

# EDITORIAL HIGHLIGHTS

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GS 2: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THE HINDU PAGE: 01

## Modi, Macron talks stress economic security

India, France adopt 'Innovation Roadmap 2030' as the two leaders meet in French city of Nice

They establish Dialogue on Economic Security; call for early implementation of India-EU FTA

The leaders discuss private sector ties in space sector and SHANTI Act's implications in India

Sriram Lakshman  
LONDON

India and France adopted an 'Innovation Roadmap 2030' and established a Dialogue on Economic Security during bilateral talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron held in Nice on Sunday.

A press release from the government outlined a number of themes – including calling for the fast adoption of the India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

Earlier this year, the two countries had renamed their partnership a 'Special Global Strategic Partnership' to reflect an enhanced level of cooperation. No traditional 'joint statement' had emerged from the meeting as of this writing.

"Recognising the key role of innovation and



Eyeing the sky: Prime Minister Narendra Modi takes in the sea with French President Emmanuel Macron ahead of talks in Nice on Sunday. AP

technology in the bilateral relationship, both sides adopted an 'Innovation Roadmap 2030' to give the partnership a long-term direction," the press release said, with the two leaders agreeing to create a Joint India-France AI Working Group to expand coopera-

tion in AI. They also noted the signing of 19 agreements between entities in the innovation ecosystems of the two countries.

Calling for the early implementation of the India-EU FTA, which was signed in February this year, the two sides agreed to set up a

High-Level Mechanism to double trade in five years. The discussion also focused on cooperation in the SME, rail, and aviation sectors.

Mr. Modi and Mr. Macron agreed to strengthen supply chain resilience, particularly in critical min-

### PM, Macron inaugurate Bharat Innovates 2026

Sriram Lakshman

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron on Sunday co-inaugurated the Bharat Innovates 2026 in Nice where the leaders focused on trust and cooperation in technology. Mr. Modi invited investors to "design and develop in

India" to "create solutions for the world", while Mr. Macron said India brings the reliability that the world seeks at moments of upheaval in geopolitics. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar were present.

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erals, as part of the 'Dialogue on Economic Security', as per the press release.

Cautious on crises

On the major crises in the world – in West Asia, including Iran and Gaza, as well as on Ukraine – the

press release remained circumspect relative to the February 17, 2026 joint statement from the two countries, saying only that leaders exchanged views "on matters of global importance, including the situation in West Asia and Ukraine".

The Prime Minister thanked Mr. Macron for the speedy implementation of visa-free transit for Indians in French airports and invited French universities to open campuses in India under the New Education Policy, as per the government statement.

The two leaders discussed private sector collaboration in the space sector and the SHANTI Act's (legislation governing the nuclear sector) implications in India.

"I think the field is open for French nuclear companies in this case to start looking at direct participation in the Indian nuclear sector, or do so with in participation with Indian private sector companies, whether in conventional nuclear power reactors or in the more advanced small modular reactors," Foreign Secretary Vikram Misra said at a press briefing in Nice.

# Deaths in Brazil raise concerns about India's dengue vaccine, DengiAll

Brazilian authorities have stressed that the 42 cases of severe adverse events represent only 0.008% of half-a-million vaccinated; there is no doubt that it is a small risk at the population level; however, at the individual level even one life lost to a severe adverse event is one too many

S. Swaminathan

The recent deaths of two people in Brazil during its dengue vaccination campaign, leading to the shot's suspension on June 8, is a crucial wake-up call for India. This is because the dengue vaccine in Brazil, Butantan-DV, is pretty similar, if not identical, to India's upcoming dengue vaccine, DengiAll.

Both vaccines were several years in the making. Both have live but weakened (attenuated) versions of the dengue viruses (DENVs). And both vaccines are said to be tetravalent because each vaccine is a physical mixture of four live, weakened DENVs.

DENVs come in four versions called serotypes: DENV-1, -2, -3 and -4. All four serotypes are known to be prevalent in Brazil and India. Each DENV serotype has an outer shell adorned with specialised envelope proteins, called E proteins – akin to the spike protein of coronaviruses. Even though the four DENV serotypes are very similar, their E proteins are different enough to warrant immunisation against each of the four serotypes.

When weakened DENV is used in a vaccine, it will prompt two broad types of antibodies: type-specific antibodies and cross-reactive antibodies. Type-specific antibodies are often made in small amounts and recognise only one particular serotype (based on its E proteins) and excel at blocking infections by that serotype alone.

On the other hand, the cross-reactive antibodies are made usually in large amounts and can recognise any of the four serotypes and block an infection – provided they are present at adequate levels. When their levels drop, the cross-reactive antibodies don't just fail to block a new DENV infection; they enhance it, leading to a severe and potentially fatal form of dengue. This phenomenon is called antibody-dependent enhancement (ADE).

The risk of ADE during dengue vaccination is considered a serious adverse event. If untreated, it can lead to death.

In Brazil's dengue vaccination campaign, of 42 vaccine recipients who displayed serious side-effects, two people died and one had to receive intensive care. These side-effects included severe abdominal pain, persistent vomiting, and bleeding, none of which the phase 3 clinical trials revealed. These signs are reminiscent of the symptoms of severe dengue. Medical researchers should look into whether this could be due to ADE. They should also clarify if DengiAll will manifest a similar risk when it is rolled out in India.

Butantan-DV and DengiAll are both based on a technology developed at the



This photograph taken on January 29 shows chief scientific officer Syed Khalid Ali explaining the development of the DengiAll vaccine's clinical sample at Panacea Biotech, a pharmaceutical company in New Delhi. AFP

U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH). Over many years, scientists weakened each DENV serotype to make monovalent vaccines, assessed each one for its capacity to induce an immune response without causing disease, and finally mixed all four monovalent vaccine viruses to generate tetravalent vaccines. Two of them, called TV003 and TV005, and the monovalent vaccine viruses were licensed to Instituto Butantan in Brazil and Panacea Biotech in India, among others, for further development.

Butantan-DV is not the first dengue vaccine to be linked to such events. A little over a decade ago, Sanofi Pasteur developed the first tetravalent dengue vaccine to be licensed. It differed from the NIH's vaccines because the four weakened serotypes were hybrid viruses, each covered on its surface with the E protein of one of the DENV serotypes (plus another protein).

This shot, called Dengvaxia, was given to more than 8 lakh children in the Philippines, a dengue-endemic country like Brazil and India. Severe adverse events occurred three years after vaccination.

Further study revealed Dengvaxia worked like a monovalent vaccine, provoking antibodies to only DENV-4. That is, mixing four live yet weakened viruses didn't automatically ensure tetravalent immunity. There is no clear answer why.

The severe adverse events linked to Butantan-DV thus raise many questions. Is

Once DengiAll is launched, the regulator must implement a robust pharmacovigilance programme for an extended duration to check for viruses, antibodies, and other parameters

Butantan-DV really functionally tetravalent? Is there a possibility of viral interference compromising its functionality? Could ADE be responsible for the deaths?

There was also a lacuna in the vaccine efficacy data collected in the phase 3 trials. Reports in January 2024, November 2024, and March 2026 indicated that Butantan-DV's efficacy against DENV-3 and DENV-4 is unknown as these serotypes were not prevalent in Brazil at the time of the trials.

Panacea Biotech's DengiAll phase 3 trials, together with the Indian Council of Medical Research, completed its enrollment target of 10,335 healthy volunteers in January this year. The trial began in August 2024; its participants will be followed for two years post-vaccination. Once all the data have been analysed, the company will approach the drug regulator for market approval.

There is no solid reason to deny that DengiAll may not face the potentially fatal issues that have come up with Butantan-DV. However, India can take some proactive actions ahead of

DengiAll's rollout. First, Panacea must analyse a representative subset of sera from vaccinated volunteers for type-specific antibodies against all four serotypes. And the regulator must ensure such data are available and rules out the risk of ADE.

Next, once DengiAll is launched, the regulator must implement a robust pharmacovigilance programme for an extended duration. Vaccine recipients must be clinically monitored periodically and their blood must be collected at regular intervals to check for viruses, antibodies, and other parameters to implement remedial measures quickly. Continuous real-world monitoring is key to identifying rare or long-term adverse events.

The ADE concerns also apply to another tetravalent dengue vaccine, Qdenga, which is also a physical mix of four weakened versions of the DENV serotypes. Japan-based Takeda markets it and its India approval is imminent.

Brazilian authorities have stressed that the 42 cases of severe adverse events out of half-a-million vaccinated represent only 0.008%. There is no doubt it is a small risk at the population level. At the individual level, however, even one life lost to a severe adverse event is one too many.

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## THE GIST

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## The hidden history of the Thai-Bharat connection

**T**oday, June 15, marks the 84th anniversary of a historic meeting we have allowed ourselves to forget, which led to the birth of the Indian National Army (INA). I learned about it on a visit to the Thai-Bharat Cultural Lodge (TBCL) in Bangkok, discovering a remarkable, overlooked chapter of history that reveals Thailand's vital role as a neutral, strategic beacon for Indian revolutionaries seeking refuge from British colonial rule. From its humble beginnings as a hub for cultural and intellectual exchange, the organisation evolved into a cornerstone of the Indian independence movement, providing the essential infrastructure for the formation of the INA.

### From culture to cause

The roots of this alliance were sown in 1927 during a historic visit to Siam, now Thailand, by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, who met with King Prajadhipok (Rama VII). Their dialogue centred on the deep, enduring connections between India and Thailand – ancient ties rooted in religion, philosophy, and shared cultural narratives such as the Ramayana and the Thai Ramakien. Inspired by his vision, Prafulla Kumar Sen, a Bengali scholar who became known as Swami Satyananda Puri, arrived in Bangkok in 1932.

A brilliant intellectual who had taught at the University of Calcutta and Visva-Bharati University, the Swami immersed himself in the Thai language and culture, mastering it in six months and becoming an esteemed professor at Chulalongkorn University. In 1939, he established the Dharam Ashram, a sanctuary for spiritual and cultural exchange, which served as a focal point for the growing Indian diaspora in Bangkok.

In December 1940, this ashram was transformed into the TBCL. A defining moment in the organisation's history occurred shortly after, when the Indian Tricolour was hoisted at the Lodge – a bold, defiant gesture that signalled the arrival of the Indian independence movement in Thailand and drew strong protests from the British Ambassador. As the Second World War descended upon Southeast Asia, the TBCL shifted from a cultural institution to an active political base. By late 1941, as Japanese forces advanced, the Lodge became a nexus for Indian nationalists and independence activists.

One of the most instrumental figures in this era was Sardar Giani Pritam Singh, a Sikh missionary and Ghadar Party veteran who had been preaching revolutionary ideals among the Indian diaspora in Bangkok. Operating from gurdwaras and working closely with the TBCL, Pritam Singh established vital covert links with Major Iwachi Fujiwara, the chief of the Japanese intelligence



**Shashi Tharoor**

Fourth-term Member of Parliament, Congress party (Lok Sabha) for Thiruvananthapuram, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs and the Sahitya Akademi Award-winning author of 29 books, including, most recently, 'The Sage Who Reimagined Hinduism: The Life, Lessons and Legacy of Sree Narayana Guru'

An enduring Thailand-India bond that played a pivotal role in India's independence movement

unit, F-Kikan. In December 1941, the Indian National Council (INC) was founded at the Silpakorn Theatre in Bangkok by a group of nationalists associated with the TBCL, with Swami Satyananda Puri as its president and Debnath Das as its secretary. This organisation played a crucial role in coordinating the efforts of the Indian independence movement, bridging the gap between civilian aspirations and the military mobilisation led by the Indian Independence League (IIL).

### Toward organised resistance

The cooperation between these groups culminated in the historic Bangkok Conference, which took place between June 15 and June 23, 1942, at the Silpakorn Theatre. This gathering represented a turning point in the struggle, bringing together more than a hundred representatives of Indian communities and freedom fighters from across Southeast Asia, including Burma, Malaya, and Singapore.

The conference served three primary functions. It brought together diverse nationalist factions under a coherent political and military framework, effectively establishing the IIL as the central body for Indians residing outside of India. It adopted a comprehensive 34-point resolution, which provided the official blueprint for the INA, stipulating that it would be composed of volunteers and former prisoners of war and supervised by the IIL rather than the Japanese military. The delegates urged Japan to formally recognise India as an independent nation and acknowledge the IIL as its sole legitimate representative, reflecting a strategic effort to ensure that the independence movement maintained its own agency despite its reliance on Japanese support.

The struggle began with a tragedy that shook the movement to its core. In March 1942, a plane carrying the Swami and the Sardar, who were en route to a high-level meeting in Tokyo to secure further commitments for the movement, crashed, resulting in their deaths. Their loss was a devastating blow, yet their sacrifice served to deepen the resolve of those who remained and who conferred in June with the Japanese to set up the INA. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's arrival in 1943 provided the centralised, charismatic, and revolutionary military leadership needed. He took command of the IIL and the INA, shifting the focus from decentralised regional council discussions toward a unified, disciplined military and political front designed to launch an armed struggle for Indian independence.

While the TBCL's roots were in intellectual and cultural exchange, Netaji's arrival accelerated the transition to a mass-mobilisation effort, drawing in thousands of civilian volunteers and former

prisoners of war who were inspired by his call for "Total Mobilization". Under Bose, the collaboration with the Japanese military was elevated to a high-stakes diplomatic partnership aimed at securing full recognition for the Provisional Government of Free India.

Despite the shift toward a more militarised and centralised command under Netaji, the TBCL continued to serve as a vital institutional bridge. It provided the necessary civilian and cultural cover for many activities that supported the broader independence movement. As the war progressed, the TBCL remained a steadfast centre for the Indian diaspora, even as the focus of the struggle moved to the front lines of the INA's march toward the Indian border. The Lodge maintained its role as a sanctuary for those committed to the ideals of independence, preserving the vision that had been articulated during the early days of Swami Satyananda Puri's tenure – that India's freedom was inextricably linked to the broader cause of Asian liberation from colonial rule.

### Keeping history alive

Following the conclusion of the war in 1945, the TBCL was banned by Allied forces and its leaders imprisoned. Even after the conclusion of the war and the dissolution of the INA, the legacy of this era persisted. Thanks to the tireless efforts of figures such as Pandit Raghunath Sharma, the Lodge was successfully re-established in 1946. The Lodge's survival serves as a testament to the fact that the political and military efforts of the Bose era were supported by the deep-rooted cultural and social networks fostered in the years prior. These networks allowed the movement to survive the vacuum of leadership following the war and continue to inform the historic relationship between India and Thailand.

Today, the TBCL remains the only surviving institution from this era, functioning as a living archive, housing a precious collection of rare texts, historical photographs, and documents that provide an intimate window into the lives of the Indian families who contributed to the fight for freedom.

During my visit I was treated to a passionate tour of the premises by Pandeyji, a descendant of Indian rajpurohits who had migrated to Thailand three centuries ago. As he evoked the stories behind each grainy photograph and historic document, it became clear that the TBCL stands not just as a library or a museum, but as a monument to the enduring friendship between the people of Thailand and the Indian diaspora – a symbol of the shared courage and determination that defined one of the most critical, yet often forgotten, chapters of the global anti-colonial movement.

## GS 2: HEALTH

### THE HINDU PAGE: 08

# The 'seven-point IQ opportunity' for Indian children

**W**hat if we could increase the IQ of India's future generations by seven points with a pivot in the understanding of early childhood development under the Anganwadi system?

For decades, India's early childhood agenda has focused on ensuring that children survive early childhood, reducing under-five mortality from 43 in 2012 to 32 in 2020 (UNICEF and World Bank data) with sufficient inputs invested toward their health, nutrition, immunisation and sanitation conditions. The Anganwadi system reflects these priorities at scale: approximately eight crore children (ages 0-6 years) receive supplementary nutrition, growth monitoring and health services, alongside counselling and home visits for their parents. However, body and brain development in the early years do not proceed on separate tracks.

Early childhood development is an ecological process in which nutrition, health, and early learning interact dynamically with each other through the body, brain, and environment. The developing brain is highly energy-intensive, consuming nearly one-fifth of the body's energy at rest. In the first year alone, grey matter volume increases by 149% and the cerebellum by 240% as millions of synapses form in regions associated with movement, language, and planning.

#### Middle-income evidence is clear

Paediatric research in Jamaica in the 1980s provided hard academic evidence to an idea that many cultures already understood. Researchers working with stunted children found that nutritional supplementation improved physical health alone, but adding regular psychosocial stimulation (love-talk-play and responsive interaction) resulted in stronger cognitive gains.

Similar findings emerged in India from a birth cohort study in Vellore (250 children followed from birth to age 9) where children stunted early in life performed worst on later cognitive assessments, but those who recovered physically also showed better cognitive outcomes.



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Anganwadis can help boost cognitive development through holistic early intervention

International research on enteric dysfunction and poor sanitation has shown that nutritional inputs are mediated by the child's environment. A child's body may receive food, but infection, inflammation, toxic exposure and deprivation of stimulation can adversely influence this very nutrition. In studies in Vellore, children with iron deficiency or high lead exposure in early life, score lower on developmental and cognitive assessments, even when their height and weight appear normal. It is not simply what children eat that matters, but whether their bodies can absorb and use it. Yet, numbers on a growth chart never tell the full story. The quality of the home environment – how much they are talked to, read to, played with and emotionally supported, keeps emerging as a stronger predictor of cognitive outcomes than diet alone.

Most encouragingly, exposure to structured preschool and early stimulation has the potential to transform a generation. Children in the Vellore cohort who attend preschool regularly for 18 to 24 months, including in Anganwadi centres, are scoring seven IQ units higher on cognitive tests than those not attending preschool, even after accounting for poverty, maternal education and early stunting. In a similar Brazilian birth cohort, children who received structured preschool had higher cognition scores by eight units at age five. This is powerful evidence that stimulation and nutrition have strong, independent effects and amplify each other when both are fulfilled.

#### A role for Anganwadis

Indian policymakers are responding to new evidence quickly. The Anganwadi system has started to incorporate this broader understanding of holistic early childhood development into its core design. This shift is most visible in the rollout of national frameworks such as Aadharshila and Navchetana and programmes such as Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi. They are critical inputs in redefining neighbourhood Anganwadis as vibrant early childhood education centres that nourish both mind and body. Aadharshila

strengthens play-based preschool education within centres, while Navchetana extends early stimulation into the home, equipping caregivers with simple, science-based ways to support development through everyday interactions.

In clinical practice, we offer these frameworks to parents everyday, helping to turn routine moments into opportunities for learning. We encourage the integration of Navchetana's "loving, talking and playing" into daily life while feeding, cooking or playing with children. The home lays the foundation of early language, cognition and socio-emotional skills in the first three years, and Anganwadis deepen it through structured play-based activities, storytelling and peer learning from ages three to six.

Systemic community mobilisation initiatives, such as Poshan Pakhwada conducted in April 2026 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development focus on promoting early stimulation for brain development, play-based education in the early years, and the role of parents and communities in reducing screen exposure and strengthening engagement with Anganwadis. The campaign signals that early childhood development is not confined to centres or programmes, but depends on what happens within households and neighbourhoods.

#### Building futures

An "ecological" approach uplifts families as much as it strengthens children. Reliable childcare gives mothers the time, the confidence and the opportunity to work, study or contribute economically. In Vellore, we have seen women trained as childcare workers gain both dignity and livelihood, creating a virtuous circle of care. When the kitchen, classroom and crèche align, children flourish, women work and communities thrive.

For a Viksit Bharat, progress cannot rest on calories alone. The physical and interactive learning and playing environments in homes, Anganwadis and communities must be as enriching as the meals they receive.

GS 1: GEOGRAPHY & URBANIZATION INDIAN EXPRESS PAGE: 12

# Our parched cities need to make every drop count, recycle water



PARAMESWARAN IYER, ARUNABHA GHOSH AND NITIN BASSI

**W**HAT IS common between Narsinghpur in Madhya Pradesh, Ahmedabad in Gujarat, and Barmer in Rajasthan? These cities have reported maximum daytime temperatures north of 40 °C in the first week of May. The high temperatures have led to water scarcity, driven by high evaporation rates and increased demand for domestic water. For many small cities and towns, private tanker water supply has become a norm during summer. Bigger cities such as Delhi are sourcing water from far-off places, often leading to higher costs and dependence on upper riparian regions.

The annual per capita water availability in India is about 1,500 m<sup>3</sup>, which is likely to fall below 1,200 m<sup>3</sup> by 2050, edging us closer to the water scarcity threshold of 1,000 m<sup>3</sup>. The reduced water availability, coupled with the water scarcity during scorching summers and increasing heatwaves, calls for more proactive water action. The larger question is what can cities do differently?

One intervention with immense (and thus far unrealised) potential is integrating the reuse of treated used water (domestic sewage), especially for non-potable purposes such as irrigating horticultural crops, land-

scaping, construction, public conveniences, textile manufacturing, lake rejuvenation, and wherever there is no direct contact with humans. As per an analysis by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), this can unlock a market and investment opportunity worth over Rs 3 lakh crore and generate 1,00,000 additional jobs by 2047. Also, implementing a circular water economy will help ease water stress. For instance, Thane city can bridge its existing water deficit of 53 million litres per day through scaling up the reuse of treated used water. **Four interrelated actions can unlock these benefits.**

**First, the policy on water reuse must be complemented by city-specific reuse plans.** About 14 Indian states now have water reuse policies. Uttarakhand, UP and Odisha are the latest states to realise seasonal water risks and notify reuse policies. While this is a step in the right direction, city-specific reuse plans are needed, which would have clear targets to address existing water deficits and water quality issues, reuse avenues, reuse water quality requirements, revenue generation options, and implementation mechanisms. Each city has a unique reuse requirement. For instance, in Delhi, Varanasi, and Bengaluru, the priority for water reuse is in agriculture in peri-urban areas, whereas in Chennai, it is for rejuvenating water bodies and lakes, and in Thane, for construction, or for industrial use in Surat.

**Second, enable private financing for reuse projects.** Urban areas have less than 50 per cent of networked sewage treatment capacity, and less than one-third was actually treated in 2021. There are many reasons for this, including the absence of infrastructure to

transport sewage to treatment plants, a lack of human resources to operate a plant, an energy deficit for running the plants, and insufficient allocations for maintenance of treatment plants. Reuse is low and accounts for only a small proportion of total treated volumes. **Along with public investments, private investments are needed to strengthen used water treatment and reuse infrastructure.** Different models of blended finance are possible: The hybrid annuity model, adopted by the National Mission for Clean Ganga, shares financial risk between the government and the private developer.

**Third, there is a need to improve the functionality of sewage treatment plants.** Many plants in various cities do not meet the effluent discharge quality standards set by the Central Pollution Control Board. **Beyond poor plant maintenance, used water is often mixed with industrial effluents from non-conforming units in unauthorised areas, impairing plant operations.** Most of the water treatment plants operate on biological processes that rely on microorganisms. The heavy metals and toxins in industrial effluents kill the bacteria or make them dormant. Although India does have a zero-liquid discharge (ZLD) policy for industries, many small-scale units flout norms and release untreated effluent into drains carrying

**domestic wastewater.** As adopted by cities in the Ganga river basin, local governments can leverage innovations in technology and AI to monitor violations and improve compliance of the plants. Further, they can provide incentives to the industries that follow the rules on proper implementation of ZLD. Cities in Gujarat that offer financial assistance to industries for setting

up ZLD policies are good examples.

**Fourth, create a national circular water mission to shift water management from a linear use-and-dispose approach to a restorative model that maximises its reuse.** This will require technological, institutional, financial, and behavioural reforms. Technological reforms should target building more decentralised faecal sludge treatment plants in the growing peri-urban areas. Institutional reforms are needed to enable urban local bodies to set up special-purpose instruments to manage reuse projects and convert them into a business opportunity. Financial instruments must be designed to incentivise those reusing treated used water and reclassify freshwater as an asset class. While the introduction of market-based freshwater pricing for all users should drive efficiency, targeted subsidies must be maintained to protect those at the base of the economic pyramid. Lastly, but importantly, are the behavioural nudges to make used water everyone's business. By shifting public perception, treated used water and its reuse can be made an essential component of life in a city. **The recently published study, 'Water, Nature, Progress,' and the Economic Survey of India 2025-26 have laid down the roadmap for a circular water mission in India.**

**India's journey to Viksit Bharat by 2047 will depend on how boldly it builds water resilience.** A circular water economy can be the lighthouse – it can reduce freshwater stress, improve water quality, and secure water for all. India has the political leadership, will, and proof of concept. What it needs now is action – at scale, at speed, and with urgency.

*Iyer is India's executive director at the World Bank, Ghosh is founder-CEO CEEW, and Bassi is fellow at CEEW. Views are personal*

**Institutional reforms are needed to enable urban local bodies to set up special-purpose instruments to manage reuse projects and convert them into a business opportunity**