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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

The Hindu & The Indian express

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Industrial output growth slows to 4% in August

Country's IIP growth gets pulled down by consumer-related sectors; primary goods sector sees a turnaround with seven-month-high of 5.2%; experts say no effect of GST reforms that came in later

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Growth in industrial activity in India slowed to 4% in August from its six-month high growth of 4.3% in July. Growth was dragged down by the consumer durables and non-durables sectors, as well as slower growth in manufacturing, capital goods, and infrastructure sectors, government data showed.

On the other hand, mining activity, the primary goods sector, and electricity output saw a positive turnaround.

Data on the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on Monday, showed that growth in the index this August was

Slowing growth

The year-on-year change (in %) in the Index of Industrial Production. The index saw 0% growth in August last year



SOURCE: CENTRE FOR MONITORING INDIAN ECONOMY

considerably faster than the 0% seen in August last year.

"This data should be read with caution as it captures neither the tariff nor GST effect which have been in the news and affected sentiment in business," Madan Sabnavis, chief economist at the Bank of Baroda, said. "Tariffs were implemented

from August 27 while GST benefits kicked in late September."

The mining and quarrying sector in particular saw a significant turnaround. It grew 6% in August, a 14-month high, snapping a four-month streak of contractions.

The second sector to see a robust turnaround was the primary goods sector,

which saw growth coming in at a seven-month high of 5.2%. The electricity sector grew at a five-month high of 4.1%.

The manufacturing sector, however, slowed to 3.8% in August, down from 6% in July. This was quicker than the 1.2% growth the sector saw in August last year. Similarly, growth in the capital goods sector slowed in August to 4.4% from 6.7% in July. This was, however, quicker than the 0% seen in August last year.

The growth in the consumer durables sector slowed to 3.5% in August from 7.3% in July and 5.4% in August last year. The consumer non-durables sector saw activity contracting 6.3%, the worst performance in eight months.

Industrial output growth slows to 4% in August

Source: The Hindu | Page 1

Context:

- Industrial growth slowed to 4% in Aug 2025 (from 4.3% in July).
- Dragged by consumer durables, non-durables, manufacturing, capital goods, infrastructure.
- Mining, primary goods, electricity showed improvement.
- Experts: slowdown not linked to GST reforms and tariffs.

Index of Industrial Production (IIP)

- **What:** Measures industrial output in mining, manufacturing, electricity.
- **Released by:** National Statistical Office (NSO), MoSPI.
- **Frequency:** Monthly (6 weeks lag).
- **Current base year:** 2011-12.
- **New proposed base year:** 2022-23 (data from 2026-27).

8 Core Industries

- **Share in IIP:** 40.27%.
- **Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement, Electricity.**
- **Subset of IIP, represent key backbone industries.**
- **Released by** OEA, DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce & Industry.



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Base Year Updates (Important)

- IIP: 2011-12 -> 2022-23 (from 2026-27).
- GDP: 2011-12 -> 2022-23 (from 2026).
- CPI: 2012 -> 2024 (from 2026, based on HCES 2023-24).

Two railway links to offer easy connectivity to Bhutan

Kokrajhar-Gelephu and Banarhat-Samtse lines will run to a total distance of 89 km; they will be developed at a cost of ₹4,033 crore; Railway Minister says project will boost economy, tourism

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Monday announced two rail links with a total distance of 89 km between India and Bhutan – Kokrajhar-Gelephu (Assam) and Banarhat-Samtse (West Bengal) – at a cost of ₹4,033 crore.

These two projects are part of the first set of rail connectivity projects between India and Bhutan, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri announced at a press conference.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) for these projects was signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bhutan in March 2024 and a formal agreement was signed here on the occasion of the Bhutanese Foreign Secretary's visit to New Delhi.

"India is the largest trading partner of Bhutan. Most of the EXIM trade of Bhutan is through Indian ports, therefore, it becomes very important to have seamless rail connectivity for the Bhutanese economy to grow, and for the Bhutanese people to have better access to the



Strategic link: Railway Board CEO Satish Kumar, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishaw, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, and MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal announcing the Bhutan rail link on Monday. ANI

global network," Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said.

For Vande Bharat trains
The Minister said the two rail links would provide Bhutan access to 1,50,000 km of the Indian railway network. While the Kokrajhar-Gelephu rail link would be developed over the next four years, the Banarhat-Samtse line would be constructed over a period of three years. The railway lines would be designed for running Vande Bharat trains. The former will have six stations, two

viaducts, 29 major bridges, 65 minor bridges, two good sheds, one flyover and 39 underpasses. The latter will include two stations, one major flyover, 24 minor flyovers, and 37 underpasses. It will be developed at a cost of ₹577 crore.

"This will provide a lot of economic benefits to the people, in terms of tourism, industrial growth, people-to-people movement, and goods movement. Practically, every benefit that railway brings will happen with this," Mr. Vaishnav added.

The Government of India has pledged ₹10,000 crore in development assistance to Bhutan for its 13th Five-Year Plan running from 2024 to 2029. This funding doubles the support provided during the 12th Plan.

Bhutan is also set to benefit from the Jogighopha Inland Waterways Transport Terminal, opened in February. The two nations have also collaborated on five major hydropower projects – Chukha, Tala, Mangdechhu, Kurichhu, and the recently completed Punatsangchhu II.

Two railway links to offer easy connectivity to Bhutan

Source: The Hindu | Page No : 12

Topic: International Relations

Context

- India and Bhutan signed MoUs for two new railway links:
- Kokrajhar-Gelephu (Assam to Bhutan)
- Banarhat-Samtse (West Bengal to Bhutan)
- Combined length: 89 km, cost: ₹4,033 crore.
- Projects aim to improve trade, tourism, and people-to-people ties.
- India is Bhutan's largest trading partner; most Bhutanese EXIM trade passes through Indian ports.

India-Bhutan Relationship

1. Historical & Strategic Ties

- Friendship Treaty, 1949 -> updated in 2007 to give Bhutan more sovereignty.
- Bhutan is vital for India's Himalayan security and neighborhood first policy.



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2. Economic & Development Cooperation

- India is Bhutan's largest trading partner.
- ₹10,000 crore pledged by India under Bhutan's 13th Five-Year Plan (2024-29).
- Hydropower cooperation: Chukha, Tala, Kurichhu, Mangdechhu, Punatsangchhu-II.
- Connectivity projects: railways, waterways (Jogighopa terminal), highways.

3. People-to-People & Cultural Linkages

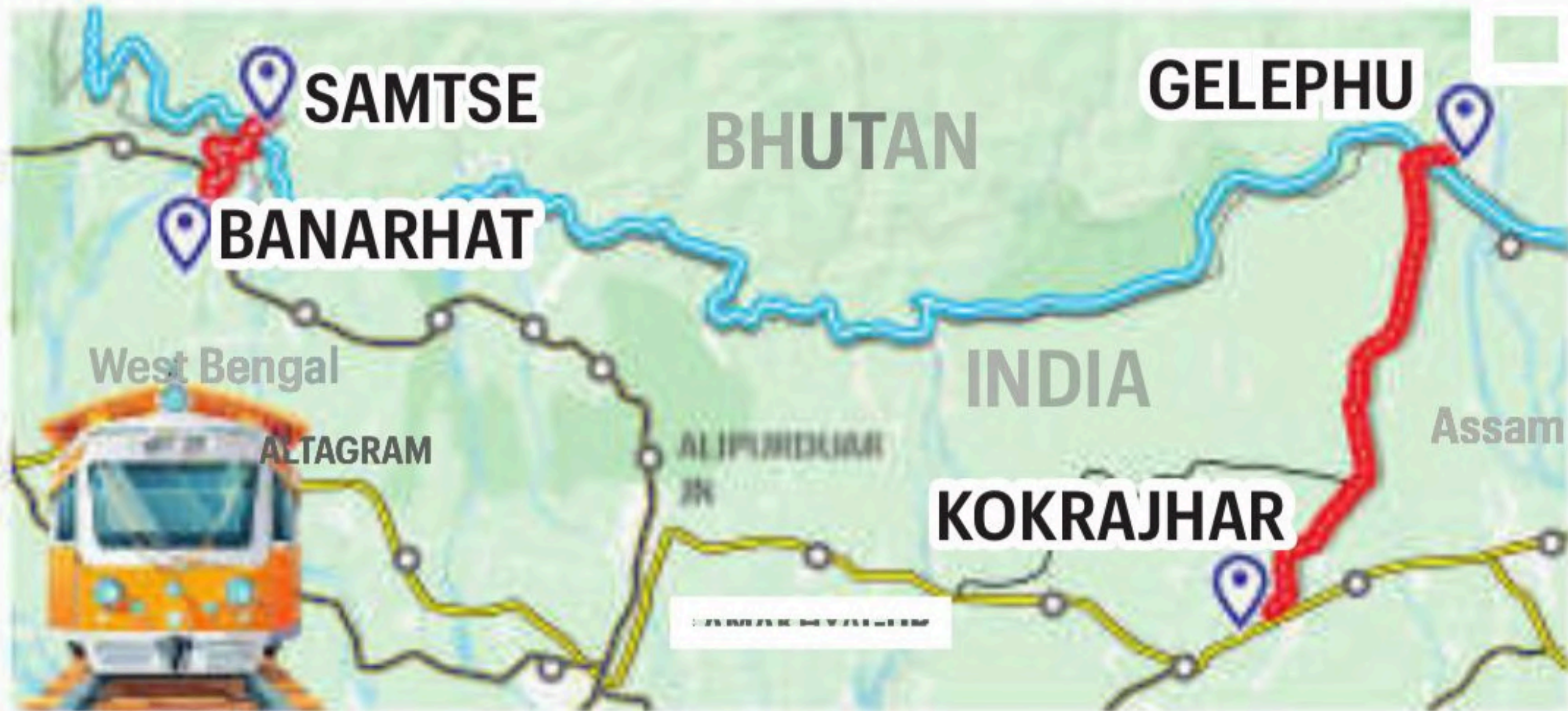
- Shared Buddhist heritage.
- Open border -> free movement of people.

4. Strategic Importance

- Bhutan acts as a buffer between India and China.
- Cooperation ensures regional stability and counters China's influence.



THE TWO NEW RAIL LINES



Suriname pledges to protect 90% of forests

Associated Press

Suriname's government has pledged to permanently protect 90% of its tropical forests, a move conservationists say is among the most ambitious commitments to climate and biodiversity ever made by an Amazonian nation.

The announcement came during Climate Week in New York City. Foreign Minister Melvin W.J. Bouva delivered the pledge on behalf of President Jennifer Geerlings-Simons, who took office two months ago.

Some 93% of Suriname is already heavily forested. Scientists also say Suriname is one of only three countries worldwide that absorb more carbon dioxide than it emits.

"We understand and accept the immense responsibility of stewarding over 15 million hectares of tropical rainforest in a world that is seeing her forests fall day in and day out," Geerlings-Simons said in remarks released by her office.

The pledge far surpasses the "30x30" global target – a UN-backed goal for countries to protect 30% of land and oceans by 2030. It comes weeks before COP30, the UN climate summit that will be hosted in Belem, Brazil, at the heart of the Amazon rainforest.

Suriname's government says it will update conservation laws by the end of the year to create stronger protections for its forests. The new framework could also recognize the ancestral lands of Indigenous and Maroon peoples, descendants of enslaved Africans who escaped into the rainforest, and aims to

93% of Suriname is already heavily forested. Scientists also say Suriname is one of only three countries worldwide that absorb more carbon dioxide than it emits

expand opportunities in ecotourism and the growing carbon credit market. A coalition of environmental donors has committed \$20 million to help finance the effort and support local jobs tied to forest protection.

"This sets a new standard for the Amazonian region as a whole, which has suffered from serious deforestation in recent decades," said Russell Mittermeier, chief conservation officer at Rewild, a global conservation nonprofit.

Suriname's rainforests harbour jaguars, giant river otters, tapirs, and more than 700 bird species, as well as the striking blue poison dart frog. Advocates say keeping such ecosystems intact is vital not only for local communities but also for stabilizing the global climate.

Hugo Jabini, a lawyer from Suriname's Saramaka Maroon community and a 2009 Goldman Environmental Prize winner, said the pledge will mean little unless the government addresses long-standing Indigenous and tribal land rights.

"Suriname is the only country in the Western Hemisphere where Indigenous and tribal land rights are not legally recognised," he told The Associated Press. "Without recognition, the very people who depend on the forest – and who are best placed to protect it – cannot truly safeguard it."

He warned that illegal mining, logging, and roadbuilding already threaten communities despite international court rulings ordering Suriname to halt concessions. Protecting 90% of the forest, he added, will require international support to create sustainable alternatives to extraction.



Suriname pledges to protect 90% of forests

Source: The Hindu | Science Page

Context

- Suriname's government pledged to permanently protect 90% of its tropical forests.
- Announcement made at Climate Week, New York City.
- This is considered one of the strongest climate and biodiversity commitments by an Amazonian country.

Context

- 93% of Suriname is already forested.
- Suriname is one of only three countries that absorb more CO2 than they emit.
- The pledge exceeds the UN's "30x30" global target (protecting 30% of land and oceans by 2030).

UN "30x30 Global Target"

- Part of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (2022, CBD COP15).
- Goal: Protect 30% of world's land and ocean areas by 2030.
- Aim: Prevent biodiversity loss, restore ecosystems, ensure sustainable use.
- Currently, only ~17% of land and ~8% of oceans are under protection.

An anti-terror role that defies logic

From harbouring Osama bin Laden in a house that was just a stone's throw away from its own military academy, to training and backing groups such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), Pakistan's role in fuelling cross-border terrorism is no longer an allegation. It is a matter of record. The 2008 Mumbai attacks, the 2019 Pulwama bombing and the attack on tourists in Pahalgam on April 22, 2025, are events that bear the unmistakable marks of a terror infrastructure being nurtured across the border. In response to the Pahalgam attack, India launched Operation Sindoor, striking at the roots of this terror network along the Line of Control. Pakistan faces growing accusations not only from India but also from Afghanistan to Balochistan – of fostering regional instability, crushing dissent and deepening unrest.

Just a few days ago, India delivered a sharp rebuttal to Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's speech at the United Nations General Assembly. Therefore, when a nation long accused of harbouring terrorists is given the reins of global counter-terrorism efforts – despite clear evidence of its terror links – the world should pause and ask questions.

In June this year, in a decision that sparked disbelief, Pakistan was to lead two critical United Nations bodies: the Taliban Sanctions Committee of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and as the vice-chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the 15-nation UN body. This development also came at a time when Pakistan's credibility on counter-terrorism was under scrutiny. On July 1, Pakistan also officially assumed the Presidency of the UNSC for the month of July.

In the past, the UN's decisions to make Libya as the chair of the UN Human Rights Commission and Saudi Arabia as the chair of UN Women's Rights Commission have come under scrutiny. In May 2025, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a \$1 billion loan to Pakistan, despite concerns over its potential misuse for terror financing. These developments expose significant loopholes in the UN's foreign policy and raise questions about the UN's commitment to combating global terrorism.

Terror shelter

The Pahalgam attack highlighted Pakistan's continuing role as a haven for terror groups. Hafiz Saeed, a UN-designated terrorist, has made several public appearances in recent years despite serving a sentence for terror financing. He has often been seen at terror launchpads in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK) but is "in custody" on paper. The presence of Pakistani



Gauri Mishra

is a highly decorated naval officer with a career of around two decades in the Indian Navy, from where she retired as Commander. She is also a motivational speaker, author, skydiver and an international track cyclist representing India

The world should pause and ask why Pakistan, a nation with evidence of terror links, has been allowed to oversee global counter-terrorism efforts at the United Nations

Army personnel, the Pakistani police and members of civil bureaucracy at the funeral procession of terrorists killed in Operation Sindoor, further indicates Pakistan's open support for terrorist organisations.

The inclusion of Pakistan in the UN's counter terrorism mechanisms exposes troubling gaps and issues with the global body's moral and strategic compass.

First, Pakistan's long-standing support for terror groups such as the LeT and JeM, directly contradicts the objectives of the Counter-Terrorism Committee. There is adequate evidence linking Pakistan's military and Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to logistical and tactical support for terror modules. Yet, the UN prioritised geopolitical considerations over moral and security imperatives.

Second, the UN's selection process for committee leadership lacks stringent vetting for a country's compliance with counter-terrorism standards. Pakistan's removal from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list in October 2022, despite ongoing concerns about terror financing, exemplifies this leniency.

Third, the decision also reflects a broader trend of geopolitical manoeuvring within the UN, where powerful nations support Pakistan's elevation to secure economic or strategic interests. This bias compromises the UN's impartiality and risks legitimising Pakistan's duplicitous stance on terrorism.

Fourth, by rewarding duplicity with leadership, the UN sends a dangerous message: state-sponsored terror can be overlooked if packaged diplomatically.

The IMF loan to Pakistan – part of a \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility – fuelled controversy despite India abstaining from the vote. The risk of funds being misused for terror activities was cited. However, the timing of the loan, just weeks after the Pahalgam attack raised ethical questions on the UN's commitment to combat global terrorism.

The UN's dangerous gamble

In May this year, the Pakistan government announced a compensation of ₹14 crore to the families of terrorists, including relatives of JeM chief Masood Azhar, who were killed in Indian strikes. When a nation equates terrorists with martyrs, one does not need to imagine its commitment to peace.

The UN's decision to entrust Pakistan with key counter-terrorism roles, despite its explicit ties to terrorism, casts a shadow over UN's integrity and suggests a troubling disconnect between the UN's stated goals and its actions.

Such moves will only help Pakistan legitimise

its narrative and project itself as a responsible global actor in counter-terrorism. It will also undermine India's efforts to portray Pakistan as a state sponsor of terrorism. Pakistan could shape narratives around regional stability, potentially deflecting blame for regional terrorism on India, particularly in the context of Balochistan.

Pakistan's role as vice-chair in the Counter Terrorism Committee allows it to influence global counter-terrorism policies. This may have serious repercussions for India's push to bring Pakistan-based terrorists under UN sanctions. Pakistan could also derail India's growing diplomatic ties with the Taliban.

Counter-measures by India

India's failure to block Pakistan's appointments, despite its outreach to most UNSC members following the Pahalgam attack, signals a diplomatic challenge.

In counter strategies, India must leverage its strategic alliances with other UNSC members to counterbalance Pakistan's influence.

That Pakistan is at the centre of attention at the White House also raises doubts on the U.S.'s commitment to combat terrorism for the sake of trade and business.

India should actively participate in discussions at crucial UN bodies to highlight Pakistan's history of harbouring terrorists. These committees are operated by consensus and India's growing global influence can limit Pakistan's ability to push biased agendas. It is essential that India and its allies monitor Pakistan's role and push for periodic performance reviews and stringent accountability.

India should aim to deepen its ties with the Taliban regime – humanitarian aid missions in Kabul is one possibility – to counter Pakistan's influence in the Taliban Sanctions Committee.

India must proactively pursue an international campaign that engages the global media, academia and diaspora, exposing Pakistan's terror links and pushing for more accountability.

Pakistan's enhanced diplomatic position is likely to encourage asymmetric warfare, infiltration and cyber-attacks. Therefore, India must strengthen its national security and intelligence networks.

The Indian government's silence on the appointments suggests a cautious approach, but proactive diplomacy will be crucial to maintain India's narrative on the global stage. The world must be alert because what begins as a seat at the table can turn into control over the agenda. The real danger is not about Pakistan at the high table. It is the world pretending that it does not matter.

An anti-terror role that defies logic

Source: The Hindu | Page No.: 6 | Section: Editorial

GS Paper 2: International Relations

Context

- Recently, Pakistan assumed the presidency of the UN Security Council (UNSC) for July and became Vice-Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) of the 15-nation UN body.
- This comes despite Pakistan's track record of harbouring and sponsoring terrorist groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), responsible for major attacks in India (Mumbai 2008, Pulwama 2019).
- The development raises questions on the UN's credibility and the global fight against terrorism.

Summary

1. Pakistan's Terror Links:

- Evidence of Pakistan hosting terror groups and ISI providing logistical and material support is well-established.
- Yet, Pakistan has been given leadership roles in global counter-terrorism frameworks.



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2. Global Politics & UN Weakness:

- Appointment reflects geopolitical compromises by major powers for securing economic or strategic support from Pakistan.
- Shows the UN's inability to act impartially and exposes its double standards on terrorism.

3. Financial & Strategic Angle:

- Pakistan has repeatedly escaped blacklisting by FATF despite global concerns.

4. Implications for India:

- India faces direct security threats from terror modules operating out of Pakistan.
- UN's move undermines India's long-standing efforts to highlight Pakistan's role in fostering terrorism.
- Limits India's ability to push for stricter accountability and global sanctions.

5. Way Forward for India:

- Should continue exposing Pakistan's duplicity at global forums.
- Deepen ties with like-minded countries to counter terrorism.
- Push for reforms in global institutions to strengthen transparency and accountability.



REPORT FOR 2023

29% jump in crimes against STs, Manipur tops list: NCRB data

**MAHENDER SINGH
MANRAL**

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 29

CRIMES AGAINST Scheduled Tribes (STs) increased 28.8 per cent in 2023 as compared to the previous year, with a total of 12,960 cases being registered across the country, up from 10,064 in 2022, according to the latest data released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

Manipur, which has been grappling with ethnic violence between the Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities since May 2023, emerged as the worst-affected state, accounting for 3,399 cases

against STs. It had just one case registered under this category in 2022, and no case in 2021. "In crime against STs, 260 cases of dacoity were reported in 2023 in Manipur, 1,051 cases of arson, 203 cases of intentional insult or intimidation with intent to humiliate, 193 cases of occupy/dispose of land belonging to STs," it said.

In comparison, crime against Scheduled Castes (SCs) showed a marginal increase of 0.4%, with a total of 57,789 cases being registered in 2023, from 57,582 cases

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

MORE REPORTS

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Mains Enrichment

NCRB Report 2023 - Crimes Against STs & SCs

- Total cases (2023): 12,960
- Total cases (2022): 10,064
- Increase: 28.8%
- Worst-affected state: Manipur - 3,399 cases
- Crimes against SCs (2023): 57,789 (vs 57,582 in 2022) -> 0.4% rise



Q1. Industrial Output Growth Slows to 4% Which organisation releases the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) in India?

- (a) RBI
- (b) NSO, MoSPI
- (c) NITI Aayog
- (d) DPIIT

Q2. India-Bhutan: New Railway Links The recently signed India-Bhutan railway projects connect Bhutan with which two Indian states?

- (a) Assam and West Bengal
- (b) Sikkim and Assam
- (c) Bihar and West Bengal
- (d) Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim

Q3. Suriname to Protect 90% Forests The "30x30 Global Target" adopted under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework aims to:

- (a) Protect 30% of land and oceans by 2030
- (b) Reduce 30% of CO₂ emissions by 2030
- (c) Restore 30% of degraded wetlands by 2030
- (d) Increase renewable energy share to 30% by 2030

Q4. Pakistan's UNSC Anti-Terror Role Which of the following is true about the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC)?

- (a) It is a subsidiary body of the UN General Assembly.
- (b) It was established in response to the 9/11 attacks.
- (c) India has never chaired the committee.
- (d) It works under the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

Q5. 29% Rise in Crimes Against STs According to NCRB 2023 data, which state reported the highest number of crimes against Scheduled Tribes?

- (a) Chhattisgarh
- (b) Jharkhand
- (c) Odisha
- (d) Manipur

1. (b)
2. (a)
3. (a)
4. (b)
5. (d)

