

EDITORIALS - 10TH JUL 2026

1. A perfect storm (GS Paper III Disaster Management)

This editorial 'A perfect storm' was published in The Hindu on 10th Jul 2026, highlights how ecological fragility, regulatory lapses and poor execution converted extreme rainfall into a deadly infrastructure disaster.

Disaster and Project Context

- A July 7 cloudburst triggered debris near the Kalladi twin-tunnel entrance in Meppadi, killing six workers and forcing suspension of construction.
- The ₹2,100-crore, 8.73-km twin-tube tunnel links Anakkampoyil in Kozhikode with Meppadi to improve mobility and access to tertiary health care.
- Meppadi, located above 7,000 feet, has faced repeated climate disasters, including the 2018 floods and the 2019 Puthumala landslide.
- Environmentalists opposed the project in Wayanad's fragile ecology, warning that large-scale tunnelling could intensify landslide and debris-flow risks.
- The project was fast-tracked for its claimed national importance; the Supreme Court rejected a plea to halt it, though petitioners plan a review.

Regulatory and Execution Failures

- Construction remains suspended pending investigation into the disaster's causes and compliance with MoEFCC clearance conditions prescribed by the Expert Appraisal Committee.
- The State blamed contractor Konkan Railways for allegedly missing the June 20 deadline to remove excavated debris from the project site.

- CCTV footage indicated an avalanche-like debris flow down the bored hill, while rainfall and regional landslide susceptibility were cited as contributing factors.
- Whether an upper-slope mudslip triggered the debris cascade requires a geomorphological probe, preventing premature attribution of responsibility.
- Synoptic conditions resembled those preceding the 2024 Wayanad calamity, exposing inadequate preparedness despite identifiable meteorological warning signs.

Climate-Resilient Infrastructure Imperative

- Infrastructure in Wayanad requires rigorous ecological assessment and climate-resilient planning suited to its fragile terrain and recurrent extreme rainfall.
- Environmental clearance must be matched by uncompromising execution, continuous slope monitoring and strict removal of construction debris.
- The State must reassess the project's social costs and environmental risks while strengthening prevention-oriented disaster management.

Beyond Editorial

Community-Centred Disaster Governance

- Local risk mapping: Aizawl prepared 1:5,000 landslide-hazard maps and mandated geotechnical reports for building permits, demonstrating how local scientific capacity can prevent unsafe construction.
- Community evacuation: Odisha evacuated nearly one million people before Cyclone Phailin in 2013, limiting deaths to 38 compared with over 10,000 during the 1999 Super Cyclone.

- **Volunteer response:** The Aapda Mitra scheme targets training 100,000 community volunteers across 350 disaster-prone districts in flood, cyclone, landslide and earthquake response.
- **Women's participation:** Gorakhpur's Aapda Sakhis strengthened women's role in village disaster planning, while Uttar Pradesh trained 40,000 residents across 1,045 villages.
- **Resilient shelters:** Twenty-five cyclone shelters constructed under the National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project accommodated about 25,000 people in Odisha during Cyclone Phailin.
- **Local accountability:** Odisha made participation of local authorities in disaster-management activities obligatory in 2021, strengthening decentralised responsibility for preparedness and response.
- **Preparedness drills:** Odisha's Noliasahi and Venkatraipur communities earned TsunamiReady recognition after evacuation exercises, showing how repeated drills convert warning systems into community readiness.

2. A global crackdown and a chance for India

(GS Paper II International Relations)

This editorial 'A global crackdown and a chance for India' was published in The Indian Express on 10th Jul 2026, highlights how coordinated international action can rebuild India-Canada ties while dismantling crime-terror networks threatening the Indian diaspora.

International Cooperation and Diplomatic Reset

- Operation Hard Ball, a multi-country crackdown on transnational syndicates, received Indian cooperation and supported Delhi's denial of involvement in overseas terror cells.
- Allegations surrounding Hardeep Singh Nijjar's June 2023 killing and the Trudeau government's campaign had frozen India-Canada relations.

- Statements by senior RCMP officials and Prime Minister Mark Carney's leadership signal greater maturity and bilateral reconciliation.
- Renewed engagement could revive educational exchanges and people-to-people ties disrupted by the diplomatic freeze.

Transnational Crime-Terror Nexus

- The operation exposed the transnational reach of syndicates targeting the Indian diaspora across Canada, the US, Europe and Australia.
- The organised crime-terror nexus enables separatist financing while combining drugs, terrorism and separatism within common networks.
- Extortion calls, once associated with Mumbai's underworld, have become a preferred weapon of criminal syndicates against Indians abroad.
- These networks damage the diaspora's reputation while recruiting vulnerable students as foot soldiers.

Opportunity for India

- Cross-border enforcement can protect overseas Indians while helping dismantle domestic gangs and extortion rackets targeting businesses.
- Action against once-untouchable syndicates can counter the glamour of gang culture, which ultimately leads to prison or deportation.
- India must make organised crime a high-risk, zero-reward activity rather than a lucrative enterprise.

Beyond Editorial

Legal Architecture for Transnational Crime Control

- Treaty foundation: The India-Canada Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty, signed in 1994 and effective from 1995, provides a formal channel for evidence and judicial cooperation.
- Central coordination: The Ministry of Home Affairs acts as India's central authority for criminal legal assistance, supported by operational treaties with 39 countries.

- Extradition safeguards: The India–Canada extradition treaty permits refusal where requests are politically motivated, made in bad faith or contrary to the interests of justice.
- Real-time intelligence: INTERPOL’s I-24/7 network connects all 196 member countries, allowing authorised agencies to exchange urgent information and access criminal databases instantly.
- Coordinated enforcement: Under Operation Chakra V, the Central Bureau of Investigation raided 19 locations and dismantled call centres targeting Japanese citizens in 2025.
- Financial disruption: Operation HAECHE VI involved 40 jurisdictions, blocked 68,000 bank accounts and recovered \$439 million in currencies, virtual assets and physical property.
- Witness security: The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime provides a global framework covering extradition, legal assistance, joint investigations and protection of witnesses from criminal retaliation.

3. Lessons from a Chinese supercomputer (GS Paper III Economy, Science and Technology)

This editorial ‘Lessons from a Chinese supercomputer’ was published in The Indian Express on 10th Jul 2026, highlights how China’s indigenous supercomputing breakthrough offers lessons for India’s semiconductor sovereignty and technology strategy.

China’s Indigenous Technology Breakthrough

- China’s LineShine recorded 2.198 exaflops, outperforming America’s El Capitan and becoming the first CPU-only system to cross two exaflops.
- The machine integrates 13.8 million cores through a fully domestic stack of processors, interconnects, platform and operating system.
- US export controls since 2022 accelerated state-backed substitution rather than preserving a permanent technological chokehold.

- China's chip self-sufficiency reached 33% in 2024 against an 80% target by 2030, while domestic chips may capture half its 2026 AI-chip market.
- Naura, AMEC and ACM Research entered the global top 20 equipment makers, while Huawei's AI-chip revenue may rise 60% to \$12 billion.
- China is moving from assembly towards design, materials, tooling and architecture, capturing harder-to-replicate and higher-value segments.

Lessons for India's Semiconductor Strategy

- The India Semiconductor Mission, launched with ₹76,000 crore in 2021, has approved 13 projects across seven States.
- Tata-Powerchip's ₹91,000-crore Dholera fabrication plant targets 50,000 28-nanometre wafers monthly, with first production expected around 2028.
- China demonstrates that technological strength requires an integrated semiconductor ecosystem, not merely isolated fabrication facilities.
- The proposed ISM 2.0 emphasis on equipment, materials and Indian intellectual property reflects this lesson, though execution remains decisive.
- Chip design contributes up to half of value addition; India can leverage its R&D centres and fabless capabilities before pursuing costly leading-edge fabrication.
- Sustained patient capital and rapid talent creation are essential, particularly with a projected shortage of 700,000 skilled workers by 2030.

Geopolitical Implications and India's Opportunity

- Technology denial can accelerate domestic substitution, dividing global supply chains into parallel and potentially incompatible technological ecosystems.
- Supply-chain diversification away from China-Taiwan concentration creates opportunities for India as a non-aligned, English-speaking manufacturing and design destination.

- India must not equate assembly capacity with strategic autonomy, which ultimately depends on indigenous intellectual property and engineering competence.
- LineShine shows that a determined State can develop adequate alternatives despite restrictions and use technological achievements for strategic signalling.

Beyond Editorial

Environmental Costs of Computational Sovereignty

- Electricity burden: The International Energy Agency projects data-centre electricity use to rise from 485 terawatt-hours in 2025 to around 950 terawatt-hours by 2030.
- Grid pressure: Singapore imposed a moratorium on new data centres after they reached about 7% of national electricity demand, later permitting growth under stricter resource conditions.
- Carbon lock-in: Renewables may supply nearly half of additional data-centre electricity demand by 2030, but natural gas and coal will continue meeting substantial requirements.
- Water recycling: Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company aims to replace over 60% of freshwater used by its Taiwanese fabrication plants with reclaimed water by 2030.
- Chemical footprint: A wastewater system introduced at TSMC's Fab 20 reduced chemical-reagent use by 30% and is projected to cut annual emissions by 8,950 tonnes.
- Electronic waste: Global e-waste reached 62 million tonnes in 2022 and may reach 82 million tonnes by 2030, while recycling supplies only 1% of rare-earth demand.
- Extractive burden: UNCTAD finds that expanding digital infrastructure raises mineral demand while shifting mining-related water, pollution and social costs disproportionately towards developing countries.