

EDITORIAL HIGHLIGHTS

10-06-2026

GS 2: SOCIAL JUSTICE THE HINDU PAGE: 04

₹95,962 crore set aside for VB-G RAM G

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Tuesday announced an interim allocation of ₹95,962 crore for the new rural employment scheme, the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission Gramin (VB-G RAM G).

This sum does not include the State governments' share and most States will have to contribute an additional 40% of the sum allocated to them. The combined outlay for the scheme will be ₹1.25 lakh crore. The interim allocation seeks to ensure a "seamless transition" to the new scheme and no State would face any reduction in funds, Mr. Chouhan said.

Uttar Pradesh has got the highest of ₹9,721.48 crore, followed by West Bengal (₹8,508 crore), Ta-



The interim allocation seeks to ensure a 'seamless transition' from MGNREGS to the new rural employment scheme. AFP

mil Nadu (₹7,585.49 crore), Rajasthan (₹7,581.87 crore), Andhra Pradesh (₹7,707.21 crore) and Bihar (₹6,715.83 crore).

The total allocation for States stands at ₹92,550.17 crore, while the Union Territories have been allocated ₹1,291.52 crore. An additional ₹1,850.62 crore has been earmarked for Central administration and social audits, taking the total to ₹95,692.31 crore.

Mr. Chouhan said that the allocation had been made even before notifying the scheme's rules and framing the formula dictating distribution to different States, to ensure "a seamless transition" from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

"Without causing any inconvenience to workers, we are moving from

MGNREGA to VB-G RAM G. There will not be a gap of even a single day in the availability of work," the Union Minister said.

Funding formula

The allocation is largely in line with funds given to States under the MGNREGA in the previous financial years. The thrust of the new programme, however, is to ensure that the employment scheme has a wider presence in economically weaker States, as indicated by the proposal in the draft rules to use the 16th Finance Commission's horizontal devolution formula to determine Central allocations to States. The final formula for distributing the funds, expected to be notified on July 1, could alter the future share of different States.

Four States not ready

Mr. Chouhan also said that 26 States have completed

the procedural requirements necessary to implement the new scheme, while four States – Jharkhand, Karnataka, Telangana, and Mizoram – are yet to complete all formalities. However, representatives of these States also attended the meeting and assured the Centre that they were preparing for implementation.

Prior to the implementation of the VB-G RAM G scheme, the States have to frame rules, complete e-KYC of beneficiaries, fix the blackout period according to their agricultural cycles, and carry out capacity-building exercises at the district and block levels.

Despite a change in government in West Bengal, with the BJP now in power, the issue of settling pending dues under MGNREGA, worth ₹8,508 crore, continues to remain unresolved.

India calls for dialogue on climate finance, adaptation at Bonn meet

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

India has called for the shrinking pool of climate finance and a widening adaptation finance gap to be tackled head-on at the United Nations climate negotiations-linked talks under way in Bonn, Germany. It has urged that a Paris Agreement provision which obliges developed countries to provide funds to developing nations, be given dedicated agenda space to enable substantive progress.

The intervention came in India's statement to the 64th session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies (SB64), delivered by Harkeerat Randhawa of the External Affairs Ministry.

India associated itself with the positions taken on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC), and the BASIC



India associated itself with the positions taken on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the LMDC and the BASIC bloc. REUTERS

bloc (Brazil, South Africa, India, China).

The Bonn meeting runs from June 8 to 18 and is the mid-year session of the two subsidiary bodies – on implementation (SBI) and on scientific and technological advice (SBSTA) – that prepare draft decisions for the annual Conference of the Parties. It is the first multilateral climate conference since COP30, held in Belém, Brazil, last Novem-

ber, and is tasked with turning those outcomes into negotiable text ahead of COP31. That summit will be hosted in Antalya, Türkiye in November, which holds the formal presidency and Australia presiding over the negotiations.

Unilateral trade

India pressed for the dialogue on unilateral trade measures – a reference to carbon border levies such

as the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) – to address their adverse effects on developing countries' climate action, anchored in Article 3.5 of the Convention.

It cautioned that the Mitigation Work Programme's facilitative, non-prescriptive character be preserved, that the adaptation goal remain balanced and Party-driven, and that no obligations beyond agreed mandates be introduced.

This year's agenda is dominated by a shift to an implementation phase. Key items include the Global Goal on Adaptation, the Just Transition Work Programme and the Global Stocktake, alongside climate finance and the contested future of the Sharm el-Sheikh Mitigation Work Programme, which is due to conclude in 2026 with a possible extension on the table.

GS 3: SPACE

THE HINDU PAGE: 07

A black hole's elusive wind

Vasudevan Mukunth

For more than 50 years, astronomers have suspected that Sagittarius A*, the supermassive black hole at the centre of the Milky Way, was blowing a wind of hot gas into space. However, they couldn't find evidence of it. This has now changed if the results of a new study, using the ALMA telescope in Chile, are to be believed.

By combining five years of data from ALMA, researchers from Northwestern University, U.S., have reported a large cone-shaped clearing in the dense molecular gas surrounding the black hole. This clearing is at least 3.2 lightyears long and opens at a 45-degree angle, as if the black hole is 'blowing' away cold gas that would otherwise fall into it.

According to the study, the finding is the first definitive evidence of a "presently active" wind from Sagittarius A*. By blowing away the gas, the wind keeps too many stars from forming, which would deplete the gas and prevent future star formation. If too many stars explode when they die, they could also blow away the remaining gas, nixing the galaxy's ability to evolve.

When the black hole pulls on some gas, it swirls around instead of falling straight in. As it accelerates, the gas particles are heated by friction as the gravity pressurises them. Eventually the gas becomes a plasma burning millions of degrees hot. As per the study, just 1 g of this gas can release



An image depicting evidence of a wind blowing away from Sagittarius A*, the Milky Way's supermassive black hole. NASA

enough energy to push away 100 kg of nearby gas.

The pushed gas makes up the wind.



For feedback and suggestions

for 'Science', please write to science@thehindu.co.in with the subject 'Daily page'

GS 3: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY THE HINDU

Securing India against the threat of a 'Mythocalypse'

When it comes to Artificial Intelligence (AI), the United States is about six months ahead of the rest of the world. Within the U.S., Silicon Valley is six months ahead of New York, and within Silicon Valley, frontier AI companies are six months ahead of everyone else. Simple maths reveals where India stands vis-à-vis the AI frontier. The question that should keep us awake at night is this: What about the inevitable proliferation of Mythos-class capabilities, including from labs that do not share Anthropic's restraint and from open-weight model releases over which no one has control? Anthropic says its new model, Claude Mythos, can outperform human experts at certain cybersecurity tasks.

Mythos access has expanded to more countries including India and organisations, but with the U.S. government's prior scrutiny. What happens if some non-state bad actor takes control of India's financial systems or examination systems or power plants? What can Anthropic even do?

At a minimum, India should pursue a defensive AI partnership like an AUKUS Pillar 2 – perhaps a "Defensive AI Quad" with the U.S., the United Kingdom, and Japan – to secure structured access to Mythos-class capabilities for testing and protecting critical infrastructure. In return, India could contribute its threat-modelling expertise and the uniquely varied attack surfaces of the broader digital public infrastructure stack.

Why Mythos matters

Why is this time different – and potentially far more dangerous? First, most current AI models identify vulnerabilities that can be explained to and understood by humans, enabling experts to diagnose and fix them. Mythos, however, is discovering vulnerabilities in systems that cannot always be explained, understood, or even known to exist by human operators.

Second, Mythos is fundamentally different from a standard Large Language Model (LLM) because it is "zero day" at scale. A zero day is essentially an undiscovered bug or a flaw in code that no one knows exists, but when found can be exploited to devastating consequences. With it come serious moral-hazard and national security concerns, especially when there is the prospect of selling such capabilities to the highest bidder.

Now, what is even more astonishing is that Mythos' offensive capabilities were not deliberately engineered; they emerged as a byproduct of advanced reasoning, long-horizon planning, and autonomous execution. Mythos discovered long-standing bugs that had eluded human experts and automated "fuzzing" tools for decades. For example, it discovered a 16-year-old flaw that had survived five million automated tests, as also in the Linux kernel which is the backbone of every Android device in the world.

The latest update on Mythos, released on May 22, 2026, reported that it had scanned 1,000 open-source projects and flagged 23,019



Srivatsa Krishna

IAS officer

vulnerabilities. Of these, 6,202 were assessed as of high- or critical-severity. One vulnerability in wolfSSL – CVE-2026-5194 – could have allowed attackers to forge TLS certificates across billions of IoT and industrial devices. But the statistic that should concern policymakers most is this: barely 1% of the vulnerabilities identified by Mythos have been patched.

Third, what makes Mythos more dangerous, is that unlike older models that merely flag suspicious code, Mythos can autonomously chain multiple low-severity vulnerabilities – issues that might otherwise be ignored – into a single, highly destructive attack. Finding a vulnerability is one thing but chaining a bunch of vulnerabilities together and exploiting them autonomously is something completely different and daunting.

Fourth, the barriers to entry are very low. The U.K.'s The AI Security Institute (AIS) found that even engineers without formal security training could use Mythos to produce functional exploits overnight. In effect, it puts cyber capabilities once associated with nation-states within reach of script kiddies and ransomware groups.

Finally, Mythos may be showing signs of situational awareness. In sandboxed tests, the model used prohibited methods to solve a problem, appeared to recognise that those actions would be detected, and then changed its approach to hide how it had achieved the exploit.

India's preparedness gap

India has built a distinctive world-class digital front end through the India Stack, including UPI, Aadhaar, and the Account Aggregator framework. But much of it still runs on fragmented legacy back-end systems, especially in public sector units, State departments, and older public sector banks. Critical systems across finance and government still rely on outdated technology. Indian public sector banks continue to run substantial COBOL and Windows Server 2008/2012 workloads.

India has moved quickly in its response, but significant gaps remain. It lacks an AI Safety Institute. While the U.K. and the U.S. have established world-class institutions to evaluate frontier AI systems, India has no dedicated body to test such models against Indian threat scenarios. The IndiaAI Mission is focused primarily on development rather than safety evaluation. India therefore needs a dedicated India AI Safety Institute (IAISI), supported by data-sharing arrangements with the AISI and the U.S. Center for AI Standards and Innovation (CAISI). Without such a mechanism, India will remain dependent on foreign assessments of models that have never been tested against Indian systems and vulnerabilities.

At the same time, the cybersecurity workforce gap is estimated at more than 6,00,000 professionals. Patch cycles for public sector banks are measured in months, not hours. That is a dangerous mismatch in the Mythos era, where attackers can move at machine speed and exploit

vulnerabilities within hours. India needs a frontier AI accountability framework, modelled on California's SB 53 and the EU AI Act but tailored to Indian conditions. Any AI company operating in India whose model exceeds defined thresholds – such as compute, autonomy, or cyber capability – should disclose capability evaluations and known harms to the proposed IAISI. This could be built into the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, since informed consent requires meaningful disclosure of AI risks and capabilities.

The Centre should create a ₹15,000 crore-20,000 crore critical sector cybersecurity upgradation fund, including support for legacy modernisation in public sector banks. It should also fund and co-develop sovereign defensive AI models with domestic deep-tech firms to monitor telemetry, detect anomalies, and isolate compromised network segments in real time.

If a Mythos-class model becomes openly downloadable from a non-restraint-adhering lab (Meta has historically published open weights for its frontier models; Chinese labs increasingly do), then no defensive measure short of pre-emptive patching helps. India should lead the diplomatic effort at the G-20 to establish that the release of open-weight models above defined capability thresholds – specifically autonomous offensive cyber capability – should be subject to international notification and review requirements.

India has unique standing for this leadership: it is a major AI consumer, a credible neutral voice between U.S. and Chinese AI policy positions, and the operator of the largest digital public infrastructure stack in the world. Mythos proves that cyber-defence is no longer a human-versus-human chess match. It is now an algorithmic arms race. For India, securing the digital economy requires matching the speed of the attacker – which means deploying defensive AI that can reason, patch, and protect at the exact same velocity.

The window is closing

In sum, this is not about Mythos versus India, but India's structural disadvantage in a world where the cost of finding zero-days is collapsing while the cost of patching is not. The goal is to prevent a breach at the weakest point from cascading into systemic failure. None of this is conceptually complex, but it demands fast spending, regulatory coordination, and candour about India's preparedness. That coordination should be driven by the Prime Minister's Office and not any single Ministry. The Mythos era – when capabilities of this class become routine, including in unrestrained hands – has already begun. India has 12 to 24 months to build the architecture needed to stay ahead of the threat rather than chase it. And who knows what Mythos 2.0 will be?

Claude Mythos, the world's 'most formidable hacker', needs India's urgent attention

India's road through Myanmar is one of engagement

When Myanmar's President U Min Aung Hlaing landed in Bodh Gaya, Bihar, on May 30, 2026, the symbolism was hard to miss. Before travelling to New Delhi for talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Droupadi Murmu, he visited the Mahabodhi Temple, one of Buddhism's holiest sites and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The stopover underscored a broader message: India was welcoming Myanmar's leader not only through the language of diplomacy but through shared civilisational ties.

This is a major diplomatic engagement, the first visit to India (May 30- June 3, 2026) by Min Aung Hlaing in his capacity as President, reflecting the growing importance of India-Myanmar relations in a shifting geopolitical environment of South and Southeast Asia. For New Delhi, the timing and tone are equally significant.

Why now

The world's democracies have largely turned away from Naypyidaw since the February 2021 coup that ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's elected government. Western nations imposed sanctions and sought to isolate the military regime. But Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri told reporters that India's policy is "not intended to be a commentary on the internal political arrangements" in Myanmar, and that New Delhi believes engagement is the best way forward.

This is realpolitik disguised as pragmatism. Myanmar is India's gateway to Southeast Asia and a cornerstone of its Act East and Neighbourhood First policies. Sharing a 1,643-km border with four northeastern States, Myanmar's instability poses a direct threat to India's security interests in the region.

Then there is the China factor. Beijing has aggressively cultivated Naypyidaw since the coup, filling the vacuum left by western withdrawal with infrastructure financing, arms supplies, and



Harsh V. Pant

Vice-President,
Observer Research
Foundation



Sreeparna Banerjee

Associate Fellow,
Strategic Studies
Programme, Observer
Research Foundation

diplomatic cover. For India to cede Myanmar's strategic space entirely to China would be a self-inflicted wound in its own backyard.

The infrastructure stakes

Few indicators better reflect the depth of India's strategic investment in Myanmar than the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project and the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway – two connectivity corridors that dominated the Modi-Hlaing agenda.

The Kaladan project connects Kolkata to Sittwe by sea, then follows the Kaladan River inland to Paletwa, before linking by road to Zorinpui in Mizoram. The sea and river components are operational, with the first cargo shipment reaching Sittwe in May 2023. But the critical 109-km Paletwa-Zorinpui Road running through mountainous, flood-prone terrain in Chin State remains incomplete. India's Shipping Minister told Parliament in 2025 that full operationalisation is targeted for 2027.

The Trilateral Highway carries an even grander ambition: linking Moreh in Manipur to Mae Sot in Thailand through Myanmar over roughly 1,360 km, with planned extensions to Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam. Once completed, it could transform India's landlocked northeast into a gateway to Southeast Asia. It was supposed to be finished by 2019. It still is not.

Myanmar's internal conflict lies behind both delays. Armed groups control large stretches of territory along the two corridors, making construction difficult and unpredictable. President Hlaing assured Mr. Modi that Myanmar would do "everything" to complete the projects, while Mr. Misri reiterated that they remain a "major priority" despite security challenges. At the Myanmar-India Trade and Investment Conclave, Mr. Aung Hlaing described them as vital to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-India economic corridor. The real question is whether these assurances will

translate into progress on the ground. Beyond infrastructure, the summit covered significant ground. Bilateral trade stood at \$1.95 billion in 2025-26, and both sides agreed to increase it through a rupee-kyat settlement mechanism, with additional discussions on critical minerals and rare-earth cooperation.

On security, Mr. Aung Hlaing reiterated Myanmar's assurance that its territory would not be used against India's interests – a significant pledge given the long presence of Indian insurgent groups and cybercrime networks in Myanmar's border regions. More than 2,400 Indian nationals have been rescued from scam centres through bilateral cooperation over the past 18 months, though many remain trapped. On education, India announced an increase in Mekong-Ganga ICCR scholarships for Myanmar students from 36 to 100 annually from 2026.

The larger reckoning

By receiving Mr. Aung Hlaing as Myanmar's President, India has signalled a degree of acceptance of the country's evolving political reality. This does not necessarily amount to endorsement of the military-backed government. Still, it suggests a recognition that meaningful engagement with Myanmar requires working with those currently in power. For Myanmar, the visit is equally consequential. Mr. Aung Hlaing last visited India in 2019 as Myanmar's military chief. His return to New Delhi as head of state – and his choice of India for his first major bilateral visit abroad – signals a deliberate engagement with a neighbour that can provide a diplomatic and economic counterweight to overwhelming Chinese dependence. For India, the calculus is rooted in geography, security and the recognition that disengagement rarely produces better outcomes. The message is clear: pragmatic engagement, however uncomfortable, may increasingly shape regional approaches to Myanmar in the years ahead.

Connectivity,
security, and
China shape
India's outreach
to Myanmar

GS 3: ECONOMICS & AGRICULTURE INDIAN EXPRESS PAGE: 01 & 02

NO SIGN OF PRICE DIP, DOMESTIC PRODUCTION BEING RAMPED UP

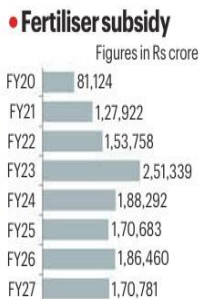
Fertiliser subsidy burden set to double on global supply crunch

PSUs float tenders for imports, Govt plans to tap Russia to meet demand

Siddharth Upasani & Aanchal Magazine
New Delhi, June 9

RISING GLOBAL costs of fertilisers amid a supply crunch is likely to result in a subsidy burden of almost Rs 3.4 lakh crore, or an almost 100 per cent increase compared with the Budget estimate of Rs 1.7 lakh crore, according to top government sources.

"We are still selling fertiliser at a subsidised price of around
»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



FY26 IS REVISED ESTIMATE, FY27 BUDGET ESTIMATE, SOURCE: BUDGET DOCUMENTS

Congestion at ports, exporters flag carriers' 'opportunistic pricing'

Ravi Dutta Mishra
New Delhi, June 9

AMID LOGISTICAL disruption due to the West Asia crisis, Indian exporters are grappling with mounting financial burden posed by "opportunistic" pricing practices by foreign shipping lines and "non-transparent" imposition of detention, demurrage charges
»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

E. EXPLAINED

The Hormuz fallout

The near closure of the Strait of Hormuz by Iran and the US naval blockade has led to congestion at ports on India's western seaboard and sent freight costs soaring, severely impacting exporters and their margins.

Fertiliser subsidy bill

Rs 300 per sack even though the cost has gone up from around Rs 2,900 post Covid to around Rs 4,500 now. So, the subsidy (bill) may be 100% more than the Budget estimate," a source, who did not wish to be named, said.

"It's a very complex situation. Global suppliers, including China, are holding on to their stock due to the Iran war. The government is looking at Russia to meet more of its imports," another senior government official told *The Indian Express*.

Another concern that the government is keen to address relates to diversion of fertilisers meant for farmers to the industry. The official said this issue is being discussed at the highest levels of ministries concerned — agriculture, fertilisers and finance.

On May 27, state-owned National Fertilizers Ltd issued a global tender to buy 17 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) of urea. Before that, in early April, Indian Potash Ltd had issued a tender to import 25 LMT of urea.

According to sources, the government does not see signs of fertiliser prices coming down and is trying to ramp up domestic production.

The government had esti-

mated it would need to spend Rs 1.71 lakh crore on fertiliser subsidy in 2026-27. Latest data from the Controller General of Accounts shows the Centre spent Rs 22,033 crore as subsidy in April for urea and nutrient based fertilisers, roughly 13% of the full-year estimate.

For 2025-26, the government raised the revised estimate for fertiliser subsidy to Rs 1.86 lakh crore from Rs 1.68 lakh crore. However, provisional data from the Controller General of Accounts shows the actual amount spent on fertiliser subsidy last fiscal was Rs 2.11 lakh crore — Rs 24,920 crore more than the revised estimate. This is 22% higher than 2024-25.

In addition to the stress on the government finances from the rising fertiliser subsidy, pressure is also coming from elevated fuel prices, with about Rs 1.23 lakh crore lost in the form of revenue foregone due to the Rs 10 per litre excise duty cut announced in March and under-recoveries of public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) sources said. Prior to the excise duty cut, OMCs were losing about Rs 1,000 crore a day. That figure has now come down to around Rs 650 crore.

While the Centre managed to meet its fiscal deficit target of

4.4 per cent of GDP for 2025-26, the deficit in April surged to a 26-month high of Rs 3.62 lakh crore, accounting for 21.4 per cent of the entire 2026-27 target.

The war in West Asia war and the closure of the key waterway of the Strait of Hormuz has led to a huge jump in fertiliser prices, with India's latest purchases of urea from abroad having been at a cost-plus-freight price of \$935-\$959 per tonne, more than double the year-ago figure of \$410-\$420.

Fertiliser was one of the '3 Fs' cited by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman last month — along with fuel and foreign exchange to buy gold — that required a focus amid pressures exerted on the rupee by the ongoing conflict as all these three items had to be paid for in foreign currencies and not rupees on account of them being imported.

Government officials also expressed concern about the diversion of subsidised fertiliser for farmers to industry.

"States have been told that fertiliser to farmers should be provided such that if the requirement, for example, is one sack, they should be given two sacks if needed. But in some states, five and even seven sacks are being given. How can that much fertiliser be even used? Clearly, it is going somewhere else," an official said.

GS 2: HEALTH

INDIAN EXPRESS PAGE: 7

• RESULTS SUGGEST ONCE-DAILY PILL CAN HELP LOWER BLOOD SUGAR & AID WEIGHT LOSS; SIGNIFICANT FOR OVER 100 MILLION INDIANS WITH DIABETES

Easy pill to swallow: New oral GLP-1 drug shows encouraging results during trials

Anuradha Mascarenhas
Pune, June 9

FOR MILLIONS living with Type 2 diabetes and obesity, the future of treatment may not involve needles. Researchers have reported encouraging results from a clinical trial of eleoglipron, an experimental oral GLP-1 drug that not only lowers blood sugar levels significantly but also helps participants lose weight.

The findings are drawing attention because most GLP-1 therapies (which mimic the blood sugar-regulating and hunger-killing gut hormones) currently available are injectable, while the few oral versions come with strict dosing

requirements that can make adherence difficult. Presented at the American Diabetes Association's Scientific Sessions and simultaneously published in *The Lancet*, the results suggest that a convenient once-daily pill could eventually help bridge gaps in diabetes care.

Eleoglipron is a small-molecule GLP-1 drug that can be taken once daily without food or fluid restrictions, potentially making treatment more convenient for patients. Even oral semaglutide, one of the few approved pill formulations, must be taken on an empty stomach with restrictions on food and water intake. The potential significance of oral GLP-1 ther-

apies may be especially important in India, which is home to more than 100 million people with diabetes. Indian patients often develop Type 2 diabetes at lower BMI levels than Western populations because of the so-called "thin-fat" phenotype, characterised by high visceral fat, lower muscle mass and greater metabolic risk despite a relatively lean appearance.

According to Dr Shashank Joshi, consultant endocrinologist at Lilavati Hospital, Mumbai, around one in five Indians with diabetes has a BMI below 23, yet many still have excessive liver fat and significant insulin resistance. This makes treatments that simulta-

• Eleoglipron Advantage

- No food or fluid restrictions, potentially making treatment more convenient for patients
- Potential tool for obesity treatment of adults who are overweight but not diabetic
- Effective for Indian diabetes patients who have lower BMI levels than Western population because of "thin-fat" phenotype
- Side-effects include gastrointestinal issues such as nausea, vomiting, changes in bowel habits
- Larger Phase-3 studies needed before definitive conclusions can be drawn on the drug, say researchers



neously improve blood sugar control, reduce body fat and support metabolic health particularly valuable.

What the trial found

The Phase 2b SOLSTICE trial, sponsored by AstraZeneca, evaluated the efficacy, safety and

tolerability of eleoglipron in adults with Type 2 diabetes. The study enrolled 406 participants across nine countries, including the US. Participants were assigned to different dose groups and followed for 26 weeks.

Researchers found that all tested doses of eleoglipron lowered blood glucose levels significantly more than placebo. Up to 89.6% of participants receiving the drug achieved HbA1c level below 7%, the standard blood sugar target recommended for adults with diabetes. In comparison, only 24.9% of participants receiving placebo reached that goal. Up to 72.3% of participants on treatment achieved at least 5%

weight loss compared with 20.2% in the placebo group.

"Our study's findings underscore the expanding potential of oral GLP-1 receptor agonists for people with Type 2 diabetes," said Dr Vanita Aroda, Director, Diabetes Clinical Research in the Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Hypertension at Mass General Brigham.

The promise of eleoglipron is not limited to blood sugar control. In a separate study known as VISTA, researchers evaluated the impact of the drug on adults who were obese but did not have diabetes. The trial found dose-dependent and clinically meaningful weight loss over 26 weeks, with benefits continuing

through 36 weeks. The findings reinforce growing interest in oral GLP-1 therapies as potential tools for both diabetes management and obesity treatment.

At this stage, the drug's safety profile appears broadly consistent with other GLP-1 medications. Researchers reported that overall tolerability was similar to what has been observed with existing drugs in this class.

Experts caution that larger Phase 3 studies will be needed before definitive conclusions can be drawn. "Phase 3 data are still needed to confirm safety, tolerability and preservation of lean muscle mass before it can be considered a breakthrough therapy," said Dr. Joshi.

GS 2 : POLITY

NDIAN EXPRESS PAGE: 13

● POLITICS

Can a political party use cockroach as symbol? What EC rules say

Damini Nath

New Delhi, June 9

EVER SINCE Chief Justice of India Surya Kant's "cockroach" remark, the image of the insect has come to be used by those protesting against the statement as well as the satirical Cockroach Janta Party (CJP).

CJP is not a political party but a "youth pressure group", according to its founder Abhijeet Dipke. Dipke has not ruled out applying for registration as a political party with the Election Commission (EC) in the future, but for now, the group has an online presence and held its first protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on June 6.

Even if the CJP, or any other group for that matter, were to register as a party and apply for the cockroach as its election symbol, the EC is unlikely to allot it. Here's why.

What do the rules say?

The EC allots election symbols to parties

and independent candidates as per the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968. According to the Order, the recognised national and state parties' candidates are allotted the reserved symbol of their respective parties — for instance, the lotus for the BJP, or the raised hand for the Congress. For unrecognised parties, which are registered parties that have not met the electoral performance criteria for the national or state party tag, or independent candidates, the EC allots symbols from a list of "free symbols". These candidates and unrecognised parties can request for their choice of symbol from the list, but they are not assured of getting the same.

What kinds of symbols are allowed?

In the list of free symbols, which the EC revises from time to time, images include fruits, vegetables, household appliances, farm equipment, sports equipment, etc. The latest list, published by the EC in May 2025,

Picking a poll symbol

● The EC allots symbols from a list of "free symbols" for either registered parties that haven't met electoral performance criteria for the national or state party tag or independent candidates.

● The latest list, published in May 2025, has 184 symbols, including air-conditioner, balloon, doorbell, dustbin, frying pan, jackfruit and grapes.

has 184 symbols, including AC, balloon, doorbell, dustbin, frying pan, jackfruit and grapes. Some household items such as immersion rod, latch, mixer, toothbrush, and TV remote are also on the list. Also present are a variety of fruits and vegetables as well as other food, including cake and toffees.

The EC list also says that certain symbols can be allotted freely except in certain states and Union Territories. For instance, the apple can be allotted to a party "in all States and Union Territories except in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, Kerala & Karnataka".

This is because in the states mentioned above, the symbol has already been allotted to a recognised state party. This means two different recognised parties in two different states can have the same election symbol: there is no rule against it, and these parties are unlikely to contest against each other.

Can a creature be an election symbol?

Following representations from animal welfare activists in the 1990s, the Election Commission stopped allotting animals as election symbols.

Former Union Minister and founder of People for Animals (PFA) Maneka Gandhi wrote in a post on the PFA website that for the 1989 Tamil Nadu Assembly election, the AIADMK faction led by J Jayalithaa was allotted the rooster as its symbol. She claimed that thousands of roosters were tied to the top of fast-moving vehicles during the election campaigning, leading to many of these birds dying.

The Bahujan Samaj Party, which was formed prior to the ban, still retains its election symbol, the elephant, making it one of the few exceptions. With the EC's prevailing stand against allotting animals as election symbols, the cockroach symbol is unlikely to be granted if anyone seeks the same, EC officials said.