

## **NEWS ITEMS ON CAG/ AUDIT REPORTS (11.03.2023 to 13.03.2023)**

### **1. CAG Murmu calls for auditing frameworks on AI and “Blue Economy” ([thehindu.com](https://www.thehindu.com)) 13 March, 2023**

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, Girish Chandra Murmu, on March 13 called for initiatives to develop auditing frameworks and granular checklists on the two emerging sectors of Artificial Intelligence and “Blue Economy”.

He said although AI could contribute up to \$15.7 trillion to the global economy in 2030, it had also raised concerns related to privacy, transparency, and fairness.

“It (AI) has the potential to lead socio-economic growth and can be used to benefit citizens and the country through targeted and timely intervention,” said Mr. Murmu during the inaugural address at the three-day Supreme Audit Institutions-20 (SAI20) Engagement Group delegates’ meet.

However, he said, AI systems also involved issues of privacy, bias, and discrimination and there was an inadequate understanding of AI algorithms among the general public. “These problems are complex and interconnected, highlighting the need for responsible AI practices, where the fairness of solutions is ensured,” said Mr. Murmu.

The CAG — as part of data-driven audits — has been using AI and Geographic Information System (GIS) technologies, particularly for environment and ecology studies. “We are now increasingly using GIS, drone visualization, geotagging and linking it with Machine Learning to audit areas such as mining, coastal protection, urban planning, etc,” he said.

Stating that the cornerstone of “responsible AI” was ethics, he said it entailed safety and reliability, inclusivity and non-discrimination, equality, privacy and security, protection and reinforcement of positive human values.

Mr. Murmu said data should be in a standard format across IT applications, especially government applications. “...technological development in India has happened organically over the last two-three decades. IT applications were designed based on then-available technologies and they did not envisage integration with other IT applications. Not incorporating an audit module in

government IT applications is the simplest of such examples,” he said, talking about the challenge involved.

In this regard, at the recent CAG-hosted Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) Leaders’ meeting in Lucknow, a consensus emerged that governments should work on data standardisation. The Indian Government has brought out a comprehensive “National Strategy for AI”.

He said the SAIs too should imbibe a data culture, adding: “Our path in respect of this fast-spreading frontier technology is two-fold: adopting AI capabilities in audit and auditing AI system in government — AI enables automation of redundant audit activity, reduced reliance on sample testing, identification of high-risk transactions and enabling fraud detection,” he said.

Apart from AI, “Blue Economy” is a priority area at the meet. Mr. Murmu said it encompassed a spectrum of policy and operational dimensions aimed at conserving marine and freshwater environments while promoting their sustainable use.

“Roughly, 40% of the world’s population lives within 100 km of the coast. Primary fish farming alone employs globally over 58.5 million people, of whom about 21% are women. Around 600 million people rely at least somewhat on fisheries and aquaculture for their livelihood,” he said.

Given its importance, the United Nations has declared the decade 2021-2030 as the decade of “Ocean Science for Sustainable Development”.

“The unplanned and unregulated development in the coastal areas have to be highlighted in the audit...governments have to be shown with evidence the importance of ensuring that the livelihoods of the people living in these areas is not affected adversely,” said Mr. Murmu.

The CAG has released a first-ever nationwide Compendium of Asset Accounts on Mineral and Energy Resources in States, which attempts to create an account for the stocks of mineral resources, mapping their geographical spread. “...we have also completed a Performance Audit Report on Conservation of Coastal Ecosystems...,” he said.

The SAIs from India, Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, South Korea, Oman, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, and the United Arab Emirates, besides two World Bank representatives, are participating in the event.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/cag-murmu-calls-for-auditing-frameworks-on-ai-and-blue-economy/article66614136.ece>

**2. ‘Blue economy’ and AI prominent sectors cannot be ignored CAG**  
([theweek.in](https://www.theweek.in)) 13 March, 2023

Comptroller and Auditor General of India Girish Chandra Murmu on Monday said “prominent sectors” like ‘blue economy’ and artificial intelligence can no longer be ignored, as he urged delegates of the Supreme Audit Institutions-20 to come up with an auditing framework for these categories.

Murmu was speaking at the inaugural session of the SAI20 Engagement Group meeting, which is being hosted by the CAG as part of the country's G20 presidency.

"It will be imperative for leading SAIs to start working on an auditing framework and checklists so that auditors not only have broad guidelines, but also specific toolkits to audit these two sectors in a meaningful way," Murmu said.

Both ‘blue economy’ and artificial intelligence are emerging areas and "we as Supreme Audit Institutions cannot afford to ignore these prominent sectors", he said.

Recognising the importance of sustainability, growth and role of emerging technologies, the SAI20 has identified ‘blue economy’ and ‘responsible artificial intelligence’ as the two themes to discuss at this forum, the CAG said.

‘Blue economy’ is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of the ecosystem

Responsible AI is a governance framework aimed at what data can be collected and used, how AI models should be evaluated, and how to best deploy and monitor models, it said.

The framework can also define who is accountable for any negative outcomes of AI.

"These two priority areas represent the new-age opportunities and concerns, underline the need for genuine cooperation," Murmu said.

He noted that SAI20, with its collaborative commitment to an accountable, economic, efficient and effective governance, and a strategic partnership with the governments, has a crucial role to play.

The SAIs have the mandate to provide independent and objective examination of public services and serve as the much-needed feedback mechanism for policymakers in identifying the areas for improvements and opportunities, Murmu said.

The Centre has come out with a National Strategy for AI, which includes policy and programmes, global partnership, upskilling, capacity building, safe and ethical framework.

"SAI's, too, must imbibe a data culture while simultaneously building data capability," Murmu added. <https://www.theweek.in/wire-updates/business/2023/03/13/cal14-biz-cag-meeting.html>.

**3. AI offers many opportunities, also raises concerns on privacy & fairness: CAG Murmu** ([theprint.in](https://theprint.in), [ptinews.com](https://ptinews.com), [latestly.com](https://latestly.com)) 13 March, 2023

Comptroller and Auditor General Girish Chandra Murmu on Monday stressed on responsible use of artificial intelligence, saying while this emerging technology has the potential to contribute USD 15.7 trillion to the global economy by 2030, it also raises concerns related to privacy and fairness.

In his opening remarks at the SAI20 Senior Officials' Meeting, the CAG also advocated the need for balance between short-term growth and long-term sustainability of the blue economy, as the blue economy can make all the difference to planet earth and sustenance thereon.

SAI20 has chosen two themes representing new-age opportunities and concerns — blue economy (sustainability aspect) and responsible AI (emerging technologies) — and emphasised the need for gender balance in sustainable growth in blue economy and principles underlying responsible and ethical use of AI.

As India holds the presidency of the G20, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) is the chair for SAI20 — the engagement group of Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI) of the G20.

Recalling that the expert opinion in the recently held seminar organised by SAI India in Lucknow brought out the insight that democratisation of AI technologies is inevitable, Murmu said, “Today we have reached a level where AI could contribute up to USD 15.7 trillion to the global economy in 2030”.

He said AI has the potential to lead socio-economic growth and it can be used to benefit citizens and the country through targeted and timely intervention.

Healthcare, retail, finance, agriculture, food, water resources, environment and pollution, education, special needs, transportation, energy, public safety, disaster management and judiciary are a few of the areas that AI has the potential to solve.

“While AI offers many opportunities, it also raises concerns related to transparency and fairness.

“These issues include the impact of AI on privacy, bias and discrimination in AI systems, and inadequate understanding of AI algorithms by the general public,” he said.

Murmu further said these problems are complex and interconnected, highlighting the need for responsible AI practices, where the fairness of solutions is ensured.

“The cornerstone of responsible AI is ethics. Ethics focussed on safety and reliability, inclusivity and non-discrimination, equality, privacy and security, protection and reinforcement of positive human values,” he added.

While explaining the criticality of the priority area, blue economy, CAG stated that it is an economic system that encompasses a spectrum of policy and operational dimensions aimed at conserving marine and freshwater environments while promoting their sustainable use, producing food and energy, supporting livelihoods, and acting as a driver for economic advancement and welfare.

Murmu emphasised that the Supreme Audit Institutions had an opportunity to ensure that the journey of exploring the oceanic resources does not follow the same path as exploitation of land by careful evaluation of management and regulation of businesses operating within the sector, with an emphasis on promoting sustainable practices that will benefit both current and future generations.

CAG explained that the unplanned and unregulated development in the coastal areas needed to be highlighted in audit, and at the same time governments had to

be shown with evidence the importance of ensuring that the livelihoods of the people living in these areas do not get affected adversely.

SAIs from India, Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, South Korea, Oman, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkiye and UAE are participating in the three-day event. Two representatives of World Bank are also attending the event. <https://theprint.in/economy/ai-offers-many-opportunities-also-raises-concerns-on-privacy-fairness-cag-murmu-2/1439582/>

**4. Addressing Privacy Fears, CAG Says Ethics a Must for AI in Audit**  
([aninews.in](https://aninews.in), [thehindu.com](https://thehindu.com), [theprint.in](https://theprint.in), [latestly.com](https://latestly.com),  
[devdiscourse.com](https://devdiscourse.com)) Suchitra Mukherjee | March 13, 2023

Indicating that assuaging worldwide fears and concerns red-flagged on the use and application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in governance including in audit, would be a top agenda item in the three-day meeting of the senior officials of the Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI) of the G20 being held in Guwahati, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has said ethics has to be the key guiding factor.

The national auditor Girish Chandra Murmu, who is the chair for Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI) of the G20, in his address on Monday, said: "While AI offers many opportunities, it also raises concerns related to transparency and fairness. These issues include the impact of AI on privacy, bias and discrimination in AI systems, and inadequate understanding of AI algorithms by the general public. These problems are complex and interconnected, highlighting the need for responsible AI practices, where the fairness of solutions is ensured."

"The cornerstone of Responsible AI is ethics. Ethics focused on safety and reliability, inclusivity and non-discrimination, equality, privacy and security, protection and reinforcement of positive human values," he further said.

While AI and its applications are picking up on a global scale, there have been serious concerns raised relating to the infringement of privacy rights and promoting bias.

Two priority areas — Blue Economy and Responsible AI — have been selected for collaboration within the SAI for G20.

The role of SAIs is important because of its objective and criteria-based scientific approach towards programme evaluation and performance audits. (SAIs) is in a

unique position to give near real time feedback to governments and policymakers for not only mid-course correction but also changes in approach, where required.

Highlighting the benefits that can accrue because of AI applications, the CAG said: "Democratisation of AI technologies is inevitable. Today we have reached a level where, AI could contribute up to \$15.7 trillion to the global economy in 2030."

"It has the potential to lead socio-economic growth and it can be used to benefit citizens and the country through targeted and timely intervention. Healthcare, retail, finance, agriculture, food, water resources, environment and pollution, education, special needs, transportation, energy, public safety, disaster management, judiciary, etc. are just a few of the areas that AI has the potential to solve," the CAG added.

Blue economy refers to the sustainable use of marine resources for exploration, economic growth, improved livelihoods, and transport while preserving the health of marine and coastal ecosystems.

Responsible AI is the practice of designing, developing, and deploying AI with good intentions to empower employees and businesses, and fairly impact customers and society — allowing companies to engender trust and scale AI with confidence. <https://www.aninews.in/news/business/business/addressing-privacy-fears-cag-says-ethics-a-must-for-ai-in-audit20230313120058/>

## **5. CAG Girish Chandra Murmu chairs first Supreme Audit Institution 20 meeting in Guwahati ([newsonair.com](https://www.newsonair.com)) Updated: Mar 13, 2023**

The SAI20 Senior Officers' Meeting symbioses the global cooperation and collective efforts of the G20 member countries, to ensure inclusive development and wellbeing of all, said Mr. Girish Chandra Murmu, Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) while chairing the first Supreme Audit Institution 20 meeting in Guwahati today with the themes - 'Blue Economy' and 'Responsible Artificial Intelligence'.

The CAG said that the world is seized of multiple challenges – the most daunting ones being sustainable development and climate change. Climate change and its impact on biodiversity, food security are emerging challenges threatening the sustainable development goals and the need for the global community to address these problems for a secure future for all.

Mr. Murmu said that for a world of inclusive and sustainable development, and prosperity, the SAI20 with its collaborative commitment to an accountable, economic, efficient and effective governance has a crucial role to play.

The CAG said that recognizing the importance of sustainability, growth and role of emerging technologies, the SAI20, have identified two themes “Blue Economy” and “Responsible Artificial Intelligence” as these areas represent the new-age opportunities and concerns.

Mr. Murmu informed that realising the importance of ecological preservation and sustainable development, the SAI India, have released a first-ever country-wide Compendium of Asset Accounts on Mineral and Energy Resources in States which has been prepared in line with the UN system of Environment and Economic Accounts.

The CAG said that the SAI20 is aimed at bringing together an ecosystem wherein SAIs are active partners in governance, promoting transparency and accountability for a Sustainable Growth of the Blue Economy and the Principles underlying Responsible and Ethical use of AI.

The SAI have an opportunity to ensure that the journey of exploring oceanic resources does not follow the same path as exploitation of land. While AI offers many opportunities, it also raises concerns related to transparency and fairness, added the CAG.

Mr. Murmu informed that Blue Economy and Artificial Intelligence are, both, emerging areas and the SAI cannot afford to ignore these prominent sectors.

SAIs here to start working on an auditing framework and granular checklists so that auditors not only have broad guidelines but also specific toolkits to audit these two sectors in a meaningful way.

The CAG opined that SAI20 to formulate tangible audit guidelines and products for all to use in auditing the Blue Economy and AI, enhancing each SAI’s contribution to governance, through audit and as a strategic partner of their governments.

Delegates from China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, UAE & SCO Sectt. are participating in-person. The three day long event will conclude on Wednesday, 15th March.



<https://newsonair.com/2023/03/13/cag-girish-chandra-murmu-chairs-first-supreme-audit-institution-20-meeting-in-guwahati/>

**6. G-20 auditors to focus on blue economy, AI ([deccanchronicle.com](https://www.deccanchronicle.com))**  
Updated: Mar 13, 2023

As a part of India's G20 presidency, the government said on Sunday that the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) would host discussions on the blue economy and responsible artificial intelligence (AI).

The three-day meeting, which will kick off on Monday, will be held in Guwahati.

According to a statement issued by the government, CAG Girish Chandra Murmu will chair the G-20 Supreme Audit Institutions or G-20 SAI meeting. The delegates from G20 member countries, guest nations and other international organisations would attend the event.

The event is expected to witness massive participation from the G20 SAIs members, including the countries such as Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Oman, the Republic of Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates among others.

“Under the guiding philosophy for India's presidency of G20, Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam — One Earth, One Family, and One Future, the CAG has proposed the collaboration of SAI20 engagement group on two priority areas — blue economy and responsible AI,” the release said.

During the meeting, SAI India will present the concept themes on the blue economy and responsible AI. “There shall be further sharing of experiences by the participant SAIs, including member SAIs and guest SAIs of G20,” it said.

While the blue economy is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, responsible AI is a governance framework aimed at what data can be collected and used, and how AI models should be evaluated and deployed.  
<https://www.deccanchronicle.com/business/in-other-news/130323/g-20-auditors-to-focus-on-blue-economy-ai.html>

**7. G20 members to deliberate on Blue economy and responsible AI at three-day meet** ([economictimes.indiatimes.com](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com), [outlookindia.com](https://outlookindia.com), [bqprime.com/](https://bqprime.com/), [orissapost.com](https://orissapost.com)) PTI | March 12, 2023

Blue economy and responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI) will be deliberated at the three-day meeting of Supreme Audit Institutions-20 (SAI20) beginning Monday here. The meeting is being hosted by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India here on Monday as part of the country's G20 presidency.

The delegates from G20 member countries, guest nations and other International Organizations would attend the SAI20 event.

In addition, the SAIs of Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Oman, the Republic of Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, and the UAE will also participate in the deliberations, said a release.

Under the guiding philosophy for India's presidency of G20, Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam (One Earth, One Family, and One Future), the CAG has proposed the collaboration of SAI20 Engagement Group on two priority areas - Blue Economy and Responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI), it added.

During the course of the meeting, SAI India will present the concept themes on

Blue Economy and Responsible AI. There shall be further sharing of experiences by the participant SAIs including member SAIs and guest SAIs of G20, the release said.

Blue Economy is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of our ecosystem.

Responsible AI is a governance framework aimed at what data can be collected and used, how AI models should be evaluated, and how to best deploy and monitor models.

The framework can also define who is accountable for any negative outcomes of AI. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/g20-members-to-deliberate-on-blue-economy-and-responsible-ai-at-three-day-meet/articleshow/98581923.cm>

**8. CAG to chair G20 SAI meeting on March 13-15 in Guwahati, focusing on themes of ‘Blue Economy’, ‘Responsible AI’ ([aninews.in](https://aninews.in), [theprint.in](https://theprint.in), [lokmatimes.com](https://lokmatimes.com), [thenewsmill.com](https://thenewsmill.com))** March 12, 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India will be chairing the G20 SAI meeting, under India’s G20 Presidency from March 13-15 in Guwahati, Assam.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India is the Chair of the Supreme Audit Institutions-20 (SAI20) Engagement Group under India’s G20 Presidency, and the SAI20 Delegates Meeting will take place in the city of Guwahati from March 13-15, 2023.

Guwahati, known as the Gateway to Northeast India, is the major cultural, political, educational and commercial hub. It is known for its rich culture and tradition, the celebration of festivals, cuisine, and people and its cosmopolitan nature.

The delegates from G20 member countries, guest countries and other International Organizations would attend the SAI20 event.

The SAIs of Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Oman, the Republic of Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, and UAE will be participating in person.

Under the guiding philosophy for India’s presidency of G20, ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam’ i.e. “One Earth, One Family, and One Future”, the CAG of India had proposed the collaboration of SAI20 Engagement Group on two priority areas — Blue Economy and Responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI).

‘Blue Economy’ is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of our ecosystem. While, ‘Responsible AI’ is a governance framework aimed at what data can be collected and used, how AI models should be evaluated, and how to best deploy and monitor models. The framework can also define who is accountable for any negative outcomes of AI.

In line with this, during the course of the SOM meeting in Guwahati, SAI India shall present and introduce the concept themes of Blue Economy and Responsible AI respectively. There shall be further sharing of experiences by the participant SAIs including member SAIs and guest SAIs of G20. <https://www.aninews.in/news/national/general-news/cag-to-chair-g20-sai->

[meeting-on-march-13-15-in-guwahati-focusing-on-themes-of-blue-economy-responsible-ai20230312082927/](#)

**9. CAG to chair G20 SAI on March 13-15 in Guwahati, 'Responsible AI' in focus ([business-standard.com](#)) March 12, 2023**

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India will be chairing the G20 SAI meeting, under India's G20 Presidency from March 13-15 in Guwahati, Assam.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India is the Chair of the Supreme Audit Institutions-20 (SAI20) Engagement Group under India's G20 Presidency, and the SAI20 Delegates Meeting will take place in the city of Guwahati from March 13-15, 2023.

Guwahati, known as the Gateway to Northeast India, is the major cultural, political, educational and commercial hub. It is known for its rich culture and tradition, the celebration of festivals, cuisine, and people and its cosmopolitan nature.

The delegates from G20 member countries, guest countries and other International Organizations would attend the SAI20 event.

The SAIs of Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Oman, the Republic of Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, and UAE will be participating in person.

Under the guiding philosophy for India's presidency of G20, 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam' i.e. "One Earth, One Family, and One Future", the CAG of India had proposed the collaboration of SAI20 Engagement Group on two priority areas -- Blue Economy and Responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI).

'Blue Economy' is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of our ecosystem. While, 'Responsible AI' is a governance framework aimed at what data can be collected and used, how AI models should be evaluated, and how to best deploy and monitor models. The framework can also define who is accountable for any negative outcomes of AI.

In line with this, during the course of the SOM meeting in Guwahati, SAI India shall present and introduce the concept themes of Blue Economy and Responsible AI respectively. There shall be further sharing of experiences by the participant

SAIs including member SAIs and guest SAIs of G20. [https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/cag-to-chair-g20-sai-on-march-13-15-in-guwahati-responsible-ai-in-focus-123031200086\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/cag-to-chair-g20-sai-on-march-13-15-in-guwahati-responsible-ai-in-focus-123031200086_1.html)

**10. G-20 meet to focus on blue economy, responsible AI ([thehindu.com](https://www.thehindu.com))**  
March 13, 2023

Responsible application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the ‘Blue Economy’ will be the primary issues in focus during brainstorming sessions at the three-day Supreme Audit Institutions-20 (SAI20) Engagement Group delegates’ meet starting on Monday.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, Girish Chandra Murmu, is the Chair of the SAI20 Engagement Group under the India’s G-20 Presidency.

“‘Blue Economy’ is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of our ecosystem. Responsible AI is a governance framework aimed at which data can be collected and used; how AI models should be evaluated; and how to best deploy and monitor the models. The framework can also define who is accountable for any negative outcomes of AI,” the CAG said in a statement.

Delegates from G-20 member countries, guest nations and other international organisations will attend the event. The SAIs of Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Oman, South Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates will be participating in-person.

The CAG had earlier proposed collaboration in the SAI20 Engagement Group on ‘Blue Economy’ and ‘Responsible AI’. During the meeting in Guwahati, he will present and introduce concept themes on the two issues. The participants will share their experiences in these areas. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/g-20-meet-to-focus-on-blue-economy-responsible-ai/article66610534.ece>

**11. CAG to chair G20 SAI meeting on ‘Blue economy’ in Assam ([livemint.com](https://www.livemint.com))** Updated: 12 Mar 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India Girish Chandra Murmu will serve as the chairperson for the G20 SAI (Supreme Audit Institutions) meeting from March 13-15 in Guwahati, Assam, news agency ANI reported.

Murmu is leading the Supreme Audit Institutions-20 (SAI20) Engagement Group as the Chair under India's G20 Presidency. As part of this role, the CAG will preside over the SAI20 Delegates Meeting.

Representatives from G20 member countries, guest countries, and various international organizations will attend the SAI20 event, hosted by India as part of its G20 Presidency.

The event will see the participation of the Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) of Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Oman, the Republic of Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates.

'Blue Economy' refers to the sustainable utilization of ocean resources in a way that promotes economic growth, improves livelihoods, and creates jobs, while also preserving the health of our ecosystem.

On the other hand, 'Responsible AI' is a governance framework that aims to establish guidelines for the collection and utilization of data, the evaluation of AI models, and the deployment and monitoring of these models. <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/cag-to-chair-g20-sai-meeting-on-blue-economy-in-assam-11678615194055.html>

**12. Guwahati: SAI20 meeting to take place from March 13 to March 15**  
([assamtribune.com](https://assamtribune.com)) Mar 12, 2023

As the first Supreme Audit Institution 20 (SAI20) Senior Officers Meeting is set to take place in Guwahati from March 13 to March 15, 19 delegates from around the world reached Guwahati today.

The meeting will be held with the themes -'Blue Economy' and 'Responsible Artificial Intelligence'.

The main purpose of the meeting is to create an ecosystem where SAI delegates will actively participate in governance, fostering accountability and transparency.

Notably, the meeting will be chaired by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG). <https://assamtribune.com/guwahati/guwahati-sai20-meeting-to-take-place-from-march-13-to-march-15-1466601?infinitemscroll=1>

**13. SAI20 delegates' meet from today in Guwahati ([sentinelassam.com](https://www.sentinelassam.com))**  
Mar 13, 2023

The SAI20 Delegates Meeting will take place in Guwahati from March 13-15, 2023. The Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) of India is the Chair of the Supreme Audit Institutions-20 (SAI20) Engagement Group under India's G20 Presidency.

The delegates from G20 member countries, guest countries, and other international organizations will attend the SAI20 event. SAIs from Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Oman, the Republic of Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, and the UAE will be participating in person. Also Read - Indian Institute of Information Technology - Guwahati hosts literary discussion

Under the guiding philosophy for India's presidency of the G20, Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam i.e. "One Earth, One Family, and One Future", the C&AG of India had proposed the collaboration of the SAI20 Engagement Group on two priority areas: the Blue Economy and Responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI).

The Economy is the Sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of our ecosystem. Responsible AI is a governing framework aimed at what data can be collected and used, how AI models should be evaluated, and how to best deploy and monitor models. The framework can also define who is accountable for any negative outcomes of AI.

In line with this, during the course of the SOM meeting in Guwahati, SAI India shall present and introduce the themes of Blue Economy and Responsible AI respectively. There shall be further sharing of experiences by the participant SAIs, including member SAIs and guest SAIs of the G20.

The venue, Guwahati, known as the Gateway to Northeast India, is a major cultural, political, educational, and commercial hub. It is known for its rich culture and tradition, celebration of festivals, cuisine, people, and cosmopolitan nature. <https://www.sentinelassam.com/guwahati-city/sai20-delegates-meet-from-today-in-guwahati-640906>



#### 14. Delegates arrive in Guwahati for SAI20 meet ([timesofindia.indiatimes.com](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com)) Mar 13, 2023

GUWAHATI: The delegates from G20 member countries, guest countries and other international organisations have arrived in Guwahati to attend the SAI20 meeting from Monday (March 13) to Wednesday (March 15).

The comptroller and auditor general (C&AG) of India is the chair of the Supreme Audit Institutions-20 (SAI20) Engagement Group under India's G20 presidency. "SAIs of Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Oman, Republic of Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and UAE will be participating in person," stated a government release.

It noted that under the guiding philosophy for India's presidency of G20, Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam i.e. "One Earth, One Family and One Future", the C&AG of India had proposed the collaboration of SAI20 Engagement Group on two priority areas - Blue Economy and Responsible artificial intelligence (AI).

"Blue Economy is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs while preserving the health of our ecosystem. Responsible AI is a governance framework aimed at what data can be collected and used, how AI models should be evaluated, and how to best deploy and monitor models. The framework can also define who is accountable for any negative outcomes of AI," read the release.

SAI India shall present and introduce the concept themes on Blue Economy and Responsible AI respectively. There shall be further sharing of experiences by the participant SAIs, including member SAIs and guest SAIs of G20. "The venue, Guwahati, known as the Gateway to northeast India, is the major cultural, political, educational and commercial hub," it added.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/delegates-arrive-in-guwahati-for-sai20-meet/articleshow/98592813.cms>

#### 15. G-20: एआई से जुड़ी आशंकाओं को दूर करना जी-20 बैठक के दौरान शीर्ष एजेंडा होगा, गुवाहाटी में हुई चर्चा ([amarujala.com](https://amarujala.com)) March 13, 2023

गुवाहाटी में होने वाली जी-20 देशों के सर्वोच्च लेखा परीक्षा संस्थानों (साइ) के वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों की तीन दिवसीय बैठक में यह संकेत दिया गया है कि ऑडिट सहित शासन में कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता (एआई) के उपयोग और अनुप्रयोग पर दुनिया भर में आशंकाओं और



चिंताओं को दूर करना शीर्ष एजेंडा होगा। भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक (कैग) ने कहा है कि नैतिकता प्रमुख मार्गदर्शक कारक होना चाहिए।

जी-20 देशों के सर्वोच्च लेखा परीक्षा संस्थानों की बैठक के दौरान राष्ट्रीय लेखा परीक्षक (CAG) गिरीश चंद्र मुर्मू ने सोमवार को अपने संबोधन में कहा, "एआई कई अवसर प्रदान करता है, लेकिन यह पारदर्शिता और निष्पक्षता से संबंधित चिंताओं को भी उठाता है। इन मुद्दों में एआई सिस्टम में गोपनीयता, पूर्वाग्रह और भेदभाव पर एआई का प्रभाव और आम जनता के पास एआई एल्गोरिदम की अपर्याप्त समझ शामिल है।

ये समस्याएं जटिल और परस्पर रूप जुड़ी हुई हैं, ये जिम्मेदार एआई के प्रचलन की आवश्यकता को उजागर करती हैं। ताकी समाधान की निष्पक्षता सुनिश्चित की जा सके। जिम्मेदार एआई की आधारशिला नैतिकता है। एआई नैतिकता के साथ-साथ सुरक्षा और विश्वसनीयता, समावेशिता और गैर-भेदभाव, समानता, गोपनीयता और सुरक्षा, संरक्षण और सकारात्मक मानवीय मूल्यों के सुदृढीकरण पर केंद्रित है।

जबकि एआई और इसके अनुप्रयोग वैश्विक स्तर पर बढ़ रहे हैं, गोपनीयता अधिकारों के उल्लंघन और पूर्वाग्रह को बढ़ावा देने से संबंधित गंभीर चिंताएं उठाई गई हैं।

जी-20 के लिए साई के भीतर सहयोग के लिए दो प्राथमिकता वाले क्षेत्रों - ब्लू इकोनॉमी और रिस्पॉन्सिबल एआई का चयन किया गया है। एसएआई की भूमिका कार्यक्रम मूल्यांकन और प्रदर्शन लेखा परीक्षा के प्रति अपने उद्देश्य और मानदंड-आधारित वैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोण के कारण महत्वपूर्ण है।

एसएआई न केवल मध्य-पाठ्यक्रम सुधार के लिए सरकारों और नीति निर्माताओं को वास्तविक समय की प्रतिक्रिया देने की एक अनूठी स्थिति में है, बल्कि जहां आवश्यक हो, दृष्टिकोण में बदलाव भी है। एआई अनुप्रयोगों के कारण होने वाले लाभों पर प्रकाश डालते हुए, कैग ने कहा: "एआई प्रौद्योगिकियों का लोकतंत्रीकरण अपरिहार्य है। आज हम उस स्तर पर पहुंच गए हैं, जहां एआई 2030 तक में वैश्विक अर्थव्यवस्था में 15.7 ट्रिलियन अमरीकी डॉलर तक का योगदान दे सकता है।

<https://www.amarujala.com/business/business-diary/addressing-privacy-fears-cag-says-ethics-a-must-for-ai-in-audit-2023-03-13>

## 16. जी20 के सदस्य समुद्री अर्थव्यवस्था, जिम्मेदार कृत्रिम मेधा पर करेंगे विचार-विमर्श ([hindi.theprint.in](https://hindi.theprint.in)) March 12, 2023

भारत की जी 20 अध्यक्षता में सदस्य देशों के प्रतिनिधि सोमवार से शुरू होने जा रही 'सुप्रीम ऑडिट इंस्टीट्यूशंस-20 (एसएआई20)' की तीन दिवसीय बैठक में समुद्रों एवं महासागरों पर आधारित अर्थव्यवस्था (ब्लू इकोनॉमी) एवं जिम्मेदार कृत्रिम मेधा (एआई) विषयों पर विचार-विमर्श करेंगे।

भारत की जी20 अध्यक्षता के तहत सोमवार को इस बैठक की मेजबानी भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक (कैग) करेंगे।

एक विज्ञप्ति में बताया गया कि एसएआई20 कार्यक्रम में जी20 के सदस्य देश, आमंत्रित राष्ट्र तथा अन्य अंतरराष्ट्रीय संगठनों के प्रतिनिधि शामिल होंगे। इनके अलावा ऑस्ट्रेलिया, ब्राजील, मिस्र, इंडोनेशिया, ओमान, कोरिया, रूस, सऊदी अरब, तुर्किये तथा संयुक्त अरब अमीरात के एसएआई भी इसमें शामिल होंगे।

कैग ने समुद्रों एवं महासागरों पर आधारित अर्थव्यवस्था तथा जिम्मेदार कृत्रिम मेधा जैसे दो प्राथमिक क्षेत्रों पर एसएआई20 के सरोकार समूह को सहयोग करने का प्रस्ताव दिया है।

ब्लू इकोनॉमी के अंतर्गत ऐसी अर्थव्यवस्था आती है, जो प्रत्यक्ष व परोक्ष रूप से महासागरों व समुद्रों पर आधारित होती है। समुद्री अर्थव्यवस्था का मतलब है कि समुद्री संसाधनों का अर्थव्यवस्था को मजबूत करने, आजीविका को बेहतर बनाने तथा रोजगार के लिए सूझबूझ से इस्तेमाल किया जाए, जिससे हमारी परिस्थितिकी भी संरक्षित और सुरक्षित रहे।  
<https://hindi.theprint.in/india/economy/g20-members-to-discuss-ocean-economy-responsible-artificial-intelligence/492656/>

## **OTHER NEWS ITEMS ON CAG**

### 17. CAG-Rajasthan Treasury Wrangle: Balance state's control over finances with CAG's mandate for accountability, transparency ([moneycontrol.com](https://moneycontrol.com)) March 13, 2023

The Government of Rajasthan is contemplating doing away with the existing treasury accounting system and instead shifting to the Payments and Account System. According to several media reports, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has written to the Rajasthan government that this “would disrupt the compilation, preparation and reporting of government accounts.”

On the one hand, it can be argued that it will allow the State government to have greater control over its finances and better, faster and prompter understanding of the local financial situation enabling them to make informed decisions on allocating resources quickly. But Section 10(1)(b) of the Comptroller and Auditor General's (Duties, Powers and Conditions of Service) Act 1971 provides for the CAG to be responsible for compiling the Union's and each State's accounts.

### CAG's Auditing, Reporting Functions

The CAG is an independent constitutional authority responsible for auditing the accounts of the Union and state governments. Its role is defined in Article 150 of the Constitution of India and further, in the CAG (Duties, Powers and Conditions of Service) Act, 1971, which describes the manner in which it will discharge the role.

Section 13 of the CAG Act states that the CAG shall audit and report on the accounts of the Union and State governments and any other body or authority that is financed or controlled by the government. In discharge of this duty, the CAG has the power to call for and examine any document related to these accounts and to require the attendance of any person to give evidence or produce documents.

The CAG can also inspect any office of the government. In addition to auditing the government's financial transactions, the CAG has wide-ranging powers to report on any matter related to the economy, efficiency, or effectiveness of the government's activities. The CAG reports its findings to the President or the Governor of the state, who is required to place them before the Parliament or the respective legislatures.

### Maintaining Accounts

In addition, Article 150 of the Constitution provides that the accounts of the Union and the States shall be kept in such form as the President may, on the advice of the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India, prescribe. Article 149 of the Constitution states that the CAG shall perform such duties and exercise such powers in relation to the accounts of the Union and State governments as may be prescribed by or under any law made by Parliament.

Maintaining the accounts in the form prescribed by the CAG is important because it allows the CAG to effectively carry out its constitutional mandate of auditing the government's accounts. It has the power to prescribe accounting standards and

procedures to ensure that the accounts are maintained in a standardised and consistent manner that allows for effective auditing.

Hence, besides auditing, the matter of presenting a form of accounts is a constitutionally entrusted duty to the CAG. This is similar to the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India releasing the Indian Accounting Standards or the Indian Financial Reporting Standards for a uniform system of accounting for all companies to maintain their accounts, so that the same is amenable to subsequent audit by different chartered accountants.

### A Way Out For Rajasthan, CAG

In the context of Rajasthan's move, there is a provision in the CAG Act where "the Governor of a State may, with the previous approval of the President and after consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor-General, by order, relieve [the CAG] from the responsibility for compiling the said accounts of the State (either at once or gradually by the issue of several orders)".

This means that while the power to conduct audits and prescribe the form of the accounts is Constitutional, the power to compile the accounts is statutory as far CAG is concerned. State governments may be allowed to maintain their pay and pension accounts, but the "form" in which the accounts shall be kept has to be prescribed by the CAG.

It is important to strike a balance between the need for state governments to maintain control over their finances and the need for transparency and accountability. While state governments could be allowed to maintain their pay and pension accounts, robust systems should be in place to ensure that these accounts are audited regularly and transparently. It is pertinent that the transition of the power to maintain and compile records from the CAG to the States must be done in consultation with the CAG and following the due process under the proviso to Section 10(1)(b) of the CAG Act of 1971.

In order to enable the CAG to effectively perform its constitutionally mandated duty to audit state governments' accounts, the Rajasthan government's Payments and Account System must follow the CAG's prescribed format under Article 150 of the Constitution after due consultation with him.  
<https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/opinion/cag-rajasthan-treasury-wrangle-state-finances-cag-accountability-transparency-10229851.html>

**18. Vande Bharat trains are here. Is the Indian Railways infrastructure ready for faster trains? ([moneycontrol.com](https://moneycontrol.com)) March 13, 2023**

On April 16, 1853, the inaugural train between Boribunder to Thane took one hour and fifteen minutes at 29.4 kmph speed to cover a distance of 33.8 km. Low average speed remains the bane of Indian Railways, with express trains averaging 50 kilometres per hour (kmph) and freight trains 25 kmph.

A Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report tabled last April found despite a Rs 2.5 lakh crore investment and the launch of 'Mission Raftaar' to increase the average speed of trains by 25 kmph, the express trains were still running at 50.6 kmph on average in 2019-20 while the speed of freight trains dropped to 23.6 kmph. The CAG report was damning – just 2.1 percent of the 2,951 express trains operated at an average speed of more than 75 kmph while 9.4 percent moved at speeds below 40 kmph.

The average speed of a train depends on the quality of fixed and moving infrastructure such as tracks, bridges, signalling, traction, motive power and coaches. It is also affected by a compulsion to run slow-moving (freight and local) and fast-moving (express/super-fast) trains on the same track.

### **Budget Windfall**

This year's budget brought a windfall for railways with the highest ever 2.6 lakh crore capital outlay. Speedier doubling of lines, conversion of near total route to broad-gauge, induction of high-powered locomotives and completion of electrification projects are set to increase the line capacity of Indian Railways. The best news is a faster rollout of Vande Bharat trains.

Vande Bharat trains, referred to as Train18 during its trials in 2018, is a semi-high-speed, self-propelled train conceptualised, designed and manufactured by the Integral Coach Factory in record 18 months. After successful trials in December 2018, the first service of Vande Bharat - between New Delhi and Varanasi - was flagged off by the prime minister on February 15, 2019. The second service - between New Delhi and Katara - was flagged off on October 3, 2019. Train18 was renamed Vande Bharat before the launch of commercial service to celebrate its Make in India or Aatmanirbhar character.

There was a lull for two years after the 2019 inauguration. It was only on August 15, 2021, that the government revealed its ambitions for these trains. First, the prime minister announced that 75 Vande Bharat trains will connect different parts

of the country by August 15, 2023. This was followed up with an announcement in the Union Budget 2022 that India will manufacture 400 Vande Bharat trains over the next three years.

Vande Bharat trains have many advanced features such as higher speed, enhanced safety, lower energy consumption, faster acceleration and deceleration, automatic doors, GPS-enabled audio passenger audio-visual information system, world-class seats and rotating executive class chairs and onboard Wi-Fi. It is the first Indian train designed for 180 kmph, a speed it surpassed in trials. But the travesty is no Indian train, including Vande Bharat trains, clocks an average 100 kmph speed in service for several reasons.

### **Infrastructure Bottlenecks**

One, the tracks, old bridges, speed restrictions, sharp curves and other infringements cannot support speeds beyond 100-110 kmph. Over 90 percent of the route supports a maximum speed of 110 kmph and only small patches support 130 kmph. The Railway Board approved a speed policy in 2017 to upgrade quadrilateral and diagonal tracks to 160 kmph and other tracks to 130 kmph. Till the upgradation is completed, Vande Bharat trains cannot maintain a speed of 150-160 kmph.

Two, to achieve 160 kmph speed, Indian Railways will need to upgrade the capability of overhead equipment to handle higher currents which are drawn with higher acceleration. Investment in modern signalling will also be needed.

Three, line capacity will need to increase to handle 150-160 kmph speed. Increasing the average speed of freight trains to 50 kmph and express trains to 80 kmph are low-hanging fruits.

The ambitious plan to make 400 Vande Bharat trains in three years will transform the passenger experience and bring more money to Indian Railways as AC chair-car and executive cars are profitable segments. But it brings up two critical issues - the choice of Origination-Destination pair for the four hundred Vande Bharat trains and the speed at which depots to maintain these trains can be ramped up.

After the introduction of Shatabdi-type Vande Bharat trains, the need to have Rajdhani-type long-distance variant of such trains was felt. India is at the cusp of realising that ambition as the process to select manufacturers is almost complete. The challenge is to ramp up fixed infrastructure quickly to run trains at 160-200

kmph. <https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/opinion/vande-bharat-trains-are-here-is-the-indian-railways-infrastructure-ready-for-faster-trains-10239321.html>

**19. CAG report on allegations of discrepancies in accreditation not final yet: NAAC ([theprint.in](https://theprint.in)) March 10, 2023**

The CAG report which pointed out glaring discrepancies in the assessment and accreditation of higher education institutions is not final yet, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) claimed on Friday.

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) had recently sought an explanation from the council after it found irregularities in the inspections carried out by NAAC and awarding inaccurate grades to several higher education institutions. NAAC Chairperson Bhushan Patwardhan had on Sunday resigned from the top post, days after raising allegations of a rigged accreditation procedure.

“The report of CAG as presented in certain media reports is not final as the draft compliance reply of NAAC Director on grant of accreditation is still under active consideration of the CAG. The office of the CAG has also suggested some changes which are also being incorporated and a revised draft is under consideration,” NAAC said in an official statement.

NAAC is an autonomous body under the UGC that assesses and certifies higher educational institutions with gradings as part of accreditation.

The council had on Tuesday clarified that its accreditation and assessment procedure is transparent and cannot be compromised. NAAC former chairman had resigned alleging that universities were obtaining questionable grades through unfair means.

“The NAAC has followed a time-tested pattern and practises in evolving various mechanisms and interactive platforms to handhold the institutions about assessment and accreditation process,” it added. <https://theprint.in/india/cag-report-on-allegations-of-discrepancies-in-accreditation-not-final-yet-naac/1433427/>

## 20. CAG Report: नैक का दावा, उच्च शिक्षा संस्थानों के मूल्यांकन मान्यता में गड़बड़ी पर सीएजी की रिपोर्ट अंतिम नहीं ([amarujala.com](https://amarujala.com)) March 10, 2023

CAG Report On NAAC: राष्ट्रीय मूल्यांकन और प्रत्यायन परिषद (NAAC) ने शुक्रवार को दावा किया कि उच्च शिक्षा संस्थानों के मूल्यांकन और मान्यता में गंभीर विसंगतियों की ओर इशारा करने वाली CAG रिपोर्ट अभी अंतिम नहीं है। भारत के नियंत्रक और महालेखा परीक्षक (CAG) ने हाल ही में NAAC द्वारा किए गए निरीक्षणों और कई उच्च शिक्षा संस्थानों को गलत ग्रेड देने में अनियमितता पाए जाने के बाद परिषद से स्पष्टीकरण मांगा था।

NAAC ने एक आधिकारिक बयान में कहा कि "कैग की कुछ मीडिया रिपोर्टों में प्रस्तुत की गई रिपोर्ट अंतिम नहीं है, क्योंकि मान्यता प्रदान करने पर NAAC निदेशक का मसौदा अनुपालन उत्तर अभी भी CAG के सक्रिय विचाराधीन है। CAG के कार्यालय ने कुछ बदलावों का भी सुझाव दिया है जिन्हें शामिल किया जा रहा है और एक संशोधित मसौदा विचाराधीन है,"।

NAAC, UGC के तहत एक स्वायत्त निकाय है, जो मान्यता के हिस्से के रूप में ग्रेडिंग के साथ उच्च शिक्षण संस्थानों का मूल्यांकन और प्रमाणन करता है। परिषद ने मंगलवार को स्पष्ट किया था कि इसकी मान्यता और मूल्यांकन प्रक्रिया पारदर्शी है और इससे समझौता नहीं किया जा सकता है। नैक के पूर्व अध्यक्ष भूषण पटवर्धन ने यह आरोप लगाते हुए इस्तीफा दे दिया था कि विश्वविद्यालय अनुचित तरीकों से संदिग्ध ग्रेड प्राप्त कर रहे हैं।

इसमें कहा गया है, "नैक ने मूल्यांकन और मान्यता प्रक्रिया के बारे में संस्थानों को संभालने के लिए विभिन्न तंत्रों और इंटरैक्टिव प्लेटफार्मों को विकसित करने में समय-परीक्षित पैटर्न और प्रथाओं का पालन किया है।"

<https://www.amarujala.com/education/cag-report-in-assessment-and-accreditation-of-higher-education-institutions-is-not-final-yet-2023-03-10?pageId=1>

## **STATES NEWS ITEMS**

### 21. Bills and vouchers worth Rs 84 crore go 'missing', CAG report indicts Chandigarh Police ([indianexpress.com](https://indianexpress.com)) March 11, 2023

Bills and vouchers of the Chandigarh Police amounting to a whopping Rs 84 crore have gone missing in the 2017-2020 period, the Comptroller and Auditor General



of India (CAG) has said in a report submitted to Chandigarh administrator Banwari Lal Purohit. “Shocking details have been found” and “nothing has been done in this regard” despite it being pointed out, Director General of Audit (Central) Sanjeev Goyal said on Friday.

The CAG report on the irregularities found in the working of a few public departments under the Chandigarh administration was submitted on March 6.

Chandigarh Police personnel forged figures to draw excessive amounts from the exchequer, retired personnel drew salaries for three consecutive years and many policemen drew funds that they were ineligible for, the CAG pointed out, among other glaring irregularities.

“Definitely I will hold a meeting with the police department on these serious issues raised and all those found guilty will not be spared,” Chandigarh Adviser Dharam Pal told The Indian Express.

“Smelling certain issues”, the UT director general of police had requested CAG in 2020 to conduct an audit of all the amounts – salaries, pay and other allowances – that were being given to employees under a portal, Goyal said on Friday. An audit examination of the disbursement of pay and allowances for the 2017-2020 period revealed various irregularities.

“All employees of the police department are registered on the E-Sevaarth application, where employees are enrolled with all details of their pay and allowances. Shocking details have been found. Audit recommends that action may be taken against the erring officials and responsibilities be fixed for lapses in disbursement of pay and allowances,” Goyal said.

“Bills and vouchers amounting to Rs 83.59 crore were not produced to audit. Following that, no detail has been found. Rather, despite pointing it out... the department is silent on these irregularities. In October 2021, our department was informed that the matter has been referred to Crime Branch which is investigating the tracing of bills and vouchers. But nothing has been done in this regard.” The annual budget of the police department on salaries is around Rs 400 crore.

Other serious irregularities were also found.

“Due to deficiencies in internal and IT controls, gross negligence on the part of drawing and disbursing officer under office of DGP, Chandigarh, inadmissible

payment of ₹ 1.60 crore on account of pay and allowances, LTC and other benefits during 2017-20 have been detected,” the audit department pointed out.

Meanwhile, questioned about the silence of the police top brass on the CAG report, Chandigarh DGP Praveer Ranjan told The Indian Express, “Investigation in the case is on. The special audit was conducted on the request of the Chandigarh Police only. Some of the issues mentioned in the report had taken place much before I had taken charge. We had got the case investigated by the Crime branch. For the diversion of 1.6 crore funds, we lodged cases against our personnel. Around Rs 1.10 crore was recovered from some of them also. Around 8-9 people have been arrested and a chargesheet in the case has been filed. We are not silent, neither are we trying to protect anyone.”

“Regarding the missing vouchers, we are trying to reconcile with the AG office and the treasury. We have also added sections of destruction of evidence for the missing vouchers,” he added.

### **What the CAG found**

\* Bills and vouchers amounting to ₹89.58 lakh on account of pay arrears and ₹9.97 lakh on account of leave encashment on LTC had been paid to 51 Chandigarh Police personnel but these bills and vouchers were not produced to audit.

\* 42 police personnel were paid Rs 7.30 lakh for allowance but they were not eligible for this amount. The drawing and disbursement officer failed to check and ensure the admissibility of these payments. The department has recovered the entire amount.

\* Out of 82 police personnel, six personnel appointed on compassionate grounds after a notification dated July 10, 2015, were entitled only to fixed monthly emoluments or DC rates but were paid full pay and allowances resulting in excess payment of salary amounting to Rs 28.57 lakh. Out of this, only Rs 4.20 lakh has been recovered.

\* Drawing and disbursement officers are responsible for checking the correctness of the pay bill register and in case of failure, they are liable for making good any consequent loss. The audit revealed that in the case of 68 police personnel mentioned in the pay bill register, entries regarding earned leave/medical leave/maternity leave/absentee, etc., were not made, which resulted in non-recovery of inadmissible payment of ₹19.34 lakh.

\* In violation of Punjab Civil Services Rules, 12 police personnel continued to draw house rent allowance even after allotment of government accommodation to them resulting in irregular payment of ₹9.98 lakh. The department has recovered ₹6.48 lakh.

\* The department sanctioned 10 days' leave encashment for LTC for the block year i.e., 2014-17 and 2018-21 and made entries of sanctions in the service books of 18 personnel. However, instead of 10 days' leave encashment once for the LTC block, the amount was actually drawn twice, thrice or even four times for the same block year against the same sanction order, resulting in excess leave encashment of ₹7.47 lakh.

\* Instances of excess/irregular/inadmissible payment on account of pay and allowance, retirement benefits, handicapped allowance, personal pay, computer advance, ration allowance, kit maintenance allowance, city compensatory allowance, interim relief etc., amounting to ₹3,86,200 had also been noticed in the audit, out of which ₹2,93,200 has been recovered.

\* In the case of 485 personnel recruited during 2019-20, to whom salary was being paid at DC rates, NPS contributions amounting to ₹96.97 lakh at 10 per cent of the salaries drawn by these personnel were not being deducted.  
<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/bills-vouchers-84-crore-missing-cag-chandigarh-police-8489661/>

## **22. Chandigarh Police's bills, vouchers worth ₹84 crore missing: CAG** ([hindustantimes.com](https://hindustantimes.com)) Mar 11, 2023

Chandigarh Police's bills and vouchers amounting to a whopping ₹84 crore went missing between 2017 and 2020, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India has pointed out in an audit report.

Despite being made aware of the "shocking details", police have remained silent on these irregularities and have done nothing in this regard, said Sanjeev Goyal, director general of audit (central), while addressing the media on Friday.

The CAG report, which also found "glaring irregularities" in the working of certain public departments under the Chandigarh administration, was submitted to UT administrator Banwarilal Purohit on March 6.

## **Audit for 2017-2020 period**

Goyal said the special audit for the 2017-2020 period was conducted in 2020 on the request of the then UT director general of police (DGP) .

“The audit of salaries and other allowances that were being given to employees under the E-Sevaarth application was conducted. All employees of the police department are registered on the E-Sevaarth application, where employees are enrolled with all details of their pay and allowances, and shocking details have been found. The audit recommends action against the erring officials and responsibilities be fixed for lapses in the disbursement of pay and allowances,” he said.

“Bills and vouchers amounting to ₹84 crore were not produced to audit. Following that, no detail (regarding the amount) has been found. Despite pointing it out...the department is silent on these irregularities. In October 2021, our department was informed that the matter has been referred to the crime branch. But nothing has been done in this regard,” Goyal added.

Police department’s annual budget for salaries is around ₹400 crore.

## **Core team behind scam arrested: DGP**

Current Chandigarh DGP Praveer Ranjan said it was an old case and police themselves requested the special audit. “An FIR has already been registered in the matter and we have also arrested eight people. The main chargesheet, along with two supplementary chargesheets, has been filed,” he said.

The DGP added that departmental action had also been initiated against the accused police personnel. “The core team behind the scam, including destruction of vouchers, has been arrested. Maximum amount siphoned off by way of undo benefits has already been recovered by Chandigarh Police,” he said.

A statement issued by Chandigarh Police also stated that the amount involved in the scam had been recovered, while not mentioning the exact recovery.

The statement added that through investigation, Balwinder Kumar, head constable (HC) Ved Parkash, HC Naresh Kumar, constable Rajbir Singh, assistant sub-inspector Vinod Kumar and home guards volunteer Surjit Singh had been arrested. Further investigation was underway on day-to-day basis, it said.

UT adviser Dharam Pal said he will be holding a meeting with the officers concerned in this regard.

### **Audit's findings**

Among the various irregularities pointed out by the CAG audit are transfers of unwarranted amounts to the accounts of police personnel in lieu of medical bills, leave travel allowance, house rent allowance despite allotment of government accommodation, handicapped allowance, personal pay, computer advance, ration allowance, kit maintenance allowance, city compensatory allowance, etc.

For instance, an amount of ₹89.58 lakh on account of pay arrears and ₹9.97 lakh on account of LTC leave encashment was paid to 51 personnel, but their bills and vouchers were not produced to audit

Six personnel appointed on compassionate grounds were entitled only to fixed monthly emoluments or DC rates but were paid full pay and allowances, resulting in excess payment.

Even a couple of retired employees were continuing to draw salaries, while many cops drew funds in lieu of allowance that was not even admissible to them.

### **Major audit findings**

An amount of ₹89.58 lakh on account of pay arrears and ₹9.97 lakh on account of LTC leave encashment was paid to 51 personnel, but their bills and vouchers were not produced to audit

42 cops were paid ₹7.3 lakh for allowance which were not admissible to them. The police department has recovered the entire amount

Six personnel appointed on compassionate grounds were entitled only to fixed monthly emoluments or DC rates but were paid full pay and allowances, resulting in excess payment of ₹28.57 lakh. Out of it, only ₹4.20 lakh have been recovered

In case of 68 police personnel, entries regarding earned leave/medical leave/maternity leave/absentee, etc., were not made, resulting in inadmissible payment of ₹19.34 lakh

12 personnel continued to draw house rent allowance even after allotment of government accommodation, leading to irregular payment of ₹9.98 lakh. The department has recovered ₹6.48 lakh.

Leave encashments for LTC drawn multiple times for the same block year, resulting into excess encashment of ₹7.47 lakh

Excess/irregular/inadmissible payment on account of pay and allowance, retirement benefits, handicapped allowance, personal pay, computer advance, ration allowance, kit maintenance allowance, city compensatory allowance, interim relief, etc., amounting to ₹3.86 lakh, of which ₹2.93 lakh have been recovered

As many as 485 personnel, recruited during 2019-20, were being paid at DC rates, but NPS contributions amounting to ₹96.97 lakh was not deducted.  
<https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/chandigarh-news/chandigarh-police-s-bills-vouchers-worth-84-crore-missing-cag-101678490831116.html>

**23. Lax CTU passed ₹6-cr tax burden on bus passengers: CAG audit**  
([hindustantimes.com](https://www.hindustantimes.com)) Mar 13, 2023

The Chandigarh Transport Undertaking (CTU) imposed a burden of nearly ₹6 crore on non-AC bus passengers to recover service tax applicable on AC buses since 2016, an audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India has revealed.

The action of the transport department is not acceptable, as it imposed tax burden even on those who don't travel in AC buses, said Sanjeev Goyal, director general of audit (central).

CAG has also directed CTU to conduct an inquiry to identify the officials responsible for the violation.

As per the audit's findings, CTU was liable to charge service tax at the rate of 6% on the transport of passengers by stage carriage AC buses with effect from June 2016 till June 30, 2017, and goods and service tax (GST) at the rate of 5% on such services with effect from July 2017. The tax collected was to be further deposited with the government. However, CTU failed to levy the tax for years.

It was only after an inquiry in July 2018, made by the director general, GST intelligence, that CTU in 2020 belatedly deposited service tax/GST amounting to

₹5.89 crore by using funds from the government exchequer, as it never collected the tax from passengers.

Goyal said the transport department failed to implement the statutory requirement of the collection of service tax and GST from the users of service and instead paid it from government exchequer.

Further, in their reply, the department stated that of the total amount submitted, the ₹5.53 crore paid as service tax was being recovered from passengers with effect from January 16, 2020, through increase in the bus fares, daily and monthly passes and concessional tickets, he said, adding that imposing the tax burden even on non-AC passengers was not acceptable.

Notably, before the fare hike, the charge for local non-AC buses was ₹5 for the first 5 km, ₹10 for five to 10 km and ₹15 for 10 km and above.

To recover the tax arrears, in January 2020, CTU had increased the rates of the second and third slabs by ₹5 each, while not changing the first slab's rate.

In local AC buses also, the first slab of ₹10 had been kept the same. In the second slab, the fare was increased from ₹15 to ₹20; and from ₹20 to ₹25 for third slab. The charges for the daily and monthly passes were also increased by over 50%.

The increase in bus fares had come after around two years.

When contacted, Pradhuman Singh, director, transport, Chandigarh, said, "I will look into the matter. A report will be sought from the officials concerned," he said. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/chandigarh-news/lax-ctu-passed-6-cr-tax-burden-on-bus-passengerscagaudit-101678656020603.html>

**24. Chandigarh administration lost Rs 9.37 crore as rent revision norms for shops were ignored: CAG ([indianexpress.com](https://www.indianexpress.com)) March 13, 2023**

While fixing the rent of shops and booths, the Chandigarh administration's estate officer "ignored" the prescribed stages for revising rent, leading to the huge loss of Rs 9.37 crore—something that "even the internal audit did not point out", the Comptroller and Auditor General has observed in a report.

From 1992 till 2022 till the audit was done, the Union Territory administration leased out built-up shops or booths for five years. The lease was renewable every

five years with a 20 per cent increase in rent. The rent was increased to Rs 14,000 in 1992.

According to the scheme, the annual increase had to be 7½ per cent over the base rate for the rent to be charged from the lessee for the first five years. A fresh lease deed shall be executed after the expiry of the first five years, for another 5 years, with a further increase of 50 per cent of the base rent. Thereafter the rent may be enhanced by 37.5 per cent after every five years. The rent deed would be similarly renewed after five years.

“Chandigarh administration had leased out government-built shops/booths in sector 17E in 1960s and 1970s for a period of five years. The lease so granted was renewable after every five years with 20 percent increase in rent. The rent of these SCOs (shop-cum-offices) was then increased to Rs 14,000 per month in 1992.

“Further, the rent of five booths formed out of three SCOs was fixed on a pro rata basis. The same was challenged by the lessees in the high court and Supreme Court. The Supreme Court in 1999 ordered that the rent of the said SCOs/booths shall not be further enhanced without framing the rules. As per the directions of the court, the Chandigarh administration framed a scheme known as ‘Leasing out of government built up shops/booths on monthly rent basis in Chandigarh scheme 2000’, notified on April 19, 2000, and thereafter rents were to be fixed with effect from March 1992 in accordance with the scheme,” read the CAG report.

“While conducting audit of the records of the estate office, it was noticed that while re-assessing the rent in case of 18 shops and five booths in Sector 17 E, the estate officer fixed the rent of shops/booths contrary to instructions by ignoring the prescribed stages for increase in rent and revised the lease rent by directly applying 50 per cent increase on the base rent, that is Rs 14,000, which resulted in the loss of revenue of Rs 9.37 crore,” the CAG report further said.

“The estate office then had issued demand notices (May 2022) for recovery of outstanding dues to 3 allottees/tenants and stated that the demand notices in respect of the remaining allottees /tenants would be issued shortly. Audit further noticed that at the time of fixation of rent, the calculations related to rent assessment were also checked by the internal audit of the estate office, but the discrepancy was not pointed out by them.”

‘Rs 30 lakh lost because of agreement on non-judicial stamp paper’



Article 35 of the Indian Stamp Act calls for levying stamp duty on lease deeds at 2 per cent. In June 2017, the Chandigarh municipal corporation granted Arya Toll Infra Ltd, Mumbai, the licence to operate and manage 25 paid parking lots and one multilevel parking lot for three years at Rs 14.78 crore a year.

The CAG observed that the corporation's accepting the agreement on a non-judicial stamp paper of Rs 100 had incurred a Rs 30 lakh loss to the government exchequer. "MC Chandigarh replied that the registration of the lease deed was the sole responsibility of the agency. The reply is not acceptable as in a subsequent agreement in July 2021 concluded with another firm, stamp duty at 2% was paid by the firm while preparing the agreement with the MC Chandigarh," the report said. <https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/chandigarh-administration-lost-9-37-crore-rent-revision-norms-shops-ignored-cag-8494274/>

**25. CAG picks holes in rural job guarantee scheme ([tribuneindia.com](https://tribuneindia.com))**  
March 11, 2023

Punjab: Amid the non-payment of wages, absence of unemployment allowance and fraudulent payments, the government seems to have virtually dumped the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), the CAG has found.

The performance audit, which covered 2016-2021, observed that though the scheme was for giving employment to those in need of daily wages, the non-payment of wages defeated the objective of the scheme.

**Money spent on repair of vehicles**

The scrutiny of the records (August to December 2021) revealed that Rs 4.59 lakh was irregularly incurred on the maintenance of old vehicles, civil works and on other items which were not covered under the scheme

The report tabled in the Assembly on Tuesday observed that funds were released with delay ranging between three and 304 days. "Further, harassment of vendors cannot be ignored and the payments due to vendors were running into crores for each year. There was no provision made for compensating the workers for delay in payment of wages. The policy for the payment of unemployment allowance was not formulated," it said.

The scheme implementation showed serious lacunae in the maintenance of basic records. The instances of payment to deceased workers and payments on more than one job card issued to same family were noticed. The audit unearthed cases of fraudulent payments and fictitious works. These problems point to the fact that the operational guidelines were not being followed to ensure transparency in the implementation of the scheme.

The assessment of demand had not been done door-to-door and baseline surveys. The Labour Budget prepared was not realistic in nature.

District perspective plans were not prepared despite requirements. There were deficiencies in issuing and updation of job cards. IEC activities and Rozgar Diwas were not conducted to spread awareness about the Scheme.

There were cases of non-observance of wage to material ratio of 60:40. The department had done little to maintain transparency in release of payments for execution of works.

In the absence of validation checks, persons were drawing wages on two job cards, simultaneously on different works. Physical verification of certain works revealed expenditure rendered unfruitful due to works lying incomplete or work lying in various states of disuse. <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/punjab/cag-picks-holes-in-rural-job-guarantee-scheme-487134>

**26. CAG in CTU wheel: Those who did not travel in AC buses paid for those who did ([indianexpress.com](https://www.indianexpress.com)) March 13, 2023**

Chandigarh: Those passengers who did not even travel in AC buses in Chandigarh had to pay an increased amount of fare — (of travelling in AC buses) — only because the Chandigarh Transport Undertaking (CTU) failed to recover the tax from passengers who travelled in AC buses. For its own failure, it put the entire burden on passengers who did not even avail themselves the facility of the AC buses.

This was detected by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) when they conducted an audit of the CTU records from 2017 to 2020.

The CAG report, a copy of which is with The Indian Express, stated that the “Chandigarh Transport Undertaking failed to collect a service tax of 6% on transport in AC buses, which came out to be around Rs 6 crore”.

After being pointed out its failure to do so, the CTU paid on its own initially and then later increased the bus fare of the passengers and put the burden on them to recover the amount as pointed out by the audit.

The CTU was liable to charge service tax at 6 per cent on transport of passengers by stage carriage air- conditioned buses with effect from June 1, 2016, till June 30, 2017 and GST on services with effect from July 1, 2017 at the rate of 5 per cent to pay the service tax/GST so collected from the passengers to the government account.

“Failure of the CTU to implement the relevant tax enactments from the prescribed dates and the consequent non-collection of the service tax/GST from the passengers of Stage Carriage air-conditioned buses resulted in avoidable payment of Rs 5.89 crore from the government exchequer. The department failed to implement the statutory requirement of collection of service tax and GST from the users of services and instead paid it from the government exchequer,” the audit noted.

It was further specified “the department stated that Rs 5.53 crore paid as service tax was being recovered from passengers with effect from January 16, 2020 by way of increase in the bus fare, daily and monthly passes with concessional tickets. The action of the department was not acceptable as it had imposed a tax burden even on those who never travelled in AC buses and had also collected tax of previous years from passengers other than those who actually availed the services”.

The CAG’s observations mentioned, “As per Section 66D of the Finance Act, 1994, services by way of transportation of passengers by a stage carriage was under negative list of services and not leviable to service tax. On June 1, 2016, Section 66D was amended and Service Tax was levied @ 6% on transportation of passengers by way of stage carriage AC buses. On July 1, 2017, GST of five percent was to be levied.”

However, “CTU failed to collect service tax/GST from passengers till January 2020. And then CTU deposited Rs 5.89 cr from government exchequer”.

When asked, CTU replied “that service tax was being recovered from the passengers with effect from January 16, 2020 by way of increase in the bus fare, daily and monthly passes and concessional tickets,” which the audit terms “not acceptable”. <https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/chandigarh-ac-buses-cag-report-8493714/>

**27. CAG: Many bus stands devoid of basic amenities in Punjab**  
([tribuneindia.com](https://tribuneindia.com)) Mar 13, 2023

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has rapped the government-owned Punjab State Bus Stand Management Company for failing to provide basic amenities such as drinking water and clean toilets at bus stands.

**Operating from shed for 20 years**

For example, the bus stand at Ropar is being operated from a temporary shed with uncovered platform and waiting area for more than 20 years, causing inconvenience to passengers. Comptroller and Auditor General

The report tabled on Tuesday found that facilities such as safe drinking water, toilets and urinals, CCTV surveillance, safety measures and waiting rooms were inadequate at the bus stands. Monitoring too was inadequate, resulting in non-maintenance of public amenities and poor response to grievances of passengers.

At three of the six selected bus stands, it was observed that RO-purified water was not available. At two of the six selected bus stands, water coolers were not available. At two other selected bus stands, only one water cooler was available. At five of the six selected bus stands, storage chambers of water coolers were not clean. Water quality is also not being tested at the selected bus stands.

Noting that hygienically maintained toilet facilities were essential to maintain a clean environment, the report found that the number of toilets was inadequate at the selected bus stands to cater to the needs of the public as per BIS norms.

The shortage in number of toilets ranged from four to 83 for male and one to 38 toilets for female passengers for a daily footfall ranging from 5,000 to 90,000. There was also a shortage in number of urinals at four bus stands, waiting rooms at three bus stands and cloak rooms at two bus stands.

At five of the six (83 per cent) selected bus stands, the toilets and urinals were unhygienic, needing increased periodicity and quality of cleaning. There was need for urgent repairs of toilet seats and doors, it found.

The toilets for specially abled passengers were not maintained at Amritsar and Nangal bus stands, the report said.

According to the contract, the operator was required to provide adequate passenger amenities, including safe drinking water on a par with WHO standards, clean and functional water chambers, 100 per cent CCTV surveillance along with security system for passengers and their belongings, proper seating arrangements at platforms, 24-hour operational waiting rooms, descaled toilets/urinals, legible display boards regarding user charges, functional complaint registers, 24-hour operational parking facility and effective waste management along with covered dustbins. These norms are applicable on companies as well as contractors for operation and maintenance of bus stands.

The audit noticed that the company had neither prescribed any norms nor prepared a manual regarding quantum of infrastructure to be provided at the bus stands in terms of number of drinking water taps, toilets, urinals, CCTV cameras and security guards.

Though a revenue of Rs 22.28 crore and Rs 26.6 crore was earned from the bus stands in 2018-19 and 2019-20, respectively, neither a budget was allocated nor capital expenditure was incurred for making required additions to the infrastructure.

Significantly, Punjab State Bus Stand Management Company Limited was incorporated (March 1995) under the Companies Act, 1956, with the main objective to manage, control and supervise the bus stands in the state. The company had 1,917 bus stands and handled an average footfall ranging from 1,500 to 1,00,000 per day during 2020-21. The company has overall responsibility of the operation and maintenance of the bus stands and to ensure adequate amenities for the passengers. <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/punjab/cag-many-bus-stands-devoid-of-basic-amenities-in-punjab-487406>

**28. MC's stamp paper goof-up caused a loss of ₹30L: CAG**  
([timesofindia.indiatimes.com](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com)) Mar 13, 2023

Chandigarh: In a parking contract, acceptance of lease agreement by Chandigarh municipal corporation on nonjudicial stamp paper without ensuring that it was registered as a lease deed resulted in a loss of revenue of Rs 29.66 lakh on account of stamp duty and registration fee, the latest report of the Comptroller and Auditor General has revealed.

The MC in June 2017 had granted a licence to operate and manage 25 paid parkings and one multi-level parking in Chandigarh to the successful bidder, a

Mumbai-based firm, initially for a period of three years, extendable for further two years on payment of licence fee at the rate of Rs 14.78 crore per annum, plus at prevailing rates. Accordingly, an agreement was executed in June 2017 between the MC and the firm.

The audit noted that the MC accepted the instrument as agreement on non-judicial stamp paper of Rs 100 without ensuring that the instrument registered as lease deed with the sub-registrar concerned. Due to non-registration of lease deed by the licensee and acceptance of the same by the municipal corporation, the government was deprived of stamp duty and registration fee of Rs 29.56 lakh and Rs 0.10 lakh, respectively.

On being pointed out (February 2020 & June 2020), the municipal corporation said (January 2022) there was no fault on the part of MC regarding non-registration of lease deed because it was the sole responsibility of the agency. “The reply is not acceptable, as the lease agreement is a compulsorily registrable document under Indian Registration Act and the municipal corporation should have ensured the registration of lease deed/licence deed before accepting the same,” the report said. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chandigarh/mcs-stamp-paper-goof-up-caused-a-loss-of-30l-cag/articleshow/98575497.cms?from=mdr>

**29. CAG find: Rs 450 per month turned into Rs 25,450**  
([indianexpress.com](https://www.indianexpress.com)) Mar 13, 2023

The special audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) of the finances of Chandigarh Police force has stumbled upon how simple tricks of forgery were used by police personnel to draw more funds than their allotted allowances thereby causing losses to the exchequer worth crores of rupees.

The CAG report on the irregularities found in the working of a few public departments under the Chandigarh administration was submitted to Chandigarh administrator Banwarilal Purohit on March 6.

According to the report, conveyance allowance of Rs 450 per month was allowed for head constables of the force and Rs 400 per month for constables. However, while making claims, the head constables and constables, often prefixed '25' and '20' in front of their original amounts, thereby drawing Rs 25,450 and Rs 20,400, respectively.

As per details, at least 53 head constables withdrew excessive amounts ranging between Rs 5450 to Rs 25,450, and 13 constables withdrew excessive amounts ranging between Rs 4,400 and Rs 20,400 as conveyance reimbursements per month. The total loss to the exchequer hence under this method was Rs 51.48 lakh.

The report also highlights how due to the non-capping of the upper limit on conveyance allowances to be paid on the software, at least 66 constables/head constables managed to withdraw excess amounts.

“Due to non capping of upper limit in the software, excess conveyance allowance was paid. The DDO is responsible for checking the correctness of the pay bill register and in case of failure, they are liable to make good any consequent loss,” it was specified in the report.

According to the detailed report, police personnel even ended up drawing allowances that didn’t exist, such as “oil and soap allowance” or “Secretariat allowance”. At least Rs 7.30 lakh was withdrawn under fraudulent allowance heads.

“As many as 42 police personnel drew inadmissible allowances (not included in the allowances that they were entitled to) — like higher education allowance, electricity allowance, other allowance, secretariat allowance, oil and soap allowance, additional pay, special pay other than allowance, uniform allowance, washing allowance and HRA,” the report said.

What the CAG says

The CAG in its detailed recommendations, said, “Action may be taken against erring officials who made wrong entries to benefit some officials. Also, responsibility may be fixed for lapses in disbursement of pay and allowances.”

It also specified, “DDO may ensure that necessary checks as per the financial rules are meticulously exercised before release of payments, arrears, LTC, TA, medical etc. All claims ought to be internally checked to avoid excess/double/ inadmissible payments. Thorough review of IT systems may be undertaken to develop sufficient controls and validation checks to ensure data integrity and prevention of frauds.”

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/chandigarh/cag-find-month-chandigarh-police-8493061/>



### 30. 450 को बनाया 25,450 रुपये ... कैग रिपोर्ट में बड़ा खुलासा, चंडीगढ़ पुलिस के खाते से 84 करोड़ गायब ([jansatta.com](http://jansatta.com)) Mar 13, 2023

भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक (CAG) ने चंडीगढ़ पुलिस कर्मियों की बड़ी जालसाजी का खुलासा किया है। ऑडिट में पता चला कि कैसे सरल तरकीबों से पुलिसकर्मी अपने आवंटित भत्तों से अधिक धन प्राप्त कर रहे थे, जिससे सरकारी खजाने को करोड़ों रुपयों का नुकसान हुआ है। चंडीगढ़ प्रशासन के तहत कुछ विभागों के फाइनेंस का ऑडिट किया गया था, जिसमें अनियमितता पाई गई हैं। इसे लेकर कैग की रिपोर्ट 6 मार्च को चंडीगढ़ के प्रशासक बनवारीलाल पुरोहित को सौंपी सौं गई थी।

रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक, चंडीगढ़ पुलिस के हेड कांस्टेबलों के लिए 450 रुपये प्रति माह और कांस्टेबलों के लिए 400 रुपये प्रति माह का कनवेंस फाइनेंस दिया जाता था, लेकिन हेड कांस्टेबल और कांस्टेबल मूलराशि के आगे 25 और 20 लिखकर इस राशि को 25,450 रुपये और 20,400 रुपये प्राप्त करते थे।

#### अपर लिमिट तय होने के कारण हुई ये गड़बड़ियां

जांच में पता चला कि कम से कम 53 हेड कांस्टेबलों ने 5450 रुपये से 25,450 रुपये के बीच अत्यधिक राशि निकाली, जबकि 13 कांस्टेबलों ने हर महीने 4,400 रुपये से 20,400 रुपये तक अतिरिक्त राशि प्राप्त की है। इससे सरकारी खजाने को कुल 51.48 लाख नुकसान हुआ। कैग की रिपोर्ट में यह भी बताया गया कि सॉफ्टवेयर में भुगतान किए जाने वाले कनवेंस अलाउंस पर अपर लिमिट तय नहीं की गई थी, जिस कारण पुलिस कर्मचारियों ने वाउचर पर तय राशि से ज्यादा अमाउंट लिखकर अधिक राशि प्राप्त कर ली। 66 कांस्टेबल और हेड कांस्टेबल इस तरह की गड़बड़ करने में कामयाब रहे।

रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक, “सॉफ्टवेयर में ऊपरी सीमा की कैपिंग नहीं होने के कारण अतिरिक्त वाहन भत्ता का भुगतान किया गया था। डीडीओ वेतन बिल रजिस्टर की शुद्धता की जांच के लिए जिम्मेदार है और विफलता के मामले में, वे किसी भी परिणामी नुकसान की भरपाई करने के लिए उत्तरदायी हैं।”

#### 84 करोड़ रुपये के बिल और वाउचर के बारे में नहीं दी गई कोई जानकारी

एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी संजीव गोयल ने शुक्रवार को बताया कि साल 2020 में चंडीगढ़ के डीजीपी के आग्रह पर 2017-2020 के लिए यह स्पेशल ऑडिट किया गया था, जिसमें 84 करोड़ रुपये के बिल और वाउचर की कोई जानकारी नहीं मिल सकी। उन्होंने कहा, “ई-सेवार्थ एप्लीकेशन के तहत कर्मचारियों को दिए जा रहे वेतन और अन्य भत्तों का ऑडिट किया गया था। पुलिस विभाग के सभी कर्मचारी ई-सेवार्थ एप्लीकेशन पर पंजीकृत हैं, जहां



कर्मचारियों को उनके वेतन और भत्तों के सभी विवरणों के साथ नामांकित किया गया है और चौका चौं ने वाली ची जें सामने आई हैं। ऑडिट में दोषी अधिकारियों के खिलाफ कार्रवाई की सिफारिश की गई है और वेतन एवं भत्तों के वितरण में चूक के लिए जिम्मेदारियां तय की जानी चाहिए।”

उन्होंने आगे कहा, “84 करोड़ रुपये के बिल और वाउचर ऑडिट के लिए प्रस्तुत नहीं किए गए थे। उसके बाद कोई विवरण (राशि के संबंध में) नहीं मिला है। बताने के बावजूद... इन अनियमितताओं पर विभाग मौन है। अक्टूबर 2021 में हमारे विभाग को बताया गया कि मामला क्राइम ब्रांच को रेफर कर दिया गया है, लेकिन इस संबंध में कुछ भी नहीं किया गया है।” <https://www.jansatta.com/rajya/cag-audit-on-chandigarh-police-force-how-450-per-month-turned-into-rs-25450/2699165/>

**31. Maharashtra Government to launch second phase of Jalyukt Shivar project ([thehindu.com](https://www.thehindu.com)) March 12, 2023**

Stating that the ruling Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena-Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government was making efforts to promote groundwater conservation across Maharashtra, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on March 12 said that the government was in process of launching the second phase of the ‘Jalyukt Shivar’ project in the State.

The multi-crore ‘Jalyukt Shivar’ drought-proofing scheme was Mr. Fadnavis’ pet project which was launched when he was the Chief Minister of Maharashtra between 2014 and 2019.

“We all know that 50% of Maharashtra witnesses less rainfall, therefore we do not have much options available. During the erstwhile [BJP] government, we had started the Jalyukt Shivar project by which we could promote water conservation in 20,000 villages in Maharashtra. Today, approximately 37 lakh hectares of land have come under irrigation, which is helping the farmers to sow two crops a year. Now we are going to launch ‘Jalyukt Shivar 2.0,’ Mr. Fadnavis said, speaking to reporters.

Mr. Fadnavis was in Pune at the behest of the Paani Foundation, where he was asked to be part of the grand prize distribution ceremony for the ‘Farmer Cup Competition 2022’.

He said that in the first phase of the renewed Jalyukt Shivar scheme, the government would be focusing on 5,000 villages, adding that increased efforts would be taken to ensure proper water conversation in Maharashtra given the chances of an unpredictable monsoon.

“Some weather models have predicted a more intense summer and lesser rainfall. Therefore, we must take care to conserve water,” he said.

The Jalyukt Shivar scheme had been much criticised by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India in its report, which was tabled in the Maharashtra Legislature in September 2020. At the time, the Uddhav Thackeray-led MVA government was in power while the BJP sat in the opposition.

The Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government, which then stalled the Jalyukt Shivar, initiated investigations by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) into alleged irregularities in the project.

Meanwhile, lauding the efforts of the Paani Foundation, he said that the outfit had engaged nearly 40,000 farmers till now and were training them.

Speaking on the occasion of the foundation’s prize distribution ceremony, Mr. Fadnavis stressed on the need for farmers to move towards collective farming as it increased their bargaining power while creating opportunities for large-scale mechanisation.

“Many crises have befallen farmers in the last three years. It is vital we turn to sustainable agriculture by reducing the use of chemicals and focus on practising organic farming,” Mr. Fadnavis said.  
<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/jalyuk-shivar-projects-second-phase-to-start-soon-in-maharashtra-devendra-fadnavis/article66610615.ece>

**32. ‘We’ve acted against corruption. Earlier, for Rs 2 crore Noida earned, Rs 20 crore would go to party in govt’ ([timesofindia.indiatimes.com](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com))**  
Mar 13, 2023

U P cabinet minister Nand Gopal Gupta (Nandi), who holds the key industrial development and investment portfolios, says systemic changes have been made to the land allotment process since the CAG report was tabled in the assembly in

December 2021. Speaking to TOI's Aditya Dev, he says the government is aware of homebuyers' problems and will ensure their rights are protected

Noida is UP's main business city. But it's still governed the way it was structured in the 70s through the Noida Authority with powers concentrated in a CEO. Noida's population is growing rapidly but residents don't have elected representatives like councillors. Has the govt thought of changing the administrative structure or creating a municipality?

The purpose of decentralisation of power is to provide convenience to citizens. It ensures that they don't need to visit Lucknow each time and problems are resolved in Noida. For this purpose, the Noida Authority has been mandated to be an autonomous body. However, there is

no one above the state government, so officials should work with positive thoughts, and without any pressure and fear. The CEO should ensure that there is no misuse of power that comes with an autonomous body. I think the present system is alright and whatever steps are needed to improve it will be taken. Noida's infrastructure is far better than many cities. For instance, if we compare Noida with Ghaziabad, you can see that there is a huge contrast between the two cities, be it façade lighting, cleanliness or wide roads. In cities where you have municipal corporations, quite often, they are found grappling for funds and managing staff salaries.

**Tabling the CAG report on Noida in the assembly was a big statement of intent from the government to clean things up after the Supreme Court's criticism of the Noida Authority as a corrupt body in the twin towers case. But we haven't yet seen the reforms CAG suggested take shape.**

The government has taken the recommendations of CAG seriously. Decisions are being taken to ensure there are no financial irregularities. For the first time, action has been initiated against officials who have been sitting in the same office for decades. They have been removed. Stern action has been taken against officials found involved in racketeering, bribery and large-scale corruption. Officials who used to create problems through villagers have been identified and punished. The Noida Authority has undertaken several policy reforms related to land allotment. Earlier, when Rs 2 crore was deposited in Noida Authority, Rs 20 crore used to go to the political party that formed the government.

**What steps have been taken to establish a system of internal audit, a gap the CAG pointed out, to ensure compliance with rules and regulations within the Noida Authority?**

In response to objections raised by CAG, a firm has been appointed to conduct an internal audit of the Noida Authority. Additionally, internal audits have always been carried out by the Authority. Prior to CAG, the local fund audit department was conducting the internal audit of Noida Authority.

**There are lakhs of people who are either waiting for their houses in Noida or can't get registries done because of the deadlock between the Noida Authority and developers over legacy debts. The government is seen to be aloof. Can we expect a resolution to this deadlock?**

The government is cognisant of homebuyers' problems. They are not at fault at all. Builders flew with their hardearned money or landed in jail after fraud was established. The government is actively working to ensure homebuyers get their rights. The chief minister has also expressed his concern. Homebuyers are our first priority. In group housing projects, partial OC has been introduced to facilitate the has many objections pertaining to its formulation and intent. Action against illegal farmhouses is being taken. Steps like reschedulement policy have lately been introduced. in Greater Noida, largescale cancellation of non-viable projects has taken place so that competent developers may replace them.

**Noida faces acute problems with its power infrastructure, much of which is old and overloaded. In a city that brings in the big revenues, why's an overhaul of the power transmission network not a priority?**

Noida has emerged as a hub for data centres. We have arranged to provide uninterrupted power supply to companies with dedicated supply lines. In the past, parties like SP, BSP and Congress robbed the state. But our government is working to bring back its glory and make it a self-reliant state in all manners. I am not saying that there is no scope for improving the power infrastructure, but things are in better shape. It will be improved further.

**CAG has also recommended that Noida Authority should review policies that have resulted in a preponderance of allotments to a handful of companies like Wave, Logix, 3C, Jaypee, and Amrapali who are also among the largest defaulters. What steps have been taken so far?**

As per recommendations and suggestions of CAG, the participation of defaulters with any department of Noida Authority in land allotment schemes published from FY 2022-23 has been restricted and provisions for the same have been incorporated in respective scheme brochures. Major amendments have been made in the allotment process specific to group housing schemes. The e-auction system has been implemented while the full premium of the plot has to be paid within 90 days of the allotment letter being issued. The sub-division of a plot (creation of third-party rights) is not permissible. Amalgamation of two group housing plots is not permissible. A maximum time limit of 13 years has been set to complete a project. Beyond this time period, no extension (free or paid) will be allowed.

**About a fourth of the MOUs signed at the Global Investors Summit this month are for proposed investments in the Noida (Gautam Budh Nagar) region. Is there enough land available in Noida?** Noida Authority has an adequate land bank to allot plots to MoU signatories. In addition to purchasing land from farmers and removing encroachments from government land, a series of steps have been taken to reclaim unused land through cancellations. According to the Master Plan 2031, 65 acres of group housing, 198 acres of industrial, 365 acres of commercial, 130 acres of institutional and 35 acres of residential land is available for allotment in Noida. Additionally, New Noida (DNGIR) with an area of 215sq km is being developed. The areas under New Noida (DNGIR) have been notified and the Master Plan for it is in the final stage. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/noida/weve-acted-against-corruption-earlier-for-rs-2-crore-noida-earned-rs-20-crore-would-go-to-party-in-govt/articleshow/98574033.cms>

### **SELECTED NEWS ITEMS/ARTICLES FOR READING**

- 33. Defence ministry finalising ₹15,000 crore+ deal for 200 more BrahMos for Navy** ([timesofindia.indiatimes.com](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com)) Mar 13, 2023

NEW DELHI: In another mega deal for the supersonic cruise missiles, the defence ministry is now finalizing the acquisition of over 200 more such extended range missiles for frontline warships of the Navy.

The procurement proposal for the missiles and associated equipment will soon be taken up for consideration by the Rajnath Singh-led Defence Acquisitions Council (DAC). “It will then be sent for the final nod to the PM-led cabinet committee on security,” a source told TOI on Sunday.

The exact contours of the deal, which will include deliveries over a long period, are being fine-tuned at present. “The actual cost will depend on the BrahMos numbers and configurations that finally get cleared...but it’s likely to be upwards of Rs 15,000 crore,” a source said.

Among other warships, these missiles will also be for the four Project-15B destroyers (two INS Visakhapatnam and INS Mormugao have been commissioned) as well as seven Project-17A frigates (five ‘launched’ in water till now).

Ten frontline warships are already armed with the BrahMos missiles jointly developed by Russia, which fly almost three times the speed of sound at Mach 2.8, while its vertical launch systems have also been installed on another five warships.

The Navy, incidentally, had tested the air-breathing BrahMos with “an indigenous seeker and booster designed by DRDO” from a warship in the Arabian Sea on March 5. Indian Navy successfully test-fires Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile from INS Visakhapatnam

The armed forces are now also progressively inducting the upgraded BrahMos missiles, with an extended range of 450- km from the original 290-km. A 800-km range variant of BrahMos has also undergone its maiden test, while a couple of more are slated this year, as was earlier reported by TOI. BrahMos has emerged as the “prime conventional (nonnuclear) strike weapon” for the armed forces over the years, with contracts worth over Rs 38,000 crore already inked till now.

All frontline warships will progressively be armed with BrahMos. The DAC on January 10, for instance, had approved the procurement of the BrahMos launchers and fire control systems for the Shivalik-class frigates and next-generation missile vessels “for enhanced capability to carry out maritime strike operations, interdicting and destroying enemy’s warships and merchant vessels”.

Similarly, the IAF is looking to arm another 20-25 Sukhoi30MKI fighters with the BrahMos after getting the first lot of 40 jets modified by Hindustan Aeronautics to carry the missile.

With a combat radius of almost 1,500-km without mid-air refuelling, Sukhois armed with BrahMos missiles constitute a decidedly potent weapon package for pinpointed strikes against high-value targets like warships on the high seas or enemy positions, bunkers, command-and-control centres and the like on land.

The Army's BrahMos missile batteries, incidentally, have been deployed in both Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh as part of the overall military readiness posture against China along the 3,488-km Line of Actual Control.

India is also looking to export the BrahMos to other countries after inking the first such \$375 million contract for three antiship coastal missile batteries with the Philippines in January 2022.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/defence-ministry-finalising-15000-crore-deal-for-200-more-brahmos-for-navy/articleshow/98588671.cms>