EDITORIAL HIGHLIGHTS

13-11-2026

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GS 3: ENVIRONMENT AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

THE HINDU PAGE: 08

'India-EU FTA can be a game changer'

German Ambassador terms deal a 'win-win' situation; he says German firms manufacturing in India can re-export to Europe, India's auto industry can become internationally more competitive through supply chain integration, and Tamil Nadu and other industrial hubs stand to benefit from the FTA

INTERVIEW

Jasper Wieck

Narayan Lakshman

In a wide-ranging interview, German Ambassador to India Jasper Wieck spoke to Narayan Lakshman about evolving European security architecture, the potential for growth in the India-EU FTA, bilateral clean energy and defence initiatives, and opportunities for skilled Indian workers in Germany.

The India-EU FTA negotiations concluded earlier this year. Which market access provisions would German manufacturers be looking for in areas like automobiles?

This agreement has the potential to become a game changer. We have a thriving trade and investment partnership already today.

Once German companies manufacture in India, they can better re-export to Germany and Europe as a whole, a market of 450 million people. That will be a huge momentum for [Indian] industry in terms of additional investments.

Regarding the potential sectors of investments, you have to consider the entire breadth of German industry and economy: engineering and machinery, automotive, pharmaceuticals and medical equipment, semiconductors, software, automation, defence and many more sectors. Our economy in Germany is very diversified, and they find the entire spectrum here as a potential market to make additional investments and increase trade.

If, e.g., the automotive sectors in Germany and India better integrate their supply chains, we can more easily procure production parts in India, and vice versa; your car industry can procure cheaper production parts and spare parts in Germany. Your automotive industry becomes internationally more competitive as it will be the case with ours. It is a win-win situation.

Are there areas where Germany and India can jointly deliver results on their climate commitments despite energy pressures?

Annually, we commit roughly €10 billion to support decarbonization worldwide, and India is a privileged partner in this endeavour. We have launched the Green and Sustainable Development Partnership four years ago, under which we offer technical support and loans amounting to more than €1 billion each year. These investments go into energy transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy, cleaner mobility and clean tech. This year we celebrate 20 years of Indo-German Energy Partnership, which shows that India and Germany have a long-standing tradition in this domain.

At the same time, I firmly believe that the most exciting chapter of this energy partnership is still ahead of us, because now it is about developing a renewable energy industry in India itself. In order to avoid replacing one dependency through another in buying solar panels or battery storages from other countries, you should rather produce them in India.



J. JOHAN SATHYADAS

Where does Tamil Nadu fit for German supply chains that might move to India?

Tamil Nadu is already a primary destination for German investments. This has to do with the level of wages and energy prices, but also with a benign environment and incentives that the government of Tamil Nadu has put in place for foreign direct investments or joint ventures.

We have just been to Daimler Trucks, which has a huge plant producing trucks and buses not only for India, but also for Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America. They have decided to invest another ₹4,000 crore into their plant, also with a view to exporting to Europe in the future.

Are there more such projects from Germany being contemplated?

[A key] indicator is that we have high-level visits from various Länder of Germany. They always bring huge business delegations. We had Thüringen and Hessen; next week we will have Lower Saxony, a delegation of 60 people, most of them from business. That indicates a conjunction between the business that wants to get ready for the free trade agreement and the political side, which wants business to get ready.

Has the focus of German investors been mainly on industrial hubs such as the Chennai-Oragadam industrial belt, or does it expand beyond the metropolis to areas like Hosur, Coimbatore and tier two towns?

You mentioned two other important places where German companies have already invested and are keen to invest even more. In Coimbatore, it is automotive and clean-tech, wind energy. The company ZF provides equipment for wind energy power plants. In Hosur, it is two-wheelers, a joint venture between BMW with TVS.

Under Project 75(I), what would substantive technology transfer actually mean?

The final design of these submarines, which will be an Indian submarine, will be developed by both the Indian and the German shipyard together. It is not parachuted from Germany into India.

All six submarines will be produced in India, and the local content will increase over time, starting with 40% for the first submarine and then 60% or even more for the sixth submarine. Indian technology included in the construction will increase over time.

The German shipyard TKMS is ready to set up a production hub on the basis of the production of these six submarines for the Indian Navy, for the production of submarines for third markets: Southeast Asia or Latin America. Today most of the countries in Latin America are operating German submarines from the 1980s, so they have to have a new generation. Since our capacities for production in Germany are limited, it would be a win-win situation if this could also be done in India.

In addition, there are plans to develop together a heavy-weight torpedo. This would be a genuine Indo-German developed torpedo.

There are skilled Indians looking to migrate. Does Germany offer visas, schemes and initiatives for skilled Indians to move there and fill labour skill gaps in the German economy? What are their prospects? Do they get to stay on?

One very essential incentive is the studying opportunities at German universities. During my first stint, 17,000 Indian students were enrolled in German universities. Now we are at 70,000. Over a span of nine years, the number has increased fourfold. Once they have finished their studies in Germany, they are in a very good position to enter the German labour market. Roughly half of them stay in Germany.

For blue-collar jobs, German companies offer vocational training, which many Indians make use of. Here also, the numbers are going up steadily.

We issue 60,000 long-term visas each year, including those for students. I think we are now at 180,000 Indians who have come to Germany over the past years since the migration mobility agreement was signed in 2022. The numbers are going up, and there's huge satisfaction with these programmes.

GS 02: POLITY

THE HINDU PAGE: 08

The SIR exercise is also a technology failure



Priya Seetharaman

Professor, Management Information Systems Group, Indian Institute of Management Calcutta. Views are personal

Much of the public argument over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of India's electoral rolls is around law, power and politics. The autonomy of the Election Commission of India (ECI), the list of acceptable documents, and the burden placed on voters to prove eligibility are the key focus issues. There is, of course, no doubt that these questions matter. But a quieter, less spoken-about story runs underneath them. The 2025-26 SIR is the first revision of this scale to be run through a centralised digital platform, and the technology itself has become a source of exclusion. Viewed as a nationwide digital transformation project, the SIR fails on several counts that any student of technology would immediately recognise.

The irony stares right at us. India presents itself, with ample reasons to do so, as a leader in digital public infrastructure. From the IRCTC's (Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation) ticketing system and the income tax department's e-filing to Aadhaar authentication, UPI, DigiLocker etc., India holds up proof, at home and abroad, that it can build technology that works at scale.

Yet when it came to one of the most fundamental processes of any democracy, that is, the revision of electoral rolls, India has failed to utilise that capability. The irony is sharper because the above-mentioned successes were not built in weeks. They came from years of piloting, iteration and published specifications – the very peer-backed disciplines that seem to have been omitted when it came to the SIR.

Age and name discrepancies

Let's begin with how voters are flagged. A large share of notices to voters across States have been issued under the head of 'logical discrepancy' – a term that reflects little to no context sensitivity. Flags were generated centrally by ERONet, the ECI's roll management platform, using filters such as parent-child age gap, the number of children linked to one parent and the like. It is generally known that the ages mentioned on Indian electoral rolls are often approximate, especially for older citizens born at home. Therefore, rules that treat them as precise are bound to misfire.

An analysis of Delhi's draft roll by *The Hindu* found that family-size checks flagged Muslim electors at a markedly higher rate. The Supreme Court has clarified that it has not yet ruled on the legality of the 'logical discrepancy' category; it had allowed it in West Bengal only as an interim arrangement.

Additionally, a rule coded into the software platform decides who must appear for a hearing. This rule has never been published by the Commission; it varies from State to State, and the burden of contesting its outcome falls largely on the voters themselves.

Second, the platform relies on matching techniques that were not validated at scale. Linking a voter to a parent on the 2002 roll means comparing family names across decades. West Bengal's 2002 rolls which were in the Bengali language had to be digitised and rendered into English from old printed records, reportedly with machine tools. Many names that were correct on paper reached the software garbled. Over 1.3 crore entries in West Bengal were flagged, and the counsel told the Supreme Court that more than half the 'logical discrepancy' cases were name variations. Similar problems have surfaced in Telangana and Karnataka as well. The ECI's own search portal suggests trying different spellings, indicating that the difficulty was not unknown. Matching Indian names across scripts is a well-documented difficulty, given the ambiguity and variation. Pilots in a handful of constituencies across different States would have exposed it before it reached lakhs of households.

Overarching power

Third, the system and its features were repeatedly changed while the SIR was in progress. The ECI has in the past used de-duplication software to flag people who may hold more than one voter ID. It was not used in Bihar, and in late 2025, the Commission had told the Supreme Court that results from the software could not be relied on. However, it was switched back on in some States and Union Territories where the revision was underway. This is a failure of digital governance.

Another algorithm, which checks how voters are "mapped" to relatives on the old electoral roll, appeared on the app in some States, forcing Booth Level Officers (BLOs) to redo work that was already completed. If the app was being loaded with new protocols frequently, then it is only understandable that the key users of the app, the BLOs, experienced tremendous stress and frustration. In any well-run deployment of such scale, a live operation of this sensitivity would be under a change freeze, with new features being tested and documented before release.

Fourth, the encoded rules travelled by video rather than in writing. In October, some newly introduced ERONet options allowing Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) to dispose of notice cases without hearings were explained through demonstration videos. Interim instructions such as these often came through video conferences and WhatsApp groups with the software already reconfigured to enforce them. When code changes but the user manuals have not yet been updated, the software becomes the rulebook. The BLOs and EROs, as statutory custodians of the electoral roll, are left implementing decisions they are not privy to while citizens, on the other hand, have nothing to cite on appeal. Officials in some States have asked for the restoration of the discretion that the centrally controlled platform had taken from them, including the power to decide which flagged cases need a hearing.

Fifth, the digital workflow and legal forms seem to have drifted apart. The online Form 6 carried an SIR-related declaration about parents and grandparents that applicants could not skip, although it was not part of the statutory form. The Supreme Court said it had never approved that modification. In Delhi, voters whose enumeration forms were not received but were earlier on the roll were directed to submit Form 6, meant for first-time voters. The court has called this a "structural incongruity".

However, both are also system design failures. The screen a citizen sees should not demand what the law and the approved process do not.

Questions of timing

Time compounds these challenges. In Delhi, where no election is due, the Supreme Court questioned the need for a tight deadline. Voters in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal had no such cushion. In those States, enumeration went on for about six weeks with the final rolls being released in February while the polls were scheduled for April. West Bengal's final roll was published with over half-a-crore names still marked "under adjudication". In a system rollout, time is always a design parameter, not a backdrop. Here, it was set by the electoral calendar rather than by the system's and the context's readiness.

None of this is unique to elections. Validating 'business' rules against real data, testing name matching in different languages, freezing a system during live operations, issuing written SoPs (Standard Operating Procedures) prior to user training and keeping digital forms aligned with statutory ones are the ordinary, time-tested disciplines of digitising a manual process. Lawrence Lessig's warning over two decades ago, that "code is law" has rarely been more literal. With the SIR, rules written into software decided what statute did not.

In any such transformation, many of these failures could have been envisaged. Whether they were anticipated and set aside or not anticipated at all is an open question. Neither answer can ever reassure the citizens whose voting rights are on the line.

When code changes but the user manuals have not yet been updated, the software becomes the rulebook

GS 02: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
THE HINDU PAGE: 08

India and U.K. are turning climate ambition into action



Ben Mellor

Acting British High Commissioner to India

Next week, Mumbai will become the stage for one of the world's boldest climate ideas. The largest ever Earthshot Prize edition will bring together innovators, investors, businesses, policymakers and young people to turn environmental solutions into impact at scale. Five winners will each receive £1 million to accelerate their work.

It all began with a simple but powerful idea: that human ingenuity, innovation and optimism can help repair our planet. Founded by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, The Earthshot Prize seeks solutions capable of delivering transformative environmental impact. Since the Prize was launched in 2020, India has produced more Earthshot finalists and winners than any other country (nine finalists including four winners). This year two of the 15 finalists are based in India. As the Prize arrives in Mumbai, India's growing influence in clean growth and climate innovation will be on full display.

I have seen what this kind of partnership can achieve. I began my career as a diplomat working on the Montreal Protocol, when governments, companies, scientists and NGOs came together to tackle the hole in the ozone layer. It worked. Almost all ozone-depleting substances have been phased out and the ozone layer is on track to recover within decades. However, climate change is a far bigger and more complex challenge.

The need to accelerate climate action

The urgency behind Earthshot's message is stronger than ever. This year, the climate crisis has been exacerbated by El Niño, with conflict-driven energy shocks being felt globally. The surest way to safeguard our energy security and economic growth is to accelerate the transition to clean energy.

The U.K.-India climate partnership shows what delivery can look like in practice. Both our countries recognise that the shift to cleaner growth is not separate from the pursuit of prosperity. That is why climate and clean energy cooperation sit at the heart of the U.K.-India Vision 2035.

The U.K.-India climate partnership shows what delivery can look like in practice. Both our countries recognise that the shift to cleaner growth is not separate from the pursuit of prosperity

India's progress speaks for itself. Non-fossil fuel sources now account for more than half of India's installed power capacity – five years ahead of its 2030 target; it is aiming for 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030. Through the International Solar Alliance and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, India is shaping global response. Meanwhile, the U.K. has also cut its greenhouse gas emissions by more than half since 1990 while growing our economy.

Earlier this month, the U.K. was proud to be a partner country at the Bharat Renewable Energy Summit and Expo 2026, which showcased the dynamism of India's clean energy sector.

India's Central Electricity Regulatory Commission and Ofgem (the U.K.'s Office of Gas and Electricity Markets) are working together on electricity market reform, and a joint offshore wind taskforce is supporting the development of the sector in India. The U.K. is learning from India's energy stack on data sharing across the energy system.

Financing climate action

Such innovation changes the world only if it is financed at scale. Last year, our governments launched the India-U.K. Climate Finance Initiative to help scale climate investment, unlock green growth and create new financing opportunities in both countries. The U.K. is already mobilising significant capital for India's transition. Our £330 million capital investment portfolio, in partnership with the Government of India, has leveraged more than £3.5 billion for green and inclusive businesses and technology start-ups. British International Investment (BII) has backed more than 600 businesses and committed $1.1 billion to climate-focused investments in India since 2022, making India its largest market. This money is funding initiatives that people in India will be witnessing and using in their day-to-day life such as electric buses, grid-scale batteries and the next generation of clean-tech start-ups.

A global security issue

Climate is also a security issue. At the UN General Assembly in September, U.K. Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband co-convened foreign Ministers to discuss climate and nature crises as national security challenges.

It is an agenda the U.K. and India share, reflected in our co-chairing of the UN Disaster Risk Reduction Senior Officials' Meeting in New Delhi in October. Both India's National Disaster Management Authority and the U.K.'s Centre for Disaster Protection, working together, are strengthening disaster risk financing, including assessing the feasibility of a sovereign disaster risk pool.

Earthshot coincides with COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye, where governments will meet to turn the Paris Agreement into delivery. The U.K. will work with India and other partners to accelerate the electrification of transport and industry, unlock finance, and keep the goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius within reach.

The Montreal Protocol showed that the world can fix a planetary problem when it chooses to. The innovators gathering in Mumbai are showing what is possible today. The task now is for governments, investors and businesses to back them with capital and the policy certainty that lets good ideas grow. From Mumbai to Antalya, the message is clear: climate action cannot wait. The U.K. and India are not just talking about the future we need, we are building it. We invite others to build it with us.

GS 3: ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

THE HINDU PAGE: 10

Why is the Siang project contentious?

The proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project in Arunachal Pradesh has triggered protests by the Adi community, which says at least 40 villages would be affected, 27 of them submerged; the government, however, says the project will store and regulate water, reduce flood risks and generate employment for the youth

EXPLAINER

Jacob Koshy

The story so far:

The proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP) in Arunachal Pradesh has triggered protests by the Adi community, and activists have been arrested or detained since October. Protesting groups have rejected the State government's offer to hold talks on November 5.

What is the SUMP project?

It is a proposed dam on the Siang – as the Brahmaputra is known in Arunachal Pradesh – to be built by the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC).

First declared a national project in 2008, its estimated power capacity is between 11,000 and 11,200 MW. The Deputy Chief Minister, Chowna Mein of the BJP, has cited a dam height of 280 to 300 metres and about 9.2 billion cubic metres of live storage, which refers to the usable water in a dam that can actually be released, excluding the unusable bottom layer.

However, India has an established process for approving such projects. Clearing such large dams involves multiple steps, such as forest and environmental clearance from the State as well as Central Government-constituted expert appraisal committees.

What stage is the project at?

So far, the project is only at the stage of a Pre-Feasibility Report (PFR), being prepared by NHPC, which is an early study of whether the project can be built safely.

They also require a full impact study with a year of baseline data, a dam-break analysis and a disaster management plan. Parong, Ditte Dime and Uggeng are among the sites identified for it.



Raising their voices: The Adi community protests against the dam, in Yingkom village in Upper Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh. RITU RAJ KONWAR

What does it promise?

The Government says it will store and regulate water, cut flood risk in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, create jobs for the youth, and strengthen water and energy security. Mr. Mein has said power is a "secondary" benefit from the dam.

Why are people protesting?

Adi villagers say that at least 40 villages would be affected, of which 27 would be submerged. They say this would destroy paddy fields and orange orchards, as well as ancestral burial grounds and river-linked religious practices. There are also objections to the way authorities are gathering consent. Villagers allege that signatures on Memoranda of Understanding for the PFR were obtained through deceit, pressure and threats to withhold welfare benefits. *The Hindu* reported that a copy of the MoU it reviewed describes the consent as being for the PFR study alone and not for the dam.

Tensions have nevertheless escalated, with elderly protesters allegedly being *lathi*-charged on October 4, injuring 54. Activists were arrested under the State's unlawful activities law on October 9. A march in Pasighat, a major town and the headquarters of the East Siang district, on October 23, turned violent, and NHPC premises were set on fire.

What is the government's rationale?

Rejecting talks, one youth leader, quoted by *The Hindu*, said that discussions cannot happen "while they are pointing guns at us." The Adi have also proposed damming smaller tributaries instead.

China's planned Medog dam upstream, reported at 60,000 MW, is cited as the main driver. Mr. Mein says that the Medog dam is built for power generation, with about 5.5 billion cubic metres of storage. SUMP's larger storage capacity, he argues, could cushion sudden upstream releases. Some villagers ask why they should bear the cost of the Centre's failure to secure a water treaty with China.

What is the backdrop of hydropower in Arunachal Pradesh?

The State has long been seen as India's hydropower frontier. *The Hindu* reports that a veteran politician says the State signed 143 hydropower agreements in the late 2000s, opening up its rivers, and most never took off. An earlier environmental assessment brief for a 3,750 MW "Stage-II" Siang Upper project shows that the idea has existed in other forms for years.

Have States weaponised water?

Yes, though rarely as a standalone cause of war. A 2025 Geneva Graduate Institute study notes that water has long been used in conflict, for instance by flooding through destroyed dams, and that some scholars say upstream states manipulate flows to pressure downstream neighbours.

Ethiopia's Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on the Blue Nile, formally inaugurated in 2025, has been contested by downstream Egypt and Sudan for over a decade. The two countries have sought binding rules on how the reservoir is filled and operated, though no agreement has been reached.

At home, the Indus Waters Treaty (1960) gave India the eastern rivers and Pakistan the western ones. After the April 2025 Pahalgam attack, India placed it "in abeyance". A Court of Arbitration ruled unanimously on August 31, 2026, that the treaty remains in force and abeyance is unauthorised. However India has stated that it does not recognise that court.

THE GIST

- The SUMP is a proposed dam on the Siang — as the Brahmaputra is known in Arunachal Pradesh — to be built by the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC)
- The Deputy Chief Minister, Chowna Mein of the BJP, says the SUMP's larger storage capacity could cushion sudden upstream releases from the Medog dam planned by China

GS 2: POLITY

THE HINDU PAGE: 10



Why did Ladakh groups decry the announcement of polls?

Why did LAB and KDA seek the postponement of polls? What led to the impasse in talks with the Centre?

Peerzada Ashiq

The story so far:

The Lieutenant Governor-led administration of Ladakh has announced back-to-back elections in the Union Territory (U.T.). The three-tier polls – hill councils, panchayat and municipal elections – will be held in the next one month. While the panchayat and municipal elections are slated for November 21, the hill council elections will be held on December 4.

Ladakh is a U.T. without a legislature. So, these polls are key to provide platforms to public representatives in the region. However, the short window provided by the State Election Commission (SEC) is likely to make it hard for political parties to chart the course for their campaigning and enter into possible alliances.

How are these elections different?

Previously, Ladakh operated with only two hill development councils – the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) in Leh and LAHDC in Kargil – which together covered 52 constituencies, split evenly with 26 in each district. However, the Ladakh administration restructured the region's local governance by creating six new districts and establishing dedicated hill councils for each of them.

As a result of this administrative expansion, the upcoming local elections will be held across 100 constituencies. Each new district council will now comprise between seven and 24 elected members, down from the previous 26. In a first, 36 of the 100 total LAHDC seats have been reserved for women.

Meanwhile, Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra assured that the newly formed hill councils "would retain all powers vested in them under the existing law."

What makes polls difficult in Ladakh?

Conducting elections in Ladakh comes with logistical and geographical challenges. The region, spread across 59,146 square kilometres, has a sparse population of just 2.74 lakh, according to the 2011 census.

The region has 1.90 voters, according to the Election Commission of India (ECI) figures of 2025. So, the 100 constituencies going to voting will have an average 1900 voters per constituency.

Several villages are located at altitudes as high as 15,000 feet above the sea level and there are many passes, connecting the valleys and higher reaches, which get closed due to snowfall in winters. To overcome these conditions, the Ladakh administration has promised to provide heating and specialised logistical support to facilitate the polling.

According to Mr. Kundra, a portion of local representatives has already been decided without a contest.

Out of 192 *panchayat halqas*, 55 *sarpanches* have already been elected unopposed, leaving polls to be held in only 137 seats. Similarly, 1,186 out of 1,428 *panch* candidates were elected unopposed. While all 21 wards in the Leh Municipal Council will go to the polls, four of the 17 wards in the Kargil Municipal Council have already elected their representatives unopposed.

Meanwhile, the Ladakh Chief Secretary has termed these elections as steps to "strengthening democratic institutions and ensuring their early constitution".

Why have civil society groups questioned the polls?

Ladakh has two key civil society bodies – Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA). These bodies, which are amalgams of socio-political and religious groups, have been negotiating with the Centre over their core demands of Statehood and Sixth Schedule. Now, both the bodies are questioning the timing of these elections.

LAB co-chairperson Tsering Dorjey Lakrook expressed concern over likely poor participation because a sizable population of the region have moved to warmer places, especially students and elderly population. The region was facing "unilateral decisions and order-after-order without consultation," KDA co-chairperson Sajjad Kargilli added.

These groups are demanding postponement of hill council elections to April-May next year. Echoing this, Ladakh Member of Parliament (MP) Haji Haneefa urged the Lieutenant Governor and the State Election Commissioner (SEC) "to consider the region's geographical and climatic conditions before scheduling polls" and claimed that elections in winter could deprive many people of their right to vote.

Mr. Lakrook alleged that the Centre was taking negotiating civil society groups "for granted" and stated he suspected the government "was up to some mischief." He also demanded that the government make public the judicial inquiry report into the September 2025 Leh violence and ensure "justice [is] delivered to the victims." Four civilians died and around 80 were injured in alleged security forces firing in September last year.

What is the status of Ladakh-Centre talks?

Since the violent unrest in 2025, multiple rounds of talks have been held between Ladakh and the Centre, which has constituted a High Powered Committee and a Sub-Committee to engage the civil society groups of the region. However, the dialogue has recently hit an impasse.

In May this year, the Centre floated the idea of "a customised sui generis model" to meet the demands of the region and special status under a special provision of Article 371. On October 15 this year, a team of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) presented a 32-page draft. Both the LAB and KDA rejected it, terming it as "a departure from the earlier promises".

Later, on October 17, Ladakh Chief Secretary Mr. Kundra reiterated that the Centre was committed to the process of shaping the constitutional structure and called for a discussion over the MHA draft proposal. A proposed meeting on October 22 in New Delhi failed to take place with the Centre not divulging the reason.

Mr. Lakrook stated that they have received no communication from the MHA since October 15.

GS 3: ENVIRONEMNT
INDIAN EXPRESS PAGE: 10

Green jobs can fill the gaps in the growth story



SRESTHA BANERJEE

THE WORLD Bank has described India's poverty decline as among the world's fastest. Between 2011 and 2023, an estimated 496 million Indians moved out of poverty, and the share of those living in extreme poverty fell from 27.1 per cent to 2.6 per cent. The Bank points to strong consumption growth, social transfers and, above all, rising employment, with more women entering paid work. The next task is to maintain the momentum: Better jobs will carry India towards prosperity. Increasingly, those jobs will be green.

As India works towards Viksit Bharat by 2047 and a net-zero economy by 2070, new industries are taking shape in renewable energy, storage, electric vehicles, green hydrogen, recycling, and nature-based solutions that enhance climate resilience. An iFOREST assessment, *India's Green Jobs Moment*, estimates that these sectors could together support over 1.3 crore jobs by 2035.

Much of this work is spread across towns and villages and will generate local opportunities. Rooftop solar, EV repair, waste recovery and recycling are local by nature, and employment in nature-based solutions such as agroforestry and mangrove restoration is largely rural. Such opportunities are within reach of the households that have just crossed the poverty line.

More than 27 per cent of Indians are aged 15-29, and they are better educated than before. The labour market is sturdy, with the worker population ratio just 1.9 percentage points below the labour force participation rate. India also does not have to build a green workforce from scratch. About 71 per cent of thermal power roles we assessed show high or medium transferability to renewables and green hydrogen, and 90 per cent of automobile roles can move into EVs with targeted training. Many technicians are a short bridge course away from a green career.

India also does not have to build a green workforce from scratch. About 71 per cent of thermal power roles we assessed show high or medium transferability to renewables and green hydrogen, and 90 per cent of automobile roles can move into EVs with targeted training

The challenge is turning education into technical skills. Only 5.3 per cent of young people have technical education, and 5 per cent formal vocational training. Direct employment in key green sectors is projected to grow by about 4.5 lakh jobs a year, while dedicated green programmes have so far trained around 81,000 people. Even modest expansion would multiply this many times over. Skilling is largely short-term: About 43 per cent of formally trained workers have completed courses of less than six months, while advanced green roles call for deeper technical knowledge.

India's over 15,000 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIS) have more than 26 lakh seats. The PM-SETU scheme is modernising 1,000 government ITIs. We need green laboratories, trained instructors, longer-term and high-value programmes alongside short courses and apprenticeships. We need an educational continuum that runs from school through technical education and vocational training to the workplace. The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship is revising the National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. That can set the base for skilling India's workforce for the green economy. The next chapter in India's development story, from escaping poverty to building secure, rising incomes, can be written by green work.

The writer is director, Just Transition and Climate Change, iFOREST

GS 2: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
INDIAN EXPRESS PAGE: 10

On Russia-Ukraine, a chance for diplomacy

ON THE face of it, the gains from two days of talks between Russian and Ukrainian envoys — with Jared Kushner, President Donald Trump's son-in-law, and Steve Witkoff, Washington's Special Envoy to the Middle East, present -- are rather modest. The two countries have agreed to a prisoner swap, the largest since the conflict began in 2022. On more fundamental issues, such as territory, duration and terms of a ceasefire and what a post-war European security architecture will look like, both sides said there was some progress. But there were no major announcements. Despite the lack of a breakthrough at Abu Dhabi, however, there is reason to believe that the diplomatic needle could move soon.

Kushner and Witkoff are in Moscow, reportedly to ask Russian President Vladimir Putin to add European representatives to the talks. A question hangs over that request: Who will represent Europe, given that there are multiple views on the continent and within the European Union on how to deal with Russia? After Moscow, the two will go to Dublin and meet Ukraine's President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Both sides remain seemingly entrenched in their positions: While Kyiv and its staunchest supporters in Europe want a ceasefire in place before discussions on the post-war security architecture, Moscow has sought to link a cessation of hostilities with the broader question of NATO expansion and what it sees as its sphere of influence. In other words, while one side sees the ceasefire as a precondition, the other views it as intertwined with the bigger unresolved questions. Trump's White House has leaned towards the latter.

Nearly half a decade of conflict has taken a toll — political, economic and humanitarian — on Russia, Ukraine and the wider world. That there have been no major attacks in recent days by either country is something to be welcomed, cautiously. The White House, reeling from a Republican drubbing in the midterm polls, will want to present a peace deal to the American people sooner rather than later. Russia, if a ceasefire is achieved, can act as an intermediary between Tehran and Washington. Europe, too, needs stability on its eastern front. The recent increase in defence budgets notwithstanding, the continent still relies on the American security umbrella. New Delhi's proposal for de-escalation was welcomed by Ukraine's Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha. A cessation of hostilities would lead to the easing of the supply-chain constraints in energy and foodgrain, both essential for India's economy. In Moscow and Dublin, Kyiv and Brussels, the task now is to build trust, which can enable a good-faith negotiation and the compromise the world has been waiting for.

GS 2: POLITY

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After elections, more pressure for peace



HARSH V PANT

THE EVOLVING political landscape in the US and Israel, coupled with the mounting economic and strategic costs of the Iran conflict, may be creating an opening for diplomacy in the Middle East. The convergence of domestic political constraints, potential leadership changes in Israel, and growing regional anxieties about prolonged instability suggests that the strategic calculus of key actors may be shifting. While the structural impediments to peace remain formidable, this moment offers an opportunity to move beyond the logic of military escalation towards a more sustainable regional security framework.

The outcome of the US midterms is a significant setback for the Trump administration. Democratic victories, widely interpreted as a repudiation of the administration's handling of the Iran war and its economic consequences, have altered Washington's political environment. A Democratic-controlled Congress will have greater leverage over regional policy. Its control over appropriations, oversight and confirmation processes, and its ability to scrutinise arms transfers and military expenditure, could constrain Washington's capacity to sustain an open-ended military campaign. This does not necessarily signal a retreat from the region. Rather, it suggests that the political costs of continued escalation are likely to rise, creating stronger incentives for the administration to explore diplomatic alternatives.

The possibility of negotiated understandings with Tehran on its nuclear programme, freedom of navigation through Hormuz, and non-aggression arrangements involving Gulf states could acquire greater relevance. For Donald Trump, diplomacy may offer an opportunity to reclaim strategic initiative and establish a foreign-policy legacy. Progress on Gaza's transitional governance and reconstruction could be an important component of this effort.

Developments in Israeli politics could reinforce these possibilities. The absence of a clear parliamentary majority after last month's elections has made coalition formation complex and could potentially reduce the dependence of a future government on Israel's most hardline political constituencies. Any change in leadership or governing arrangements would have implications beyond domestic politics. Israel's ability to translate its military advantages into durable strategic outcomes has increasingly been questioned. A government less constrained by the far right's ideological positions could have greater room to combine deterrence with diplomatic engagement and rebuild some of the international credibility eroded by the prolonged conflict.

The prospects for Saudi-Israeli normalisation are particularly significant in this context. Riyadh's insistence on meaningful progress on the Palestinian question remains a major obstacle. A more flexible Israeli government could potentially create space for movement on this front. Similarly, a stronger commitment to addressing extremist violence and improving humanitarian and political conditions in Palestinian territories would be essential to restoring international confidence in Israel.

The Iran conflict has exposed both the limits of military power and the vulnerabilities of the regional security architecture. Growing war fatigue and shared concerns over maritime security, energy flows and regional stability are encouraging greater diplomatic coordination and regional agency, reflected in emerging defence and maritime arrangements. These converging interests could provide a basis for containing Iranian proxies, stabilising Gaza, Lebanon and Syria, and advancing the Abraham Accords. However, sustainable cooperation will depend on addressing Iran-related security concerns and the Palestinian question rather than bilateral normalisation alone.

Existing initiatives, including the Trump administration's Gaza transitional framework and proposals concerning Iran's nuclear programme, maritime security and regional non-aggression, offer potential foundations for a broader diplomatic process. Their significance is reinforced by converging political pressures: A more constrained Washington, possible political recalibration in Israel and growing regional fatigue with instability. Together, these create incentives for diplomacy, but not necessarily consensus. Deep-seated mistrust, competing strategic ambitions, hardline constituencies and the Palestinian question will continue to complicate efforts.

The challenge now is to translate these pressures into a sustainable framework encompassing Iran, maritime security, Gaza's future, Palestinian aspirations and regional economic cooperation. While formidable obstacles remain, the moment offers an opportunity to recognise that lasting regional stability will depend on diplomacy rather than perpetual confrontation.

The writer is vice president, Studies and Foreign Policy, Observer Research Foundation

GS 3: ECONOMY AND INTERNAL SECURITY

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• ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

As Huang exits Nvidia, a test looms for AI boom

Nvidia's highly advanced chips power AI models. Its investments fuel the sector's circular financing. The fallout of Jensen Huang's resignation could upend it all



SOUMYARENDRA BARIK

JENSEN HUANG, the longtime face of Nvidia, has resigned as Chief Executive of the world's largest artificial intelligence (AI) chipmaker. This came amid reports that he had two extramarital affairs, one of which involved an alleged Chinese spy. The Nvidia board has named Chief Financial Officer Colette Kress as interim CEO as it searches for a long-term replacement.

Even before his resignation, the scandal and his expected ouster had sent shockwaves through global financial markets, wiping hundreds of billions of dollars off the chipmaker's valuation and prompting investors to turn towards rivals such as AMD and Broadcom.

But the implications of the crisis could extend well beyond the fortunes of Nvidia, given the company's central position in the AI industry, where it has emerged as the biggest supplier of computing infrastructure and an important financier of the technology's expansion.

The ouster, and the uncertainty for Nvidia, has come at a particularly delicate moment for the AI industry. Technology firms are committing hundreds of billions of dollars to building data centres and developing increasingly powerful AI models, which run on Nvidia's highly advanced chips. Much of this investment is flowing into the chipmaker. So, any prolonged disruption at the company could have consequences for the pace at which the industry expands.

Huang had two extramarital relationships — including one with Alice Huang, a businesswoman suspected by US intelligence agencies of spying for China. The controversy deepened after *The New York Times* reported that he had also been involved in a relationship with Kimberly Powell, the company's vice-president of healthcare, who reported directly to him.

Stock market's AI dependence

Nvidia shares have witnessed sharp volatility amid the controversy surrounding Huang. On Wednesday, the stock plunged over 8% in after-hours trading following reports that the company's board was considering removing him. At 8:30 pm India time Thursday, after Huang's resignation, Nvidia shares were trading at $162.58 per share, down 6.4% from Wednesday, having recouped some losses after falling as low as $148.80. These swings have unsettled investors already concerned about the sustainability of the AI investment boom.

The reaction reflects how AI has become one of the most consequential investment themes in global equity markets. Nvidia alone accounts for roughly 6% of the S&P 500, making movements in its share price significant for the index. The concentration means that even investors without direct exposure to Nvidia can be affected by its fortunes via index funds and other investments.

Perhaps the bigger concern is not what happens to Nvidia's immediate chip sales, but whether its crisis could affect the financing arrangements driving the AI infrastructure boom. Nvidia has increasingly evolved from a supplier of computing hardware into an investor and financial backer of the companies building infrastructure around its products.

For instance, the company has disclosed approximately $164.5 billion in financial commitments, including an obligation capped at $105 billion relating to an OpenAI data centre in Ohio, alongside more than $50 billion in lease and capacity guarantees.

Such investments have helped accelerate the expansion of data centre capacity. However, they have also raised questions about the extent to which spending across the industry is being supported by financial commitments between companies that are simultaneously suppliers, customers and investors — creating a circular economy.

The leadership change at Nvidia could now complicate this model if Huang's long-term successor decides to scale back investments, reconsider financial guarantees or adopt a more conservative approach towards supporting customers, given how central Huang, and his company, are, and have been, across the AI ecosystem stack.

Market intelligence firm Morningstar said before Huang's resignation: "We've long considered Nvidia and Jensen Huang to be at the center of the AI ecosystem; his departure could lead to less AI dealmaking and financing, greater regulation, and more political backlash around artificial intelligence".

Rival chipmakers eye gains

Not every company stands to lose from Nvidia's troubles.

Shares of AMD, Nvidia's closest rival, opened over 3% higher on Thursday (at press time). Broadcom, another AI chip supplier, was up more than 5%, as investors considered whether the companies could benefit from customers seeking to diversify their AI hardware suppliers.

AMD has been strengthening its position in AI accelerators, while Broadcom is a major supplier of custom chips and networking technology used by large cloud companies. In China, domestic GPU manufacturers Moore Threads, MetaX and Cambricon saw their shares surge nearly 10%, amid expectations that uncertainty surrounding Nvidia could create opportunities for local chipmakers.

However, replacing Nvidia is not straightforward. Its dominance extends beyond GPUs to software, networking and integrated systems, which form the technological backbone of many AI deployments.

Morningstar has maintained its Wide Economic Moat rating for Nvidia, reflecting the difficulty competitors face in challenging its position. It also retained its $310 fair value estimate despite the investigation. The research firm said demand for computing capacity continued to exceed supply and did not expect the controversy to materially affect Nvidia's near-term or medium-term revenue.

Can the AI momentum survive

The distinction between the Nvidia crisis and the underlying strength of AI demand could prove crucial. Nvidia's chips are deeply embedded in the infrastructure used to train and operate advanced AI models, meaning that a change in leadership would not immediately eliminate demand from cloud providers and AI developers.

But the company's role in identifying emerging technologies, cultivating major customers and financing infrastructure has been closely associated with Huang, who had led Nvidia since its founding in 1993. The immediate risk, therefore, may be to investor sentiment and valuations, while the longer-term risk concerns whether the industry can maintain its pace of expansion.

With Nvidia scheduled to report quarterly earnings on November 17, investors will be watching not only its financial performance, but also whether the company's strategy of aggressively supporting the AI ecosystem remains intact.

• THE RISE OF A.I. SPENDING

Worldwide AI spending was forecast to touch $2.7 trillion in 2026, a 49.5% rise over 2025, and climb to $3.6 trillion in 2027, according to a Gartner report from September. This forecast, of course, predates the Huang resignation.

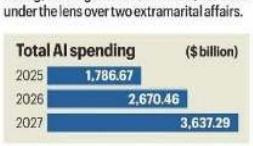
Worldwide AI spending by market ($ billion)

Market	2025	2026	2027
AI services	434.05	576.48	745.66
AI cybersecurity	25.92	51.35	86
AI software	288.17	461.64	656.35
AI agents and assistants	16.48	29.22	65.47
Generative AI models	13.02	28.27	51.62
AI platforms for data science and machine learning	19.41	26.45	35.55
AI application development platforms	6.89	9.54	12.48
AI data	0.83	3.13	6.48
AI infrastructure	981.92	1,484.4	1,977.69

SOURCE: GARTNER



Huang, the longtime face of Nvidia, has been under the lens over two extramarital affairs.



Funding goes round and round

Besides selling chips, Nvidia is a financial backer of companies building infrastructure around its products.

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This has raised questions about how the AI sector is propped up by financial commitments between firms that are suppliers, customers and investors — all at the same time.

GS 2: POLITY

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LEGAL

Not birthright: How SC ruled on Hindu man's claim to grandfather's property

Amaal Sheikh
New Delhi, November 12

IF A man inherits property from his father, is his son automatically entitled to a share in it under the Hindu Succession Act of 1956? Not really. Continuing with the analogy, it is the man who becomes the absolute owner of the property and can deal with it as he chooses, including by excluding the son, according to a Supreme Court ruling last week.

Birth alone, therefore, does not mean a man can inherit his grandfather's property — if his father is still alive and is himself an heir. The question, then, is when can a man claim a share in his grandfather's property?

First, the facts of the case

The case in the Supreme Court dealt with the property of one N Ramakrishnan, which was divided among his heirs following a partition suit filed by his daughter in 1993.

Ramakrishnan's son, M Kumaran, received a plot under a compromise deed in February 1994 and sold it in April 1997. But Kumaran's son, Rajesh, later sued his father and the buyers, claiming that the plot was ancestral property and that he had acquired a coparcenary interest in it by birth.

In Indian law, coparcenary is the group within a joint family that holds ancestral property together, with each member getting a share in it by birth.

A trial court in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, granted a preliminary decree for partition in Rajesh's favour. However, an appellate court set the decree aside, holding that the property had become Kumaran's exclusive share following the partition among the grandfather's heirs. The Madras High Court upheld that decision — and so did the Supreme Court.

The legal framework

Hindu law has two main schools, Dayabhaga and Mitakshara. Dayabhaga is followed in West Bengal and Assam, and Mitakshara is followed across the rest of India.

Under Dayabhaga, a son does not get a right in the family property by birth. His right opens only when his father dies. Until then, the father owns the property and can deal with it as he chooses.

Under the Mitakshara school of Hindu law, a son acquires an interest in ancestral coparcenary property by birth. Unlike an ordinary inheritance claim, the right does not arise only when the father dies. The son becomes a coparcener, or joint owner, in the joint Hindu family and can even claim a share in the coparcenary property.

The Hindu Succession Act has a schedule that lists who inherits and in what order. Section 8 of the Hindu Succession Act states that when a Hindu male dies intestate — that is, without making a valid will — his property first goes to relatives specified as Class I heirs in that Schedule. Class I heirs include his son, daughter, widow and mother, among others.

The son of a predeceased son is included, but the son of a living son is not.

This is the distinction that lies at the heart of the present case — a man cannot claim direct succession to his grandfather's property under Section 8 while his father is still alive and himself an heir.

Section 6 of the Hindu Succession Act (prior to the 2005 amendment) dealt with the devolution of a male Hindu's interest in Mitakshara coparcenary property. A coparcener's share in the joint family property did not pass by succession when he died. It automatically passes to the other coparceners in the family. The exception was where he left behind a female Class I heir such as a widow or a daughter. In that case, the share went to his heirs under the Act.

Section 19 of the Act also says that where two or more heirs inherit the property of a man who has not left a will behind, they receive it as tenants in common and not as joint tenants. This means that each heir holds an individual share that can be dealt with independently.

What the Supreme Court held

The bench of Justices Augustine George Masih and Sunita Agarwal said: "The right of a son's son in his grandfather's property during the lifetime of his father which existed under the personal Hindu Law as enforced before the Act 1956, was not saved expressly by the legislature while enacting the Hindu Succession Act, 1956."

The court held that Ramakrishnan's property devolved upon his Class I heirs under Section 8 following his death. The bench noted that a grandson who is the son of a living son was not included in that category. "A son's son is not mentioned as an heir under Class I of the Schedule, and, therefore, he could not get any right in the property of his grandfather under the provision," the bench said.

The court also said that once the heirs partitioned the property, each became the exclusive owner of the share allotted to them. They inherited as tenants in common, rather than as joint tenants, and the joint coparcenary did not continue. As explained above, a tenant in common holds an individual, identifiable share in property which can be dealt with independently. The plot allotted to Kumaran under the compromise deed became his individual property, and he was entitled to sell it.

"There is no question of devolution of the property once partitioned and became exclusive individual property of the first respondent upon the appellant herein so as to recognise his right on the premise of attaining coparcenary rights with his birth," the court said.

The grandson also argued that he had acquired coparcenary rights upon birth, and that Section 29A of the Hindu Succession Act, which was added to grant coparcenary rights to daughters, did not preserve any coparcenary character of the property following the 1994 compromise decree.

The bench rejected this argument, noting that although the grandfather's exact date of death was not disclosed in the record, succession had opened upon his death long before the grandson was born and before the partition proceedings were instituted in 1993. The top court held that the grandson was not a surviving coparcener when succession opened.

GS 3: ENVIRONEMNT
INDIAN EXPRESS PAGE: 14

• CLIMATE

Why India's carbon emissions could rise amid global fall

Pratyush Deep
New Delhi, November 12

GLOBAL CARBON dioxide emissions from fossil fuels are projected to decline marginally in 2026 compared with last year. But India is expected to be the only major emitter set to record an increase.

According to a new study by the Global Carbon Budget, global fossil fuel emissions are projected to fall by 0.4% this year, with China, the US, the European Union and Japan expected to record declines. India's projected rise in fossil fuel emissions, meanwhile, has been pegged at 4.4%.

The projected global decline has been attributed to the expansion of solar and wind power and the energy shock triggered by the West Asia conflict.

Although geopolitical upheavals and economic disruptions — besides the Covid-19 pandemic — have previously led to temporary reductions in fossil fuel use, these were largely one-year aberrations. The study cautions that the projected decline in global emissions this year is also likely to be a short-term consequence rather than a sustained structural shift.

'No drop in road transport emissions'

The study shows India, which accounts for around 8% of global emissions, is projected to record higher emissions growth in 2026 than its average annual increase of 3.5% over the past decade. It attributes part of the increase to a rebound from relatively low emissions growth in 2025, when a wet pre-monsoon period reduced demand for cooling. In contrast, a drier monsoon and higher temperatures in 2026 increased cooling demand, pushing up electricity consumption.



A waste-to-energy plant near Delhi's Okhla landfill. FILE

SUMMER SURGE

- India witnessed an unusual surge in power demand this summer amid persistently high temperatures and deficient rain.
- Weather conditions influenced by the El Niño climate phenomenon added to the pressure.

Notably, India witnessed an unusual surge in power demand this summer amid persistently high temperatures and deficient rainfall, with El Niño-influenced weather conditions adding to the pressure.

This increased reliance on coal-based power generation, which increased by around 13.2% to 846,229.29 million units (MU) between April and November 10, 2026 compared with the corresponding period in 2025. The dependence was also reflected in declining coal stocks.

An analysis of government data shows that while domestic consumption of overall petroleum products declined by 2.24% in January-October 2026, consumption of transport fuels continued to increase. Petrol consumption increased by 6.61% to 37.15 million tonnes from 34.85 million tonnes, while diesel consumption increased by 5.76% to 80.86 million tonnes from 76.46 million tonnes over the same period.

India's industrial emissions

An analysis by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) found that India's CO_2 emissions in the first half of 2026 increased 3.7% year-on-year because of an increase in emissions from steel, cement and other sectors.

CREA analyst Anubha Aggarwal told *The Indian Express* that the power sector's contributions to CO_2 emissions remained flat for two years until June 2026. CO_2 emissions from oil and gas fell 7% year-on-year, despite higher demand for diesel and petrol.

"For two years till June 2026, all of the growth in India's electricity demand has been met by clean energy, and that has halted the rise of coal power for the first time in half a century. The challenge now is industry, where coal dominates and electricity makes up a smaller share of energy use than in almost any other G20 economy, so unless steel and other energy-intensive manufacturers begin to electrify, rising output will keep pushing India's total emissions up even as the power sector stabilises," Aggarwal said.