



LOST  
**TIME**  
IS NEVER  
**FOUND**  
AGAIN

# **Important Issues of the Day**

- **Rajya Sabha – Page No.1 , GS 2**
- **Total fertility rate – Page No.1 , GS 1**
- **Governor – Page No.1 , GS 2**
- **Women’s rights – Page No. 8, GS 2**
- **West Asia on fire – Page No.10 , GS 2**

# Nitish files his RS papers ahead of exit as Bihar CM

JD(U) chief submits papers in the presence of Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP chief Nitin Nabin; Nitish says on social media he wishes to be an RS member; Opposition slams 'betrayal of mandate'

**Amarnath Tewary**  
PATNA

Marking the end of an era, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar filed his nomination papers for the Rajya Sabha in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah. He was accompanied by the other four candidates of the ruling National Democratic Alliance, including BJP national president Nitin Nabin, who filed their papers for the five Rajya Sabha seats from Bihar that will fall vacant on April 9.

While the Opposition mocked Mr. Kumar for becoming a "puppet of the BJP", accusing him of betraying the electoral mandate, rumours buzzed within the NDA about who would succeed him in Pat-



**New beginning:** Chief Minister Nitish Kumar filing his nomination for the Rajya Sabha at the Vidhan Sabha in Patna on Thursday. ANI

na, with discussions about the Janata Dal (United) chief's son being given the Deputy CM role under a BJP CM.

**'Spotless tenure'**  
Confirming speculation

about the end of his 20-year rule in Bihar with a post on social media, Mr. Kumar declared that he had a "desire in his heart" to become a member of both the Houses of Parliament. As he has previously

been a Lok Sabha member, he now "seeks" to become a member of the Rajya Sabha, he said.

After all five candidates filed their nomination papers, Mr. Shah praised Mr. Kumar's tenure in Bihar as "spotless, memorable, and golden".

He added: "Nitish Kumar *ji* will be remembered for the glorious works he has done for the development of the State."

NDA sources told news agency PTI that it will take a few weeks before Mr. Kumar relinquishes the CM's post, which he is likely to hold until leaving for the national capital to be sworn in as an MP.

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**END OF AN ERA**  
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- **Marking the end of an era, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar filed his nomination papers for the Rajya Sabha in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah.**
- **He was accompanied by the other four candidates of the ruling National Democratic Alliance, including BJP national president Nitin Nabin, who filed their papers for the five Rajya Sabha seats from Bihar that will fall vacant on April 9.**
- **The Upper House of the Parliament, Rajya Sabha or Council of States was constituted on 3rd April 1952 and the first session was held on 13th May 1952. Since then, it has contributed to the welfare and progress of the country in many ways.**
- **The origin of the Rajya Sabha or the Second Chamber can be traced to the Montague-Chelmsford Report of 1918.**
- **This report introduced a bicameral legislature, the Lower House or Central Legislative Assembly and the Upper House or Council of State.**

- **Rajya Sabha: It is the Upper House (Second Chamber or House of Elders) and it represents the states and union territories of the Indian Union.**
- **The Rajya Sabha is called the permanent House of the Parliament as it is never fully dissolved.**
- **The IV Schedule of the Indian Constitution deals with the allocation of seats in the Rajya Sabha to the states and UTs.**
- **The maximum strength of Rajya Sabha is 250 ( out of which 238 members are representatives of the states & UTs (elected indirectly) and 12 are nominated by the President).**
- **The current strength of the house is 245, 229 members represent the states, 4 members represent the UTs, and 12 are nominated by the president.**

- **The representatives of states are elected by the members of state legislative assemblies.**
- **The representatives of each UT in the Rajya Sabha are indirectly elected by members of an electoral college specially constituted for the purpose.**
- **Only three UTs (Delhi, Puducherry, and Jammu & Kashmir) have representation in Rajya Sabha (others don't have enough population).**
- **State Related Matters: The Rajya Sabha provides representation to the States. Therefore, any matter that affects the States must be referred to it for its consent and approval.**
- **If the Union Parliament wishes to remove/transfer a matter from the State list, the approval of the Rajya Sabha is necessary.**
- **All-India Services: It can authorise the Parliament to create new All-India Services common to both the Centre and the states (Article 312).**

**Q. Rajya Sabha has equal powers with Lok Sabha in: (2020)**

- A. the matter of creating new All India Services**
- B. amending the Constitution**
- C. the removal of the government**
- D. making cut motion**

**Q. Consider the following statements: (2015)**

- 1. The Rajya Sabha has no power either to reject or to amend a Money Bill.**
- 2. The Rajya Sabha cannot vote on the Demands for Grants.**
- 3. The Rajya Sabha cannot discuss the Annual Financial Statement.**

**Which of the statements given above is/ are correct?**

- A. 1 only**
- B. 1 and 2 only**
- C. 2 and 3 only**
- D. 1, 2 and 3**

## Mains Question

Discuss the role and significance of the Rajya Sabha in India's federal structure. In recent years, debates have emerged regarding its relevance and functioning. Critically examine whether the Rajya Sabha continues to serve its intended constitutional purpose.

*भारत की संघीय संरचना में राज्यसभा की भूमिका और महत्व पर चर्चा कीजिए। हाल के वर्षों में इसकी प्रासंगिकता और कार्यप्रणाली को लेकर बहस उभरकर सामने आई है। समालोचनात्मक विश्लेषण कीजिए कि क्या राज्यसभा आज भी अपने संवैधानिक उद्देश्य को प्रभावी रूप से पूरा कर रही है।*

# A.P. introduces incentives for families to have three children


**The Hindu Bureau**  
VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu introduced the Draft Population Management Policy, whose objective is to raise the total fertility rate (TFR) from 1.5 to an optimal level of 2.1, in the Assembly on Thursday, with the aim of reversing the declining fertility rate and preparing the State for an ageing society by 2047.

To encourage parents to have a third child, Mr. Naidu proposed an incentive of ₹25,000, noting that inaction at this stage would cause a lot of problems like in Japan, Italy and South Korea, with TFRs of 1.2, 1.2 and 0.7 they are facing respectively. The new policy is targeted to be implemented from April 1, 2026.

“Andhra Pradesh is now mirroring Tamil Nadu [TFR of 1.4] and Kerala [1.6]. We are no longer a high fertility State. The situation requires an entirely



 A.P. is now mirroring Tamil Nadu [TFR of 1.4] and Kerala [1.6]. We are no longer a high fertility State. The situation requires an entirely new policy playbook  
**N. CHANDRABABU NAIDU**  
Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister

new policy playbook,” the Chief Minister said.

Making a statement on the policy, Mr. Naidu said the State’s TFR was well below the replacement level of 2.1 and if the trend continues, nearly 23% of the population would be elderly. If the falling TFR is not stopped, the State will have a shrinking workforce and it will cripple the economy, he said.

## **Main goals**

The State government has set a goal of stabilising the TFR at 2.1 and nearly doubling women’s participation in labour force to

boost the Gross State Domestic Product by 15%.

As part of the efforts to increase the TFR, Mr. Naidu said the government will give a “Poshana - Shiksha - Suraksha” package to families having a third child. The incentive will be paid at the time of delivery, monthly aid of ₹1,000 for five years, and free education to the child up to age 18, he said.

The Chief Minister said the draft policy document will be placed in the public domain for one month to facilitate deliberations and then “it will be given a final shape”.

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- **“Andhra Pradesh is now mirroring Tamil Nadu [TFR of 1.4] and Kerala [1.6]. We are no longer a high fertility State. The situation requires an entirely new policy playbook,” the Chief Minister said.**

- **India's TFR dropped from 6.18 in the 1950s to 1.9 in 2021, below the replacement level of 2.1.**
- **By 2100, the TFR in India is projected to fall further to 1.04 (barely one child per woman).**
- **Total Fertility Rate (TFR): The TFR is the average number of children a group of women would have by the end of their reproductive years (ages 15 to 49) if they followed the current fertility rates throughout their lives, assuming no mortality. It is expressed as children per woman.**
- **As per the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) (2019-21), the TFR has declined to 2.0 children per woman from 2.2 children per woman (NFHS- 4 (2015-16)).**
- **Replacement Level: A TFR of 2.1 is considered the replacement level, where each generation replaces itself without significant population growth or decline.**
- **A TFR lower than 2.1, however, can lead to negative population growth, potentially causing long-term demographic challenges, including an ageing population**

**The total fertility rate in an economy is defined as:**

**[A] the number of children born per 1000 people in the population in a year.**

**[B] the number of children born to a couple in their lifetime in a given population.**

**[C] the birth rate minus death rate.**

**[D] the average number of live births a woman would have by the end of her child-bearing age.**

## Mains Question

Discuss the relationship between population growth and poverty in India. To what extent does rapid population growth aggravate poverty, and how can inclusive development policies address this challenge?

भारत में जनसंख्या वृद्धि और गरीबी के बीच संबंध पर चर्चा कीजिए। तीव्र जनसंख्या वृद्धि किस सीमा तक गरीबी की समस्या को बढ़ाती है, तथा समावेशी विकास नीतियाँ इस चुनौती का समाधान कैसे कर सकती हैं?

# Ahead of crucial Assembly elections, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal Governors changed

**Vijaita Singh**  
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday appointed Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi as the Governor of West Bengal, while Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar was given the additional charge of Tamil Nadu. The appointments come ahead of the announcement of crucial Assembly elections in these States.

Bihar, which saw a major political change during the day with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar filing nominations for the Rajya Sabha elections, also witnessed a change in the gubernatorial seat, with Lt. General Syed Ata Hasnain (retd) being appointed the Governor, replacing Arif Mohammed Khan.

Shiv Pratap Shukla, Governor of Himachal Pradesh, was transferred to Telangana; Governor Jishnu Dev Varma was transferred from Telangana to Maharashtra; Delhi's Lieutenant-Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena was moved to Ladakh, while Ladakh L-G Kavinder Gupta was elevated to Governor of Himachal Pradesh, according to a communication from the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Taranjit Singh Sandhu, former Indian Ambassador to the U.S., who later joined the Bharatiya Janata Party and unsuccessfully contested the 2024 Lok Sabha election from Amritsar, was appointed the new L-G of Delhi.

BJP leader and former Bihar Assembly Speaker Nand Kishore Yadav was appointed Governor of Nagaland.

## Gubernatorial postings

President Droupadi Murmu announced new Governors for seven States and Lt. Governors for two Union Territories on Thursday



**Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar**

**Given additional charge of Tamil Nadu**

**Current/previous role Governor of Kerala**



**R.N. Ravi**

**Appointed Governor of West Bengal**

**Current/previous role Governor of Tamil Nadu**

Name	State/Union Territory
Jishnu Dev Varma	Maharashtra
Shiv Pratap Shukla	Telangana
Kavinder Gupta	Himachal Pradesh
Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Syed Ata Hasnain	Bihar
Nand Kishore Yadav	Nagaland
Taranjit Singh Sandhu	Delhi
Vinai Kumar Saxena	Ladakh

**West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose has resigned from his post ahead of Assembly polls**

West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose and Ladakh Lieutenant-Governor Kavinder Gupta resigned on Thursday.

Mr. Gupta was appointed Ladakh's L-G in July 2025. His tenure witnessed unprecedented violence on September 24, 2025, in Leh city, when four people, including a Kargil war veteran, were killed in police firing when a protest to demand constitutional safeguards for the region turned violent.

### Stormy relations

Relations between Mr. Ravi and the M.K. Stalin government in Tamil Nadu have been stormy, with the ruling DMK accusing the former of positioning himself as a political rival to an elected government.

Mr. Ravi withheld assent for several Bills, following which the Supreme Court invoked powers in April 2025 to declare 10 Bills "effectively approved". Mr.

Ravi had also repeatedly walked out of the Assembly without reading out the customary Governor's Address or digressing from the government's prepared text.

Incidentally, it was at Mr. Ravi's suggestion that the name of Raj Bhavan was changed to Lok Bhavan a few months ago.

### Shocked, says Mamata

Mr. Bose, who had been in the position for more than three years, submitted his resignation to Ms. Murmu in Delhi.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said on Thursday that Union Home Minister Amit Shah called her and informed about Mr. Ravi's appointment. Ms. Banerjee said she was "shocked and deeply concerned by the sudden news of the resignation" of Mr. Bose.

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- **President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday appointed Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi as the Governor of West Bengal, while Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar was given the additional charge of Tamil Nadu.**
- **The appointments come ahead of the announcement of crucial Assembly elections in these States.**
- **Bihar, which saw a major political change during the day with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar filing nominations for the Rajya Sabha elections, also witnessed a change in the gubernatorial seat, with Lt. General Syed Ata Hasnain (retd) being appointed the Governor, replacing Arif Mohammed Khan.**

- **Article 153 of the Constitution of India mandates a Governor for each State, with the provision allowing the same person to serve as Governor for multiple States.**
- **He is the constitutional head of the state, bound by the advice of his council of ministers.**
- **Article 154 of the Constitution of India grants the executive power of the State to the Governor.**
  
- **Article 155 states that the President appoints the Governor of a State.**
- **Although appointed and reappointed by the President, the Governor is not considered an employee of the Government of India.**
  
- **Qualification for the Office of Governor: The Person must be an Indian citizen, at least 35 years old, and not a member of Parliament or any State Legislature.**

- **Article 156 stipulates that the Governor holds office at the President's pleasure, with a typical term of five years from the date of assuming office.**
- **The Governor can be dismissed by the President on the advice of a council of ministers headed by the Prime Minister.**
- **A Governor remains in office until their successor assumes charge, even after their term expires.**
- **Political Neutrality and Impartiality: Governors, appointed by the President on the advice of the central government, often face criticism for political ties to the ruling party, raising concerns about impartiality and acting as agents of the central government.**
- **Misuse of Article 356: The Governor's power under Article 356 to recommend President's Rule is often subjected to debate regarding constitutional ethos and federalism.**

**Q. Consider the following statements: (2018)**

- 1. No criminal proceedings shall be instituted against the Governor of a State in any court during his term of office.**
- 2. The emoluments and allowances of the Governor of a State shall not be diminished during his term of office.**

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

**(a) 1 only**

**(b) 2 only**

**(c) Both 1 and 2**

**(d) Neither 1 nor 2**

**Q. Which of the following are the discretionary powers given to the Governor of a State? (2014)**

- 1. Sending a report to the President of India for imposing the President's rule**
- 2. Appointing the Ministers**
- 3. Reserving certain bills passed by the State Legislature for consideration of the President of India**
- 4. Making the rules to conduct the business of the State Government**

**Select the correct answer using the code given below:**

- (a) 1 and 2 only**
- (b) 1 and 3 only**
- (c) 2, 3 and 4 only**
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4**

## Mains Question

The office of the Governor has frequently been at the centre of debates regarding federalism and constitutional morality in India. Examine the role and discretionary powers of the Governor and discuss the issues associated with their functioning.

भारत में संघवाद और संवैधानिक नैतिकता के संदर्भ में राज्यपाल का पद अक्सर विवादों के केंद्र में रहा है। राज्यपाल की भूमिका तथा उनके विवेकाधीन अधिकारों का परीक्षण कीजिए तथा उनके कार्यकलाप से जुड़ी समस्याओं पर चर्चा कीजिए।

# Protecting women's rights amid conflict and instability

International Women's Day is once again in our midst. Observed globally on March 8, the day has evolved from its early 20th century labour roots into a leading platform for deliberating on women's rights, celebrating achievements and demanding concrete action toward gender equality. Officially recognized by the United Nations (UN) in 1977, the day continues to serve as both a celebration and a call to action.

## Rights, justice and action

For 2026, the UN has chosen "Rights, Justice, Action: For All Women and Girls" as the global theme for International Women's Day. While these words resonate powerfully, affirming women's rights to equality and justice, the reality remains far from supportive of translating this theme into a practical programme. The unpleasant truth is that this ambitious call for action is against the ominous backdrop of a world marked by conflict, displacement, economic instability and political uncertainty. Multiple wars and conflicts are raging in several parts of the world.

Relentless targeted attacks by warring nations have already claimed so many lives and caused the destruction of several strategic locations. Those killed include a large number of women and children. What is worse, instead of de-escalation, we are witnessing a hardening of positions on all sides, with no early cessation of hostilities in sight.

What do these conflicts portend for living conditions and rights of women and children?

Gender equality is not a privilege but a fundamental human right. But it is easier said than done, more so in a world facing multiple crises in which women and children are the most vulnerable. Research and field studies have clearly established that women and girls suffer disproportionately in wars. Conflict and



**Archana Ramasundaram**

retired from the Indian Police Service as a Director General of the Sashastra Seema Bal, a central armed police force. She has also served as Member, Lokpal of India

Global instability makes this year's International Women's Day theme urgent

insecurity dramatically escalate incidents of gender-based violence, food insecurity, restricted mobility or forced displacement, disruption of families, loss of livelihood, breakdown of social support systems and lack of access to health care and education. Women trapped in conflict zones are also targeted as a strategy of war. Rape and sexual violence against women have been committed during wars since ancient times to subjugate and humiliate the enemy.

Many women also suffer mental health issues such as depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. The side-lining of women in peace talks and reconstruction processes further reduces their chances of addressing these problems.

## Promises but no progress

Acknowledging the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the UN Security Council, on October 31, 2000, unanimously adopted the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. It was affirmed in this historic resolution that women must be protected during conflicts and included actively in peacebuilding processes. Yet, the gap between commitments and implementation continues to remain wide. While a few countries have developed national action plans to implement Resolution 1325, no tangible change is noticed on the ground.

In fact, the conditions for women and children have worsened over these decades. Inequalities have become more acute in many places, with wars and political instability further weakening the institutions for the protection of women. The UN Secretary-General Report on Women, Peace and Security for 2025 categorically states that the world is experiencing the highest number of

active conflicts since 1946, resulting in unprecedented risks and suffering for women and girls. The report adds that nearly 676 million women live within 50 kilometres of deadly conflicts, the highest level since the 1990s. Civilian casualties among women and children quadrupled when compared to the previous two-year period. Conflict-related sexual violence increased by 87% in two years.

Moreover, despite overwhelming evidence that women's participation makes peace more durable, they remain largely excluded from decision-making. In 2024, nine out of 10 peace processes had no women negotiators, with

women making up just 7% of negotiators and 14% of mediators globally. This is despite the research consistently showing that peace agreements are more durable when women are meaningfully involved in these processes.

## Rights require action

Women, being important stakeholders as well as victims of war, should be

given equal opportunity to participate in talks and other processes. Women's collectives and global bodies should also play a more action-oriented role instead of confining themselves to slogans and conferences. Women and children in conflict zones should be protected from violence and sexual exploitation. In fact, helping them with food, education, health care, financial assistance and also emotional support is the duty of other stakeholders as well.

This underscores why the 2026 emphasis on rights and justice is both urgent and essential, making International Women's Day more than a calendar date and a reminder that protecting women's rights amid conflict and instability is a collective responsibility.



- **In 2029, India will have the most gender-representative Parliament in its history. The Women's Reservation Act will reserve one-third of the seats in the Lok Sabha for women — the largest single expansion of political representation this country has ever legislated. This moment has been decades in the making.**
- **India is ageing faster than its public conversation acknowledges.**
- **Over 100 million Indians are already above 60 years; that number will cross 250 million by the year 2040.**
- **Women will outlive men by four to five years on average, but those extra years have a compounded disadvantage: lower lifetime savings, broken employment histories, no assets in their own name, and no caregiver when they need one the most.**

- **International Women’s Day is once again in our midst. Observed globally on March 8, the day has evolved from its early 20th century labour roots into a leading platform for deliberating on women’s rights, celebrating achievements and demanding concrete action toward gender equality.**
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## Mains Question

Women empowerment is essential for achieving inclusive and sustainable development. Examine the major challenges that hinder women's empowerment in India and evaluate the effectiveness of government initiatives aimed at addressing them.

समावेशी और सतत विकास की प्राप्ति के लिए महिला सशक्तिकरण अत्यंत आवश्यक है। भारत में महिला सशक्तिकरण के मार्ग में आने वाली प्रमुख चुनौतियों का परीक्षण कीजिए तथा इनसे निपटने हेतु सरकार द्वारा उठाए गए कदमों की प्रभावशीलता का मूल्यांकन कीजिए।

## West Asia on fire

India should oppose the U.S.'s attempt to widen the war to the Indian Ocean

**S**ix days after the unprovoked, illegal Israeli-American war against Iran began, West Asia has descended into chaos. When U.S. President Donald Trump launched the war, killing Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, other leaders and at least 160 schoolchildren, he called on Iranians to overthrow the Islamic Republic and take over state institutions. That did not happen. Iran retaliated by targeting Israel as well as American bases, assets and missions in the Persian Gulf region. Satellite image-based analyses suggest that Iran has struck communication and radar structures at seven U.S. military sites. Hezbollah, the Lebanese militant group, also joined the war with rocket attacks on northern Israel. In Iraq, pro-Iran militias have struck American assets in Erbil and other areas. The U.S. has confirmed that at least six service personnel were killed and three fighter jets were lost in Kuwaiti "friendly fire", according to the Pentagon. On March 4, the U.S. expanded the theatre of war to the Indian Ocean by torpedoing an Iranian warship, *IRIS Dena*, off Sri Lanka, killing at least 83 personnel. The ship was in the region for last week's International Fleet Review off Visakhapatnam. If Mr. Trump and his ally Benjamin Netanyahu believed that Khamenei's killing would lead to a collapse of Iran's government, the result has instead been an all-out regional war.

Neither side has shown any willingness to step back. U.S. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth said on Wednesday that the conflict could last up to eight weeks. Ali Larijani, Iran's security chief, has ruled out talks with the U.S. and American media have reported that Washington is considering arming ethnic Kurdish militias in Iran's north-west to provoke internal unrest. This is a dangerous game. It appears that Mr. Trump launched the war without an exit strategy. As the Iranian state and its institutions show no signs of cracking, the U.S. has turned to massive bombardment and the prospect of fuelling civil strife in a country that it promised to "liberate" from clerical rule only days ago. If the war drags on, Mr. Trump is likely to face growing domestic resistance, with sections of his far-right base already calling it "Israel's war". For India, rising oil and gas prices will add to the burden on its economy, while a widening war could threaten the economic and physical security of the millions of Indians living in the region. New Delhi, which initially did not condemn the assassination of Khamenei, the leader of a friendly country, should take a more emphatic stand against the war and work with other powers to de-escalate the conflict. India should also strongly oppose U.S. attempts to bring the war to its backyard.

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Thank You!

