

## **NEWS ITEMS ON CAG/ AUDIT REPORTS (27.04.2023)**

### **1. कांग्रेस का सवाल- पीएम केयर्स फंड ऑडिट के अधीन या आरटीआई के तहत क्यों नहीं है ([thewirehindi.com](http://thewirehindi.com)) 27 April 2023**

पीएम केयर्स फंड के गोपनीयता के साये में घिरे होने की बात कहते हुए कांग्रेस ने सवाल किया कि इसमें सरकारी स्वामित्व वाले उपक्रमों (पीएसयू) से 60 प्रतिशत धन आने के बावजूद कोई पारदर्शिता और जवाबदेही क्यों नहीं है तथा यह किसी ऑडिट या सूचना का अधिकार (आरटीआई) अधिनियम के दायरे में क्यों नहीं आता.

बीते 25 अप्रैल को दिल्ली स्थित अखिल भारतीय कांग्रेस कमेटी (एआईसीसी) के मुख्यालय में आयोजित एक संवाददाता सम्मेलन के दौरान वरिष्ठ प्रवक्ता अभिषेक सिंघवी ने कहा कि एक सार्वजनिक कोष, जिसे 5,000 करोड़ रुपये का दान मिलता है, को आरटीआई के दायरे में आना चाहिए और जवाबदेही तय होनी चाहिए.

द हिंदू में प्रकाशित एक रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक, सिंघवी ने कहा, 'पीएम केयर्स फंड से जुड़े विवाद साबित करते हैं कि इसे एक बेपरवाह सत्ताधारी पार्टी और प्रधानमंत्री द्वारा बेहद बेपरवाह सरकार ने स्थापित किया था.'

उन्होंने कहा कि पीएम केयर्स फंड में कुल योगदान का 60 प्रतिशत ओएनजीसी, एनटीपीसी और आईओसी सहित सरकार द्वारा संचालित और सरकारी स्वामित्व वाली फर्मों से आता है.

सिंघवी ने कहा, 'पीएम केयर्स (PM CARES) में 'सी' का मतलब जबरदस्ती (Coercion), अराजकता (Chaos), भ्रम (Confusion) और भ्रष्टाचार (Corruption) है.'

उन्होंने सवाल किया, 'क्या किसी राज्य की सरकार बिना किसी विधायी मंजूरी के बड़ी रकम जुटा सकती है? लेकिन, यहां सरकार के सर्वोच्च कार्यकारी कार्यालय को बिना किसी कानूनी मंजूरी के 5,000 करोड़ रुपये मिल रहे हैं. जवाबदेही कहां है, ट्रैकिंग कहां है?'

सिंघवी ने कहा कि पीएम केयर्स फंड एक ट्रस्ट है और इसे जवाबदेही के मापदंडों से बाहर रखने का एक कारण यह है कि इसे सरकार से कोई बजटीय सहायता नहीं मिलती है. लेकिन सरकार के स्वामित्व वाले/नियंत्रित नवरत्न और मिनी रत्न कंपनियां इसमें प्रमुख दानदाता हैं.

सिंघवी ने कहा, 'छह साल बाद आप इस पर एक श्वेत पत्र क्यों नहीं लाए हैं? पैसा कहां खर्च किया जा रहा है, आप दुनिया को यह क्यों नहीं बताते कि फंड खर्च करने के लिए क्या मानदंड अपनाए जा रहे हैं? इसका खुलासा क्यों नहीं किया जाता? यदि आप किसी भी राशि का डायवर्ट करते हैं, तो क्या यह करदाता के साथ क्रूर मजाक नहीं है? हमें जवाब मिलना चाहिए.'

द प्रिंट के मुताबिक, कांग्रेस नेता ने कहा कि फंड को स्वेच्छा से जांच के दायरे में आना चाहिए और इस पर आरटीआई और कैग ऑडिट किया जाना चाहिए क्योंकि सार्वजनिक धन पीएसयू कंपनियों के माध्यम से इसमें जा रहा है.

उन्होंने यह भी सवाल किया कि सरकार ने कोष को कानूनी मान्यता देने के लिए विधायिका का समर्थन क्यों नहीं लिया.

सिंघवी ने कहा कि अगर कांग्रेस सत्ता में आती है, तो वे पीएम केयर्स फंड का कैग ऑडिट कराएंगे.

मालूम हो कि हाल ही में आई एक रिपोर्ट से पता चला है कि सरकार द्वारा संचालित सूचीबद्ध कंपनियों ने 2019-20 और 2021-22 के बीच विवादास्पद 'पीएम केयर्स फंड' में कम से कम 2,913.6 करोड़ रुपये का योगदान दिया है.

इन कंपनियों का योगदान 247 अन्य कंपनियों द्वारा फंड में किए गए कुल दान से अधिक है, जो कुल दान 4910.5 करोड़ का 59.3 फीसदी है.

शीर्ष पांच दानदाताओं में ऑयल एंड नेचुरल गैस कॉरपोरेशन (370 करोड़ रुपये), एनटीपीसी (330 करोड़ रुपये), पावर ग्रिड कॉरपोरेशन ऑफ इंडिया (275 करोड़ रुपये), इंडियन ऑयल कॉरपोरेशन (265 करोड़ रुपये) और पावर फाइनेंस कॉरपोरेशन (222.4 करोड़ रुपये) शामिल हैं.

रिपोर्ट में ऐसी 57 कंपनियों की पहचान की गई है, जिनमें सरकार की महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सेदारी है.

पीएम केयर्स फंड की स्थिति इसकी प्रकृति और इसके आसपास पारदर्शिता की कमी के कारण हमेशा से ही विवादास्पद रही है.

इस साल जनवरी में प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय (पीएमओ) ने दिल्ली हाईकोर्ट को बताया था कि पीएम केयर्स फंड भारत के संविधान के अनुच्छेद 12 के तहत 'सार्वजनिक प्राधिकरण' नहीं है और इसलिए सूचना का अधिकार अधिनियम 2005 के तहत यह अपने कामकाज के बारे में जनता के प्रति जवाबदेह नहीं है।

मार्च 2020 में स्थापित होने के बाद से ही पीएम केयर्स फंड विवादों में रहा है। ऐसा इसके सार्वजनिक जांच से बचने और चीनी कंपनियों समेत विदेशी संस्थाओं से धन प्राप्त करने की वजह से है। <https://thewirehindi.com/246354/why-is-pm-cares-fund-not-subject-to-public-audit-or-under-rti-congress/>

## **STATES NEWS ITEMS**

### **2. TN school education: Schemes aplenty but is everyone covered?** ([newindianexpress.com](https://www.newindianexpress.com)) 27th April 2023

CHENNAI: In the last two years, the school education department launched a plethora of schemes and tried to implement them in government schools across the state. However, it still remains a question whether these schemes have reached all the students, as many government schools are grappling with basic problems including infrastructure and lack of teachers.

According to the CAG report released recently, as of March 2021, 44% of the 108 government schools surveyed lack sufficient classrooms, resulting in classes being conducted in the open and under the shade of trees. There has not been much improvement in the last two years even as the government had announced in the 2022 budget that 18,000 classrooms will be built over a period of five years under the Perasiriyar Anbazhagan School Development Scheme. The officials said, now, they are in the process of identifying the needs of the schools and that no work has started in this regard, except in Vellore district.

Another major issue plaguing the government schools is the shortage of teachers. “The school education department says the temporary teachers appointed by the school management committees will be paid salaries between `12,000 to `18,000. How can they be expected to teach the students properly when they are getting such a meagre amount as salary,” questions Prince Gajendra Babu, General Secretary of State Platform for Common School System.

He also added several schemes of the government, including model schools in which students with good marks are admitted, go against the principle of equality.

Similarly, government schools get only Rs 1,500 to Rs 2,500 per month to keep their toilets clean. While around Rs 500 goes to buying cleaning materials in a school, the staff are paid only Rs 1,000 to Rs 2,000 per month. The headmasters struggle to find sanitary workers, resulting in bad maintenance of toilets. “This fund should be increased so that the staff could be paid a decent amount,” said activists.

Many government school teachers have also been requesting the school education department to cut down their non-teaching work so that they could spend more time with the students. Activists also raised concerns that the DMK government has not upgraded any schools in the past two years. “In Kottadai village in Thalavadi block in Erode district, people paid Rs 1 lakh as their contribution to upgrade the middle school there before eight years. In Kuthiyalathur in Sathiyamangalam block, they paid their contribution for five years to upgrade the school in their area .

While the students have to travel more than eight kilometres to access higher secondary education, nothing has been done so far. Many of the parents here are daily wage labourers and are struggling to collect their contribution for the upgrade. However, their wait is still not over,” said S Natraj, an activist working to uplift tribal children in Erode.

Meanwhile, the school education department officials termed the criticisms as normal when new schemes are implemented. “For example, we initiated the reconstitution of school education committees across the state. We provided training to parents heading the committees and appointed overseers to ensure their effective functioning.

It was done in more than 58,000 schools across the state and there will be some hiccups until the process is streamlined. This is the same case with the reading marathon we started in Illam Thedi Kalvi centres. We are taking suggestions from activists and teachers to improve the schemes,” added the official. <https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tamil-nadu/2023/apr/27/tn-school-education-schemes-aplentybut-is-everyone-covered-2569813.html>

### **3. DMK uses CAG report against EPS to shield from I-T raids heat** ([dtnext.in](https://www.dtnext.in)) 26 April 2023

CHENNAI: Facing a volley of assault from allies and Opposition over the I-T raids and U-Turn on two crucial policy decisions plus controversial audio tapes, the

ruling DMK has attempted to deflect some attention by levelling a bouquet of accusations against the previous AIADMK regime, mainly former chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami.

Borrowing the CAG report for its support, state Health Minister Ma Subramanian on Tuesday threw light on the revelations of the CAG report, especially ‘irregularities’ in various departments during the tenure of former chief minister Palaniswami.

Citing the CAG report as stating that about 87 tenders were submitted by contractors using 57 computers of state highway department officials between 2019 and 2021, Subramanian who detailed the controversial findings of the AIADMK regime, said that about 2,091 highway tenders were submitted using one computer in the said period in the highway department, which was helmed by Palaniswami.

Bids awarded to EPS kin

Pointing to the violation unravelled by the CAG that about 490 tenders submitted from the same IP address were accepted and work orders issued in the previous regime, the Health Minister said that the honest contractors were prevented from participating and the bids were awarded to the family members and people close to EPS by projecting bogus contractors as having participated in the bids. Subramanian, who alleged corruption in school education, home (Chennai police) and rural development among other departments, said that they would consult legal experts and find the right solution to the issues of financial loss, wasteful expenditure and corruption.

I-T dept doing its job, G-square has issued clarification

Asked about the ongoing I-T raids in G-square related places, he said, “They (I-T) are doing their duty. G Square has issued a clarification to the charges levelled by (BJP state president) K Annamalai. It has been published by the media.” On DMK MLA MK Mohan’s house also being among the raid location, he said, “There is no rule barring members of a DMK MLA’s family doing business. They will handle it legally.”

Reacting to a specific query on Annamalai alleging corruption charges against CM Stalin on metro rail procurement, he said, “CMRL has denied it. Please take a look at it. He is levelling baseless allegations.”

When reporters sought his reaction to an audio attributed to state Finance Minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan, Subramanian said, “PTR has clarified that the audio has been cut and edited. You must contact him for further information.”  
<https://www.dtnext.in/tamilnadu/2023/04/26/dmk-uses-cag-report-against-eps-to-shield-from-i-t-raids-heat>

**4. School Education Minister says irregularities in CAG report indicates years of neglect by previous regime ([thehindu.com](https://www.thehindu.com)) 26 April 2023**

Chennai: Minister for School Education Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi said on Wednesday that the irregularities exposed by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) indicated several areas with regard to school education were neglected over the last 10 years during the AIADMK rule.

“From 2016 to 2021, there was a drop in enrollments in government schools, and the report indicated that over 3% of students went to private schools. Since we came into power, the enrollment has risen by 11 lakh in government schools, and as a government, we are actively encouraging students to study in government schools through various initiatives,” he said.

Speaking about the initiatives taken to better infrastructure in schools, the Minister said that under the recently launched Professor Anbazhagan School Development Scheme, the government was focusing on building new classrooms and bathrooms for government schools.

“Following 10 years of neglect during the previous regime, we are working on fast-tracking such initiatives, and it is our duty to give schools good infrastructure,” he said, stating that the requirements of schools would also be discussed in detail in the upcoming CEOs meeting in a few days.

Expressing concerns at what the CAG report said about the Rural Development Department, Mr. Poyyamozhi said that only 2.80 lakh houses had been constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Scheme in the State while 5.09 lakh houses had been sanctioned by the Union government.

“It is also very saddening that persons belonging to Scheduled Caste and Tribe communities who should have benefited from the scheme haven’t. These irregularities identified in the report from 2016 to 2021 are indicative of how a government should not function. As a government, in the last two years, we have shown how a government should function,” he said.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/school-education-minister-says-irregularities-in-cag-report-indicates-years-of-neglect-by-previous-regime/article66782251.ece>

**5. CAG probe: Gopalan Dept to recover payment from officer**  
([firstindia.co.in](https://firstindia.co.in)) 27 April 2023

Jaipur: On a report of the CAG, the Gopalan department has ordered recovery of the amount for misuse of official vehicles by the Additional Director of the Gopalan department Dr Lal Singh. The officer was not authorized to use the official vehicle but kept on using the vehicle for commuting from office to home everyday. When the CAG inspected and objected, the department has asked to recover the amount of misuse of government vehicles from his salary.

An order issued by RAS Chandmal Verma, Director of Gopalan Department on April 12 is a great example in itself. This order is an example for those government officials who misuse the resources of the government and use them for personal purposes. This order is about Dr. Lal Singh, former director of the department and presently additional director. Actually, Dr. Lal Singh was taking the official vehicle for his personal use for a long time.

Recently, when the team of CAG released the inspection report of the dept, it was revealed that Additional Director Dr. Lal Singh was misusing the official vehicle.  
<https://firstindia.co.in/news/india/cag-probe-gopalan-dept-to-recover-payment-from-officer>

**6. Rs 8 crore dues could push cabs off roads in Chandigarh**  
([timesofindia.indiatimes.com](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com)) 27 April 2023

CHANDIGARH: Non-payment of entry fee is prompting the UT administration to consider slamming the brakes on Ola and Uber cab rides in the city.

"The administration is actively considering cancelling the licence of the cab aggregators," said a senior UT official. Outstanding dues soaring to over Rs 8 crore - a default that a Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report had recently red flagged along with inability of the administration to recover the amount - has spurred the UT to think on these lines.



## CHALLAN DRIVES HURT DRIVERS

➤ On the issue of non-payment of entry fee, the state transport authority (STA) initiated a major challan drive in January 2020, wherein cabs with aggregators were challaned for not having the entry-fee payment slips with them

➤ In response, cab driver unions went on a more than three-week strike

➤ There are around 4,400 cabs with the companies, out of which around 500 are registered in Chandigarh while rest in

Punjab and Haryana.

➤ Tricity Cab Operators' Association president Vikram Singh Pundir said, "Though for some time the challan drive was stopped after the 2020 protests, in 2022 the drive was again started and more than 60 challans were issued. It has to be paid by the companies and not us."

➤ Pundir said, "If the administration cancels their licences, it is the drivers who will suffer the most as they will lose their livelihood."

### 3 NOTICES ISSUED

➤ A UT official said, "The UT administration has already issued three show cause notices to the cab aggregators. The first one was in March 2021. Then in April 2022 and the last was in March this year." The notices directed the companies to pay the dues or face cancellation of licence.

➤ The companies approached the Punjab and Haryana high court. The

court directed, "We stay any coercive action in pursuance of the notice dated March 13, 2023. It is, however, made clear that if an order is passed, in accordance with the rules in pursuance to the show cause notice, then the writ petitioner will be at liberty to challenge the said order and the interim protection thereafter will only be extended for one week"



"But as cancelling of licences may cause inconvenience to commuters and loss of livelihood to cab drivers, we will be first taking other measures so that companies deposit their dues," said the official. The UT is likely to first forfeit bank guarantee deposited by both the companies. If the outstanding dues are still not paid, the administration will initiate proceedings under appropriate law to recover the dues. "As another step, the companies will be asked not to add more cabs from Punjab and Haryana under their service," said the official.

The UT had granted licence to the two companies in 2018 for five years. The licence expires later this year. "As per the 'Chandigarh Administration on Demand Transportation Technology Aggregator Rules 2017', the companies were mandated to pay Rs 1,000 entry fee per vehicle per quarter on the cabs enrolled with it but registered in Punjab and Haryana," said the official. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chandigarh/rs-8-crore-dues-could-push-cabs-off-roads-in-chandigarh/articleshow/99798724.cms?from=mdr>

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

### **7. India sets ambitious yearly targets for central PSUs to reach 500GW green power capacity ([moneycontrol.com](https://moneycontrol.com)) 27 April 2023**

Chasing an ambitious target of having 500 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy (RE) capacity by 2030, the government has released a detailed agency-wise break-up on inviting bids for RE projects totalling 50 GW for 2023-24.

India's current total renewable energy capacity, excluding large hydro and nuclear plants, reached 125 GW (125,159.81 MW) in March 2023, the latest monthly report by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) showed. At present, RE has a share of 26.53 percent of the total installed generation capacity in the country.

As per the latest trajectory released by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) on April 25, tenders will be floated for 15 GW each in the current quarter (Q1 - April-June 2023) and the second quarter of FY 2024 (July-September 2023). In the third (October-December 2023) and fourth quarter (January-March 2024), bids would be invited for 10 GW each.

The MNRE has appointed NTPC Ltd, Solar Energy Corporation Of India (SECI) Ltd., NHPC Ltd and SJVN Ltd as the renewable energy implementing agencies (REIAs) for floating the tenders and opening of bids. As per the trajectory, SECI

and NTPC will have to invite bids for 15 GW each of RE projects, while NHPC and SJVN will have to do 10 GW each in the ongoing financial year.

Govt revises merit order in power exchanges to maintain low costs Govt revises merit order in power exchanges to maintain low costs

The REIAs would be permitted to bring out the bids with or without storage for solar, wind, solar-wind hybrid, round-the-clock (RTC) RE power and so on.

On April 3, Moneycontrol reported about the government's plan to add 50 GW each year till 2030. "Bids for RE capacity of 50 GW per annum, with at least 10 GW per annum of wind energy capacity, are to be issued each year from financial Year (FY) 2023-24 to FY 2027-28," according to the memorandum issued by the MNRE on March 31.

Union minister for power and renewable energy, RK Singh, said, "We are committed to achieve the target 500 GW by 2030 and the bidding trajectory will provide a further stimulus towards this. The structured bidding trajectory will provide sufficient time to the RE developers to plan their finances, develop their business plans and manage the supply chain more efficiently. This is a golden opportunity of industry to invest in this sector," he said on April 5 while formally announcing the 50 GW per year trajectory.

BS Bhalla, secretary, MNRE said the bidding trajectory will also enable the power procurers, including the distribution companies, to manage their RE procurement plans effectively. "The bid trajectory will also provide a fillip to the RE manufacturing industry in the country by indicating the demand that would be created for their equipment," he said.

The decision of the government to add 50 GW of RE capacity each year from hereon is significant as well as challenging because until now, the country has managed to add only a maximum of about 15 GW annually.

As of now, nearly 82.62 GW is under implementation and 40.89 GW under tendering process, as per government data. MNRE officials told Moneycontrol that the bids for these RE capacity additions will be over and above the RE capacities that are coming up under the government's rooftop solar and PM-KUSUM schemes.

India's electricity demand is growing at 6 percent annually. However, if we only look at last year, the demand increased by almost 10 per cent, as per government data.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on February 1 said “green growth” will be one of the seven priority sectors (“Saptarishi”) of the Union Budget 2023. In her Budget speech, she explained that the “green growth” priority sector will include multiple programmes on green fuel, green energy, green farming, green mobility, green buildings and green equipment. This will also include policies for efficient use of energy across various sectors, Sitharaman said in her Budget speech this year. <https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/power/from-15-gw-to-50-gw-india-sets-ambitious-annual-targets-for-renewable-energy-bids-10480571.html>

## **8. India Needs More Urgency to Meet Formidable Clean Energy Transition Targets ([mercomindia.com](https://www.mercomindia.com)) 26 April 2023**

The targets for the renewables sector are formidable, but the good news is that the clean energy transition in India is already well and truly underway, albeit with the attendant challenges.

One of the challenges the sector faces is policy instability. Frequent policy changes have the potential to destabilize the energy transition process.

The overarching issues relating to the Indian renewables sector were discussed on the first day of the Mercom India Renewables Summit 2023, an exclusive event that is being held in New Delhi. The event started with a keynote by Raj Prabhu, CEO & Co-Founder at Mercom Capital Group.

“Energy independence is at the forefront of every government agenda worldwide. We need that same sense of urgency in India to capture a bigger slice of the renewables market,” Prabhu said.

“To achieve the 450 GW of renewables (including 280 GW of solar) by 2030, we need to think three times bigger, to be precise. We must change our mindset from a 10 GW industry to a 30 GW one,” Prabhu added.

India has set an ambitious target of 500 GW of non-fossil fuel-based energy by 2030, including 280 GW of solar. It also plans to meet 50% of its electricity

requirements from renewable energy sources by 2030, which brings into perspective India's rapidly changing energy landscape.

Following the keynote, panelists at the session 'India's Energy Transition – Markets and Opportunities' had an engaging discussion on defining the shape and roadmap for India's renewable energy future.

The session featured Mohit Bhargava, Executive Director at NTPC Renewable Energy, Shivanand Nimbargi, Managing Director and CEO of Ayana Renewable, and Raj Prabhu.

Priya Sanjay, Managing Director, Mercom India, moderated the session.

The conversation touched on demand-supply scenarios, infrastructure, and policies required to instill confidence in the investment community to fund this massive transition to renewables.

Bhargava said, "Energy transition is not just about the power sector. It is one of the pillars. The government is responsible for developing policies that can help achieve the renewable target of 500 GW by 2030."

He said that the future would not be of standalone solar or wind projects but round-the-clock power. The government needs to align its policies with the energy transition targets, which would help in the long run. Renewables will play a critical role in the next ten years, he said.

"It is essential to focus on other sectors that play an even more significant role in the energy transition. Just scaling renewable to 500 GW will not make it net zero. We need finance, the right offtake, and a supply chain to create a robust renewable energy ecosystem. NTPC currently has a pipeline of 20 GW. We are decarbonizing our fuel mix and coal-based power stations," Bhargava added.

Echoing Bhargava's views, Nimbargi said there is a massive gap between bidding and projects commissioned on the ground. There is also a need for an offtake policy. The last few months have been challenging because of the global macroeconomics and political issues affecting the global supply chain.

"Energy storage is going to be the next big thing in India. We can achieve the energy transition targets, but the government agencies must announce a set-in-stone auction timeline that adds up to 450 GW by 2030. It is possible, but there is a

need for more coordination between the government agencies and the stakeholders,” said Prabhu.

Commenting on the steps needed to increase investors’ confidence, Bhargava remarked that money is chasing projects in India. I don’t see any gap ...they are all looking to do business in the country. It’s not just about energy transition; energy security in the current scenario is equally important.

Bhargava said Renewable Purchase Obligation (RPO) targets and pooling of tariffs will lead to better outcomes by ensuring that the power distribution companies (DISCOMs) from different states procure renewables at the same tariff.

Nimbargi wanted the government to extend the Production-Linked Incentive program for developing energy storage projects. The pooling mechanism will help DISCOMs to convert PPAs quickly,” he added.

He felt there is a need to align state policies with the policies at the federal level. The reform of the distribution sector is very important,” he said.

“Investors don’t like surprises. They prefer stability and don’t want the regulatory landscape to change consistently. We are in the top five markets regarding renewable energy additions, but there needs to be a change in the mentality and approach. We need to develop a 30 GW/year approach. If we do that, investors are bound to come,” added Prabhu. <https://www.mercomindia.com/india-urgency-meet-clean-energy-transition-targets>

## **9. India needs a sound strategy to counter the EU’s carbon tax ([livemint.com](https://www.livemint.com)) 27 April 2023**

**Rather than impose retaliatory tariffs, India should institute a domestic carbon-trading mechanism like China’s and try to shift the discourse on climate change from piecemeal, localised measures to global solutions**

Mint reported last week that ministerial consultations are underway to determine if the European Union's carbon tax is WTO-complaint and if India should consider responding with retaliatory tariffs.

India needs a more constructive strategy to counter the European Union’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (C-BAM) than trying to impose retaliatory tariffs within the World Trade Organisation’s policy framework or outside it.

The WTO's dispute settlement mechanism has been dysfunctional ever since former US president Donald Trump refused to cooperate on making appointments to its appellate bodies. India needs to institute a carbon-trading mechanism domestically, as China has, to let exports bear the price of their carbon content and avoid the need for European importers to add a carbon layer to the import price.

C-BAM is an attempt to level the playing field for European players in the so-called Emission Intensive and Trade Exposed (EITE) sectors. To begin with, five sectors are in the reckoning: electricity, cement, fertilisers, iron and steel and aluminium. When the EU commenced its carbon trading mechanism, EITE sectors were given free allowances, which they could trade in the carbon market. This was to prevent their flight to locations outside the EU, where they did not have to worry about carbon pricing.

Such flight would have resulted in no net reduction in carbon emissions globally, even as industry in the European Union relocated elsewhere, destroying jobs, incomes and taxes for its member states.

When the free allocations are phased out, to level the playing field for players that still face the pressure of carbon pricing, C-BAM has been proposed. Incidentally, a high-level committee that worked on finding solutions to loss of competitiveness as a result of introducing carbon pricing was co-chaired by Anand Mahindra, and border adjustment measures were one of the solutions identified by the committee.

Now, C-BAM is far from perfect, even from a European point of view, which seeks self-righteous satisfaction that it is doing what it can to fight climate change, whatever the rest of the world does. European produce that seeks an external market, while using a C-BAM sheltered product as an input, would face a competitive disadvantage vis-à-vis a producer from a country that does not have carbon pricing.

C-BAM levels the playing field within the EU – that is all. In order to compete with producers in the global market that are unburdened by carbon prices, European firms would be incentivised to set up shop in countries without carbon pricing. European banks would find it makes sense to lend to such companies or their competitors outside Europe. Selective measures such as C-BAM only serve to leak carbon from some markets to others, without reducing overall global emissions.



C-BAM is supposed to commence scrutiny of the carbon content of EITE imports from October, and get importers to buy carbon certificates equivalent to the European price of the imports' carbon content from 2026. Countries such as India must use the intervening period to effect a paradigm shift in the global discourse on climate change and move from piecemeal, localised measures to holistic, coordinated, global solutions. In particular, the focus has to shift to sucking carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere to attain net-negative emissions rather than reductions in fresh emissions.

The carbon budget for containing warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels was just 500 gigatonnes (Gt), according to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, with 2019 as the base year. A decade of growth would exhaust that budget, even with strenuous emission reductions. The only meaningful course of action is to suck CO<sub>2</sub> out of the air in large quantities and use it as an input for economically viable processes, such as producing synthetic fuel for aircraft or making petrochemicals, graphene or carbon fibre.

At the same time, instituting national carbon trading regimes would incentivise the adoption of green technologies. A carbon tax could generate resources to offer tax credits to those who reduce their emissions while penalising offenders.

Climate change represents both a problem and an opportunity for a country like India. Policymakers must persuade Indian industry to tackle it in earnest and not to simply work around impediments such as green import tariffs in the EU, even if we recognise their flaws. <https://www.livemint.com/opinion/online-views/india-needs-a-sound-strategy-to-counter-the-eu-s-carbon-tax-11682569029480.html>

## **10. Over 24L Water Bodies, But 1 out Of 6 Can't Be Used** ([epaper.timesgroup.com](https://epaper.timesgroup.com)) Apr 27, 2023

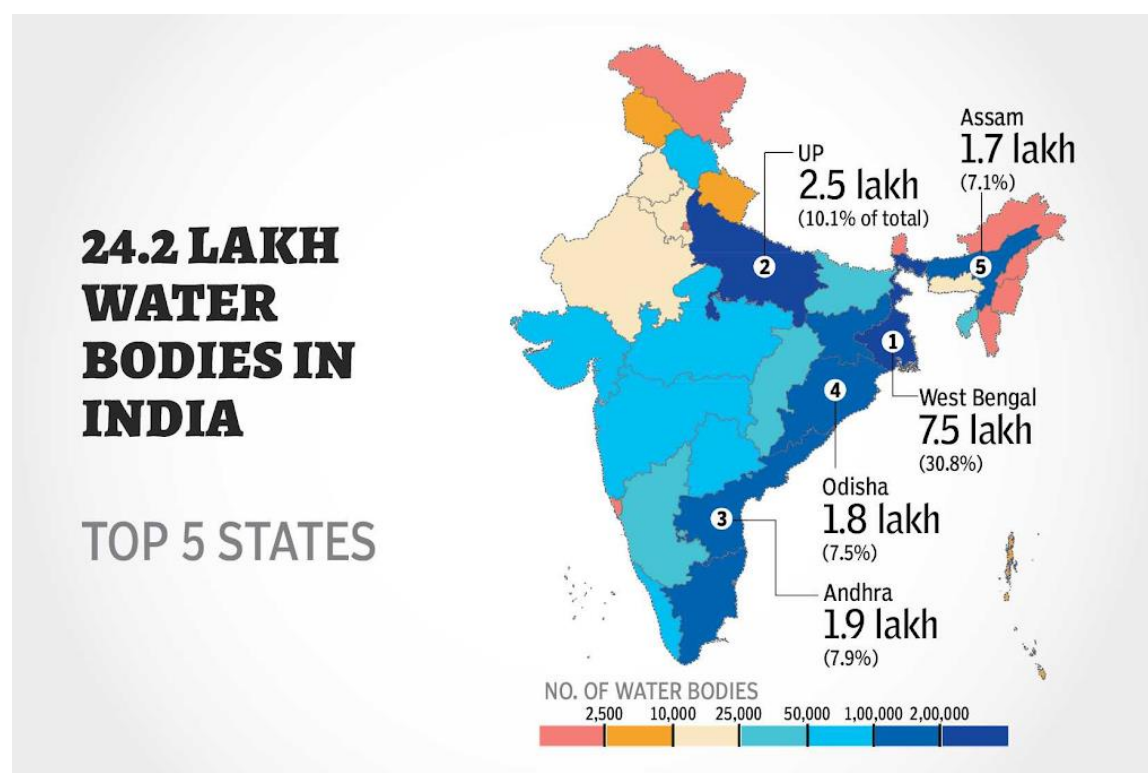
What The First Census Of Its Kind In India Says About The Health And Extent Of Ponds, Lakes And More

India's first water census was conducted for all states and UTs except Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, and Lakshadweep with 2017-18 as the reference year. The Union Jal Shakti ministry says the data has been compiled at a time when India "is gradually progressing towards water scarcity due to increasing population

pressure and urbanisation”. Home to 18% of the world’s population, the country has to make do with only 4% of global water resources.

For the purposes of the census, a water body could be natural or man-made and be used for drinking or supporting industrial activities, including fisheries. They could also be linked to religious or recreational functions and groundwater recharge. But the definition excludes rivers, streams, lagoons, as also swimming pools or storage resulting from industrial activities like mining, construction and the like.

West Bengal contains more than 30% of all water bodies in the country, the number only marginally lower than that of the next four states combined.

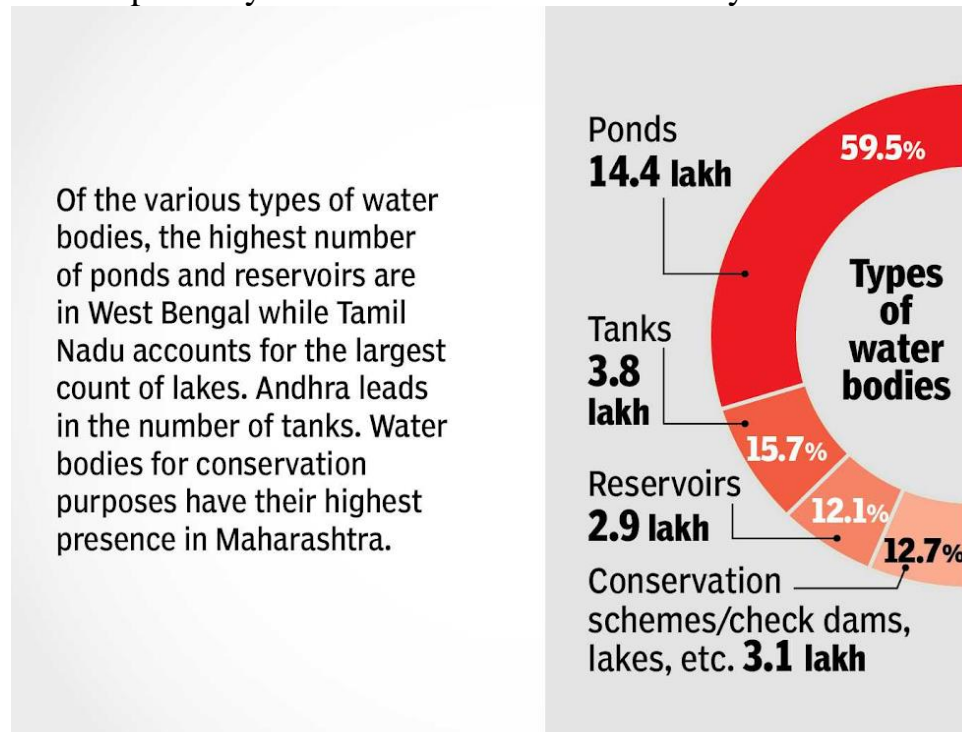


About 4 Out Of 5 Water Bodies Man-made, Majority Privately Owned

Close to 19 lakh water bodies in the country are man-made, accounting for 78% of the total. It was found that the man-made water bodies are mostly earthen in nature that cost up to Rs 1 lakh to dig/construct.

The report also found that more than 55% of all water bodies are under private ownership. Panchayats control the biggest share of publicly owned water bodies, followed by state water resources and irrigation departments with cooperatives,

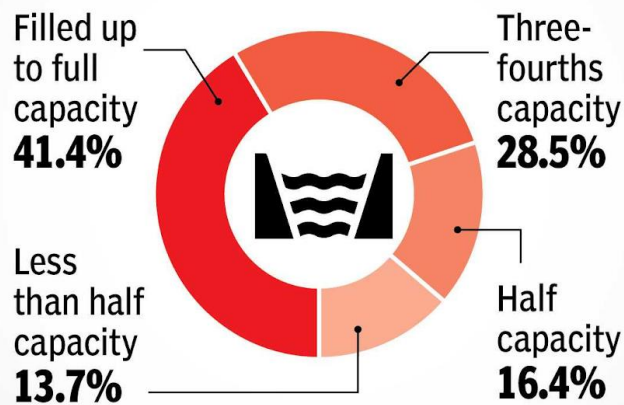
local bodies and other government agencies accounting for the rest. The lion's share of privately owned water bodies are held by individuals.



### Most Water Bodies Never At Full Capacity

A majority of water bodies are not at full capacity. Almost 59% are less than three-fourths full and about 7% had negligible amounts of water. The survey also found that most water bodies have not been at full capacity at any point in the last five years — about 48% were reported as filled up every year.

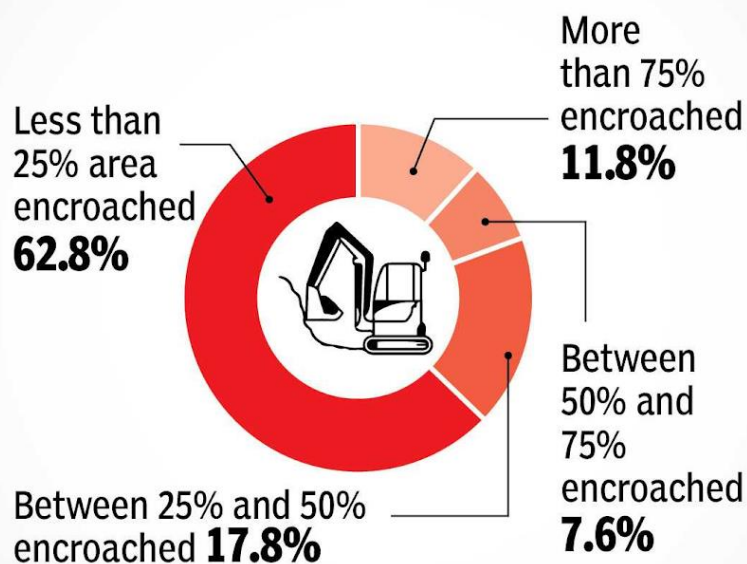
## STATUS OF WATER STORAGE



### Close To 40,000 Water Bodies Encroached

The report found that 38,496 water bodies have been illegally encroached upon for human activities like farming and construction. At 95.4%, nearly all the encroached water bodies are in rural areas. Ponds are the most frequently encroached upon water bodies, making up 67.6% of the total, followed by tanks (21%).

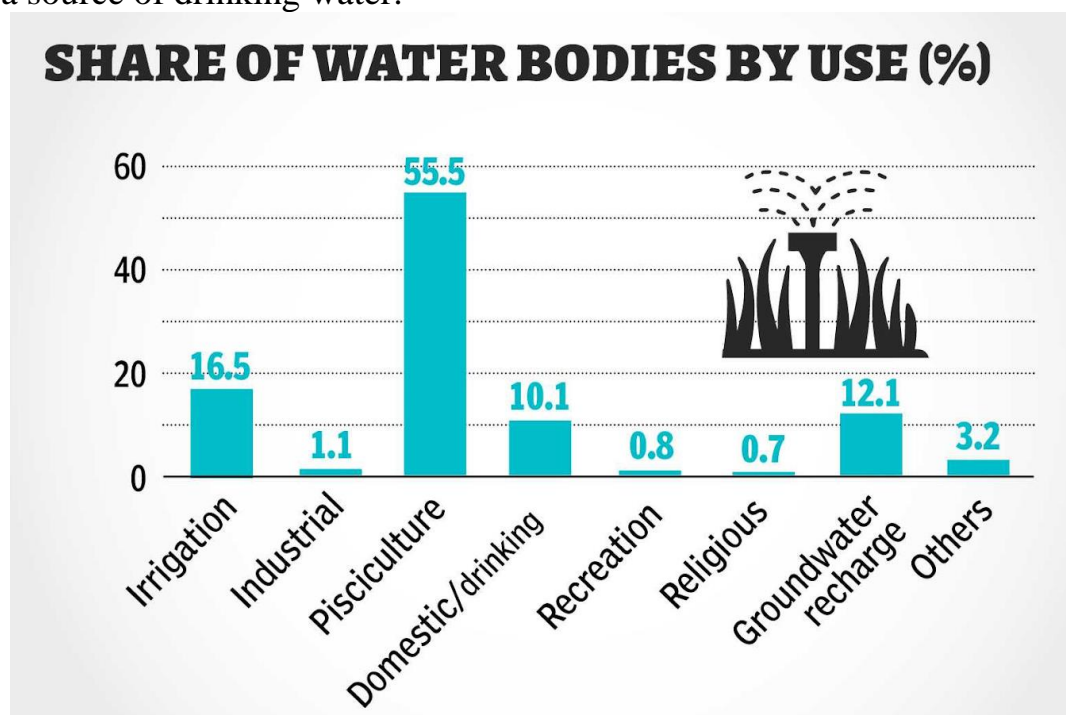
## EXTENT OF ENCROACHMENT



Note: All figures rounded to first decimal place. Source: Water Bodies First Census Report, Ministry of Jal Shakti

## About 4 Lakh Water Bodies Not In Use

At 20.3 lakh or 83.7%, most water bodies in India are in use. But the remaining 4 lakh or 16.3% water bodies are not usable due to low water levels, pollution, encroachment, or excess salinity. The most common use is for pisciculture, followed by irrigation and groundwater recharge. Only 1 in 10 water bodies acts as a source of drinking water.



About 9 in 10 in-use water bodies serve up to 100 people each and just 1.7% are large enough to meet the needs of 50,000 people or more. About 89% of water bodies are used by a single village or town.

<https://epaper.timesgroup.com/timespecial/governance-infrastructure/over-24l-water-bodies-but-1-out-of-6-can-t-be-used/1682531648357>

### 11. Rural employment under MNREGA declines sharply in FY23, govt calls it sign of low economic distress ([cnbctv18.com](https://www.cnbctv18.com)) Apr 26, 2023

The number of households that availed full 100 days of employment has fallen sharply in FY23. Government officials told CNBC-TV18, the lower the employment numbers under MNREGA, the better it is for the rural economy.

The average employment days per household under MNREGA slipped to a five-year low of 47.84 in the financial year 2022-2023. This compares to the average of 50.88 days in FY19, shows data released by the government on April 26.

Government officials explained to CNBC-TV18, the lower the employment numbers under MNREGA, the better it is for the rural economy. As MNREGA is a job provider of the last resort, a consistently high job data under the scheme doesn't augur well and is generally read as a sign of economic distress.

They added that households availing full 100 days of MNREGA are the ones that are in abject poverty. This number declining steadily is a good sign and by the same logic, the average days of employment under the scheme is also off sharply.

MNREGA scheme is aimed at enhancing livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

The multi-year low rural employment under MNREGA is based on various government parameters that assess the scheme on a real time basis.

For instance, total households employed under MNREGA have progressively declined from a high of 7.55 crore in FY21, the first year of the pandemic and nationwide lockdown to 6.19 crore households in the financial year ended.

Similarly, the number of individuals working under the job guarantee scheme has also come down from the COVID-19 pandemic years. In FY23, 8.76 crore individuals worked under the scheme as against over 11 crore workers in FY21, the highest for any given year. This is a 21 percent decline over two financial years, FY21 and FY22.

Also, a total of 36 lakh households availed 100 days' work under MNREGA in FY23, 30 percent lower than 56 lakh the previous fiscal, and 50 percent lower than nearly 72 lakh in FY21. On this particular parameter, MNREGA numbers have been witnessing a steady decline, even from the pre-pandemic years.

However, FY23 MNREGA employment data — both, the number of households as well as individuals with guaranteed jobs — is higher than in the years prior to the pandemic like FY15, FY16, FY17, FY18, FY19 etc. <https://www.cnbctv18.com/economy/rural-employment-under-mnrega->



[declines-sharply-in-fy23-govt-calls-it-sign-of-low-economic-distress-16504271.htm](#)

**12. G20 Summit: India stresses on information sharing to check tax evasion, illicit funds flow ([moneycontrol.com](#)) 27 April 2023**

Achieving a greater transparency in taxation is high on agenda at the G20 summit as tax evasion and other illicit financial flows pose considerable challenges and these, according to a top finance ministry official, can be checked with exchange of information.

“Without exchange of information, it is difficult to put a stop to tax evasion and illicit flow of funds... We will deliberate on illicit financial flows across countries at the fourth high-level meeting of the Asia Initiative of the Global Forum,” Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra said on Thursday.

India, as the co-chair of the Asia Initiative of the Global Forum on transparency and exchange of information for tax purposes, is hosting the fourth high-level meet on April 27 and 28 in New Delhi. Indonesia is the other co-chair of the Asia Initiative.

Seventeen Asian jurisdictions are members of the Asia Initiative. The meeting will deliberate upon major issues and challenges concerning exchange of information and tax transparency, particularly in the context of the Asian region, to arrive at effective solutions and chart the way forward.

The Global Forum is working on the implementation of international standards on tax transparency and exchange of information around the world. Globally, 167 jurisdictions are members of the Forum, including all G20 countries.

“India’s active engagement with the Global Forum helps in the fight against offshore tax evasion and tax avoidance,” the finance ministry said in a statement.

The Global Forum decided to launch a regional initiative for Asian members towards the end of 2021 to enhance tax cooperation and to fight illicit financial flows to sustain recovery and mobilise domestic resources. The Asia Initiative aims at promoting the regional dynamics and the tax transparency agenda to achieve the full potential of exchange of information for the region, it said.  
<https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/economy/g20-summit-india->

[stresses-on-information-sharing-to-check-tax-evasion-illicit-funds-flow-10486841.html](#)

### **13. Numbers game. India's population growth: Boon or bane?** ([thehindubusinessline.com](#)) 26 April 2023

The spectre of the population bomb, as narrated in Paul and Anne Ehrlich's 1968 book, *The Population Bomb*, haunted and mobilised many policies and behaviours that shaped the world. But the world no longer buys that kind of neo-Malthusian theory that a large population could lead to a humanitarian and ecological disaster.

In contrast, the recent State of World Population (SOWP) report of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is titled "8 Billion Lives, Infinite Possibilities," and Andrea Wojnar, the Representative UNFPA India, has described "India's 1.4 billion people as 1.4 billion opportunities."

As India is set to overtake China as the world's most populous country sometime in mid-2023, should we be worried? It can't be explained in a clearly binary way — a boon or a bane, though. Instead, it's a mixture of them — a combination of opportunities and responsibilities. To explore the impact of such a "paradigm shift," one must first gain some insight into the underlying dynamics of the Indian population.

The average number of children a female would have over her lifetime, or total fertility rate (TFR), is a key indicator of population growth. A TFR value of 2.1 is widely perceived as the replacement rate; at this rate, each generation will precisely replace itself, and the population will essentially remain constant. India's fertility rate has significantly decreased over the years, dropping from 5.7 in 1950 to 2.139 in the present.

However, because a sizeable section of the population is in reproductive age, it's predicted that India's population will increase gradually to 1.7 billion by 2064 before falling sharply after that. Such a prediction is obviously heavily model-dependent.

#### **Young population**

The median age of India's population is 28.2 years. An average Indian is 10 years younger than the average Chinese, whose median age is 39 years, and also an average North American, whose median age is 38.4. India's growth story may be becoming more and more entwined with its young population because more than

two-thirds of its population is of working age. The young Indians might also serve as the largest consumer and labour source in the knowledge and network goods economy.

As one might expect that the “most populous” status might even strengthen India’s claim of getting a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, the challenges concerning such a huge population are also pertinent. India’s labour force participation rate, which measures the proportion of the country’s working-age population that is employed or actively seeking employment, is merely 40 per cent. The unemployment rate has hovered around 7-8 per cent recently, leading to a shrinking workforce.

The dependency ratio, i.e., the ratio of children plus the elderly (who are economically non-productive) to those who are productive, has declined drastically over the past decades. The current proportion of people 65 and older in India is 7 per cent, compared to 14 per cent in China.

#### Rising elderly population

The huge proportion of youths would grow older over time, and the structure of India’s Population Pyramid would change — its centre of gravity would shift upwards as the proportion of elderly people would significantly increase in 20 to 30 years.

Despite having fewer children, dependency ratio would rise, placing pressure on the economy.

India launched a family planning programme as early as 1952 and laid out a national population policy in 1976. In response to the Malthusian hysteria of the 1960s, China and India both had to rein in population growth. However, India’s democracy provided a tick: the fallout from *nasbandi* during the 1975 Emergency period quickly made people realise that any pressure on family planning would be “counter-productive.”

China’s one-child policy, put in place by Deng Xiaoping in 1981, undoubtedly assisted them in controlling population growth, but they are currently having trouble boosting it.

The gross population figure is insufficient, though. Understanding the nature of population increases across various socio-economic categories, religions, and geographic regions is necessary for effective planning. Different experts have

noted that while the urban, affluent population is responsible for the increase in income, the majority of India's population growth originates in rural, underdeveloped areas along the Ganges basin.

Large populations frequently show greater disparity. And according to Wojnar, “[e]nsuring gender equality, empowerment and advancing greater bodily autonomy for women and girls — is one of the key determinants of a sustainable future.”

#### North vs South

India's demographic dividend, importantly, has two peaks since fertility rates have declined unevenly in the country's northern and southern States. A number of northern States have TFRs that are significantly greater than those of a number of southern States. As a result, certain northern States are experiencing a substantially faster population increase than southern States. Over the following two decades, the North would continue to be strikingly young as the South rapidly grew older.

Paul Ehlrich's visit to Delhi in 1966 forms the opening of his book: “People eating, people washing, people sleeping. People visiting, arguing, and screaming. People thrust their hands through the taxi window, begging. People defecating and urinating. People clinging to buses. People herding animals. People, people, people, people... [S]ince that night, I've known the feel of overpopulation.”

Well, Delhi's 1966 population was fewer than 3 million, which was significantly smaller than that of Paris (8 million) or London (7.8 million). However, Paris in 1966 was portrayed as a picture of sophistication and elegance, and London's defining characteristic was an absence of overall form. Clearly, lifestyle and life quality are crucial. Perception matters.

Again, and importantly, India's gradual ascent to overtake China as the world's most populous country didn't occur overnight. The majority of population benefits are already being reaped, and many issues related to the growing population are already being addressed.

To handle other important issues, policymakers must examine the entire demographic picture pixel-by-pixel. But in any case, that's a daunting task.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/indias-population-growth-boon-or-bane/article66782272.ece>

#### **14. A must-have for India: Horizontal industrial policy** ([newindianexpress.com](https://www.newindianexpress.com)) Santosh Mehrotra | 27 April 2023

No country in the world has managed to reduce poverty consistently or sustain GDP growth without a strong manufacturing base. Between 1979–2014, manufacturing remained at 16–18% of India's Gross Value Added (GVA). Since 2015, it has declined and reached 13% by 2019, the lowest ever since 1960. By contrast, in Bangladesh, it rose from 15% till 2006 to 21% in 2021. In Vietnam, it increased to 25% of GVA in 2021 from 17% till 2010. These countries have also attracted a significant share of FDI, except China, which vacates billions of dollars worth of manufactured exports.

In India, manufacturing employment has not grown—the exact opposite of what is needed in a labour-surplus economy with 30 million unemployed pre-Covid (and nearing 40 mn now). Five to six million are added to the labour force annually (and twice that number to the working-age population). Meanwhile, employment in manufacturing as a share of total work rose from 10.5% in 2004–05 to 12.8% in 2011–12 and fell to 11.6% or less between 2019–22. This is despite 'Make in India' and the Performance Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI).

India had never had an explicit industrial policy or manufacturing strategy since 1991, although the Industrial Policy Statement (1991), when economic reforms began, did articulate what today can only be called an implicit industrial policy. It relied on (a) liberalisation of the domestic economy and deregulation of sectors, including a reduction in sectors reserved for the public sector; (b) opening up to a reduced tariff regime and a new focus on export orientation; (c) de-licensing of industrial capacity in existing or new industries.

However, there was little by way of explicit measures to ensure that India's manufacturing capacity was strengthened. It was only in 2011 that the government came up with a National Manufacturing Policy, followed by an Electronics System Design and Manufacturing Policy in 2012, along with a newfound emphasis on industrial policy in the 12th Five Year Plan chapter on industry (to which I had the good fortune of contributing as the director general of the Planning Commission's research institute). Unfortunately, that government went into policy paralysis in its last two years.

'Make in India' was not really an industrial policy at all, as it only emphasised on doing business and attracting FDI. The actual results in the last eight years have

been the falling share of manufacturing in GDP as well as of manufacturing employment in total employment.

The only other initiative in manufacturing has been PLI, which has many issues. First, it is based on a conceptually flawed approach to industrial policy of picking winning firms (rather than sectors). This is the opposite of the successful approach adopted in East Asia, which did not select winning firms but adopted a combination of a horizontal, cross-sectoral industrial policy and a focus on some key sectors.

The second problem with PLI is the choice of sectors. Eleven of 14 sectors selected to receive financial subsidies are capital-intensive. India is in desperate need of more industrial jobs of good quality; hardly any jobs will result from PLI, except for a few thousand highly skilled ones. The country is desperate for more low and semi-skilled jobs where people can be employed in more labour-intensive sectors.

Third, giving the bureaucracy a role in picking winners harks back to Licence Raj; we know how well that went. It encouraged rent-seeking on a grand scale.

Fourth, there is a significant fiscal cost of PLI: ₹1.5 trillion over five years (between 2021–22 and 2024–25); this is when the fiscal deficit is at a historic high, and the debt to GDP ratio has increased in the Covid years from 60% to 85%. Besides, funds are needed for human capital (technical and vocational education, higher education, R&D), apart from an investment in hard infrastructure.

Fifth, there is a risk: on the completion of five years of subsidy, the beneficiary industries will demand an extension of benefits beyond five years, a demand that the Indian industry was used to making during the Licence Raj. A sunset clause is needed.

Finally, in PLI, there is no expectation that winning firms are expected to export when expanding capacity, an essential prerequisite in East Asia.

By contrast, in India, the labour-intensive manufacturing sectors like food processing, tobacco, textiles, apparel, leather, wood and furniture have declined since 2012. The tobacco and textiles sub-sectors within manufacturing have seen a fall in their share of total manufacturing employment in India (though total jobs grew slightly).



Nearly every successful economic growth take-off in post-war history in East Asia was associated with rapid expansion in apparel exports in the early stages. The ratio of jobs to investment is as follows: in apparel, 31.1, in autos only 2.6, and steel, 1.0 (based on the Annual Survey of Industries, 2013–14). India could take a part of the market share that China is losing in international markets due to rising Chinese wages. But India is losing to Bangladesh, Vietnam, Myanmar, and Ethiopia.

However, the government is focused exclusively on selecting winning firms in certain sectors through the Performance Linked Incentive Scheme. This has added to some exports of mobiles. But that does not amount to a broad industrial policy, just as Make in India has, far from increasing manufacturing contribution to GDP or employment, only managed to reduce it. <https://www.newindianexpress.com/opinions/2023/apr/27/a-must-have-for-india-horizontal-industrial-policy-2569689.html>

**15. Govt releases Rs 2,874 crore to PLI beneficiaries so far: Official ([moneycontrol.com](https://www.moneycontrol.com)) 27 April 2023**

The government has released Rs 2,874.71 crore to the beneficiaries of the production-linked incentive scheme till March, with a majority of companies from eight sectors like electronics, telecom, pharma and food processing, a senior official said on Wednesday.

Additional Secretary in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Rajeev Singh Thakur said these eight sectors are doing well, while few need to increase their pace.

The scheme was announced in 2020 for 14 sectors with an outlay of Rs 1.97 lakh crore to enhance domestic manufacturing capabilities and boost exports.

He said that incentive claims of over Rs 3,420.05 crore have been received under the scheme for eight sectors - large-scale electronics manufacturing; electronics and technology products; bulk drugs; medical devices; pharmaceuticals; telecom and networking products; food items; and drones, of which "over Rs 2,800 crore have already been disbursed".

"The next two-three years will be crucial and we hope that things will move with a fast pace," Singh told reporters here.

Till December 2022, 717 applications have been approved in 14 sectors with expected investments of Rs 2.74 lakh crore.

Actual investment of Rs 53,500 crore has been realised, which has resulted in incremental production/sales of over Rs 5 lakh crore and employment generation of over 3 lakhs, he added.

A maximum of Rs 1,649 was disbursed in the electronics sector. It was followed by pharma (Rs 652 crore), food products (Rs 486 crore), telecom (Rs 35 crore), drones (Rs 30 crore), medical devices (12.8 crore), and electronics (Rs 5.3 crore) and bulk drugs (Rs 4.34 crore).

The other sectors where the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme has been extended include white goods, speciality steel, advanced chemistry cells, auto components and textiles.

When asked about plans to include more sectors under the scheme, he said that demands are coming from different industries but no decision has been taken yet.

"We expect that in the next 2-3 years, things will move at a healthy rate," he added.  
<https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/economy/govt-releases-rs-2874-crore-to-pli-beneficiaries-so-far-official-10480681.html>

#### **16. Under fire, Kerala government goes for probe into AI project** ([newindianexpress.com](https://www.newindianexpress.com)) 27 April 2023

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: In the wake of a belligerent Opposition stepping up attack, the state government has ordered a probe by the principal secretary (industries) into Keltron's role in the traffic surveillance camera project. The PSU is accused of outsourcing the Rs 232-crore project to a private company against the rules.

Announcing the probe, Industries Minister P Rajeev on Wednesday claimed the "well-intended" project was executed in a fair and transparent manner.

He also said Keltron has been asked to share the project's documents with the Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau (VACB), which is already probing corruption allegations against former joint transport commissioner Rajeev Puthalath and the Safe Kerala Project, under which the Motor Vehicles Department installed the AI-powered cameras. The government had in March permitted VACB

to conduct a preliminary enquiry into the allegations raised by a Karunagappally-based NGO.

Leader of Opposition V D Satheesan wondered why the government kept the VACB probe a secret.

“News of it emerged only after we wrote to the CM seeking documents related to AI cameras. If a probe was on, why did the cabinet approve the project without mentioning it in the cabinet note?” he asked. He warned of a strike if the government failed to order a proper investigation. As per the tender, subcontracting is not permitted for critical aspects like data security and management, but was done in this case, he alleged.

Oppn creating a smokescreen over deal, says minister Rajeeve

“The tender required bidders to possess technical and financial capabilities, and provide a five-year warranty for the entire system, including control rooms and infrastructure. But SRIT, the firm awarded the tender, is not qualified, and collaborated with companies like Troyes and Mediatronix to finish the project,” Satheesan said.

However, P Rajeeve accused the Opposition of creating a smokescreen. He said all the documents of the project, including tender call, pre-quote conditions, tender allotment, relevant government orders (GOs), and MVD’s directions to Keltron, will be made public.

On subcontracting, Rajeeve said it was allowed as per the tender document and GO, and did not require cabinet’s clearance. “The sub-contractor was not assigned any duty that would affect data privacy,” he said. Accusing the Opposition of falsely claiming that the new cameras cost `33 crore, Rajeeve said, “The actual cost is about `9 lakh per camera, which is reasonable considering its features. Not just AI, the camera has 11-12 components in total. Three of the components were developed by Keltron.”

He said the project cost involves maintenance expenses and total facility management service for five years. “A state control room has been set up with computers, servers and 500 laptops. Twelve district-level control rooms were set up, . The total facility management service cost includes the salary of 146 control room staff, and covers expenses for sending SMS alerts to offenders, taking print-outs of visuals of offences and sending them to offenders by post,” he said.  
<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/kerala/2023/apr/27/under-fire-kerala-government-goes-for-probe-into-ai-project-2569829.html>