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Military Exercises – Prelims Fact

Mahad Satyagraha – Prelims Fact

A top-down view of various tools laid out on a dark wooden surface. The tools include an axe with a wooden handle, a claw hammer, a pair of worn leather work gloves, a pair of large pliers, a utility knife, a pair of shears, a circular metal object with a logo, and a metal tool with a ribbed handle. The text "There is no happiness without hard work." is overlaid in the center in a large, white, sans-serif font.

**There is no happiness
without hard work.**

Joanne Lipman

India-Russia friendship remains steady like the pole star, says PM

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Russian President Putin, who is on a two-day state visit to India, and Modi hold bilateral talks; PM signals that energy ties will continue as a 'strong and vital pillar' of partnership, despite Western opposition; the two sides sign 16 agreements

Kallol Bhattacharjee

NEW DELHI

Appreciating Russian President Vladimir Putin for taking the India-Russia relationship to “new heights” over the past quarter of a century, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid out an expansive canvas of energy and trade collaborations between the two countries, stretching to 2030. Addressing the media after bilateral talks at Hyderabad House on Friday, Mr. Modi described the India-Russia friendship as a “pole star” and called for a peaceful solution to Russia’s war with Ukraine.

“Over the past eight decades, the world has witnessed many ups and downs. Humanity has faced numerous challeng-



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. R.V. MOORTHY

es and crises. Yet, through all of this, the India-Russia friendship has remained steady like a *dhruva tara* (pole star),” the Prime Minister said.

‘Our ties a constant’

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri expanded on the

PM’s use of the Hindi term ‘*dhruva tara*’ during a later briefing, saying it referred to the “sustained and long-term significance of this relation”. Highlighting the “sustainability and certainty” of India-Russia ties, Mr. Misri added, “This relationship is a constant.

Pacts to raise opportunities for Indian workers in Russia

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Indian and Russian governments on Friday signed two agreements that will enhance mobility of Indian semi-skilled and skilled workers to Russia, as official sources indicated that New Delhi

will increasingly utilise India’s “strength” in the category of “semi-skilled workers” in the coming years while adding dynamism to existing relations between the partner countries.

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There have been several crises along the way but they have not altered the fundamentals of this relationship.”

Mr. Putin’s visit has attracted global attention as it comes months after U.S. President Donald Trump imposed punitive tariffs on

India for purchasing Russian energy. Mr. Trump described his move as a tactic to push Russia to the negotiating table on Ukraine.

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- **Moscow is reported to need 5,00,000 semi-skilled workers; to enhance people-to-people ties, Modi announces gratis grant of 30-day e-tourist visa and group tourist visa to Russian nationals**
- **India and Russia also committed to broadening cooperation in the nuclear energy sector, including fuel cycle and lifecycle support to operate the Kudankulam nuclear power plant, constructing the remaining nuclear power units at the site as well as timelines for supplies of equipment and fuel.**

Content.

- **Nature of ties:** India–Russia enjoys a “Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership” since 2010, upgraded from a Strategic Partnership in 2000, marked by high trust, defence dependence, and political convergence on multipolarity.
- **Institutional structure:** Relations are anchored in annual summits, the India–Russia Inter-Governmental Commission (IRIGC) with its TEC and M&MTC segments, the 2+2 dialogue, NSA-level talks, parliamentary exchanges and sectoral working groups.
- **Strategic convergence:** Both countries support a multipolar world, reform of global governance (UNSC expansion including India), and coordination in BRICS, SCO, G20, UN.
- **India–Russia relations remain one of New Delhi’s most enduring strategic partnerships, built on defence, energy and political trust.**

Mains Question

- **Q.** As Russia moves closer to China, India's strategic landscape faces new and complex challenges. In light of the shifting global power equations, what policy options are available for India to reduce these vulnerabilities? Discuss critically.
- **Q.** जैसे-जैसे रूस चीन के और अधिक निकट आता जा रहा है, भारत का सामरिक परिदृश्य नए और जटिल चुनौतियों का सामना कर रहा है। बदलते वैश्विक शक्ति-संतुलन के संदर्भ में भारत किन नीतिगत विकल्पों के माध्यम से इन जोखिमों को कम कर सकता है? समालोचनात्मक चर्चा कीजिए।

IndiGo cancels over 1,000 flights, gets exemption from new night duty rules

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

IndiGo cancelled more than 1,000 flights on Friday and will axe hundreds more on Saturday, crippling air travel across India and sending airfares skyrocketing. These prompted the government to exempt the country's largest airline from meeting new rules until February 10.

The airline suspended all departures from the Delhi airport for the entire day to reboot its systems and stop cascading delays. It cancelled all its domestic flights from Chennai and all flights from Bengaluru to Delhi and Mumbai for the entire day.

"Cancellations were made today to align our aircraft and crew to be where



New norm: Distressed passengers at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport on the outskirts of Hyderabad on Friday. NAGARA GOPAL

they need to be in order to start afresh tomorrow morning. Measures of the last few days have regrettably proven to be not enough. We have decided today for a reboot of all our systems and schedules," IndiGo's chief executive officer (CEO) Pieter Elbers said in a recorded video

message. He added that cancellations on Saturday were expected to be "below 1,000".

The size and scale of IndiGo's operations meant normalcy is expected only between December 10 and 15, according to the CEO. The airline operates a total of 2,200 flights every day

and accounts for six out of every 10 passengers who travel by air.

'Planning gaps'

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) granted IndiGo exemptions from night duty restrictions, including the cap on two landings, until February 10. The airline had admitted to the government that it underestimated the increased crew requirements, despite the court order issued in April 2025 on new duty hours, and acknowledged "planning gaps" in its operations for the rules that came into effect on November 1.

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- **“Cancellations were made today to align our aircraft and crew to be where they need to be in order to start afresh tomorrow morning. Measures of the last few days have regrettably proven to be not enough. We have decided today for a reboot of all our systems and schedules,” IndiGo's chief executive officer (CEO) Pieter Elbers said in a recorded video message. He added that cancellations on Saturday were expected to be “below 1,000”.**

Fact

- **The primary reason for this disruption with the airline — India's largest, accounting for over 60 per cent of domestic passenger traffic —are crew shortages in the wake of the new Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) norms**
- **The second and final phase of the new crew rest and duty rules was implemented last month, and IndiGo has been caught ill-prepared.**
- **Under the new FDTL rules, the weekly rest period for pilots has been increased to 48 hours from 36 and night landings have been limited to two from six earlier. This is learnt to have impacted IndiGo's crew rostering significantly.**
- **These rules were initially going to be implemented from June 2024, but the rollback was delayed following pushback from IndiGo and other airlines.**

- **The airlines' primary argument was that the new norms would require more crew strength, and they wanted the implementation in a step-by-step manner over an extended period. However, the rules were implemented this year by the DGCA following a direction from the Delhi High Court.**
- **They were rolled out in two phases, in July and November.**
- **While IndiGo managed the first phase—which included longer weekly rest periods for crew—without much impact, the second phase, requiring curtailed crew utilisation levels for the 'red eye' flights, has hit IndiGo a lot harder than other carriers. Under the new FDTL rules, permitted night landings for flight crew are now restricted to two, from six earlier.**
- **The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) granted IndiGo exemptions from night duty restrictions, including the cap on two landings, until February 10.**
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Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA):

- **India's apex civil aviation regulatory body, responsible for overseeing air safety, licensing, and compliance with international standards.**
- **Established in: Originally set up in 1978 as an attached office of the Ministry of Civil Aviation. It became a statutory body under the Aircraft (Amendment) Act, 2020.**
- **Ministry: Operates under the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India.**
- **Objective: To promote safe, efficient, and secure air transportation through robust regulation and proactive safety oversight.**
- **The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is a specialized UN agency established by the Chicago Convention in 1944 to regulate global civil aviation.**
- **It sets international standards and procedures for the safe, secure, efficient, and environmentally sustainable development of air transport.**

Mains Question

- **Q.** The large-scale flight cancellations by IndiGo Airlines in December 2025 highlight operational fragility in India's aviation sector. Analyse the root causes, implications for passengers and the economy, and recommend policy measures that the government and regulator should adopt to enhance resilience and protect consumer rights.
- **Q.** दिसंबर 2025 में इंडिगो द्वारा बड़े पैमाने पर उड़ान रद्द किए जाने की घटनाएँ भारत के नागरिक उड्डयन क्षेत्र की संचालन-क्षमता में नाजुकता को उजागर करती हैं। इसके मूल कारणों, यात्रियों व अर्थव्यवस्था पर प्रभावों का विश्लेषण कीजिए तथा क्षेत्र में मजबूती और उपभोक्ता अधिकारों की सुरक्षा हेतु आवश्यक नीतिगत उपाय सुझाइए।

Cheaper loans likely as repo rate cut by 25 bps

Lalatendu Mishra

MUMBAI

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday voted unanimously to reduce the policy repo rate by 25 basis points (bps) to 5.25% with immediate effect.

The decision comes against the backdrop of data showing that real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth accelerated to 8.2% in the second quarter and average headline inflation reduced to 1.7%.

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- **The decision comes against the backdrop of data showing that real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth accelerated to 8.2% in the second quarter and average headline inflation reduced to 1.7%.**
- **The MPC is a statutory body established under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, as amended by the Finance Act, 2016. It is responsible for setting the benchmark policy rate (repo rate) to control inflation within a specified target range.**

Members:

- **RBI Governor (Chairperson)**
- **RBI Deputy Governor in charge of monetary policy**
- **One official nominated by the RBI Board**
- **Three external members representing the Government of India**

Tenure:

- **External members serve a four-year term.**
- **RBI Governor and Deputy Governor serve ex-officio.**

Meetings:

- **The MPC meets at least four times a year.**
- **Additional meetings can be convened if necessary.**
- **Quorum for Decision:**
- **A minimum of four members is required for a quorum.**
- **The Governor (or Deputy Governor in their absence) must be present.**
- **Decisions are made by majority vote; in case of a tie, the Governor has the casting vote.**

Function and Role:

- **Primary role: To determine the repo rate to maintain inflation within the target range (currently 4% +/- 2%).**
- **Replaced the earlier Technical Advisory Committee.**
- **Decisions are binding on the RBI.**

Content.

- **The Union government routinely announces Centrally sponsored schemes but fails to allocate its share of the funding.**
- **The 15th Finance Commission recommended that 41% of the Union's tax revenue be devolved to the States. But over the past four years, only 33.16% has been shared.**
- **Every time we pass a Bill and send it to the Governor for assent, we are left with no choice but to move the Supreme Court as well.**
- **This repeated compulsion is not just an insult to legislative authority — it is a betrayal of the Constitution and of democracy itself.**

RBI to conduct OMO purchases of 1 lakh cr. G-Secs for liquidity

Regulator 'comfortable' with rupee level, to undertake dollar-rupee swap of \$5 bn this month; tariffs have had minimal impact, says governor

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

In view of the evolving liquidity conditions and the outlook, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday announced to conduct Open Market Operation (OMO) purchases of government securities of ₹1,00,000 crore and a three-year USD/INR Buy Sell swap of \$5 billion this month to inject durable liquidity into the system.

Later during the day, the regulator notified purchase of government securities (G-Secs) worth ₹50,000 crore on December 11 and later this month for the remaining ₹50,000.

"I would like to reiterate that we are committed to provide sufficient durable liquidity to the banking system. We continuously assess the durable liquidity requirements of the banking system due to changes in currency in circulation, forex operations, and reserve maintenance," RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said in his monetary policy statement.

"Going forward too, we shall continue to do so. These measures will ensure adequate durable liquidity in the system and further facilitate monetary transmission," he said.

At the post MPC meet press conference, he clari-



Point blank: RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra at a press conference to announce the monetary policy, at the RBI headquarters. PTI

fied that the dollar-rupee swap was a liquidity measure and not to support the depreciating rupee.

Answering multiple questions on the impact of the depreciating rupee, Mr. Malhotra said the RBI was comfortable at this level and had factored in the current level [of over 90 a dollar] in its estimates for the projections.

"We allow the market to determine the rate of the rupee. We do not target any price level or any bands. We believe market is very efficient in the long run. In February 2025, we saw the rupee going to almost 88 level and in three months it came back to below 84," he said.

"So these fluctuations and volatility do happen. Our effort has always been to reduce any abnormal or excessive volatility. The external sector is very strong and will remain strong going forward," he said.

"Also we are having sufficient [forex] reserves, current account is very manageable at about 1% or so. Given these strong fundamentals of our country, we should get good capital flows going forward," he emphasised.

Tariff impact 'minimal'

To a query from *The Hindu* on the impact of the U.S. tariffs on the Indian economy he said, "Mostly the impact is minimal, it's not high because ours is mostly a domestic demand driven economy. A few sectors [such as textiles, leather, shrimps and gem and jewellery] will be impacted and we and the government have given out certain trade relief packages." "I think it [tariff] is an opportunity for us and exporters have already started looking out and improving their productivity. They have also started diversifying," he said.

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- **Later during the day, the regulator notified purchase of government securities (G-Secs) worth ₹50,000 crore on December 11 and later this month for the remaining ₹50,000.**
- **At the post MPC meet press conference, he clarified that the dollar-rupee swap was a liquidity measure and not to support the depreciating rupee.**
- **Open Market Operations (OMOs) are market operations conducted by RBI by way of sale/purchase of government securities to/from the market with an objective to adjust the rupee liquidity conditions in the market on a durable basis.**

Content.

- **If there is excess liquidity, RBI resorts to sale of securities and sucks out the rupee liquidity.**
- **Similarly, when the liquidity conditions are tight, RBI buys securities from the market, thereby releasing liquidity into the market.**
- **It is one of the quantitative (to regulate or control the total volume of money) monetary policy tools which is employed by the central bank of a country to control the money supply in the economy.**

A growing shadow over digital constitutionalism

In an unprecedented move, the central government revoked its order to mobile phone manufacturers to install 'Sanchar Saathi', a government app, from 2026. The rollback came in 48 hours following widespread concerns raised by most stakeholders about ambiguous data collection methods, the lack of consent, surveillance and unlimited data storage. Reuters broke the story and Apple refused to implement the policy.

These foreign entities may have played some sort of backstage role as the government cannot afford to lose Apple and its manufacturing in India. Although the government's move to have the app installed was apparently aimed as a safety measure – cybercrimes increased from 15.9 lakh cases in 2023 to 20.4 lakh in 2024 – to help mobile users and the police, legitimate questions were raised during the pushback against the government's move about surveillance, state power and data misuse. These issues can be regarded as a significant step to understand the urgent need of what may be termed as digital constitutionalism.

What digital constitutionalism entails

Digital constitutionalism signifies the extension of constitutional principles such as liberty, dignity, equality including non-arbitrariness, accountability and rule of law in the digital space. These values are being threatened in the world where data collection, artificial intelligence (AI) and surveillance technologies take the lead. Modern governance is becoming an invisible system, whether it is biometric databases, predictive algorithms or both. In the absence of strong constitutional protection within these systems, humans are likely to be exposed to abuse of authority.

Everyday life is now being influenced by digital governance. Automated processes mediate Know Your Customer (KYC) verification, welfare distribution, job applications, health-care records, and even political expression in social media. These technologies tend to operate without any significant revelation or approval from people.

Consequently, the concentration of power takes place in the hands of tech designers, law enforcement agencies and private companies. This generates an unequal state where the citizens are passive data subjects but not active right-holders as they are supposed to be in liberal democracies.

There has also been a worrisome development in surveillance which even George Orwell could not imagine in the celebrated and futuristic *1984*. It has ceased to be visible and immediate. These days it is being performed with the help of metadata gathering, location tracing, biometric identification, behavioural modelling and predictive analytics.

This kind of silent and constant surveillance can chill free speech, discourage dissent and disrupt democracies. People start censoring themselves when they are aware that they are



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Constitutional principles are under threat in a world where data collection, artificial intelligence and surveillance technologies are taking the lead

under observation. Self-censorship is the new normal. The right to privacy is now considered to be one of the basic rights in India. This was affirmed in *Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (Retd.) And Anr. vs Union of India And Ors.* (2017) by the Supreme Court of India. More recently, the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, was passed by Parliament. Although it was supposed to safeguard the data of the citizens, the law has some significant flaws. It gives broad exemption to the government, is not well overseen by the independent body, and has weak remedies for individuals. It places administrative convenience and national security over individual autonomy and dignity, rendering it inadequate as a constitutional protection.

Efficiency but less personal control

Data-fication has entered every sector. Banks rely on behavioural analytics. Hospitals and insurance agencies depend on digital medical records. Education is delivered through online platforms. Social media do profile users constantly. These developments create efficiency, yet they also reduce personal control over information. Consent has become a routine "click-through" process, not a genuine voluntary choice. Purpose limitation is often ignored. Consequently, privacy loss is no longer just about isolated breaches. It is about the gradual erasure of personal control over identity and decision-making.

Surveillance technologies now form part of public places. Closed circuit cameras, biometric scanners and digital identifiers constantly monitor people. Accordingly, facial recognition has been prohibited or severely limited in a few cities in the United States because of racial discrimination, surveillance and false identification. Facial recognition misidentification has led to wrongful arrests abroad. Digi Yatra data (at Indian airports) too is not with the government. Research has found that these systems at times adversely work against people of colour, women, and minority groups. Thus, facial recognition technology basically leads to discrimination rather than assisting crime prevention which like Sanchar Saathi, is its stated objective.

While such technologies are still growing and are being used in India. There is no comprehensive law on surveillance. There is a lack of effective judicial control. Transparency is rare. This poses a serious disproportion between authority and responsibility. Unchecked surveillance may end up transforming a democratic state into a monitoring state like Big Brother.

Algorithms determine who receives welfare, is profiled by police, has their content removed, and who gets a job or a loan application shortlisted. Such systems are commonly known as black boxes as their decision-making functions are obscure. In cases when a benefit is not provided to a person, or a person is suspected, there is no explanation. It also lacks a clear-cut mechanism of appeal.

There are real consequences. Algorithmic failures have excluded deserving families from welfare schemes. Automated content moderation has silenced legitimate voices. Indeed, technology can quietly violate the constitutional principles of equality, reasonableness and natural justice.

An inadequate legal system

The legal system that is in place in India, including the Information Technology Act, 2000, and emerging digital laws, is mainly aimed at controlling technology and governing platforms. It is not doing enough to defend citizen's liberties in general and privacy in particular. Few guidelines have been provided by courts, but these are disjointed and provisional. When it comes to high-risk algorithms and surveillance orders, there is no external institution with the ability to audit them or even review them. To the majority of tech-savvy citizens, remedies are slow and expensive and unreachable. Masses are unaware of dangers.

This gives rise to a paradox in the constitution. Rights, freedoms and state power are now being shaped by the digital system, just like the government institutions. These are not, however, subjected to constitutional discipline. This is an incongruity that undermines democracy.

To find the appropriate model of digital constitutionalism, it will have to be more than being merely theoretical. It should develop institutional protection. Violations should be inquired into by creating an independent digital rights commission that will ensure accountability. The law should restrict surveillance except in grave situations of national security, which can be determined by necessity and proportionality. Public transparency reports and parliamentary scrutiny, and judicial warrants must be obligatory.

Risky AI devices should be audited and bias-tested on a regular basis. Citizens should be granted the right to explanation and the right to appeal to the automated decisions. The tight control of purpose, limited collection and severe punishment of abuse should be reinforced to ensure better data protection.

Digital literacy too is to be considered as a constitutional empowerment. Individuals should be in a position to criticise, challenge and oppose digital power structures. Rights are mere theories without knowing.

Digital technologies have become an integral part of citizenship. They determine the availability of services, political participation and even identity. With governance increasingly being more data-driven, constitutional values should be used as the starting point for this shift. Freedom, equality and privacy are too precious to be among the mute victims of efficiency. Digital constitutionalism is not just a change in law. It is the defence of the democratic era in the algorithmic era. It is a promise to make sure that technology is a servant of the people and not their silent authoritarian master.

Content.

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- **These values are being threatened in the world where data collection, artificial intelligence (AI) and surveillance technologies take the lead. Modern governance is becoming an invisible system, whether it is biometric databases, predictive algorithms or both. In the absence of strong constitutional protection within these systems, humans are likely to be exposed to abuse of authority.**

- **Everyday life is now being influenced by digital governance. Automated processes mediate Know Your Customer (KYC) verification, welfare distribution, job applications, health-care records, and even political expression in social media.**
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Chile's lesson for India's coal conundrum

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Despite dramatic gains in renewable energy, India dropped 13 places to 23rd in the Climate Change Performance Index released during COP30 in Brazil in November 2025. The main reason is the lack of progress to phase out coal. Coal presents a conundrum of the worst kind because its phaseout presents a loss of jobs and the supply of low-cost electricity in some States, while the current trajectory means the loss of lives and livelihoods from runaway global warming and air pollution. This trade-off draws attention to Chile's experience in tackling it.

A comparison

The big Indian picture is that coal, as a source of the use of all energy, makes up over half while renewables (solar, wind, hydro, nuclear) are still a minority share. At the same time, the good news is that India doubled clean energy capacity during 2021-25. Now, the share of renewables in total installed power capacity is one half, although only one-fifth of electricity was actually generated using them in 2024, with coal contributing 75% of electricity generation. What is more, India is increasing domestic production of coal.

In comparison, coal's share of Chile's electricity generation fell from 43.6% to 17.5% during 2016-24. Today, renewables (especially wind and solar) make up over 60% of the country's power mix. This shift was driven by decisive government actions, first by a 2014 tax of \$5 a tonne of carbon emissions. The government imposed stringent emission standards on coal plants, raising construction and compliance costs by 30%. Competitive auctions for wind and solar power helped push renewables. Chile has also aggressively built out energy storage systems to stabilise the grid, and committed to phase out all coal by 2040. All this makes the case that even



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India needs to draw up a plan to exit the use of coal and in this, Chile's experience can help

economies with coal dependence can accelerate a transition. That said, coal occupies a smaller share of Chile's energy when compared to India, giving it fewer plants to shut down and a smaller dependent workforce. The transition was also enabled by a political environment that allowed swift, market reforms following privatisation of key sectors.

Crucially, Chile had already begun developing alternative industries, particularly in renewables, creating pathways to absorb displaced workers and capital. In contrast, India's far deeper coal dependence and limited economic alternatives in coal regions make its transition more complex. Many districts in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal could face social risks from abrupt closures.

But it is worth remembering that coal phaseout constitutes a "no regrets" policy. That is to say it is part of averting the damage from climate change. One estimate is that by 2100, climate change would sap 3%-10% of India's GDP through heat stress and declining labour productivity. It is also part of stopping massive health damage: by one estimate, a one GW increase in coal-fired capacity corresponds to a 14% increase in infant mortality rates in districts near the plant site.

Focus on decarbonisation

Considering this socio-ecological calculus, the eye needs to be squarely on decarbonisation which calls for a systematic removal of the oldest and most polluting plants, cancellation of new coal approvals, and replacement of coal output with firm renewable power backed by storage. It is important to have timelines for plant retirements and closures. TERI has suggested that India could phase out coal power entirely by 2050 to meet its net zero goals. In the transition

to this target, there could be an incremental scaling down of coal, improved efficiency and decommissioning. Three sets of action aid this central thrust of a coal phaseout.

First, the more the limitations of renewables are tackled, the better for the moving out of coal. The effort would also be aided by a drive to electrify transport, industry and households.

Second, underpinning this physical transition would be the reform of markets and regulation to disincentivise coal, for example through carbon pricing, removal of coal subsidies, clean dispatch rules and power procurement contracts that favour renewables.

Third, Chile's experience also speaks to providing robust support for workers through reskilling and alternative livelihoods. A dedicated transition fund is essential, such as the "Green Energy Transition India Fund" proposed by the Inter-Ministerial Committee.

The issue of finance

Financing the transition will benefit from a blended model of public and private capital, where government support is directed toward community welfare and workforce reskilling, while private investors lead the expansion of clean energy infrastructure. The District Mineral Foundation corpus can be strategically used to foster entrepreneurship and economic diversification in coal-dependent regions.

Considering the high stakes, a phaseout of coal needs to become a top political priority. Renewable energy gains show tremendous promise, but without an actionable plan to replace coal, climate ambitions would remain hollow. The time has come for a coal exit road map, one that enshrines delivery timelines, financing of social protection, market reform, and learning from peers such as Chile.



PERU

BRAZIL

PACIFIC
OCEAN

BOLIVIA

PARAGUAY

CHILE

ARGENTINA

SANTIAGO

URUGUAY

ATLANTIC
OCEAN

Content.

- **Despite dramatic gains in renewable energy, India dropped 13 places to 23rd in the Climate Change Performance Index released during COP30 in Brazil in November 2025. The main reason is the lack of progress to phase out coal.**
- **The big Indian picture is that coal, as a source of the use of all energy, makes up over half while renewables (solar, wind, hydro, nuclear) are still a minority share.**
- **At the same time, the good news is that India doubled clean energy capacity during 2021-25.**
- **Now, the share of renewables in total installed power capacity is one half, although only one-fifth of electricity was actually generated using them in 2024, with coal contributing 75% of electricity generation. What is more, India is increasing domestic production of coal.**
- **In comparison, coal's share of Chile's electricity generation fell from 43.6% to 17.5% during 2016-24.**

- **Today, renewables (especially wind and solar) make up over 60% of the country's power mix. This shift was driven by decisive government actions, first by a 2014 tax of \$5 a tonne of carbon emissions.**
- **The government imposed stringent emission standards on coal plants, raising construction and compliance costs by 30%. Competitive auctions for wind and solar power helped push renewables.**
- **Chile has also aggressively built out energy storage systems to stabilise the grid, and committed to phase out all coal by 2040.**
- **All this makes the case that even economies with coal dependence can accelerate a transition.**
- **That said, coal occupies a smaller share of Chile's energy when compared to India, giving it fewer plants to shut down and a smaller dependent workforce.**

- **Crucially, Chile had already begun developing alternative industries, particularly in renewables, creating pathways to absorb displaced workers and capital.**
- **In contrast, India's far deeper coal dependence and limited economic alternatives in coal regions make its transition more complex. Many districts in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal could face social risks from abrupt closures.**
- **But it is worth remembering that coal phaseout constitutes a “no regrets” policy. That is to say it is part of averting the damage from climate change.**
- **One estimate is that by 2100, climate change would sap 3%-10% of India's GDP through heat stress and declining labour productivity. It is also part of stopping massive health damage: by one estimate, a one GW increase in coal-fired capacity corresponds to a 14% increase in infant mortality rates in districts near the plant site.**
- **Focus on decarbonisation**

Deal without peace

Trump's announcement of the accord between Congo, Rwanda is premature

President Donald Trump counts the crisis in Congo as among the conflicts he has helped resolve. On December 4, he hosted the leaders of Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo in Washington for the signing of a formal peace agreement, which endorsed an earlier deal concluded by the Foreign Ministers of both countries. Mr. Trump hailed the accord as a "historic" step towards bringing prosperity to Africa, while Congolese President Félix Tshisekedi and his Rwandan counterpart Paul Kagame, who had frequently exchanged insults, praised his mediation. Mr. Trump also promised American investments in the resource-rich Congo if peace holds. On Thursday, he said he would send "our biggest and greatest companies over to the two countries", adding that "we are going to take some of the rare earth, take out some of the assets and pay ... and everybody is going to make a lot of money". But beyond the grandiosity of the ceremony, the situation remains complex and violent, with fighting continuing to rage in eastern Congo between Congolese forces and the M23 rebels. Under the agreement, Rwanda wants Congo to disarm the Hutu militias operating from its territory, while Congo wants Rwanda to withdraw troops from the east. Ultimately, however, the success of the deal hinges on securing peace between the Congolese government and M23.

The crisis in Congo can be traced back to the 1994 Rwandan genocide in which about 8,00,000 people, mostly Tutsis, were massacred by ethnic Hutu militias. After the genocidal regime in Kigali fell, thousands of Hutus fled to Congo in the mid-1990s. Rwanda now claims that some of the militias that took part in the genocide continue to operate from Congolese territory. M23, which takes its name from a failed peace agreement signed between a Tutsi-led rebel group and the Congolese government on March 23, 2009, says it is fighting to protect the rights of Congo's Tutsi ethnic minority. The Congo and UN experts say neighbouring Rwanda, ruled by a Tutsi-led government, is backing M23. In 2012, shortly after its formation, M23 seized much of Goma in eastern Congo, but withdrew when Rwanda came under international pressure. It started another rebellion in 2021, capturing Goma again and expanding its reach. Alongside the U.S.-brokered talks between the Congo and Rwanda, a parallel dialogue between M23 and Kinshasa, facilitated by Qatar, is also under way. Congo wants M23 to withdraw from the eastern regions it controls, but the rebels have shown little interest in doing so. Mr. Trump's declaration that he brought the war to an end appears premature, given the complexity of the crisis. For peace, the wounds of the genocide must be healed, inter-racial relations between Hutus and Tutsis improved, non-state militias disarmed and ties between Rwanda and the Congo stabilised.



CAMEROON

Yaounde

**CENTRAL AFRICAN
REPUBLIC**

Bangui

SOUTH SUDAN

Libreville

GABON

**REPUBLIC OF
THE CONGO**

Brazzaville

Kinshasa

Matadi

Luanda

ANGOLA

Huambo

**DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF
THE CONGO**

Kikwit

Kolwezi

Lubumbashi

ZAMBIA

SOUTH SUDAN

UGANDA

Kampala

KENYA

Nairobi

RWANDA

BURUNDI

TANZANIA

Mombasa



South
Atlantic
Ocean

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Fact

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- **M23, which takes its name from a failed peace agreement signed between a Tutsi-led rebel group and the Congolese government on March 23, 2009, says it is fighting to protect the rights of Congo's Tutsi ethnic minority.**
- **The Congo and UN experts say neighbouring Rwanda, ruled by a Tutsi-led government, is backing M23.**

Mahad Satyagraha



Content.

- **A historic non-violent movement led by B. R. Ambedkar asserting Dalit rights to access public water and reject caste-based exclusion—one of India's earliest human rights struggles.**
- **Launched in: March 19–20, 1927 (Mahad 1.0) and December 25–26, 1927 (Mahad 2.0) at Mahad, Bombay Presidency (now Raigad, Maharashtra).**
- **Denial of access to public water sources such as the Chavdar Tank due to caste-based untouchability.**
- **1923 Bole Resolution legally allowed Dalits to use public facilities, but local caste elites resisted implementation.**
- **Rising caste violence in villages like Goregaon and Dasgaon reinforcing the need for collective assertion of rights.**

Outcome:

- **Legal victory (1937):** Courts held no valid custom existed to bar Dalits from public tanks, affirming equal civic rights.
- **Strengthened Dalit political consciousness:** Mahad became the birthplace of a new rights-based movement.
- **Foundation for later struggles:** Directly influenced Ambedkar's arguments in *Annihilation of Caste* and shaped the moral core of India's Constitution.
- **December 25 recognised as Indian Women's Liberation Day,** reflecting the gendered nature of Ambedkar's social revolution.

Military Exercises



- **Exercise Garuda 25:**
- **Host: Air Base 118, Mont-de-Marsan, France**
- **Nations Involved: India (IAF) and France (French Air & Space Force – FASF)**

- **Exercise Garuda Shakti 2025:**
- **Host: Special Forces Training School, Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh**
- **Nations Involved: India (PARA SF) and Indonesia (Indonesian Special Forces)**

1. सत्य कोई रंग नहीं जानता है।

Truth knows no color.

2. बिना लड़े ही दुश्मन को परास्त करना युद्ध की सर्वोच्च कला है।

The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting.

3. विचार एक दुनिया खोजता भी है और एक बनाता भी है।

Thought finds a world and creates one also.

4. सबसे अच्छे सबक कड़वे अनुभवों से सीखे जाते हैं।

Best lessons are learnt through bitter experiences.

5. मैले पानी को अकेला छोड़ने से ही उसे सबसे अच्छा साफ़ किया जा सकता है।

Muddy water is best cleared by leaving it alone.

6. वर्ष बहुत कुछ सिखाते हैं, जो दिन कभी नहीं जानते।

The years teach much which the days never know.

7. जीवन को एक यात्रा के रूप में देखना सर्वोत्तम है, न कि एक गंतव्य के रूप में।

It is best to see life as a journey, not as a destination.

8. संतोष स्वाभाविक संपत्ति है; विलासिता कृत्रिम निर्धनता है।

Contentment is natural wealth; luxury is artificial poverty.



Thank You!