Nuclear Suppliers Group
Nature	International treaty	Export-control grouping
Objective	Prevent spread of nuclear weapons	Regulate nuclear exports
India	Not a member	Not a member, but has a 2008 waiver

Area

Cooperation

Defence

AUSINDEX naval exercise, Indo-Pacific cooperation

Trade

ECTA (Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement)

Critical Minerals

Lithium, cobalt, rare earths

Education

Student mobility and research

Energy

LNG, hydrogen, uranium

QUAD

India, Australia, Japan, United States

Word of the day

Tacit:

implied by or inferred from actions or statements

Synonyms: implied, hinted

Usage: *There was a tacit agreement that he would pay off the loan.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/tacit

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈtæs.ɪt/

Word of the day

Beleaguer:

annoy persistently

Synonyms: badger, pester

Usage: *The political party was beleaguered by internal divisions and electoral setbacks.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/beleaguer

International Phonetic Alphabet: /bɪˈliː.gə/



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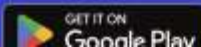


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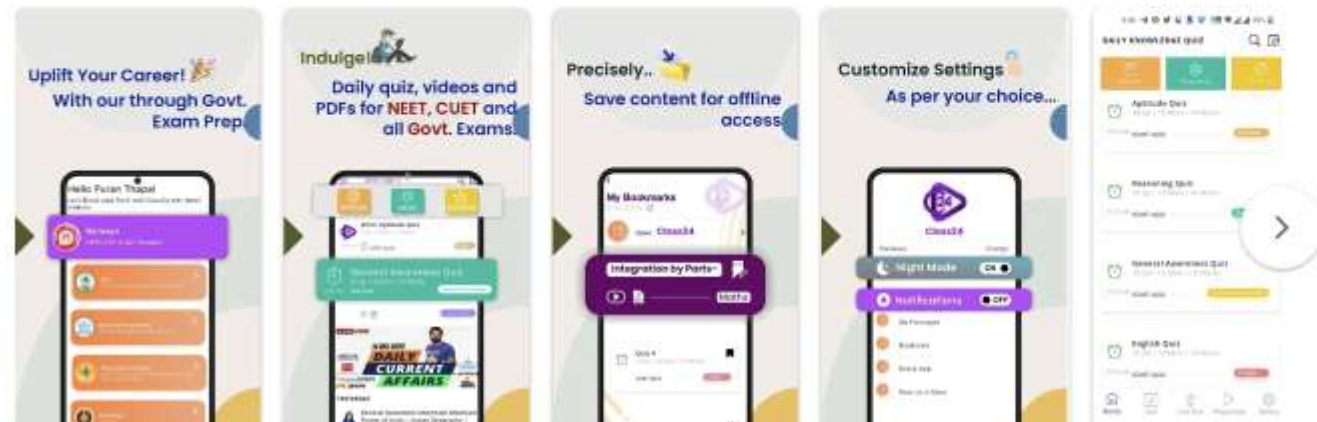
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