

EDITORIAL HIGHLIGHTS

04-09-2026

GS 2: Polity THE HINDU PAGE: 01

Bar Council has no power to punish students: SC

Court says the BCI, its head lack jurisdiction over students; only universities can discipline them

SC rebukes BCI's attempt to intimidate NALSAR students who opposed CJI as chief guest at event

The BCI's disciplinary powers under Advocates Act, 1961, are limited to advocates, court adds

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday declared that the Bar Council of India (BCI) and its Chairperson, Manan Kumar Mishra, lack jurisdiction to discipline or penalise law students, rebuking the regulatory body's attempts to intimidate NALSAR students exercising their constitutional right to protest.

The court insisted on clarifying the limits of the BCI's powers though the latter had revoked its August 13 letters to NALSAR administration to launch an inquiry against the stu-

dents and to the State Bar Councils to block their professional enrolment.

The students had protested against having Chief Justice Surya Kant as chief guest at their convocation following his oral comments in court comparing youth to "cockroaches" and "parasites".

Right to dissent

A three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant said the order, drawing the boundary for the Bar Council, was designed to safeguard university space and students' right to freely express dissent against future attempts to breach.



On an in-depth consideration of the issue, we are of the opinion that the Advocates Act, 1961 does not confer, expressly or impliedly, any power on the Bar Council of India and State Bar Councils to take any disciplinary or punitive action against law students

SUPREME COURT

"The BCI has no jurisdiction or statutory competence as regards students. That is for their universities," Chief Justice Kant observed.

"On an in-depth consideration of the issue, we are

of the opinion that the Advocates Act, 1961, does not confer, expressly or impliedly, any power on the Bar Council of India and State Bar Councils to take any disciplinary or punitive action against law students,"

the top court recorded in the order.

Mr. Mishra, who was present, said that the BCI had a role in regulating legal education.

But the court said the BCI could step in only after enrolment.

Its disciplinary powers under the Advocates Act, 1961, were, obviously, limited to registered advocates.

"Till then, BCI did not come into the picture... To say a student will not be enrolled..." Justice Joydipya Bagchi said, leaving the sentence unfinished.

The apex court was hearing a petition filed by two former NALSAR grad-

uates, represented by senior advocate K. Parameshwar and advocate Rupali Samuel, seeking legal action against the BCI and the chairperson for threatening the 2026 batch of NALSAR students.

Freedom of speech

The petition said that the Bar Council's letters had created a chilling effect on the freedom of speech and the freedom of association among students.

Mr. Mishra said that letters issued to NALSAR and State Bar Councils were withdrawn "within one hour".

He said there was no reason for further cause of

action, and the controversy should be given a quietus.

However, the court agreed with Mr. Parameshwar that the court should protect students in the future against any such violation of their rights by bodies acting without jurisdiction.

Such a situation should never arise, the senior counsel said.

It clarified that only the parent university or the competent authority under the law has any disciplinary power over students.

The Bench said the August 13 letters of the BCI were "obsolete".

GS 2: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THE HINDU PAGE: 05

India and Belgium ramp up bilateral defence cooperation

After meeting his Belgian counterpart, Prime Minister calls for ending conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia through dialogue; three government-level defence agreements signed; two sides also announce the establishment of a fast trade mechanism

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

Prim Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday called for dialogue and diplomacy to end the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia.

Mr. Modi made the remarks while welcoming Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever here, where the two sides ramped up bilateral defence cooperation by signing three government-level defence agreements.

Belgian sources informed that at least 10 private defence agreements will be sealed during the visit that will include production of Belgian military items such as rockets in India.

"Whether it is Ukraine or West Asia, we support all efforts aimed at an early end to conflicts and the restoration of peace. And



Boosting ties: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Prime Minister of Belgium Bart De Wever in New Delhi. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

eliminating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations is our shared commitment," Mr. Modi said in his remarks after he and Mr. De Wever discussed global and regional issues.

Paid tributes

The two leaders also paid tributes to the more than 9,000 Indian soldiers who perished in the Flanders

Fields during the First World War. A Joint Statement issued at the end of the discussions announced that the two leaders called for "safety and security of maritime routes and maintaining safe and unimpeded maritime shipping" in the context of the conflicts in West Asia and Ukraine.

The Belgian dignitary expressed support to In-

dia's campaign against cross-border terrorism and condemned the Pahalgam terror attack.

In his remarks at an event organised by the CII (Confederation of Indian Industry), the Belgian leader described the current global situation as "turbulent" and called for free trade and end to unilateral imposition of tariffs.

The two governments signed a Letter of Intent of Defence Cooperation, an MoU between Belgian Security and Defence Industry and Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers, and an MoU between the Central Bureau of Investigation and Belgium Federal Police on cooperation in combating transnational organised crime, cyber-crime and related matters.

"Our security does not stop at our borders. That is why we need to work more closely with strong part-

ners such as India – militarily, technologically and industrially," said Belgian Defence Minister Theo Francken.

On this occasion, India announced that a Defence Attache will be appointed at the Indian Embassy in Brussels. The visit included defence partnerships between Belgian and Indian defence majors. "Today, India and Europe are speaking the language of trade with renewed conviction, a language of peace, of progress and of prosperity," said Mr. De Wever.

The two sides announced the establishment of a fast trade mechanism that will deal with trade and investment and announced that bilateral trade will be doubled in the next five years. They also announced the establishment of Consular Dialogue between New Delhi and Brussels.

GS 2: SOCIAL JUSTICE THE HINDU PAGE: 07

Why accessible rehabilitation is the need of the hour in India

With the country's growing burden of non-communicable diseases, including heart disease and stroke, the need for physiotherapy is increasing. It is high time we treated physiotherapy as an important component of lifesaving care, not as an optional service tacked on after the treatment.

WORLD PHYSIOTHERAPY DAY
SEPTEMBER 8

Shakeeb Ahmed Khan
Christianeze Ratna Kiruba

When Sidhartha Bandha's 63-year-old father suffered a stroke, the hospital did what it was supposed to do: it saved his life. But when he came back home, another struggle began.

His father could no longer do things on his own. The doctors told the family that rehabilitation and physiotherapy were important for his recovery. But the physiotherapy service available to them was far away. For a family dependent on daily earnings, travelling repeatedly for treatment meant spending money on transport, losing working days and managing the difficulty of moving a person who could barely move independently.

The family eventually had to give up on regular rehabilitation. Over time, Sidhartha's father developed contractures, a condition in which muscles and joints become stiff and shortened when a person remains immobile for a long period. Sitting, standing, changing position and doing everyday activities can become a struggle.

Sidhartha remembers a different life of his father, a life where he worked in the fields and helped with household chores. His father is alive now, his life saved. But what kind of a life was it?

Where should healthcare end?

If a person survives a stroke but cannot regain the ability to move, work, participate in family life or live with some independence because rehabilitation was out of reach, is it fair to say that the job of healthcare was completed?

There is no doubt that acute medical care saves lives. But saving a life is only the first part of recovery. Rehabilitation helps a person live the life that has been saved in the way they want to.

In India, while a lot of attention has been rightfully given to improving emergency and critical care, far less has been given to what happens to patients after they leave a hospital. Physiotherapy and rehabilitation are crucial components of recovering after a number of conditions, including damage to the nervous system, heart disease and orthopaedic injuries. The question before the country today, however, is: how many people can physiotherapists actually reach?

Global organisation World Physiotherapy's profile of the Indian Association of Physiotherapists estimates 52,000 practising physiotherapists in India, equivalent to only 0.36 physiotherapists per 10,000 people, whereas, for instance, several countries in Europe have over 10 per 10,000 people.

The number tells only part of the story. The more important question is where these physiotherapists are and how many people each one can realistically reach. Are they available close to the homes of people living in rural areas? Can a person from a low-income family receive regular treatment that can last from days to months without spending a large part of



Growing needs Physiotherapy and rehabilitation are crucial components of recovering after a number of conditions, including damage to the nervous system, heart disease and orthopaedic injuries. CBI/IRACES

the family's income on travel and treatment?

The problem, therefore, is two-fold: there are not enough physiotherapists, and those that are available are not able to reach the people who need them.

And the need is enormous.

Physiotherapy is not limited to treating back pain or helping an injured athlete. It can make a meaningful difference to people recovering from stroke, heart disease, injury, surgery and many other conditions. It can help a person stand again, walk again, use an affected limb, improve balance, become physically active and return to everyday life.

Growing burden

With India's growing burden of non-communicable diseases, including heart disease and stroke, the need for physiotherapy is increasing. Someone with heart disease may need help becoming physically active safely. An older person may need help maintaining strength and balance.

A person recovering from an injury or surgery may need rehabilitation to return to work. For all of them, physiotherapy can be the bridge between being medically stable and becoming an active, functioning member of the family and community. But that bridge is often missing.

There are a number of measures that can help, ranging from policy change to

Physiotherapy is not limited to treating back pain or helping an injured athlete. It can make a meaningful difference to people recovering from stroke, heart disease, injury, surgery and many other conditions.

simple steps hospitals can take.

A model that has worked is community-based learning. This model gives physiotherapy students opportunities to work in rural and underserved communities and understand the barriers people face in accessing rehabilitation.

Students are encouraged to see these communities not just as places for academic postings, but as places where physiotherapists can build meaningful careers and take rehabilitation closer to people's homes. It deserves wider attention across physiotherapy education and healthcare policy.

Another measure is to reach families how to safely continue simple rehabilitation at home. A physiotherapist does not have to be physically present for every exercise. Families can be shown how to help with safe movement, positioning, walking and everyday activities, while the physiotherapist checks progress and changes the programme when needed.

Technology can help too.

Tele-rehabilitation cannot replace hands-on treatment when a person needs physical examination or direct treatment. But it can allow a physiotherapist to follow up, demonstrate exercises, answer questions and keep in touch with patients who find regular travel difficult.

India also needs to think about where physiotherapists work. If most opportunities are concentrated in large cities and private clinics, many people who need rehabilitation will continue to be left behind. Students should have meaningful opportunities to work in villages, smaller towns, primary healthcare centres and underserved communities – not as an afterthought, but as an important part of the profession.

It is high time we treated physiotherapy as an important component of lifesaving care, not as an optional service tacked on after the treatment. No one should be left unable to move simply because rehabilitation was too far away or too expensive.

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GS 3: ECONOMY THE HINDU PAGE: 08

The gap in manufacturing sector GVA

According to the National Accounts Statistics, the manufacturing sector's GVA is ₹38.6 lakh crore in 2023-24 at current prices; however, an 'Alternative Estimate' using data from the Annual Survey of Industries and Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises gives a lower figure, prompting a closer look at the official estimate

ECONOMIC NOTES

Jatinder S. Bedi
R. Nagaraj

Early this year, the National Statistical Office (NSO) released the new series of the National Accounts Statistics (NAS). It shows that the manufacturing sector's gross value added (GVA) is ₹38.6 lakh crore (₹38.6 trillion), constituting 14.7 per cent of GDP (gross domestic product) for the year 2023-24 at current prices. How reliable is the official estimate? This article investigates.

The manufacturing sector has two parts: one comprises all registered factories employing 10+20 workers with/without power, including registered companies (defined as the organised/formal sector). The other comprises unincorporated/informal/household units consisting of small factories/workshops falling outside the corporate/factory sector. The Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) reports the production accounts of the factory sector, while the Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE) covers the informal sector. The combined output (GVA) of the factory and unincorporated sectors almost completely represents total manufacturing output.

The discrepancy in estimates

For 2023-24, the sum of the GVA of units covered by the ASI and ASUSE is ₹27.4 lakh crore (the Alternative Estimate or AE). The official figure, as per the NAS, is ₹38.6 lakh crore. It is higher than the AE by a whopping 40.9 per cent. Let's call this the GAP. What could account for it?

While minor variations between the two estimates is understandable due to methodological or definitional issues, such a substantial GAP between the two estimates using official data sources surely raises many questions.

What are the data sources used for estimating the official GVA? For the unincorporated sector, it is ASUSE. The same as what we have used to estimate the AE. Hence, it cannot account for the GAP noted above. Moreover, the unincorporated sector's share in total manufacturing GVA is a mere 13.9 per cent.

Hence, the reason for the GAP must lie in the estimation of organised manufacturing output. The NAS uses company balance-sheet data sourced from the Ministry of Corporate Affairs database (MCA21), compiled using the annual statutory filings by registered companies. This practice of using the MCA data began with the previous NAS revision (base year 2011-12), partially replacing the ASI. The procedure has continued in the latest revision, with minor modifications.

A standard way to validate the GVA is to use employment data to estimate the sector's potential output by applying appropriate "technical ratios" drawn from the ASI and ASUSE datasets. The official Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) for 2023-24, estimated that the manufacturing sector employed 697.3 lakh workers.

However, as per the ASI and ASUSE datasets, only 532.9 lakh workers were employed to produce the official GVA. Thus, quite possibly, the contribution of the remaining 164.6 lakh "residual workers" (697.3 minus 532.9) may account for the GAP in the GVA reported above.

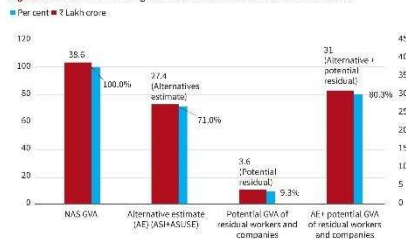


The manufacturing sector includes the organised sector comprising registered factories and companies, and the unincorporated sector comprising small factories and workshops outside the corporate sector. AP/PT/ST/NT/MS/AT

Conflicting figures

An alternative estimate of manufacturing sector GVA using time-tested official datasets puts the figure below the official estimate

Figure 1: Official manufacturing sector GVA and Alternative Estimates for 2023-24



The definitions of employment in the three surveys are not the same, and their data collection methods differ. However, for a validation exercise, the PLFS estimates provide a useful reference point. Official agencies also use similar methods.

Some of this GAP is contributed by the residual 2,72,534 MCA companies, not covered in the 78,618 "private companies" captured in the ASI data. A majority of the residual companies are likely to be non-factory private companies. The leftover residual workers are likely to belong to the unincorporated sector not covered in ASUSE survey because of their small size.

Then, applying the "technical ratios" of the appropriate segments of manufacturing as derived from unit-wise

ASI and ASUSE data, the potential GVA of the residual workers is estimated to be ₹3.6 lakh crore.

Then adding the potential GVA to the AE of ₹27.4 lakh crore reported earlier, the likely/potential overall manufacturing GVA could be ₹31.0 lakh crore.

This figure, however, still falls short of the official GVA estimate of ₹38.6 lakh crore by 24.5 per cent. In other words, the potential GVA of all workers employed in the manufacturing sector in companies and unincorporated sector enterprises would at best account for 80.3 per cent of the official estimate. It still leaves ₹7.6 lakh crore (or 19.7%) worth of NAS manufacturing GVA "unaccounted" for or "unexplained" (Figure 1). This is the real puzzle of the new GVA figures for the manufacturing sector.

THE GIST

The National Accounts Statistics data shows that the manufacturing sector's GVA is ₹38.6 lakh crore for 2023-24, constituting 14.7 per cent of GDP. However, as per an Alternative Estimate, the sum of the GVA of units covered by the ASI and ASUSE is ₹27.4 lakh crore, a 40.9 per cent difference.

The potential GVA of 'residual workers', not captured by ASI and ASUSE data, is estimated to be ₹3.6 lakh crore. Adding this to the AE of ₹27.4 lakh crore, the potential overall manufacturing GVA could be ₹31.0 lakh crore.

Whether the official estimate represents a 'fuller description of ground reality' through use of corporate data, or amounts to an overestimation of output, is a matter of contention. The statistical issue can only be resolved if the NSO's methodologies are made public.

How can this GAP be reconciled with the best alternative estimate obtained using widely used data sources? The NSO documents say that, being an establishment-based survey, the ASI reportedly fails to capture value addition taking place within an enterprise, but outside of the factory premises (such as head office, marketing and distribution, or R&D activities). Is this really true? Probably not. Available evidence does not seem to support the official view (Dholakia, Nagaraj and Pandya, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 2018). Alternatively, if the ASI-based GVA estimate did not underestimate production, how could such a large GAP arise. Is it because of the NSO methodology of scaling up of sample estimates of active companies for the universe of companies whose size and composition are lazy and unverified?

The statistical issue

As per the latest NAS, for 2023-24, manufacturing GVA is ₹38.6 lakh crore at current prices. An alternative estimate, using time-tested official ASI and ASUSE data sets, finds the official figure to be higher than the alternative estimate by 40.9 per cent.

Even after accounting for the contribution of residual companies and workers, the unexplained GAP remains at 24.5 per cent. Whether the official estimate represents a "fuller description of ground reality" through the use of corporate data, or amounts to an overestimation of output, remains a matter of contention. The statistical issue can only be resolved if the MCA data and NSO's methodologies are made public for independent verification. (Jatinder S. Bedi is a Professor of Economics at the Institute for Development and Communication, Chaudigarh, R. Nagaraj was formerly with the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR), Mumbai)

GS 3: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY INDIAN EXPRESS PAGE: 17

• SCIENCE

How Roman telescope can help decode universe's mysteries

Anjali Marar
Bengaluru, September 3

NASA ON Sunday (August 30) launched a powerful, next-generation space telescope that can search for clues for some of the universe's deepest mysteries, including mysterious phenomena such as dark matter and dark energy. The telescope, launched on a SpaceX rocket, is named after the late Nancy Grace Roman — known as the "mother of Hubble" owing to her role in the creation of the Hubble Space Telescope, which has been operating since 1990.

What will the telescope do?

In terms of scientific capabilities, the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope lies between the Hubble Space Telescope and the James Webb Telescope, which was launched in 2021. It will be able to scan vast swathes of the cosmos and may provide new insights about exoplanets, dark matter and dark energy.

EXOPLANETS: These are planets located outside our solar system and are often found orbiting a star or a "remnant star" (the remains of a star that has burnt out).

So far, more than 6,000 exoplanets have been identified. The Roman Space Telescope may be able to identify many more. This search for exoplanets could eventually

help us answer that tantalising question: Are we alone in the universe?

DARK MATTER AND DARK ENERGY: Scientists estimate that ordinary matter makes up only about 5% of the universe. The rest is composed of little-understood phenomena called dark matter and dark energy.

Scientists believe that dark matter, which makes up about 27% of the universe, is an invisible glue that holds galaxies together. On the other hand, dark energy, estimated to make up around 68% of the universe, is believed to be a repulsive force that has expedited the universe's expansion since the Big Bang. This telescope will conduct the most detailed dark matter studies ever, potentially helping map how it is structured and distributed throughout the cosmos, especially during the process of early star birth.

Besides this, this telescope will help measure how gravity subtly bends the path of light across vast distances (a phenomenon known as gravitational lensing).

The Roman telescope will, therefore, provide a three-dimensional map of the distribution of galaxies and galaxy clusters across the universe.

How does it work?

The Roman Space Telescope, weighing about 8,000 kgs and about the size of a tour bus, will operate from the Lagrange Point

Who was Nancy Grace Roman?

• Born in 1925, Roman was NASA's first chief astronomer and made key contributions to space-based telescopes at a time when ground-based ones were preferred. She died in 2018.

• Roman was deeply involved in NASA's Great Observatories programme: Hubble Space Telescope, Chandra X-ray Observatory, Compton Gamma Ray Observatory, Spitzer Space Telescope. All these took astronomy to new heights.



A SpaceX rocket carries the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope. NASA/X

2 — a vantage point between Earth and Sun located 1.2 million km from Earth.

At this point, the gravity from the Sun and Earth works together with an object's motion around the Sun. This can help the Roman telescope remain steady. Lagrange Point 2 also offers stable optical performance and an unobstructed view of the universe for imaging. The James Webb Telescope operates from this zone.

It has two major instruments on board: **WIDE FIELD INSTRUMENT:** This is a 300-megapixel infrared camera that can capture a patch of the sky about 1.5 times bigger

than the apparent size of a full Moon. The telescope can also process images 1,000 times faster than the Hubble telescope.

CORONAGRAPH: Just like humans can't look directly into the sun but can see its rounded rim with the help of goggles/protective shields, astronomers use coronagraphs to mask the extreme bright light emitted by celestial bodies to study their surroundings. The Roman Telescope will deploy one of the most advanced coronagraphs that will block the glare from stars and help scientists to see the faint reflected light from planets around them.