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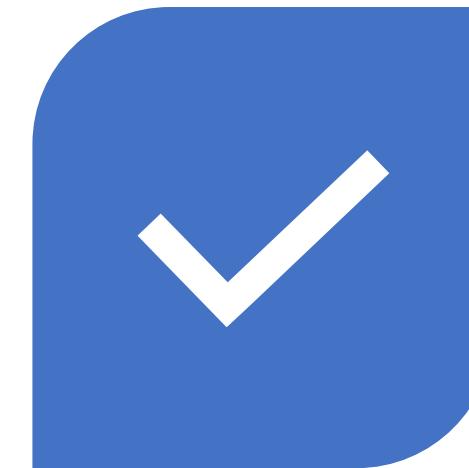




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EC tells SC it has duty to weed out foreigners

Poll body defends SIR in the Supreme Court, insists it has power to verify citizenship status

Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India (EC) began its defence of the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls before the Supreme Court on Tuesday by dismissing claims that it is conducting a "parallel" National Register of Citizens (NRC) as sheer "rhetoric".

The poll body maintained that it has the "constitutional power, even a constitutional duty" to ensure that not a single foreigner, as far as possible, occupies space in the nation's electoral rolls.

The SIR kicked off in Bihar last year and expanded to cover 12 more States and Union Territories in the ongoing second phase.

"We have a constitutional duty, and not just a constitutional power, to en-

sure no foreigners are there on the electoral rolls. It is not important how many foreigners are found... It was repeatedly asked of us to show how many foreigners were found in Bihar, but that is not important. Even if there was one foreigner, he had to be excluded. We are not concerned with the rhetoric of the political parties. They may be right or wrong. As the Election Commission, it is our constitutional duty to ensure there are no foreign voters as far as possible," senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, appearing for the EC, clarified before a Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant.

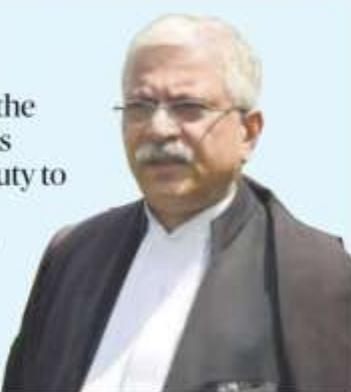
Faulty comparison

Mr. Dwivedi said the comparison of the SIR with the NRC was devoid of truth. The EC differentiated between the NRC conducted in Assam and the "special



We are not concerned with the rhetoric of the political parties... it is our constitutional duty to ensure there are no foreign voters as far as possible

RAKESH DWIVEDI
Senior advocate for the
Election Commission



revision" of electoral rolls underway in the State.

"The NRC register includes all the people, all citizens, whereas, in electoral rolls it is citizens who are above 18 years of age. Less than that they are not in the electoral roll. A person of unsound mind is excluded from the electoral roll, but is part of the NRC. Preparation of the electoral roll is not a parallel NRC on the face of it," Mr. Dwivedi contended.

EC stresses that NRC register includes all citizens; the electoral rolls only consider those above 18

Counsel for the EC says the Constitution is citizen-centric; the central theme is citizenship

2.89 crore voters deleted in U.P.

NEW DELHI/LUCKNOW

The Election Commission on Tuesday published the draft rolls for Uttar Pradesh under the special intensive revision with 2.89 crore names deleted, the highest for any State or Union Territory where SIR has been held so far. » PAGE 5

The senior counsel argued that it was for the Centre to issue a 'national identity card' and maintain a 'National Register of Indian Citizens' and, for that purpose, establish a National Registration Authority under Section 14A of the Citizenship Act, 1955. On the other hand, the EC drew its power to verify citizenship for the "preparation of the electoral rolls" under Article 324 of the Constitution. Mr. Dwivedi

tizen," Mr. Dwivedi said.

Citizenship status

He noted how citizenship had played a prime part in the struggle for nationhood. The Government of India Act, 1935, had allowed a separate electorate for Europeans, leading to an objection raised in the Constituent Assembly.

"From the aforesaid, it

is evident that from its inception, the Constituent Assembly intended that authorities responsible for preparation of electoral rolls would enquire into citizenship and exclude those who were not citizens from the electoral rolls of constituencies. Later, the EC was vested with plenary powers with respect to superintendence, direction, and control over all elections, as well as the power to verify the status of citizenship under Article 324 read with Article 326

(adult suffrage)," Mr. Dwivedi submitted for the poll body.

Even the power of Parliament under Article 327 to frame election laws was "subject to provisions of the Constitution", Mr. Dwivedi said, adding that this means that "the legislative powers of Parliament envisaged under Article 327 are subject to Articles 324 and 326."

Citizenship Act

Addressing the petitioners' submission that citizenship was exclusively the domain of the Union government, the EC counsel pointed to Section 9(2) of the Citizenship Act. "The Central government has exclusive jurisdiction only with termination of citizenship on account of voluntary acquisition of foreign citizenship under this provision," Mr. Dwivedi submitted.

1 Core Issue / मूल मुद्दा

- **English:** The Election Commission of India (ECI) told the Supreme Court that it has a **constitutional duty to ensure no foreigner is on electoral rolls.**
- **हिंदी:** चुनाव आयोग (ECI) ने सुप्रीम कोर्ट को बताया कि मतदाता सूची से विदेशियों को हटाना उसका संवैधानिक कर्तव्य है।

2 Special Intensive Revision (SIR) / विशेष गहन पुनरीक्षण

- **English:** SIR is a **regular electoral exercise**, not a parallel NRC.
- **हिंदी:** SIR एक सामान्य चुनावी प्रक्रिया है, यह NRC का समानांतर प्रयास नहीं है।
- **English:** Started in Bihar and extended to 12 States/UTs.
- **हिंदी:** शुरुआत बिहार से हुई और इसे 12 राज्यों/केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों तक बढ़ाया गया।

3 EC vs NRC Clarification / NRC से अंतर

- **English:** NRC includes **all citizens**, while electoral rolls include **citizens above 18 years only**.
- **हिंदी:** NRC में सभी नागरिक, जबकि मतदाता सूची में 18 वर्ष से अधिक आयु के नागरिक शामिल होते हैं।
- **English:** Exclusion from electoral rolls ≠ loss of citizenship.
- **हिंदी:** मतदाता सूची से नाम हटना ≠ नागरिकता समाप्त होना।

4 Constitutional Basis / संवैधानिक आधार

- English: EC derives powers from Article 324, subject to Articles 326 & 327.
- हिंदी: चुनाव आयोग की शक्तियाँ अनुच्छेद 324 से आती हैं, जो अनुच्छेद 326 व 327 के अधीन हैं।
- English: Constitution is **citizen-centric**; voting is tied to **citizenship + age**.
- हिंदी: संविधान नागरिक-केंद्रित है; मतदान का अधिकार नागरिकता + आयु से जुड़ा है।

5 UP Draft Rolls Data / उत्तर प्रदेश डेटा

- English: 2.89 crore names deleted in UP draft rolls during SIR.
- हिंदी: SIR के दौरान यूपी की ड्राफ्ट सूची से 2.89 करोड़ नाम हटाए गए।

6 Citizenship Act Reference / नागरिकता अधिनियम

- English: Termination of citizenship lies with the **Union Government** under **Section 9(2)** of the Citizenship Act, 1955.
- हिंदी: नागरिकता अधिनियम, 1955 की धारा 9(2) के तहत नागरिकता समाप्त करने का अधिकार केंद्र सरकार के पास है।

Aspect	Key Facts (English)	ਰਾਜਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਲਈ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ
Constitutional Article	Article 324 – Superintendence of elections	੧ ਲਈ 324 – ਦੁਸਤੀ ਕੇਂਦਰੀ ਕੱਟਲੇ
Voting Right	Article 326 – Adult suffrage	੧ ਲਈ 326 – ਦੁਵਾਰੀ ਵਾਲਾ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ
Election Laws	Article 327 – Parliament's power	੧ ਲਈ 327 – ਦੁਕਾਨਾਂ ਵਿਖੇ ਵਾਲੇ
NRC Authority	Citizenship Act, 1955 (Sec. 14A)	ਭਾਰਤੀ ਸਾਹਮਿਤ੍ਰਾਂ ਵਿਖੇ 1955 ਵਿਖੇ ਵਾਲੇ
Electoral Roll Prep	Citizenship verification allowed	ਭਾਰਤੀ ਸਾਹਮਿਤ੍ਰਾਂ ਵਿਖੇ ਵਾਲੇ
Mental Unsoundness	Excluded from rolls, not NRC	ਦੁਕਾਨਾਂ ਵਿਖੇ ਵਾਲੇ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਮਨੀਂ ਅਵਸ਼ੇਸ਼ਿਤ ਹਨ

Exam	Year & Date	Question (Summary)	Answer
UPSC CSE Prelims	2018	Which Article deals with powers of Election Commission?	Article 324
UPSC CSE Prelims	2016	Adult suffrage is provided under which Article?	Article 326
UPPSC PCS	2021	Who has power to frame election laws?	Parliament (Art. 327)
SSC CGL	2019	Minimum age to be a voter in India	18 years
Bank PO (IBPS)	2020	Authority to decide termination of citizenship	Union Government
Railway NTPC	2021	NRC is governed under which Act?	Citizenship Act, 1955

Aspect / Theme	Key Points (English)	मुख्य बिंदु (हिंदी)
Full Form	SIR = Special Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls	SIR = विशेष गहन पुनरीक्षण
Authority	Conducted by Election Commission of India	भारत निर्वाचन आयोग द्वारा
Constitutional Basis	Article 324 (Superintendence, direction & control of elections)	अनुच्छेद 324
Legal Framework	Representation of the People Act, 1950; Registration of Electors Rules, 1960	जनप्रतिनिधित्व अधिनियम, 1950; निर्वाचक नियम, 1960
Nature	Administrative & periodic exercise	प्रशासनिक एवं आवधिक प्रक्रिया
Objective (Core)	Ensure accurate, updated, error-free electoral rolls	सही, अद्यतन, त्रुटिरहित मतदाता सूची
Key Purpose	Remove ineligible names (death, shift, duplicate, non-citizen, underage) and add eligible voters	अयोग्य नाम हटाना व योग्य मतदाता जोड़ना
Age Criterion	Only citizens ≥18 years can be on rolls	केवल 18+ भारतीय नागरिक

Citizenship Link	Voting requires citizenship, but SIR ≠ NRC	मतदान हेतु नागरिकता आवश्यक, पर SIR ≠ NRC
SIR vs NRC	NRC: all citizens; SIR: only voters (18+). SIR does not determine citizenship	NRC: सभी नागरिक; SIR: केवल मतदाता
Trigger for SIR	Large migration, delimitation, time gap since last intensive revision	भारी प्रवासन, परिसीमन, लंबे अंतराल
Types of Revision	1) Intensive 2) Summary 3) Special Summary 4) Special Intensive	4 प्रकार
When SIR is Used	When major corrections are needed	जब व्यापक सुधार आवश्यक हों
Verification Method	Door-to-door verification, BLO verification, claims & objections	घर-घर सत्यापन, BLO
Officials Involved	ERO, AERO, BLO, DEO under EC supervision	ERO, AERO, BLO, DEO
Public Participation	Citizens can file claims & objections	दावे व आपत्तियाँ दर्ज
Transparency	Draft rolls published; objections invited	ड्राफ्ट सूची सार्वजनिक
Deletion Grounds	Death, migration, duplication, non-citizen, unsound mind	मृत्यु, प्रवासन, दोहराव, गैर-नागरिक
Unsound Mind Clause	Excluded from rolls but not from NRC	सूची से हटेगा, NRC से नहीं
Appeal Mechanism	Appeal to District Magistrate/Chief Electoral Officer	अपील की व्यवस्था

- Which statement is correct?
- NRC includes only voters above 18 years.
- Electoral rolls include only citizens above 18 years.
- **Correct option:**
 - a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) Both
 - d) None

India turned to Trump aide's firm during standoff with Pak.

Suhasini Haidar

NEW DELHI

The Indian Embassy in Washington made four outreach requests, including three to White House officials and one to the U.S. trade representative on May 10, 2025, the day a ceasefire between India and Pakistan following Operation Sindoor was announced. It approached White House Chief of Staff Susie Wiles, U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer, Ricky Gill of the National Security Council, and Director of Communications Steven Cheung to discuss "media coverage" of the conflict, says a filing by U.S. lobby firm SHW LLC with the Department of Justice (DoJ). While the

filings, made in December 2025 on the DoJ's Foreign Agent Registration Act website listing 60 entries, does not divulge whether the calls were made before or after the ceasefire, it indicates close interaction on the day.

Filings made by firms contracted by the Pakistan government also showed a flurry of activity by Islamabad to drum up support during the conflict, and a *New York Times* investigation in November 2024 showed how the country spent "millions" in trying to "win Mr. Trump over".

The Narendra Modi government has repeatedly denied that the U.S. played any role in mediating the ceasefire, despite several claims by U.S. President

Private diplomacy

The filings under U.S. Foreign Agent Registration Act by lobby firm SHW LLC marks India as the only client

- Filings show 60 entries from April 24, 2025, detailing requests from the Indian Embassy
- Total four requests for calls made on day of the Indo-Pak ceasefire
- Half of the entries related to lobbying work on India-U.S. trade discussions
- Filings show, for the first time, a lobby firm asking to schedule meetings for External Affairs Minister and other officials



Close allies: U.S. President Donald Trump with Jason Miller, Principal of SHW LLC.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Donald Trump, and Secretary of State Marco Rubio's decision to recognise Mr. Gill for the 'role' he played. The External Affairs Ministry has denied Mr. Trump's contention that he had threatened to stop trade if the conflict was not ended,

and the call made to Mr. Greer is particularly significant for that reason.

Responding to questions from *The Hindu*, the Indian Embassy did not deny the filings but only said that hiring lobbyists was a "standard practice" in or-

der to "augment outreach". "The Indian Embassy has hired such firms, consistent with local practice and requirements, under successive governments since the 1950s," the Embassy spokesperson said, but did not respond to specific questions on why the firms had been asked to fix meetings or calls with senior U.S. officials on May 10.

'A first for India'

The practice for India is a first, say former and current Ministry officials, suggesting that the use of a former spokesperson of Mr. Trump, Jason Miller, who is listed as the principal of SHW LLC, may have been due to the more "transactional" nature of

the Trump administration.

The U.S. lobby firm's filings raised eyebrows amongst diplomats in Delhi as the firm claimed that it set up meetings for several Indian officials – from External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar to Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, Deputy National Security Advisor Pavan Kapoor and Indian Ambassador Vinay Kwatra – with top U.S. officials over the past year. On June 23, days before Mr. Jaishankar's visit to Washington to attend the Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting, SHW says, it sent emails requesting meetings for the Minister with U.S. Vice-President J.D. Vance, Secretary of War Pete Hegseth and CIA Chief John Ratcliffe.

1 What happened? / क्या हुआ?

- English: During the India–Pakistan standoff following Operation Sindoor, the Indian Embassy in Washington sought help from a U.S. lobby firm linked to a former Trump aide.
- हिंदी: ऑपरेशन सिंदूर के बाद भारत-पाक तनाव के दौरान वॉशिंगटन स्थित भारतीय दूतावास ने ट्रंप के पूर्व सहयोगी से जुड़ी अमेरिकी लॉबी फर्म की सेवाएँ लीं।

2 Timing & Outreach / समय और संपर्क

- English: On May 10, 2025 (the day the ceasefire was announced), four outreach requests were made—three to White House officials and one to the U.S. Trade Representative.
- हिंदी: 10 मई 2025 (युद्धविराम की घोषणा का दिन) को चार संपर्क प्रयास किए गए—तीन व्हाइट हाउस अधिकारियों से और एक अमेरिकी व्यापार प्रतिनिधि से।

3 Who was contacted? / किनसे संपर्क किया गया?

- English: Contacts included Susie Wiles (White House Chief of Staff), Jamieson Greer (USTR), Ricky Gill (NSC) and Steven Cheung (Director of Communications).
- हिंदी: संपर्क में सूज़ी वाइल्स, जेमीसन ग्रीर, रिकी गिल और स्टीवन च्यांग शामिल थे।

4 Legal Trail: FARA filings / कानूनी रिकॉर्ड

- English: Filings under the U.S. Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) by SHW LLC list India as the only client; about 60 entries (from April 24, 2025) detail embassy requests.
- हिंदी: यूएस फॉरेन एजेंट्स रजिस्ट्रेशन एक्ट (FARA) के तहत SHW LLC की फाइलिंग में भारत को एकमात्र क्लाइंट बताया गया; 24 अप्रैल 2025 से लगभग 60 प्रविष्टियाँ दर्ज हैं।

5 Nature of work / काम का स्वरूप

- English: Roughly half the entries relate to India–U.S. trade discussions; for the first time, a lobby firm sought to schedule meetings for India's External Affairs Minister and senior officials.
- हिंदी: लगभग आधी प्रविष्टियाँ भारत-अमेरिका व्यापार वार्ताओं से जुड़ी हैं; पहली बार किसी लॉबी फर्म ने विदेश मंत्री व वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों के लिए बैठकों की व्यवस्था की।

6 India's position / भारत का रुख

- English: India reiterated that the U.S. did not mediate the ceasefire; hiring lobbyists was termed "standard practice" to augment outreach, consistent since the 1950s.
- हिंदी: भारत ने दोहराया कि युद्धविराम में अमेरिका की मध्यस्थता नहीं थी; लॉबिस्ट रखना 1950 के दशक से चली आ रही "मानक प्रक्रिया" बताया गया।

7 Context & controversy / पृष्ठभूमि और विवाद

- English: Parallel filings showed **Pakistan's lobbying surge**. A prior **New York Times** investigation (Nov 2024) noted Islamabad's efforts to court U.S. leadership.
- हिंदी: साथ-साथ पाकिस्तान की लॉबिंग गतिविधियाँ भी दिखीं; न्यूयॉर्क टाइम्स (नवंबर 2024) ने ऐसी कोशिशों का उल्लेख किया था।

8 Key personalities / प्रमुख नाम

- English: The firm's principal is **Jason Miller**, a former aide to **Donald Trump**; references also arose to **Marco Rubio** in wider U.S. policy context.
- हिंदी: फर्म के प्रमुख जेसन मिलर हैं—डोनाल्ड ट्रंप के पूर्व सहयोगी; अमेरिकी नीति संदर्भ में मार्को रुबियो का भी उल्लेख आया।

Theme	English Fact	ਸਾਫ਼ ਲੱਈ
Law	FARA (1938) mandates disclosure of foreign lobbying in the U.S.	FARA (1938) ਸਾਫ਼ ਲੱਈ ਕਰਾਉਣ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਵਿਵਾਹ ਕਰਾਉਣ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਵਿਵਾਹ ਕਰਾਉਣ
Diplomacy Tool	Track-II / private diplomacy complements official channels	ਕੁਝ ਘੋ॥ ਸਾਫ਼ ਲੱਈ ਕਰਾਉਣ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਵਾਹ ਕਰਾਉਣ ਵਿਵਾਹ ਕਰਾਉਣ
Trade Angle	Lobbying often aligns with trade access & market rules	ਕਰਾਉਣ ਵਿਵਾਹ ਕਰਾਉਣ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਵਾਹ ਕਰਾਉਣ
Ceasefire Claim	India denies third-party mediation	ਕਰਾਉਣ ਲੱਈ ਕਰਾਉਣ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਵਾਹ ਕਰਾਉਣ
Precedent	Indian embassies have used firms since 1950s	1950 ਵਿਵਾਹ ਕਰਾਉਣ ਵਿਵਾਹ ਕਰਾਉਣ

Exam	Year	Question Theme (Summary)	Answer
UPSC CSE Prelims	2014	Track-II diplomacy refers to?	Informal/non-official diplomacy
UPSC CSE Mains (GS-II)	2017	India–U.S. relations: stakeholders & tools	Strategic + diplomatic instruments
SSC CGL	2020	Meaning of lobbying	Influencing policy decisions
IBPS PO	2021	Role of USTR	U.S. trade negotiations
Railways NTPC	2022	Ceasefire meaning	Formal stoppage of hostilities

- Which of the following best describes **Track-II diplomacy**?
 - a) Military negotiations
 - b) Official treaty talks
 - c) Informal engagement by non-official actors
 - d) Parliamentary exchanges

Madras HC upholds order to light lamp at Madurai stone pillar

The Hindu Bureau
MADRASI

A Division Bench of the Madras High Court on Tuesday upheld an earlier single-judge order directing the Subramaniya Swamy Temple management to light the Karthigai Deepam at a stone pillar, identified as the *deepathoon*, atop Thirupparankundram Hill in Madurai of Tamil Nadu, dismissing fears of public disturbance as an "imaginary ghost", which would only happen if sponsored by the State itself.

The State government plans to challenge the order in the Supreme Court, Minister S. Regupathy told journalists after the ruling.

The Madurai Bench of Justices G. Jayachandran and K.K. Ramakrishnan criticised the State government for citing its apprehension of law and order issues and public peace as a reason for not complying with the earlier order of Justice G.R. Swaminathan.

'Imaginary ghost'

"It is ridiculous and hard to believe the fear of the mighty State that by allowing representatives of the Devasthanam [temple management] to light the lamp at the stone pillar near top of the hill located within its territory of Devasthanam land, on a particular day in a year, will cause disturbance to public peace. Of course, it may happen only if such disturbance is sponsored by the State itself. We pray no State should stoop to that level to achieve their political agenda," it said.

For the administration to act as though such a congregation will disturb the peace or cause stamp-

It is ridiculous and hard to believe the fear of the mighty State that allowing representatives of the Devasthanam to light the lamp... will cause disturbance to public peace

MADRAS HIGH COURT (MADRASI BENCH)



pedes or disharmony among communities is either an exposure of their incapacity to maintain law and order or their hesitation to bring harmony among communities, the court said.

"We find that the apprehension expressed by the District Administration regarding the probability of disturbance to the public peace is nothing but an imaginary ghost created by them for their convenience sake and to put one community against another community under suspicion and constant mistrust. By allowing a few persons from Devasthanam to the pillar for lighting the lamp and keeping the devotees stay at the foothill and worship is not an un-manageable task," the judges said.

They said no member of the public should be allowed to accompany the team from the Devasthanam, whose size is to be decided in consultation with the police and the Archaeological Society of India. The District Collector is to co-ordinate and supervise the event, the court said.

1 What did the Court decide? / न्यायालय का निर्णय

- English: A Division Bench of the Madras High Court (Madurai Bench) upheld a single-judge order allowing the lighting of the Karthigai Deepam at a stone pillar (deepasthoon) on Thirupparankundram Hill, Madurai.
- हिंदी: मद्रास हाईकोर्ट (मदुरै पीठ) ने थिरुप्परकुंदरम पहाड़ी पर स्थित दीपस्तंभ (पत्थर के स्तंभ) पर कार्तिगई दीपम जलाने के आदेश को बरकरार रखा।

2 Temple & Location / मंदिर और स्थान

- English: The event concerns the Subramania Swamy Temple at Thirupparankundram Hill.
- हिंदी: यह मामला सुब्रामण्य स्वामी मंदिर, थिरुप्परकुंदरम पहाड़ी (मदुरै) से संबंधित है।

3 'Imaginary ghost' argument rejected / 'काल्पनिक भय' खारिज

- English: The Court dismissed the State's apprehension of law-and-order disturbance as an "imaginary ghost", holding that such fears are unfounded.
- हिंदी: राज्य सरकार के कानून-व्यवस्था बिगड़ने के डर को अदालत ने "काल्पनिक भय" कहकर खारिज किया।

4 State's plan & judicial criticism / राज्य की योजना व आलोचना

- English: Though the State plans to challenge the order in the Supreme Court, the Bench criticised the government for using speculative public-order concerns to avoid compliance.
- हिंदी: राज्य सरकार ने सुप्रीम कोर्ट में चुनौती देने की बात कही, लेकिन पीठ ने अनुमानों के आधार पर आदेश न मानने की आलोचना की।

Theme	English Fact	શાસ્ત્રીય લાલું
Freedom of Religion	Arts 25–28 protect religious practice, subject to public order	૧ એટા 25–28ક દ્વારા શરીરક શરૂઆતી સ્તરે પ્રાણી રીતે રિલિગિયન્સ પ્રાચીનતાની પ્રશાસન કરી શકે હોય
State & Temples (TN)	HR&CE administration common in TN	લાલું હોય HR&CE દ્વારા રાજ્ય વિભાગીય પ્રશાસન
Public Order	State must show credible evidence , not conjecture	ઘરૂંદું હોય બ્રાહ્મણ શાંતિની પ્રશાસન કરી શકે હોય
Heritage Sites	Activities coordinated with ASI where applicable	શાસ્ત્રીય ચક્રવર્તી ASI દ્વારા ગોંગા એ બ્રાહ્મણ દ્વારા નિયમિતી કરી શકે હોય
Judicial Review	Courts test proportionality & reasonableness	પ્રેરણ કરી શકે હોય લાલું હોય

Exam	Year	Theme (Summary)	Answer
UPSC CSE Prelims	2018	Articles linked to freedom of religion	Arts 25–28
UPSC CSE Mains (GS-II)	2016	State control vs religious freedom	Balance via public order
TNPSC	2020	HR&CE role in temple administration	State oversight
SSC CGL	2019	Meaning of 'public order'	Order & tranquility
Railway NTPC	2021	ASI's mandate	Protection of monuments

- The Madras High Court upheld lighting of Karthigai Deepam by rejecting which argument of the State?
 - a) Heritage damage
 - b) Financial burden
 - c) Public order disturbance
 - d) Environmental harm

1 Trigger Event / प्रमुख घटना

- English: With ~200 American troops entering Caracas, the Trump administration's intervention in Venezuela and attempt to capture Nicolás Maduro became the most dramatic U.S. action in Latin America since the 1989 Panama invasion.
- हिंदी: लगभग 200 अमेरिकी सैनिकों के कराकस में प्रवेश के साथ, ट्रंप प्रशासन का वेनेजुएला हस्तक्षेप और निकोलस मादुरो को पकड़ने का प्रयास 1989 के पनामा आक्रमण के बाद लैटिन अमेरिका में सबसे बड़ा अमेरिकी कदम माना गया।

2 International Law & Global Response / अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून व प्रतिक्रिया

- English: Allies and adversaries condemned the move as a **clear violation of international law**.
- हिंदी: सहयोगियों व विरोधियों ने इसे अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून का स्पष्ट उल्लंघन बताया।

3 Strategic Objective / रणनीतिक उद्देश्य

- English: Experts argue the move aimed to **reassert the Monroe Doctrine**, restore U.S. hegemony in the Americas, and **curb China's growing influence**.
- हिंदी: विशेषज्ञों के अनुसार उद्देश्य मोनरो सिद्धांत को पुनः लागू करना, अमेरिकी प्रभुत्व बहाल करना, और चीन के बढ़ते प्रभाव को कम करना था।

4 Arms Imports Shift / हथियार आयात में बदलाव

- English: Venezuela relied on the U.S. for weapons till 1995; since the mid-2000s, China has emerged as a key arms supplier.
- हिंदी: 1995 तक वेनेजुएला हथियारों के लिए अमेरिका पर निर्भर था; मध्य-2000s के बाद चीन प्रमुख आपूर्तिकर्ता बना।
- English: Since 2014, China has accounted for ~46% of Venezuela's arms imports.
- हिंदी: 2014 से, चीन का हिस्सा लगभग 46% रहा।

5 Trade & Oil Dependence / व्यापार व तेल निर्भरता

- English: Though direct crude data is limited, **mineral export proxies** show China's share rising from <1% (early 2000s) to ~28% (2018); by mid-2025, almost all Venezuelan oil exports reportedly went to **China**.
- हिंदी: प्रत्यक्ष कच्चे तेल डेटा सीमित होने पर खनिज निर्यात संकेतक बताते हैं कि चीन का हिस्सा <1% (2000s की शुरुआत) से ~28% (2018) तक पहुँचा; मध्य-2025 में लगभग सारा तेल चीन को गया।

6 Imports Pivot / आयात स्रोतों में परिवर्तन

- English: In 2023, the U.S. supplied ~25% of Venezuela's imports, while **China** ~33%; the U.S. share has halved over two decades.
- हिंदी: 2023 में अमेरिका ~25%, जबकि चीन ~33% आयात का स्रोत; दो दशकों में अमेरिकी हिस्सा लगभग आधा हुआ।

7 China's Investment & Aid / चीन का निवेश व सहायता

- English: China invested **>\$300 billion (2001–2023)** in Latin America; **>\$106 billion** (over one-third) went to **Venezuela**, making it the **largest recipient**.
- हिंदी: चीन ने 2001–2023 में लैटिन अमेरिका में **>\$300** अरब निवेश किया; इसमें से **>\$106** अरब वेनेजुएला को—इसे सबसे बड़ा प्राप्तकर्ता बनाया।
- English: Venezuela is the **4th-largest recipient of Chinese aid globally**; **170+ projects**, largely **loans**, with **~26%** in **energy/mining**.
- हिंदी: वेनेजुएला चीन की वैश्विक सहायता का चौथा सबसे बड़ा लाभार्थी; **170+** परियोजनाएँ, अधिकतर **ऋण**, जिनमें **~26%** **ऊर्जा/खनन** में।

Dimension	Data / Fact (English)	ਲਈ ਜਾਂਪਾਂਹਿਜਾ
Doctrine	Monroe Doctrine (1823): U.S. primacy in Western Hemisphere	ਰਾਸ਼ਨਾਂਤਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ (1823)
Arms Data Source	SIPRI tracks arms transfers	ਅੱਕਾਂਗਰਾ ਮੁੱਲਕ SIPRI
Oil Reserves	Venezuela has world's largest proven crude reserves	ਅੱਕਾਂਗਰਾ ਪਰਿ ਤੁੱਹ ਵਿਤ੍ਤ ਅਤੇ C ਤੁੱਹ ਵੱਡੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਭਰਪੁਰ ਅਤੇ ਕੁਝ ਵਿਧਾ
Financing Mode	Chinese funds largely loans	ਦੁਹਣੀ ਵਾਂਗ ਰਾਸ਼ਨ ਲੈਂਕ ਰੂ
Sectors	Energy, mining dominate	ਦੁਹਣੀ ਵਾਂਗ ਦੁਹਣੀ ਵਾਂਗ ਰਾਸ਼ਨ

Exam	Year	Theme (Summary)	Answer
UPSC CSE Prelims	2013	Monroe Doctrine relates to which region?	Americas
UPSC CSE Mains (GS-II)	2019	China's role in Latin America	Investment & influence
UPSC CSE Mains (GS-III)	2020	Energy geopolitics	Oil dependence
SSC CGL	2021	SIPRI's work	Arms transfer database
IBPS PO	2022	Crude oil reserves leader	Venezuela
Railway NTPC	2023	Meaning of hegemony	Dominant influence

- The primary geopolitical objective of the U.S. action in Venezuela (as per analysts) was to:
 - a) Expand NATO
 - b) Reassert Monroe Doctrine and reduce China's influence
 - c) Secure UN mandate
 - d) Control OPEC

The Chinese factor

Data were sourced from Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Harvard Growth Lab and AidData.org



Rising influence: China's President Xi Jinping with Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro in 2023. REUTERS

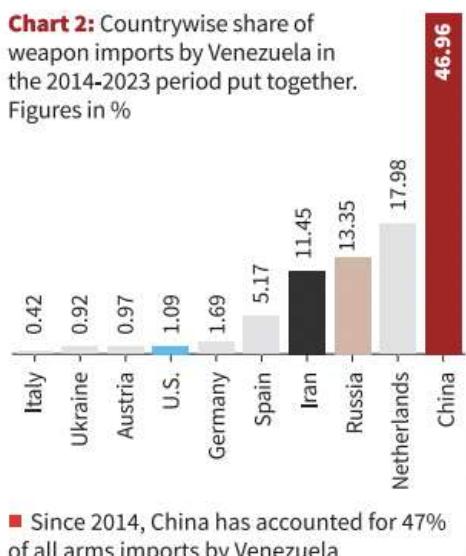


Chart 1: Countrywise share of weapon imports by Venezuela in the 1950-2023 period. Figures in %

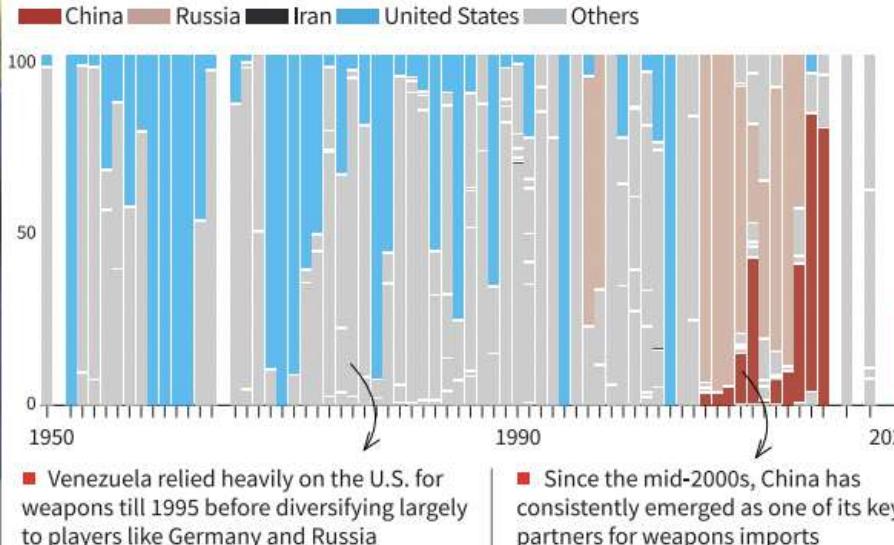


Chart 3: Countrywise share (in %) of Venezuela's mineral exports. As direct crude oil data was unavailable, this analysis relies on mineral export.

Only major partners were considered

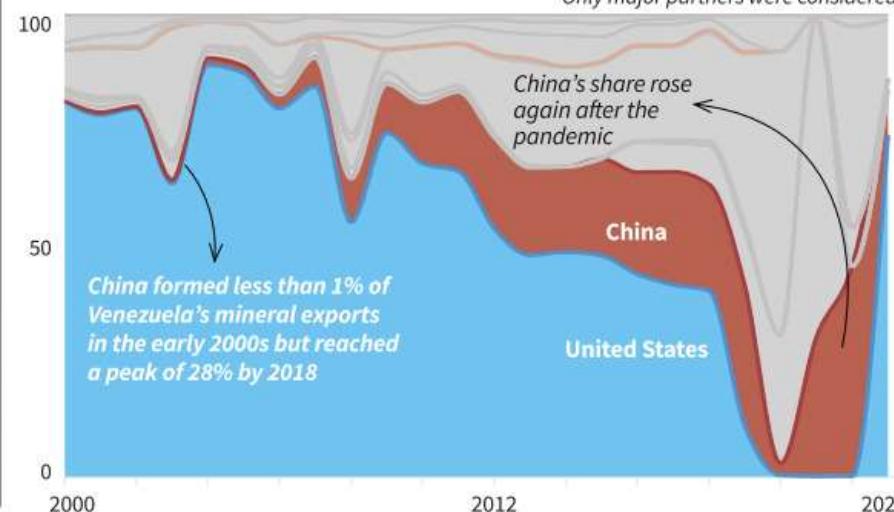


Chart 4: Countrywise share (in %) of imports by Venezuela. China has also surpassed the U.S. as the primary source of imports

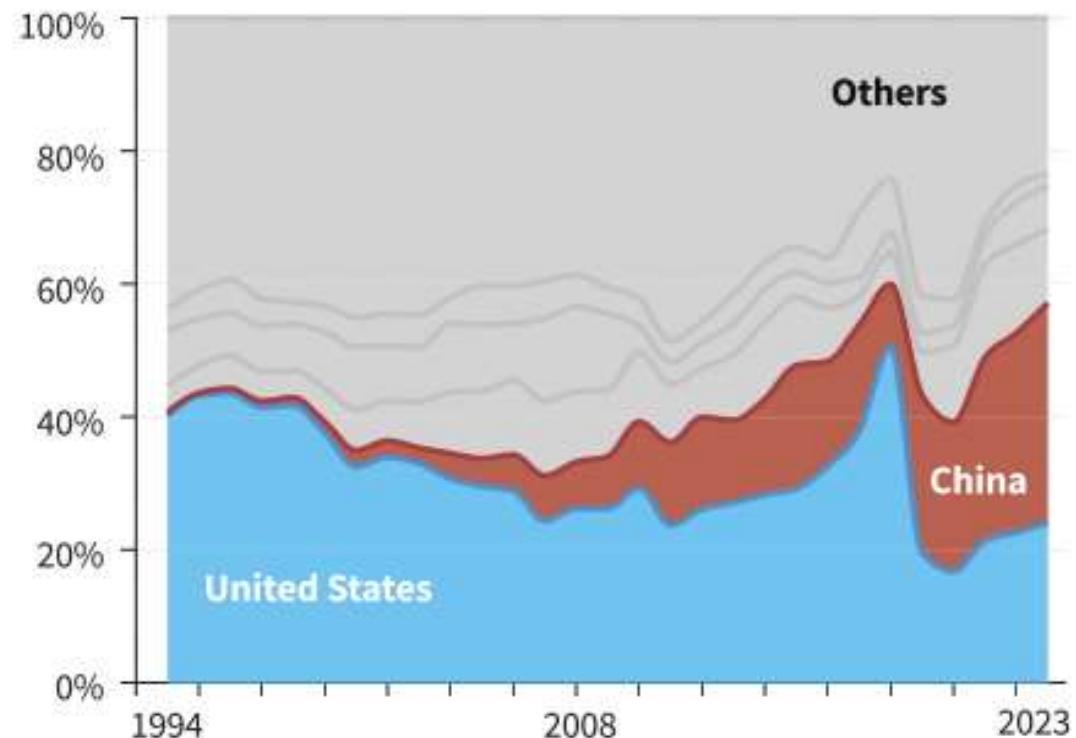


Chart 5: China's investments (loans/grants/aid) in the Latin American countries in the 2001-2023 period. Figures in \$ billion



Text & Context

Fit to width

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Number of deaths in Manipur pickup van accident

4 Four persons, including three women, were killed after a pick-up van carrying 30-40 passengers fell into a gorge in Manipur's Charachandpur district. This van, hired for a wedding, met with an accident on a remote Hinglaj village around noon.

Number of people killed in Iran's economic protests

35 At least 35 people have been killed in violence linked to ongoing economic protests across Iran, according to a U.S.-based rights group. The toll includes 29 protesters, four children and two security personnel.

Value of international forex fraud racket busted in Maharashtra

200 In a probe, Maharashtra Police busted an international online fraud syndicate that claimed hundreds of victims of foreign currency through fake foreign exchange trading schemes. Seven have been arrested, 100

Quantity of charas seized from Inter-State drug supplier

2.5 In Maharashtra, C饮 Police arrested an international online fraud syndicate that claimed hundreds of victims of foreign currency through fake foreign exchange trading schemes. Seven have been arrested, 100

Death toll in Siau Island floods in Indonesia

16 At least 16 people were killed in torrential rains triggered a flash flood on Indonesia's Siau island, north of Sulawesi. A river inundated four towns, injuring 22 people and displacing 1,000 residents. 400

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Rethinking India's skilling outcomes

What prevents skilling from becoming a first-choice pathway for youth? Why has formal vocational training reached only a small share of the workforce? What limits industry participation in public skilling programmes? Why do Sector Skill Councils lack credibility with employers?

EXPLAINER

Praveesh Dhadial

The story so far:

Over the last decade, India has built a world-class vocational skilling ecosystem in the world. Between 2008 and 2020, India's技能 (Technical) population, Prashant Maroti Kavita Vihar Yojana, has trained and certified around 1.40 crore candidates. Yet skilling has not become a first-choice pathway for many young Indians. Employability outcomes remain uneven, and Periodic Labour Force Survey data shows that skill gains from vocational training are modest and inconsistent, particularly in informal employment. Sector Skill Councils are absorbed, offering limited recognition for certified skills and little visible improvement in quality of life.

Why does skilling still fail to inspire aspiration? India's Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) stands at 28%, but the National Education Policy 2020 aims to raise it to 30% by 2030. While the government is expanding traditional education, it must be integrated into higher education, making it easier for students to learn new skills.

Despite years of investment, only about 4 in 10 vocational learners have received formal vocational training, barely improving from about 2.5% a decade ago (PLFS, World Bank). In contrast, across 2019-20, 1.40 crore upper-secondary learners are enrolled in vocational programmes, rising to around 20% in India, Germany, the Czech Republic, Finland, the Netherlands, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia.

The India Skills Report 2022 shows that post-degree skilling by graduates is not a mainstream or high-participation behaviour in India. If skilling is to scale, something industry consumes rather than



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meaningfully, it must travel through and alongside formal education.

How can industry contribute

Industry is the single largest beneficiary of effective skilling and trained manpower. According to various industry reports, skill gaps in training cycles, and productivity losses impose real costs, with attrition rates of 30-40% in hospitality, and manufacturing alone.

Yet, there is still not much participation from industry. Most employers do not use public skill certification, hiring benchmarks; instead, they use internal training, referrals, or private platforms for hiring. The National Council for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) has increased participation, but its impact is limited, particularly among bigger companies.

Industry is neither interested nor obliged to contribute to vocational training, curriculum development, certification standards, or assessment rigour at scale. As long as skilling remains something industry consumes rather than

co-designs, it will lag labour-market reality.

Why do Sector Skill Councils fail? The most important bottleneck in India's skilling ecosystem is the Sector Skill Councils (SSCs).

SSCs were created with a clear mandate to develop vocational training institutions that define standards, ensure relevance, and anchor employability. In effect, they were to be the 'backbone' of the skilling value chain – from identifying industry demand to certifying job readiness. That mandate has not been fulfilled.

Today, responsibility is fragmented: training is delivered by one entity, industry standards by another, and placement by someone else – if at all. Unlike higher education or primary school, where electronic diplomas colleges, where reputational risk enforces accountability, the skilling system does not.

The fragmentation has eroded trust. Employer surveys frequently indicate that SSC credentials have limited signalling

value compared to degrees or prior work experience. Standards exist, but employers do not reliably hire against them. Industry-led certification models illustrate what is possible. From AWS, Google Cloud, or Microsoft work because the certifier's credibility is at stake. Certifications are not binary, nor binary, and employers know what a certified candidate can do.

SSCs were created to fulfil this role at a national scale. Instead, they have largely limited themselves to standards creation, without owning outcomes. Until SSCs are held fully accountable, reputational certification will remain symbolic rather than economic.

The lack of oversight of standard-setting bodies must confront this directly.

How can skilling drive sustained economic growth? India's skilling challenge is a failure of incentives, lack of intent or government funding.

Expanding NAPs and deepening industry participation can become one of the fastest levers to improve job readiness at scale by pushing skilling into the workplace. The National Skill Quality Council (NSQC), the central scheme for modernisation of ITIs, points towards stronger execution models where industry ownership and accountability are built into programme design.

Today, skills are embedded in degrees, where industry is treated as a co-owner, and when SSCs are made answerable for placement outcomes, skilling moves from fragmented to a single entity, becoming a pillar of national economic empowerment.

To move beyond just about jobs, it is about the dignity of labour, productivity, and India's ability to convert its demographic strength into sustained national growth.

Praveesh Dhadial is the Founder & Chancellor of Madhuri Skills University and an Advisor to NSDC.

THE GIST

Despite NSQF training around 1.40 crore candidates, employability outcomes remain mixed, with wage gains in informal and micro-enterprises and informal employment offers limited recognition for certified skills and low visibility in improvement in quality of life.

Limited industry participation, uneven NSQF recognition, and the structural failure of Sector Skill Councils – fragmented and unaligned – were significant source of certifications, and lack of accountability for employers. SSCs have reduced skilling as a fragmented welfare intervention rather than a driver of sustained economic growth.

THE GIST

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Biomaterials derived from biological sources are increasingly being used across sectors and can reduce dependence on fossil-based inputs. Biomaterials can improve environmental benefits. Fragmented policy coordination across agriculture, environment, and industry adoption, and failure to move quickly could leave India dependent on imports at a time of global supply chain.

To capitalise on this sector, policy actions include scaling biomaterials industry, improving agro-industrial and polymerisation capacity, improving feedstock productivity for crops such as sugarcane, manioc, and jatropha, research on emerging technologies, and investing in R&D and standards to develop both drop-in and novel biomaterials.

Clear regulatory definitions, labelling norms, and end-of-life pathways that are harmonised across countries are essential to build consumer and industry confidence.

Consistent procurement, time-bound incentives under frameworks, and support for pilot plants and shared facilities can help de-risk early investment.

Shambhavi Naik is chairperson, TukshyaShri Initiatory's Health & Life Sciences Policy.

What are biomaterials and how do they work?

How can indigenous biomaterials reduce dependence on fossil-based imports?

Shambhavi Naik

The story so far:

As countries look to shift to cleaner processes to manufacture consumer products, biomaterials or textiles, fibres and materials will become the new frontier of materials engineering.

What are biomaterials?

Biomaterials are materials derived wholly or partly from biological sources, or engineered to mimic biological processes, that are designed to replace or interact with conventional materials. They are increasingly used in sectors such as packaging, textiles, construction, and healthcare. Biomaterials can be broadly categorised into two types: drop-in biomaterials, which are chemically identical to petroleum-based materials and can be used in existing industrial processes, such as bio-PETs; drop-out biomaterials, which are chemically different and require new processing or end-of-life systems (such as

polylactic acid or PLA); and novel biomaterials, which offer new properties not found in conventional materials, such as self-healing properties, biodegradability, implants, and advanced composites.

Why does India need biomaterials?

For India, biomaterials address multiple goals, including environmental sustainability, industrial growth, revenue generation, and employment. The market alone valued at around \$500 million in 2024 and forecast to grow strongly through 2030. In 2022, Reliance Industries planned PLA plant investment in Uttar Pradesh is one of the biggest biomaterials investments. The innovation includes startups like Phyxios, converting temple flower waste into bioplastics, and others who have their own demonstration-level bioplastics plant in progress. Although India has a rich agricultural base, in some sectors, there is a lack of dependence for the technologies required for the transformation of feedstocks into market-ready final products.

What is the way forward?

India has an advantage in building a plastics and climate action goals.

Where does India stand today? India's biomaterials sector, spanning bioplastics, biopolymers, and bio-based materials, is rapidly emerging as a significant opportunity, with the bioplastics market alone valued at around \$500 million in 2024 and forecast to grow strongly through 2030.

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What are biomaterials and how do they work?

How can indigenous biomaterials reduce dependence on fossil-based imports?

Shambhavi Naik

The story so far:

As countries look to shift to cleaner processes to manufacture consumer products, be it plastics or textiles, biomaterials will become the new frontier of materials engineering.

What are biomaterials?

Biomaterials are materials derived wholly or partly from biological sources, or engineered using biological processes, that are designed to replace or interact with conventional materials. They are increasingly used across sectors such as packaging, textiles, construction, and healthcare. Biomaterials can be broadly categorised into three types: drop-in biomaterials, which are chemically identical to petroleum-based materials and can be used in existing manufacturing systems (such as bio-PET); drop-out biomaterials, which are chemically different and require new processing or end-of-life systems (such as

polylactic acid or PLA); and novel biomaterials, which offer new properties not found in conventional materials, such as self-healing materials, bioactive implants, and advanced composites.

Why does India need biomaterials? For India, biomaterials address multiple goals, including environmental sustainability, industrial growth, revenue generation, and supporting farmer livelihoods through a single pathway. Indigenous biomaterials biomanufacturing can reduce India's heavy dependence on fossil-based imports for plastics, chemicals, and materials. It would also enable diversified value for agricultural feedstocks and residues, offering farmers new income streams beyond food markets. As global regulations and consumer preferences shift toward low-carbon and circular products, biomaterials position the Indian industry to remain competitive in export markets. Biomaterials also support domestic policy goals around waste reduction, such as the ban on single-use

plastics and climate action goals.

Where does India stand today?

India's biomaterials sector, spanning bioplastics, biopolymers, and bio-derived materials, is rapidly emerging as a strategic industrial and sustainability opportunity, with the bioplastics market alone valued at around \$500 million in 2024 and forecast to grow strongly through the decade. Balrampur Chini Mills planned PLA plant investment in Uttar Pradesh is one of the biggest investments in India. Domestic innovation includes startups like Phool.co, converting temple flower waste into biomaterials and Praj Industries, who have their own demonstration-level bioplastics plant in progress. Although India has a rich agricultural base, in some sectors, there is foreign dependence for the technologies required for the transformation of feedstocks into market-ready final products.

What is the way forward?

India has an advantage in building a

biomaterials industry, but some issues would need to be addressed first. If feedstocks also do not scale with increased demand, there could be feedstock competition with food sources. Similarly, aggressive agricultural practices could lead to water stress and soil deterioration. Further, weak waste-management and composting infrastructure could undermine environmental benefits. Fragmented policy coordination across agriculture, environment, and industry may slow adoption, and failure to move quickly could leave India dependent on imports as other countries scale faster.

To capitalise on this sector, policy actions include scaling biomanufacturing infrastructure (especially fermentation and polymerisation capacity), improving feedstock productivity for crops such as sugarcane, maize, and agricultural residues using emerging technologies, and investing in R&D and standards to develop both drop-in and novel biomaterials.

Clear regulatory definitions, labelling norms, and end-of-life pathways (recycling or industrial composting) are essential to build consumer and industry confidence.

Government procurement, time-bound incentives under frameworks, and support for pilot plants and shared facilities can help de-risk early investments.

Shambhavi Naik is chairperson, Takshashila Institution's Health & Life Sciences Policy

1 What are biomaterials? / बायोमैटेरियल्स क्या हैं?

- English: Biomaterials are materials derived wholly/partly from biological sources or engineered using biological processes, designed to replace or interact with conventional materials.
- हिंदी: बायोमैटेरियल्स वे सामग्री हैं जो पूरी तरह/आंशिक रूप से जैविक स्रोतों से बनी होती हैं या जैविक प्रक्रियाओं से इंजीनियर की जाती हैं, और पारंपरिक सामग्रियों का विकल्प बनती हैं।
- English: Widely used in packaging, textiles, construction, healthcare.
- हिंदी: पैकेजिंग, वस्त्र, निर्माण, स्वास्थ्य क्षेत्रों में उपयोग।

2 Types of biomaterials / बायोमैटेरियल्स के प्रकार

- **Drop-in biomaterials**
 - English: Chemically identical to petroleum-based materials; work in existing systems (e.g., bio-PET).
 - हिंदी: रासायनिक रूप से पेट्रोलियम-आधारित जैसी; मौजूदा सिस्टम में उपयोग (जैसे bio-PET)।
- **Drop-out biomaterials**
 - English: Chemically different; need new processing/end-of-life systems (e.g., PLA – polylactic acid).
 - हिंदी: रासायनिक रूप से अलग; नए प्रोसेसिंग/निपटान सिस्टम की जरूरत (जैसे PLA)।
- **Novel/advanced biomaterials**
 - English: New properties—self-healing materials, bioactive implants, advanced composites.
 - हिंदी: नए गुण—स्व-मरम्मत सामग्री, बायोएक्टिव इम्प्लांट, उन्नत कंपोज़िट।

3 Why does India need biomaterials? / भारत को क्यों ज़रूरत है?

- English: Meet goals of environmental sustainability, industrial growth, revenue generation, and farmer livelihoods.
- हिंदी: पर्यावरणीय स्थिरता, औद्योगिक विकास, राजस्व, और किसानों की आय।
- English: Reduce dependence on fossil-based imports (plastics, chemicals, materials).
- हिंदी: फॉसिल-आधारित आयात निर्भरता कम करना।
- English: Align with circular economy, export competitiveness, and single-use plastic bans.
- हिंदी: परिपत्र अर्थव्यवस्था, निर्यात प्रतिस्पर्धा, और सिंगल-यूज़ प्लास्टिक प्रतिबंध।

4 How do biomaterials reduce fossil imports? / फॉसिल आयात कैसे घटाते हैं?

- English: Use agri-feedstocks and residues → domestic value addition → less crude-linked inputs.
- हिंदी: कृषि फीडस्टॉक/अवशेष का उपयोग → घरेलू वैल्यू-एडिशन → कच्चे तेल पर निर्भरता कम।
- English: Create new income streams for farmers beyond food markets.
- हिंदी: किसानों के लिए खाद्य बाजार से आगे आय के अवसर।

5 Where does India stand today? / भारत आज कहाँ खड़ा है?

- English: Biomaterials sector (bioplastics, biopolymers, bio-derived materials) is **rapidly emerging**; bioplastics market ~US\$500 million in 2024, strong growth expected.
- हिंदी: बायोमैटेरियल्स क्षेत्र तेज़ी से उभर रहा; बायोप्लास्टिक्स बाज़ार ~US\$500 मिलियन (2024)।
- English: Major investments like **Balrampur Chini Mills' PLA plant in Uttar Pradesh**.
- हिंदी: बलरामपुर चीनी मिल्स का यूपी में PLA प्लांट।
- English: Startups such as **Phool.co** (temple-flower waste to biomaterials) and **Praj Industries** with demo plants.
- हिंदी: **Phool.co** (मंदिर-फूल अपशिष्ट से बायोमैटेरियल) और प्राज इंडस्ट्रीज़ की पहल।
- English: Some **technology dependence** remains for scale-up.
- हिंदी: बड़े पैमाने पर कुछ तकनीकी निर्भरता बनी हुई है।

6 Challenges / चुनौतियाँ

- English: Feedstock scaling vs **food competition**; water stress/soil degradation from aggressive farming.
- हिंदी: फीडस्टॉक विस्तार बनाम खाद्य प्रतिस्पर्धा; जल-मृदा दबाव।
- English: Weak **waste-management & composting** infrastructure; fragmented policy coordination.
- हिंदी: कमज़ोर कचरा प्रबंधन/कम्पोस्टिंग; नीति समन्वय की कमी।
- English: Risk of continued **import dependence** if adoption is slow.
- हिंदी: धीमी अपनाने से आयात निर्भरता का जोखिम।

7 Way forward / आगे का रास्ता

- English: Scale **biomanufacturing infrastructure** (fermentation, polymerisation).
- हिंदी: बायो-मैन्युफैक्चरिंग अवसंरचना का विस्तार।
- English: Boost feedstock productivity (sugarcane, maize, agri-residues) using new tech.
- हिंदी: गन्ना, मक्का, कृषि अवशेष की उत्पादकता बढ़ाना।
- English: Invest in R&D, standards, clear labelling & end-of-life pathways (recycling/industrial composting).
- हिंदी: R&D, मानक, स्पष्ट लेबलिंग व जीवन-अंत निपटान।
- English: Government procurement, time-bound incentives, pilot plants & shared facilities.
- हिंदी: सरकारी खरीद, समयबद्ध प्रोत्साहन, पायलट प्लांट व साझा सुविधाएँ।

WASHINGTON

U.S. Justice Dept. says millions of Epstein files still not released



The U.S. Department of Justice said on Monday it is still reviewing over two million documents provided by sex offender Jeffrey Epstein and has released more than two-thirds of them. About 600 DOJ attorneys will spend "the next few weeks" reviewing the documents, the officials said. AP

BEIRUT

Israeli strikes undermine efforts to prevent escalation, says Lebanon



Lebanese President Joseph Aoun on Tuesday condemned Israel's latest strikes on his country, saying they undermine efforts to prevent an Israeli-Hezbollah conflict after Lebanon launched a series of strikes in southern and eastern Lebanon on Monday, saying it hit Hezbollah and Hamas targets. AP

CARACAS

U.S. killed 55 Cuban, Venezuelan troops during capture of Maduro



Fifty-five Cuban and Venezuelan military personnel were killed during the U.S. raid on Venezuelan leader Hugo Chavez's residence on Tuesday, Venezuelan Foreign Minister Vladimir Padrino Lopez said. Mr. Maduro's presidential guard was largely wiped out "in cold blood" by U.S. troops. AP

DUBAI

Yemeni separatists set for Riyadh talks after fighting, says official



The leader of Yemen's separatists is heading to Riyadh on Tuesday for talks, a government said, the day of fighting between his U.S.-backed tribe and rebels. The Saudi-organized talks indicate the beginning of de-escalation efforts after clashes in Yemen's government-run areas. AP

Venezuelan Parliament swears in Rodriguez as interim President

Former V.P. takes the oath in National Assembly, expressing willingness to cooperate with Washington while condemning Maduro's capture; Machado denounces Rodriguez as corrupt and illegitimate, vowing to return and win future elections

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
CARACAS

Venezuelan Parliament swore in Delcy Rodriguez as interim President on Monday, two days after U.S. forces freed her predecessor Nicolas Maduro to face trial in New York. Ms. Rodriguez has indicated she will cooperate with Washington, took the oath of office in an ceremony in the National Assembly, telling lawmakers she was doing so "in the name of all Venezuelans". She said she was "in pain over the kidnapping of our heroes, the hostages



in the United States, referring to Mr. Maduro and his wife Cilia Flores, who face drug charges in New York for their stand in Ms. Rodriguez's defense after the U.S. military attack that shocked Caracas and the world.

Outside the legislature, thousands of Venezuelans demonstrated to demand the release of their leader, chanting: "Maduro, hold on; we're with you". Inside, members of the National Assembly offered their full backing to Ms. Rodriguez, who had been Mr. Maduro's Vice President — and now interim President — before he was ousted by Ms. Rodriguez as Parliament Speaker.

Elsewhere, Opposition leader Maria Corina Machado slammed Ms. Rodriguez, saying she was "rejected by the Venezuelan people and calling her 'In free and fair elections, we will win by over 50 percent' and 'there is no doubt about it'." Ms. Machado said.

Mr. Trump, however, has downplayed the possibility of Mr. Maduro coming to power, saying she did not not command the "respect" to run the country.

China bans dual-use goods exports for Japanese military

REUTERS
BEIJING

China has banned exports of dual-use items to Japan that can be used for military purposes, according to a Commerce Ministry statement on Tuesday, in line with Japan's reaction to an early November missile launch by North Korea.

Dual-use items are goods, equipment and technologies that have both civilian and military applications. They can include rare earth elements that are essential for making drones and ships.

Beijing said that organisations or individuals

from any country or region that violated the ban would be held legally liable.

A Japanese government source said that they believed that they weren't identified called the move "unjust". China has avoided doing things that would damage its business community. By taking this step, they may be aiming to fuel domestic criticism of Prime Minister Naoto Kan.

Strong dissent



Protesters affiliated with the Central Obrera Boliviana clash with riot police after taking part in the 'Bolivia is Not for Sale' march against Decree 5953 and rising fuel prices, in La Paz, Bolivia, on Monday.

Hadi killed due to political vendetta, chargesheet names 17 people: police

Press Trust of India
DHAKA/NEW DELHI

Shafiq Hossain Hadi, chief constable of Dhaka, was killed due to "political vendetta" at the behest of the Awami League, Bangladesh police said. Commissioner of police, Md. Pressed formal charges against 17 people in connection with his killing.

"Through public rallies and social media, Hadi had been criticising the activities of the now-banned Awami League and its leader, Sheikh Hasina. He had issued remarks against leaders and activists of the Islamic League and its affiliated groups, and also against Islam, Additional Commissioner of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police's

Chittagong League is the strong wing of the previous political statements, the investigation has revealed that Hadi was shot dead when he was in the custody of the Hasina government, was shot in the head on December 12.

He said 12 of the 17 charged sheeted in the case have been arrested so far, while five remain at large.

Imtiaz Moni spoke yesterday, adding that Hadi's political prominence during the July-August 2004 mass protests that led to the fall of the Hasina government, was shot in the head on December 12.

He said 12 of the 17 charged sheeted in the case have been arrested so far, while five remain at large.

He said 12 of the 17 charged sheeted in the case have been arrested so far, while five remain at large.

Hungarian director Béla Tarr, master of long, darkly comic films, dies at 70

Associated Press
BUDAPEST

The acclaimed Hungarian filmmaker Béla Tarr, director of such works as *Sátántangó* and *The Turin Horse* and the recipient of numerous awards for his long and often darkly comic films, has died at 70. He said 12 of the 17 charged sheeted in the case have been arrested so far, while five remain at large.

He said 12 of the 17 charged sheeted in the case have been arrested so far, while five remain at large.



Celebrated Filmmaker Béla Tarr completed his first feature film, *Family Nest*, when he was only 23. NEUTS

after a long and serious illness, film director Béla Tarr passed away early this morning.

Tarr completed his first feature film, *Family Nest*, when he was only 23. That film won the Grand Prize at the Mannheim-Heidelberg International Film Festival that year.

8

Asia and he received honorary memberships at universities in China.

9

In a statement on Tuesday, the Hungarian Film and Media Council informed Tarr that "deep sorrow we announce that,

Often shot in black and white and defined by long, breathless takes, Tarr's films depict bleak, hopeless, even dystopian landscapes.

10

Venezuelan Parliament swears in Rodriguez as interim President

Former V-P takes the oath in National Assembly, expressing willingness to cooperate with Washington while condemning Maduro's capture; Machado denounces Rodriguez as corrupt and illegitimate, vowing to return and win future elections

Agence France-Presse

CARACAS

Venezuela's Parliament swore in Delcy Rodriguez as interim President on Monday, two days after U.S. forces seized her predecessor Nicolas Maduro to face trial in New York.

Ms. Rodriguez, who has indicated she will cooperate with Washington, took the oath of office during a ceremony in the National Assembly, telling lawmakers she was doing so "in the name of all Venezuelans".

She said she was "in pain over the kidnapping of our heroes, the hostages



Taking charge: Delcy Rodriguez takes the oath during a session of the National Assembly in Caracas on Monday. AFP

in the United States," referring to Mr. Maduro and his wife Cilia Flores, who face drugs charges in New York with other Venezuelan officials.

Parliament denounced the capture of leftist leader Maduro while vowing support for his stand-in Ms. Rodriguez after the U.S. military attack that

shocked Caracas and the world.

Outside the legislature, thousands of Venezuelans gathered to demand the release of their leader, chanting: "Maduro, hold on: Venezuela is rising!"

Inside, meanwhile, members of the National Assembly offered their full backing to Ms. Rodriguez – who had been Mr. Maduro's Vice President – and reelected her brother Jorge Rodriguez as Parliament Speaker.

Elsewhere, Opposition leader Maria Corina Machado slammed Ms. Rodriguez, saying she was "rejected" by the Venezuelan people and calling her

"one of the main architects of torture, persecution, corruption, narcotrafficking".

Speaking from an undisclosed location to *Fox News* in her first public comments since the weekend, Ms. Machado added that she plans to return to Venezuela "as soon as possible".

"In free and fair elections, we will win by over 90% of the votes, I have no doubt about it," Ms. Machado said.

Mr. Trump, however, has downplayed the possibility of Machado coming to power, saying she did not command the "respect" to run the country.

1 What happened? / क्या हुआ?

- English: Venezuela's National Assembly swore in **Delcy Rodríguez** as **Interim President**, days after former President **Nicolás Maduro** was captured by U.S. forces to face trial in **New York**.
- हिंदी: वेनेजुएला की नेशनल असेंबली ने डेल्सी रोड्रिगोज को अंतरिम राष्ट्रपति के रूप में शपथ दिलाई, यह कदम पूर्व राष्ट्रपति निकोलस मादुरो की अमेरिकी बलों द्वारा गिरफ्तारी के बाद उठाया गया।

2 Who is Delcy Rodríguez? / डेल्सी रोड्रिगोज कौन हैं?

- English: She is the **former Vice-President** of Venezuela and expressed willingness to **cooperate with Washington** while condemning Maduro's arrest.
- हिंदी: वे वेनेजुएला की पूर्व उपराष्ट्रपति हैं और उन्होंने वॉशिंगटन से सहयोग की इच्छा जताई, साथ ही मादुरो की गिरफ्तारी की निंदा की।

3 Parliamentary stance / संसद का रुख

- English: Parliament denounced Maduro's capture as an **illegal foreign intervention** and pledged support to the interim leadership.
- हिंदी: संसद ने मादुरो की गिरफ्तारी को अवैध विदेशी हस्तक्षेप बताया और अंतरिम सरकार को समर्थन दिया।

4 Public response / जन प्रतिक्रिया

- English: Large protests erupted in **Caracas**, with supporters demanding Maduro's release.
- हिंदी: कराकस में बड़े-पैमाने पर प्रदर्शन हुए, जहाँ मादुरो की रिहाई की माँग की गई।

5 Opposition reaction / विपक्ष की प्रतिक्रिया

- English: Opposition leader **María Corina Machado** denounced Rodriguez as **corrupt and illegitimate**, vowing to return and win future elections.
- हिंदी: विपक्षी नेता मारिया कोरीना माचाडो ने रोड्रिगोज को भ्रष्ट और अवैध बताया और भविष्य के चुनाव जीतने का दावा किया।

6 International angle / अंतरराष्ट्रीय आयाम

- English: The crisis deepens Venezuela's confrontation with the **United States**, while raising questions about **sovereignty, regime change, and international law**.
- हिंदी: यह संकट अमेरिका के साथ वेनेजुएला के टकराव को और गहरा करता है तथा संप्रभुता, सत्ता परिवर्तन और अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून पर प्रश्न खड़े करता है।

Theme

English Fact

ਸਾਮੁੱਲ ਲੰਘ੍ਹ

Political system

Venezuela has a
presidential republic

ਵੈਨੇਜੂਲਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਂਤੀ ਸਾਮੁੱਲ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ

Legislature

National Assembly is
unicameral

ਛੁਟ੍ਟ ਏ ਚ੍ਰ ੧ ਲੁਕਾ ਚਹੁ ਤੁੱਹ੍ਹ ਫ੍ਰਾਂਗ ਲੁਕਾ

Interim President

Used during constitutional
crises

ਲੁਕਾ ਸਾਮੁੱਲ ਤੁੱਹ੍ਹ ਵੇਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਤੁੱਹ੍ਹ ਸਾਮੁੱਲ

U.S. trials

Drug & corruption charges
often under U.S. courts

ਰਕਾਨ ਤੁੱਹ੍ਹ ਵੱਡਾ ਕਾਨਾਡਾ ਵੱਡਾ ਰਕਾਨ ਵੱਡਾ
ਰਾਹੀਂ ਰਕਾਨ ਤੁੱਹ੍ਹ ਤੁੱਹ੍ਹ ੨ ਕਾਨਾਡਾ

Protests

Common in regime-
change crises

ਫ੍ਰਾਂਗ ਵੱਡਾ ਰਕਾਨ ਤੁੱਹ੍ਹ ਰਕਾਨ ਵੱਡਾ ਰਕਾਨ

Exam	Year	Question Theme (Summary)	Answer
UPSC CSE Mains (GS-II)	2018	Foreign intervention & sovereignty	International law
UPSC CSE Prelims	2020	Presidential form of government	Executive headed by President
SSC CGL	2021	Meaning of interim government	Temporary authority
Railway NTPC	2022	Legislature of Venezuela	National Assembly

- the Venezuelan crisis discussed above most directly raises concerns related to:
 - a) Monetary policy
 - b) Environmental governance
 - c) Sovereignty and foreign intervention
 - d) Climate change

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English+Hindi

Word of the day

Morass:

an unpleasant and complicated situation that is difficult to escape from

Synonyms: trap, tangle, confusion

Usage: *The project is stuck in a morass.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/morasspro

International Phonetic

Alphabet: /məræs/



Thank you ☺

