



Delhi Imposes Year-Round Ban on Firecrackers

ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT



Comprehensive Ban Announced

The Delhi government has imposed a complete ban on the manufacturing, storage, sale (including online delivery), and bursting of all forms of firecrackers throughout the year in the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi. The order, issued on December 19 by the Principal Secretary, Environment, was enacted under Section 5 of the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

Previous Seasonal Restrictions

For several years, the Delhi government had imposed firecracker bans only during the winter months, when air pollution levels peak. This year's ban extended from October 14 to January 1,

2025. However, the new directive establishes a permanent, all-encompassing restriction.

Supreme Court's Role

The Delhi government informed the Supreme Court of its "permanent, all-pervasive" ban, as per the court's earlier directions. Representing Delhi, senior advocate Shadan Farasat emphasized that the order was issued to align with the court's mandate to reduce air and noise pollution in the region.

Need for Regional Cooperation

The Delhi government highlighted that the ban would only be fully effective if neighboring NCR states—Rajasthan, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh—implemented similar measures. Rajasthan confirmed a similar ban in its NCR areas on December 17. Following this, the Supreme Court directed Uttar Pradesh and Haryana to enforce comparable restrictions.

Concerns of Firecracker Dealers

Advocate Rohini Musa, representing 150 firecracker dealers, argued that the Delhi government failed to consult them before imposing the ban, despite the Supreme Court's earlier suggestion for deliberation. Dealers expressed discontent over the lack of dialogue in this decision-making process.

Broader Implications

The Supreme Court has consistently urged NCR states to impose a perennial ban on firecrackers to address air and noise pollution. The recent directives aim to create a unified approach across the region, ensuring sustained environmental benefits.

The
More
You Learn,
The
More
You Earn



www.vedhikiasacademy.org

Eklavya Schools Struggle to Fulfill 5% PVTG Sub-Quota

SOCIAL JUSTICE



Quota Implementation Challenges

Four years after the Centre introduced a 5% sub-quota for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS), data reveals that the target remains unmet. Currently, only 3.4% of students in these schools belong to PVTG communities, falling short of the mandated quota.

Rising Dropout Rates

The dropout rate among PVTG students in EMRS has been steadily increasing over the past three academic years. According to data presented in the Lok Sabha:

- In 2021-22, 10 PVTG students dropped out.

- In 2022-23, the number rose to 14.
- By 2023-24, dropouts increased further to 18.

State-Wise Performance

Key states with significant tribal populations are struggling to meet the 5% PVTG quota:

- Madhya Pradesh: PVTG students constitute 3.8% of total enrollment.
- Chhattisgarh: PVTG representation is at 2.74%.
- Gujarat: Out of 10,688 students, only 21 belong to PVTG communities.

Reasons for Dropouts

The Union Minister of State for Tribal Affairs, Durgadas Uikey, cited several factors contributing to dropouts:

- Infrastructure gaps
- Shortage of teachers
- Financial pressure leading students to work for earnings
- Perceived low quality of education

Introduction of Sub-Quota

The 5% sub-quota for PVTGs was introduced in 2019, following the centralization of EMRS administration under the National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS). The reservation matrix incorporating this provision was formalized in 2020 guidelines.

Need for Improvement

The data highlights the need for targeted interventions to address structural and systemic issues, ensuring better inclusion and retention of PVTG students in EMRS programs.

India and France Sign MoU for New National Museum

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



Historic Collaboration

India and France signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Thursday to develop a new National Museum, "Yuga Yugeen Bharat," at the historic North Block and South Block in New Delhi. Modeled on the renowned Louvre in Paris, the museum aims to become the largest in the world upon completion.

Signatories and Vision

The agreement was signed by Herve Barbaret, Director General and CEO of France Museums, and B.R. Mani, Director General of the National Museum of India. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, present at the event, described the initiative as "an

inspiration for the remaking of Bharat,” envisioning the transformation of North and South Blocks into world-class museums.

Cultural Collaboration

Highlighting the significance of international cooperation, Mr. Jaishankar stated, “This collaboration reflects a vital cultural exchange and underscores the essence of soft power.” He also emphasized the strong strategic partnership between India and France, rooted in mutual respect as key players in a multipolar world.

Expertise from France

France, with its extensive experience in adaptive reuse projects, will lend its expertise to the development of the museum. Notable examples of France’s capabilities include the Louvre, the Grand Palais, and the Hotel de la Marine.

Adaptive Reuse for a Global Landmark

The "Yuga Yugeen Bharat" museum will stand as a testament to India-France cooperation, combining heritage preservation with modern museum practices to create a cultural landmark of global significance.

Understanding 'Never Events': Preventable Failures in Patient Safety

SOCIAL JUSTICE

List of never events as per NHS

Never events are difficult to eradicate, but efforts and a method to prevent them are critical.



CATEGORY	NEVER EVENT
Surgical	Wrong site surgery
Surgical	Wrong implant/prosthesis
Surgical	Retained foreign object post-procedure
Medication	Mis-selection of a strong potassium solution
Medication	Administration of medication by the wrong route
Medication	Overdose of insulin due to abbreviations or incorrect device
Medication	Overdose of methotrexate for non-cancer treatment
Medication	Mis-selection of high-strength midazolam during conscious sedation
Mental health	Failure to install functional collapsible shower or curtain rails
General	Falls from poorly restricted windows
General	Chest or neck entrapment in bed rails
General	Transfusion or transplantation of ABO-incompatible blood components or organs
General	Misplaced naso- or oro-gastric tubes
General	Scalding of patients
General	Unintentional connection of a patient requiring oxygen to an air flowmeter
General	Undetected oesophageal intubation

Introduction to Never Events

The concept of "Never Events" (NE) was introduced by the National Quality Forum (NQF) in the United States in 2002. These are serious, preventable incidents in healthcare settings that should never occur if proper safety protocols are implemented. Countries like the U.S., U.K., and Canada have adopted this concept, maintaining lists of such events to emphasize the importance of systematic checks and strict adherence to safety standards.

Defining and Categorizing Never Events

- **Characteristics:** Never events broadly overlap with terms like "sentinel events" or "serious reportable events." They involve preventable harm resulting in severe consequences, such as wrong-site surgery, insulin overdoses, or mismatched blood transfusions.
- **Impact:** These incidents can cause significant disability, death, or discomfort for patients, highlighting systemic failures in healthcare delivery.

Variations Across Systems

- The list of never events varies globally:
 - o The U.K.'s National Health Service (NHS) recognizes 16 events.
 - o The U.S. acknowledges 29 events.
- These variations reflect healthcare's complexity, involving interactions among technical,

human, organizational, and regulatory components.

Response to Never Events

According to the Leapfrog Group, healthcare providers should:

1. Offer a sincere apology to affected patients.
2. Report the incident transparently.
3. Conduct a detailed root cause analysis.
4. Waive costs incurred due to the incident as a gesture of accountability.

Challenges in Prevention

- Persistent Incidents: Studies indicate a rate of 1 to 2 never events per 100 patient safety incidents.
- Systemic Complexities: Healthcare involves socio-technical systems, organizational inefficiencies, and cultural factors, making complete prevention aspirational rather than practical.
- Balanced Approach: The "As Low As Reasonably Practicable" (ALARP) principle offers a pragmatic framework to reduce incidents.

Accountability and Systemic Failures

- Disproportionate Blame: Frontline healthcare workers often bear undue responsibility for never events, overshadowing organizational and systemic flaws.
- Root Causes: Factors such as poor infrastructure, communication gaps, and systemic inefficiencies contribute significantly to these incidents.

Never Events in the Indian Context

- Legal Framework: India does not explicitly use the term "never events." Instead, incidents are addressed under medical negligence laws, applying the Bolam Test to evaluate standards of care.
- Medical Negligence: Includes acts of omission or commission that deviate from expected care standards.
- Key Differentiations:
 - o Medical Errors: Unintended mistakes without deliberate deviation.
 - o Iatrogenic Events: Harm caused by medical interventions.
 - o Medical Complications: Expected risks inherent to procedures.
 - o Medical Maloccurrences: Unpreventable outcomes despite proper care.

Conclusion

Never events highlight critical failures in healthcare safety protocols and emphasize the need for systemic reforms. While complete prevention may be unrealistic, adopting balanced risk management approaches and focusing on systemic improvements can significantly reduce their occurrence.

Disability and Queer Health in Medical Education: The Indian Context

SOCIAL JUSTICE



Concerns Over Curriculum Inclusion

- India's National Medical Commission (NMC) has faced criticism for the alleged exclusion of disability and queer health rights from its medical curriculum.
- This issue was highlighted in a commentary titled *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Urgent Priorities to Embed Disability and Queer Health in Medical Education Systems*, published in *The Lancet Regional Health — Southeast Asia*.

Global Perspective

- Among the 110 Lancet Commissions, only mental health and the Holocaust have received

dedicated focus, with no commissions for disability or the queer community.

- This lack of representation underscores the need for inclusion and prioritization of these groups in global health policy frameworks.

India's Lighthouse Initiative

- In 2019, India introduced mandatory disability competencies into its medical curriculum. This was recognized as one of 17 lighthouse initiatives by the UN India during the SDG mid-point review.
- However, the ongoing exclusion of queer health topics signals a gap in comprehensive medical education.

Human Rights Implications

- Dr. Satendra Singh from the University College of Medical Sciences, Delhi, highlighted that exclusion hampers human rights and perpetuates health inequities.
- Both the disability and queer communities face significant mistrust and vulnerabilities, undermining the Agenda 2030 goal of "leaving no one behind."

India's Health Burden

- India ranks among the highest globally in road accident fatalities and is often called the "diabetes capital of the world."
- Complications such as gangrene, limb loss, and ocular conditions contribute significantly to disability, further emphasizing the need for an inclusive medical curriculum.

Importance of Inclusive Language

- The commentary stresses the role of inclusive language—clear, consistent, and respectful—in addressing inequalities.
- Co-author Rohin Bhatt, a human rights lawyer, argues that marginalization in healthcare settings can only be addressed by educating future medical professionals on the rights and needs of vulnerable groups.

The Role of Medical Graduates

- India, home to the highest number of medical colleges worldwide, produces a significant proportion of the global medical workforce.
- Compassionate medical graduates trained in health inequities can dismantle structural and attitudinal barriers, ensuring dignity and rights for marginalized groups.

NMC's Mandate and Criticism

- The NMC emphasizes equitable healthcare and community health perspectives in its preamble. However, its exclusion of disability and queer health is seen as a dereliction of duty.
- The paper suggests that this exclusion may even be ultra vires the parent legislation, raising questions about its legality.

Call to Action

- The commentary advocates for including voices from the disability and queer communities in initiatives like the Lancet Commissions to address health inequities.
- Policymakers must prioritize inclusive education and systemic reforms to ensure equitable healthcare for all.

The
More
You Learn,
The
More
You Earn



www.vedhikiasacademy.org



VEDHIK
IAS ACADEMY
The New Learning Mantra

[f](#) [@](#) [in](#) [v](#)

Reality Check on Sri Lanka's Tamil Question

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



President Dissanayake's State Visit to India

- President Anura Kumara Dissanayake's visit to India marked his first state visit since assuming office, symbolizing the importance of India-Sri Lanka relations.
- Hosting a leader from the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), a party historically critical of India, highlighted the evolving political dynamics in Sri Lanka and its foreign relations.
- Despite a strong mandate, the visit raised questions about the long-standing Tamil issue in Sri Lanka, which was notably absent from the joint statement issued by both

nations.

Changing Indian Interests

- The 34-point joint statement, titled Fostering Partnerships for a Shared Future, focused on political, economic, and strategic cooperation but omitted references to Tamil aspirations or post-war reconciliation.
- While Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged the Sri Lankan government to fulfill Tamil aspirations and conduct provincial council elections, he refrained from mentioning the contentious 13th Amendment, signaling a shift in India's priorities.

The Tamil Question and the 13th Amendment

- The 13th Amendment, introduced under the Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987, continues to polarize opinions in Sri Lanka.
- While some Tamils view it as a necessary but limited step toward power devolution, others criticize it as inadequate to meet federalist aspirations.
- The ruling NPP has avoided referencing the amendment, wary of its association with perceived Indian imposition and its potential to alienate the Sinhala-Buddhist majority.

Promises and Challenges

- President Dissanayake has pledged to enact a new Constitution based on public consultation and to hold long-delayed provincial council elections. However, the government's vision for a political solution remains vague.
- Tamil minorities, who played a crucial role in the NPP's electoral success, are justified in demanding clarity on post-war accountability, land restitution, and political agency.

Post-War Realities

- Fifteen years after the civil war, Tamil communities in Sri Lanka's north and east continue to grapple with:
 - Forcibly disappeared loved ones.
 - Military-held lands.
 - Rebuilding shattered livelihoods.
- The government's goal of fostering a unified "Sri Lankan identity" hinges on addressing these pressing issues through specific policies.

Challenges Facing the Tamil Polity

- Regional Tamil parties suffered a significant electoral setback, losing ground to the NPP in most districts.
- Historically reliant on international actors, including India and Western powers, the Tamil political leadership now faces the challenge of reconnecting with the people they claim to represent.

- The Tamil electorate has sent a clear message: focus on grassroots issues rather than external advocacy.

India's Waning Role

- India's influence on the Tamil question has diminished, with New Delhi prioritizing strategic interests over domestic political considerations in Sri Lanka.
- The Tamil polity must recognize this shift and realign its strategies, focusing on local engagement and addressing community needs.

A Moment of Opportunity

- With unprecedented national momentum and legislative power, the NPP has a rare opportunity to reimagine a political solution rooted in the realities of Sri Lanka's post-war landscape.
- Whether the new political order will rise to this challenge or perpetuate historical failures remains to be seen.

Crimes Against Humanity: A Global Landmark

SOCIAL JUSTICE



A New Treaty in the Making

On December 4, 2024, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted a resolution to initiate negotiations on a proposed treaty to prevent and punish crimes against humanity (CAH). This marks a pivotal step in international law, coming five years after the International Law Commission submitted the draft text to the Sixth Committee, the UNGA's primary legal forum. The treaty aims to close gaps in the legal framework for addressing CAH, complementing existing treaties on genocide and war crimes.

The Accountability Gap

Limitations of Existing Frameworks

CAH, alongside genocide and war crimes, are among the gravest international offenses under the Rome Statute, which established the International Criminal Court (ICC). While treaties like the Genocide Convention (1948) and Geneva Conventions (1949) govern genocide and war crimes, CAH lacks a dedicated treaty, creating accountability challenges.

The Case for a CAH Treaty

1. Limited ICC Jurisdiction: Many states are not members of the Rome Statute, restricting the ICC's ability to prosecute CAH in non-member states.
2. State Accountability: Unlike the ICC, which focuses on individual criminal responsibility, a CAH treaty could hold states accountable for failing to prevent these crimes, akin to the Genocide Convention.
3. Expanding Definitions: A treaty could include modern crimes such as gender apartheid, terrorism, exploitation of natural resources, and crimes against indigenous populations.

India's Position on the CAH Treaty

Skepticism and Reservations

India is not a party to the Rome Statute and has consistently voiced concerns about the ICC, including the prosecutor's powers, the role of the UN Security Council, and the exclusion of nuclear weapons from war crimes. Key elements of India's stance include:

- Opposing CAH definitions that include crimes during peacetime or enforced disappearances.
- Advocating for the inclusion of terrorism as a CAH.

- Stressing the primacy of national courts and legislations over international mechanisms.

Calls for Further Discussion

India has repeatedly urged for an in-depth study on the need for a CAH treaty, expressing concerns about potential overlaps with the Rome Statute.

The Domestic Gap in India

Lack of Legal Framework

India lacks domestic legislation to address international crimes, including CAH. In 2018, Justice S. Muralidhar of the Delhi High Court highlighted this lacuna in *State vs. Sajjan Kumar*, urging legislative action. Despite opportunities, recent amendments to criminal law failed to incorporate these crimes.

The Need for Leadership

India's emphasis on national jurisdiction for international crimes underscores the need to align its domestic laws with global standards. As a nation aspiring to global leadership, India must address this gap to effectively combat impunity for grave human rights violations.

Towards a Visionary Role

India has a unique opportunity to lead by example in the international fight against crimes against humanity. By enacting comprehensive domestic legislation and engaging constructively in global treaty negotiations, India can reinforce its commitment to justice and human rights on a global stage — a step befitting its aspirations as a "Vishwaguru."

The Future of Commodities in 2025: Trump, China, and Uncertainty

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



Global Commodities in 2025: Key Influences

The return of Donald Trump to the U.S. presidency and China's faltering economy will be critical drivers of the global commodities market in 2025. However, the interplay of these forces remains unpredictable, with volatility and opposing factors shaping the landscape. As a result, forecasting prices for key commodities such as crude oil, liquefied natural gas, iron ore, coal, and metals like copper will be particularly challenging.

Trump's Trade Policies: Uncertainty and Risks

Tariffs and Economic Impacts

Donald Trump's proposed tariffs, including up to 60% on China and 20% on other nations, could disrupt global trade flows, dampen economic growth, and raise inflation. This might prompt tighter monetary

policies worldwide. Alternatively, if these tariff threats serve only as negotiating tactics, their implementation may be avoided, reducing their potential economic impact.

Volatility in Commodity Markets

Uncertainty around Trump's policies could lead to significant price volatility, especially for commodities tied to the global economy, like copper and iron ore. Traders may adopt a cautious "wait-and-see" approach, with market movements driven by daily political developments.

Lessons from Trump's First Term

Experience from Trump's first term suggests a focus on actual policy actions rather than rhetoric is critical. His

administration often prioritized deal-making over the substance of agreements, as seen in the largely ineffective tariffs against China. These tariffs failed to reduce the U.S. trade deficit, revive manufacturing, or generate significant revenue, highlighting the potential risks of similar policies in the future.

China's Position: Challenges and Opportunities

Economic Headwinds

China's slower economic growth may limit its ability to endure a prolonged trade war with the United States. However, it retains tools to counteract potential U.S. actions, including:

- Disrupting U.S. supply chains.
- Selling large amounts of U.S. Treasury bonds.
- Devaluing its currency.
- Boosting domestic stimulus spending.
- Strengthening its leadership in renewable energy.

Shifting Trade Partnerships

China may offset reduced access to U.S. markets by increasing trade and investment with Europe and the "global south," leveraging its economic influence in emerging markets.

Implications for Commodities

Tariff Effects on Prices

If Trump's administration implements broad tariffs, they are likely to weaken the global economy, exerting downward pressure on commodities like crude oil and iron ore. Conversely, restrained policy actions could mitigate these effects, stabilizing markets to some extent.

Focus on Policies, Not Rhetoric

Given the high degree of uncertainty, market participants must prioritize analyzing Trump's actual policies over his rhetoric. The impact of any policy decisions on global commodities will depend heavily on their scale and implementation.

2025: A Year of Uncertainty

As 2025 unfolds, the global commodities market is poised to navigate an environment of heightened unpredictability. The interplay between Trump's trade policies and China's economic strategies will determine the trajectory of key commodities, underscoring the need for vigilance and adaptability in an increasingly complex global market.



**START YOUR
JOURNEY
WITH THE
BEST**
COME JOIN WITH US





VEDHIK

IAS ACADEMY

The New Learning Mantra

START YOUR JOURNEY WITH THE BEST

**INDIA'S
TOP MOST
CIVIL SERVANTS
FOR COACHING**

www.vedhikiasacademy.org

Head Office:
Vedhik IAS Academy
Mercy Estate,
MG Road, Ravipuram,
Ernakulam-682 015,

Corporate office:
Vedhik IAS Academy
Samkalp Bhawan, Plot No.15,
Sector 4, Rama Krishna Puram,
New Delhi, Delhi-110022

Regional office
Vedhik IAS Academy
202, Raheja Chambers, 12,
Museum Road. Bangalore -
560001. Karnataka, India.

GCC Office:
Bobscoedu,
Bobsco Trading & Contracting Co. W. L . L
Office 22, Dream Tower 1,
Road: 2701, Adliya, Kingdom of Bahrain
www.bobscoedu.com