

## BANGLADESH FLOODS NOT DUE TO TRIPURA DAM: MEA

### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



**CONTEXT:** The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) denied India's responsibility for the floods in Bangladesh, stating that the Dumbur dam in Tripura was automatically releasing water due to heavy rainfall.

#### Key Points:

- **India rejects claims:** The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) refutes allegations that the Dumbur dam in Tripura caused floods in Bangladesh.
- **Natural causes:** The MEA attributes the floods to heavy rainfall in the catchment areas of the Gumti river, which flows through both countries.

- **Automatic releases:** The Dumbur dam is designed to release water automatically during heavy rainfall to maintain reservoir stability.
- **Shared responsibility:** The MEA emphasizes that floods in common rivers are a shared problem and require mutual cooperation between India and Bangladesh.
- **Security concerns:** The Indian High Commissioner expresses concerns about the safety of Indian mission and personnel in Bangladesh amid protests.

## DOCTORS IN CAPITAL CALL OFF 11-DAY STRIKE AS SC BROKERS PEACE

### POLITY & GOVERNANCE



**CONTEXT:** The Supreme Court intervened to end the 11-day strike by doctors in India, urging them to return to work and promising to address their concerns regarding safety and working conditions.

The court urged doctors to return to work and promised to address their concerns regarding safety and working conditions. The court also directed the creation of a National Task Force to suggest reforms and ensure better infrastructure for medical professionals. The court ordered the creation of an online portal for the NTF to receive suggestions and grievances anonymously. The court also directed the Union Health Secretary to implement interim safety measures within two weeks.

# NO PROBLEM CAN BE SOLVED ON BATTLEFIELD, SAYS MODI

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**CONTEXT:** The statement by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, emphasizing India's support for dialogue and diplomacy over military conflict, came during a bilateral meeting with Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, where the two leaders expressed deep concern over the ongoing war in Ukraine and its global repercussions, as they elevated India-Poland ties to a strategic partnership.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during a bilateral meeting with Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, expressed deep concern over the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia, highlighting the loss of innocent lives as a major challenge for humanity. Emphasizing India's belief in dialogue and diplomacy over military solutions, Modi reiterated India's readiness to support efforts for peace and stability. The leaders jointly called for a "comprehensive, just, and lasting peace" in accordance with international law and the UN Charter, emphasizing the importance of respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity. They also noted the adverse effects of the Ukraine war on global food and energy security.

# INDIA, POLAND FORMULATE ACTION PLAN, UPGRADE TIES TO STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



**CONTEXT:** India and Poland have solidified their bilateral relationship by establishing a strategic partnership, focusing on comprehensive cooperation across various sectors through a five-year action plan (2024-2028).

### Strategic Partnership and Five-Year Action Plan

India and Poland have elevated their bilateral relationship to a strategic partnership, guided by a five-year action plan (2024-2028). The plan identifies key areas for cooperation, including political dialogue, security, trade, investment, climate, energy, science and technology, transport, cyber security,

health, and cultural exchange.

### Economic Cooperation and Investment Opportunities

India has invited Polish companies to participate in its mega food parks, recognizing Poland's expertise in food processing. Cooperation opportunities also exist in water treatment, solid waste management, and urban infrastructure due to India's rapid urbanization.

### Energy and Technology Collaboration

Both countries have identified clean coal technology, green hydrogen, renewable energy, and artificial intelligence as priorities. Poland acknowledges India's ambition to join the International Energy Agency.

## Cultural Exchange and People-to-People Ties

A youth exchange program, the Jam Saheb of Nawanagar, will annually bring 20 Polish youth to India to strengthen cultural ties.

## Space Cooperation and Social Security

India and Poland will collaborate on safe, sustainable space use and promote human and robotic exploration. A social security agreement aims to benefit skilled workers and enhance mobility.

## India's "Make in India" Initiative

Prime Minister Modi has invited Polish companies to participate in the "Make in India" initiative, contributing to global manufacturing efforts.

# MODI'S UKRAINE VISIT LIKELY TO EXPLORE DEEPER TIES IN DEFENCE MANUFACTURING

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



**CONTEXT:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcoming visit to Ukraine, the first by an Indian Prime Minister, will focus on strengthening defence ties between the two nations, as India seeks to address challenges in its military supply chain caused by the ongoing Ukraine conflict. The visit will explore opportunities for joint ventures and partnerships in defence manufacturing, given India's reliance on military equipment from both Russia and Ukraine.

## Modi's Ukraine Visit to Focus on Defence Manufacturing Ties

**Overview of the Visit** Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcoming visit to Ukraine, the first by an Indian Prime Minister, will emphasize strengthening defence cooperation between India and Ukraine. The visit comes at the invitation of Ukrainian President

Volodymyr Zelenskyy, with a particular focus on defence trade impacted by the ongoing war.

**Challenges in Defence Supply Chain** India, which operates a large inventory of military equipment from both Russia and Ukraine, has faced disruptions in the supply of spares and components since the war began. While the situation has improved, deliveries have not returned to pre-war levels. Both Russia and Ukraine have committed to ensuring timely deliveries, though earlier schedules have been affected.

**Opportunities for Joint Ventures** Ukraine has expressed interest in forming joint ventures with Indian companies, particularly in areas involving cutting-edge, battle-tested systems and technologies. This could help India diversify its defence partnerships and reduce reliance on traditional suppliers.

**Impact on Indian Military** The war in Ukraine has significantly impacted the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force, all of which have substantial inventories of equipment from Russia and Ukraine. Contracts related to air defence, armour, and artillery were terminated due to price escalations and supply chain disruptions. This has led the Indian military to seek domestic alternatives and diversify its vendor base to other countries such as Poland, Estonia, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic.

**Push for Indigenous Manufacturing** In response to these challenges, the Indian Army, Navy, and Air

Force have turned to indigenous defence manufacturers for smaller components and sub-assemblies. The Navy has drawn up a roadmap to increase local servicing of warship engines, reducing dependence on Ukrainian facilities.

**Past Defence Trade with Ukraine** Defence trade between India and Ukraine continued until just before the war. Notably, after the Balakot air strike in 2019, the Indian Air Force (IAF) procured R-27 air-to-air missiles from Ukraine for its SU-30MKI fighters. In February 2021, Ukraine signed four agreements worth \$70 million with India, covering the sale of new weapons and the maintenance and upgrade of existing equipment in the Indian military's inventory.

## OPPOSITION MEMBERS RAISE AN ARRAY OF OBJECTIONS TO WAQF AMENDMENT BILL

POLITY & GOVERNANCE



**CONTEXT:** The Joint Committee on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill began consultations, with opposition members voicing strong objections to various provisions, including government interference, the inclusion of non-Muslim members in Waqf Boards, and the designation of the District Collector as the authority for classifying Waqf properties.

### Opposition Challenges to Waqf Amendment Bill Combative Mood in Joint Committee Meeting

Parliament's Joint Committee on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill began consultations with opposition members expressing strong objections to several provisions. The meeting, described as "combative," highlighted widespread opposition to what was perceived as excessive government interference, the inclusion of non-Muslim members in Waqf Boards, and the role of the District Collector in determining whether a property is classified as Waqf or government land.

### Key Objections Raised

Opposition parties, including the Congress, All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), and Trinamool Congress, voiced near-unanimous disapproval of the clause designating the District Collector as the primary authority on Waqf property classification. There was significant uproar over the inclusion of non-Muslim members in Waqf Boards, a move seen as misinterpreting the Sachar

Committee's recommendations. AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi was particularly vocal, criticizing the government for not consulting stakeholders before drafting the Bill.

### Concerns Over Property Deed Requirement

Samajwadi Party MP Mohibullah objected to the requirement for Waqf properties to submit a "property deed" for registration, arguing that the same expectation is not applied to temples, where "customs and usage" are sufficient for recognition.

### NDA Allies' Stance

The YSR Congress strongly opposed the amendments, particularly the inclusion of non-Muslim members and the recognition of sub-sects like "Aghakhani" and "Bohra" Muslims as having separate Waqf Boards. Meanwhile, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), an NDA ally, adopted a more balanced approach, supporting reform while expressing a willingness to address concerns during the clause-by-clause discussion.

### Committee Chair's Assurance

Chairperson Jagdambika Pal assured that the committee would consider all 44 amendments and aim to produce a comprehensive Bill before the Winter Session, scheduled for late November.

## PM TO MEET UNIONS OF GOVT. EMPLOYEES FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 10 YEARS

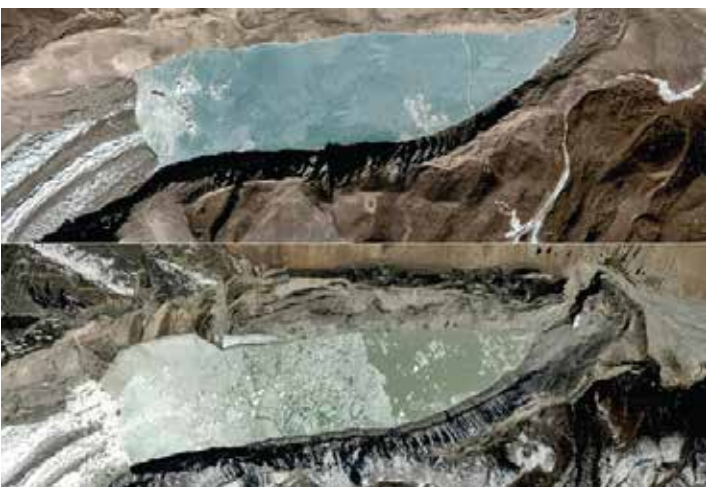
### POLITY & GOVERNANCE

For the first time in a decade, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will meet with staff representatives from the national-level Joint Consultative Mechanism (JCM) of Union government employees and the Personnel Ministry. The meeting is scheduled for Saturday at the PM's official residence.

The JCM secretary, Shiv Gopal Mishra, and other staff representatives will discuss several issues with the Prime Minister, including the restoration of the old pension scheme (OPS), which remains unresolved. The unions had previously planned an indefinite strike starting May 1 but deferred it after discussions with the government.

## NDMA TO MONITOR 189 HIGH-RISK GLACIAL LAKES TO PREVENT DISASTERS

### DISASTER MANAGEMENT



**CONTEXT:** The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is taking proactive measures to mitigate the risks posed by high-risk glacial lakes in the Himalayas, including lake-lowering measures and early warning systems, in response to recent disasters caused by overflowing glacial lakes.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is taking action to prevent disasters caused by glacial lake outbursts in the Himalayas. They have identified 189 high-risk lakes and are implementing

measures such as lake-lowering and early warning systems. This initiative comes in response to a recent incident where a glacial lake in Sikkim overflowed, causing significant damage and loss of life.

The NDMA is conducting expeditions to study these lakes and develop effective mitigation strategies.

## CENTRE, STATES DISCUSS NEW MECHANISM FOR GATHERING CROP DATA

ECONOMICS & DEVELOPMENT



**CONTEXT:** The Indian government is implementing a new digital survey to improve crop production statistics.

### ENHANCING CROP PRODUCTION STATISTICS

#### Digital General Crop Estimation Survey (DGCES)

- The Indian government is implementing DGCES to improve the accuracy and reliability of agricultural statistics.
- It aims to provide plot-level data with geotagged areas of crops.
- DGCES will calculate yield using scientifically designed crop cutting experiments.

#### Key Objectives

- Enhance accuracy, reliability, and transparency of agricultural statistics.
- Support policy formulation, trade decisions, and agricultural planning.
- Improve agricultural production estimates.

- Integrate technology to strengthen data accuracy.

#### Collaborative Approach

- The Centre and States will work together to achieve these objectives.
- They will discuss the integration of cutting-edge technologies like remote sensing, geospatial analysis, and artificial intelligence.

#### Benefits of DGCES

- Provide near real-time and reliable data directly from the field.
- Serve as a single source of truth for agricultural data.
- Support better decision-making in the agricultural sector.



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# WHEN SWELTERING HEAT TURNS PUBLIC HOSPITALS INTO POTENTIAL 'DEATH TRAPS'

## POLITY & GOVERNANCE

**CONTEXT:** India's public health infrastructure is ill-equipped to handle the rising heatwaves, putting vulnerable populations at risk of heat-related illnesses and deaths. Urgent measures are needed to improve hospital facilities and implement preventive strategies to mitigate these risks.

### THE GIST

Heat-related deaths are likely being underreported. Reasons include lack of knowledge among healthcare professionals and inadequate autopsy services. Also patients developing heat-related illness after admission for a different illness can cause underreporting

People who come to hospitals for certain illnesses are more vulnerable to heat-related illnesses. If someone has a fever it is very important to dissipate heat via sweating. However, if the ambient heat in the hospital ward is high, they will not be able to do so. This puts them at high risk of heat exhaustion

Individual measures taken by doctors cannot cope with systemic failings of poor health infrastructure and the problem of climate change at large. Hospitals need to have a strategy in place every year to deal with such occurrences

### Heat-Related Risks in Indian Hospitals

#### Impact of Heatwaves on Healthcare

- Heatwaves disproportionately affect poor and marginalized communities.
- Lack of access to cooling devices exacerbates the problem.
- Heat-related deaths are likely underreported.

#### Vulnerability in Hospitals

- Patients admitted for illnesses are more susceptible to heat-related complications.
- Overcrowded and poorly ventilated hospital wards increase the risk.
- Systemic failures in healthcare infrastructure contribute to the problem.

#### Case Studies

- Patients died due to heat-related illnesses while undergoing treatment for other ailments.
- Hospitals struggled to provide adequate care in the extreme heat.

#### Addressing the Issue

- Hospitals need to implement strategies to prevent heat-related complications.
- Improving hospital infrastructure, such as providing shade and water dispensers, is essential.
- Individual measures taken by doctors are not sufficient to address the systemic problem.

#### Conclusion

- The urgent need to address the inadequate public health infrastructure in India is highlighted.
- Improving hospital facilities and implementing preventive strategies are crucial to mitigate the risks posed by heatwaves.



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# WHAT IS VACCINE-DERIVED POLIO?

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

**CONTEXT:** overview of vaccine-derived polio, exploring its causes, types, and the global initiatives to eradicate it. It also highlights a recent case in India and delves into the distinctions between oral and inactivated polio vaccines.

### Vaccine-Derived Polio Case Detected in Meghalaya

A two-year-old child in Tikrikilla, Meghalaya, has been infected with vaccine-derived polio, a rare condition resulting from the mutated strain of the oral polio vaccine (OPV) virus. This is not a wild poliovirus case but occurs in areas with low immunity, poor sanitation, or among immunocompromised individuals. The child, diagnosed with acute flaccid paralysis, has prompted high alert in Meghalaya's West Garo Hills district.

Vaccine-derived polio can occur when the attenuated virus in OPV mutates and regains the ability to cause paralysis. While OPV is widely used due to its ease of administration and cost-effectiveness, it carries a risk of reversion to a virulent form. In contrast, the inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) contains no live virus, thus posing no risk of vaccine-associated paralytic poliomyelitis (VAPP).

India has seen a rise in cases of VAPP, especially after the global shift from trivalent to bivalent OPV in 2016. In response to increasing vaccine-derived poliovirus outbreaks, the WHO introduced a genetically modified novel oral polio vaccine in 2021, which is less likely to revert to a harmful form, thus reducing the risk of VDPV.

# DEATH AT WORK INTRIGUING SILENCE

## POLITY & GOVERNANCE

The recent industrial accidents in Andhra Pradesh's Atchutapuram SEZ highlight serious safety concerns. Despite government efforts to streamline regulations, lax safety standards and a lack of oversight have contributed to these tragic events. Trade unions and activists are demanding stricter regulations and thorough safety audits to prevent future accidents. A key complaint is the exemption from government inspections given to units in SEZs, which can lead to a lack of oversight. The series of accidents calls for a broader investigation and stricter enforcement of safety regulations to ensure the well-being of workers and prevent future tragedies.

# BUILDING ON FAVOURABLE CHANGE IN THE 2024 WAQF BILL

## POLITY & GOVERNANCE

**CONTEXT:** The Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2024 introduces significant reforms to the Waqf Act, aiming to address concerns, particularly those surrounding family waqfs. By proposing changes to ensure fair inheritance rights, the bill seeks to rectify historical inequities. However, it is crucial for the Joint Parliamentary Committee to consider the potential impact of these reforms on family waqfs and ensure that they align with broader legal principles regarding testamentary powers across different communities. This will help to promote consistency and fairness in the waqf system.

### Introduction

- The Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2024, currently under review by a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC),



faces scrutiny from both government allies and opposition parties. Concerns include the potential reduction in protection for waqf properties and the increased powers granted to District Magistrates.

### Family Waqf: Rationale and Historical Context

- **Definition and Purpose:** Family waqf, though not explicitly mentioned in the Quran, is a form of charitable endowment aimed at benefiting family members while also potentially contributing to public welfare.
- **Historical Practices:** The concept dates back to the Prophet Muhammad and his companions, who created family waqfs to protect property from fragmentation and ensure its use for family and public good.
- **Scholarly Criticism:** Critics argue that family waqf was used to circumvent women's inheritance rights and favor family aggrandizement. However, it also addressed issues like orphaned grandchildren and care for elderly and disabled family members.

### Global and Historical Perspectives

- **Colonial Influence:** The British Privy Council initially invalidated family waqfs but later reversed this decision. Colonial rule influenced many Muslim countries to restrict or abolish family waqfs, including Egypt, Syria, Kuwait, Iraq, Tunisia, Libya, and the UAE.
- **Current Status:** In countries like India, family waqfs are recognized but lack the privileges of charitable waqfs, such as tax exemptions. They also face restrictions under land reform laws.

### Proposed Reforms in the 2024 Bill

- **New Section 3A(2):** The bill proposes that family waqfs should not deny inheritance rights, including those of female heirs. It allows a Muslim to create a family waqf only on a third of their property if excluding all heirs and ensures female heirs cannot be wholly excluded.
- **Issues with the Reform:** The provision could still allow minimal benefits to female heirs, which might not align with the full legal entitlements under Islamic inheritance law. It also raises questions about the consistency of testamentary restrictions across different communities.

### Call for Uniformity

- **Need for Uniform Civil Code:** The article suggests that similar restrictions on testamentary powers should apply across all communities, advocating for a Uniform Civil Code or Secular Civil Code to ensure consistency and fairness in inheritance laws.

### Conclusion

- The Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2024 includes positive reforms, particularly regarding family waqfs and inheritance rights. However, the JPC is urged to address concerns and consider broader legal uniformity to ensure equitable treatment across different religious and legal systems.

## THE KURSK GAMBIT, UKRAINIAN TACTICS AND BATTLE REALITIES

### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**CONTEXT:** The strategic and tactical significance of Ukraine's daring incursion into Russia's Kursk region, examining how this bold move might impact the ongoing conflict with Russia, its implications for Western support for Ukraine, and the potential risks and benefits for Kyiv amidst the broader geopolitical dynamics.

### The Kursk Gambit: Ukraine's Bold Move

**Surprising Offensive:** Ukraine's audacious attack into Russia's Kursk region, resulting in the capture of

several hundred Russian soldiers, showcases Kyiv's bold strategy under President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. This move is aimed at impressing Western allies and creating leverage in the conflict with Russia.

**Strategic Importance of Pokrovsk:** Amidst Ukraine's offensive, the city of Pokrovsk in Eastern Donetsk is under siege by Russian forces. Pokrovsk is a crucial logistics hub for Ukraine, and its capture by Russia could significantly impact the balance of power in the region. Ukrainian forces are being ordered to withdraw, which could facilitate further Russian advances in Donetsk.

**Strategic Deception and Tactical Choices:** Kyiv had planned the Kursk offensive for months while disguising it as a defensive measure against a potential Russian attack on Sumy. The incursion into Kursk, where Russian defenses were weak, aims to force a Russian redeployment and reduce pressure on Ukrainian-held areas. However, Ukraine faces the risk of a significant Russian counter-attack due to Russia's superior firepower and resources.

**Russian Response and Tactical Realities:** Despite Ukraine's gains in Kursk, Russia remains focused on its offensive in Eastern Ukraine. Moscow's potential capture of Pokrovsk could lead to further operations in Ukraine, but the full impact of Ukraine's Kursk incursion on Russian strategy is yet to be seen. Russia's response may involve strategic counterattacks to reclaim control and consolidate gains.

**Kyiv's Messaging and Risks:** The offensive serves both as a strategic maneuver to demonstrate Ukrainian capability and a message to Western allies about the need for continued support. Kyiv risks overstressing its forces and facing significant losses if Russia successfully counters the incursion. The long-term value of the Kursk gambit will depend on its impact on the broader conflict and potential negotiations for a settlement.

## INDIA SHOULD SWITCH TO INACTIVATED POLIO VACCINE

### SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

**CONTEXT:** India faces a critical situation with a potential polio case in Meghalaya, highlighting the urgent need to transition from oral polio vaccines (OPV) to inactivated polio vaccines (IPV) due to concerns over vaccine-derived poliovirus and the challenges in identifying immunodeficient individuals who are at risk of developing vaccine-derived poliomyelitis.

India is facing a potential polio case in Meghalaya, raising concerns about vaccine-derived poliovirus (VDPV). While the specific type of virus involved remains unclear, the delay in confirming details is troubling. India's switch in 2016 to a bivalent oral polio vaccine (OPV) reduces the risk of type 2 VDPV but does not eliminate the issue. Given the challenges in identifying immunodeficient children who are at risk, there is an urgent need for India to transition to inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) to prevent future cases. Most developed countries have already made this switch, and India should follow suit to enhance polio eradication efforts.

## A LOOK AT ONGOING INDIAN SPACE MISSIONS

### SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

**CONTEXT:** Over the past year, India's space program has seen significant advancements, with key missions such as Aditya L1 for solar research, Gaganyaan TV-D1 testing crew safety systems, and the XPoSat for X-ray studies. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is focusing on its 25-year roadmap, including the development of the Next Generation Launch Vehicle and the Bharatiya Antariksh Station, while NewSpace India Ltd. (NSIL) manages commercial missions and private companies like Agnikul Cosmos and Skyroot Aerospace advance their technologies. Recent policy updates by IN-SPACE

and changes in foreign direct investment (FDI) regulations are also boosting private sector participation in India's space sector.



## Indian Space Missions: Key Developments and Future Plans

### Recent Achievements

- **Aditya L1 Mission:** Launched on September 2, 2023, this spacecraft studies solar radiation from the Earth-Sun Lagrange point (L1). It entered its orbit around L1 on January 6, 2024, and observed a solar storm in May 2024.
- **Gaganyaan TV-D1:** On October 21, 2023, ISRO conducted its first abort test for the Gaganyaan human spaceflight mission, demonstrating the Crew Escape System's effectiveness.
- **XPoSat:** Launched on January 1, 2024, this X-ray Polarimeter Satellite studies radiation polarization from celestial objects, complementing NASA's IPEX.

### Successful Missions and Tests

- **INSAT-3DS:** Launched on February 17, 2024, this meteorological satellite validated the GSLV's performance ahead of the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) mission.
- **RLV-TD:** Two landing experiments with the Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV) Pushpak were conducted in March and June 2024.
- **SSLV:** On August 16, 2024, the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) successfully placed EOS-08 and SR-0 Demosat satellites in orbit, marking the SSLV's final development phase.

### Future Plans

- **Gaganyaan Roadmap:** A 25-year plan was announced in December 2023, including crewed lunar missions and a potential Indian moon landing by 2040. The first uncrewed Gaganyaan flight is expected in late 2024.
- **Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV):** ISRO is developing a new three-stage launch vehicle to handle heavier payloads, with a focus on manufacturing and funding requirements.
- **Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS):** Planned for completion by 2035, this space station will support India's long-term space objectives.

### Commercial and Private Sector Involvement

- **NewSpace India Ltd. (NSIL):** Manages commercial missions and has agreements for satellite launches and SSLV services.
- **Private Companies:** Agnikul Cosmos and Skyroot Aerospace have made strides with their own space technologies. Agnikul launched its SoRTeD-01 vehicle in March 2024, and Skyroot is progressing towards launching its Vikram 1 rocket.

### Policy and Regulatory Updates

- **IN-SPACE:** Released new guidelines for space activities and granted licenses for satellite broadband and ground station services.
- **FDI Policy:** Updated in February 2024 to permit 100% direct foreign investment in most space sectors, with certain limits on satellite manufacturing and launch infrastructure.

Overall, ISRO and India's space sector are advancing rapidly with a mix of successful missions, new technological developments, and enhanced private sector participation.

# SHIFT IN INFLATION GOAL CAN TRIP ECONOMIC PROSPECTS: PATRA

ECONOMICS & DEVELOPMENT

## Food for thought

**Premature to consider natural interest rate equilibrium when durable disinflation to target 4% is work in progress: RBI's Das**

- 'MPC's steadfast path to align inflation durably with 4% target led to hold'
- 'Empirical evidence points to rise in time-varying food inflation persistence'
- 'Justification for policy easing based on high real rates can be misleading'



**CONTEXT:** Wedge between headline and food inflation has been widening and stalling alignment of former with the target, says RBI Deputy Governor; 'food inflation taking longer to revert after a shock'

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) maintained its policy rates due to persistent food inflation, despite a gradual decline. The RBI believes that focusing on abstract theoretical concepts like the "equilibrium natural interest rate" is premature and can be misleading.

# MODI ATTEMPTS A TRICKY BALANCE IN KYIV, AS U.S., RUSSIA WATCH CLOSELY

ECONOMICS & DEVELOPMENT

**CONTEXT:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcoming visit to Kyiv, following his recent trip to Moscow, aims to navigate India's delicate position in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, address Ukraine's grievances regarding India's stance and support, and explore potential roles in peace negotiations and reconstruction efforts amidst ongoing international debates and geopolitical tensions.

## Overview of Prime Minister Modi's Kyiv Visit

### Purpose and Timing

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Kyiv, the first high-level visit from India since the start of the Russia-Ukraine war, aims to balance India's position on the conflict. This visit follows Modi's recent trip to Moscow and will be closely scrutinized, given Ukraine's past dissatisfaction with India's stance.

### Key Focus Areas

- **India's Stance on the War:** Modi's responses to Ukraine's requests for reconstruction aid and equipment supplies will be significant.
- **Role in Peace Process:** The visit may influence India's potential role in peace negotiations and conflict resolution.

### Context and Opportunities

- **International Context:** The visit comes amid a failed Swiss peace summit, rising European concerns about war costs, and U.S. domestic distractions.

- **Strategic Opportunity:** India might use this visit to initiate global discussions on bringing warring parties to the negotiation table.

### Reactions and Challenges

#### Ukrainian Criticism

- **Zelenskyy's Disappointment:** Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy criticized Modi's earlier support for Putin, viewing it as detrimental to peace efforts.

#### UN Position and Diplomatic Reactions

- **UN Resolutions:** India's abstentions from critical UN resolutions and disassociation from the Swiss Peace conference outcome have been sources of disappointment in Kyiv.
- **Future Peace Summit:** India could leverage its position to ensure Russia's participation in upcoming peace talks and facilitate dialogue.

#### India's Support and Future Cooperation

##### Current Assistance

- **Humanitarian Aid:** India has provided tents and medicines but has yet to approve requests for advanced equipment and machinery.
- Future Engagement

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