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UN wants Lebanon stability as UNIFIL mandate nears end

Agence France-Presse
BEIRUT

A visiting senior United Nations official on Wednesday reaffirmed the UN's commitment to stability in Lebanon as the mandate of its peacekeeping force in the country is set to expire.

Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix met officials as well as representatives of countries contributing to the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which counts some 7,500 personnel from nearly 50 countries.

"I thanked them for their critical support to UNIFIL and reiterated the UN's strong commitment



Jean-Pierre Lacroix

to supporting peace and stability in Lebanon," Mr. Lacroix said.

UNIFIL has served as a buffer between Israel and Lebanon since 1978.

Under U.S. pressure, the UN Security Council last year voted to end UNIFIL's mandate on December 31, 2026.

Match List I with List II and select the answer using the code given below the Lists :

<i>List I</i>	<i>List II</i>
<i>(UN Peacekeeping Operation)</i>	<i>(Period of Operation)</i>
A. UNMIL	1. 2007 – 2010
B. MINURCAT	2. 2002 – 2005
C. MINUSTAH	3. 2003 – 2018
D. UNMISSET	4. 2004 – 2017

Code :

	A	B	C	D
(a)	3	4	1	2
(b)	3	1	4	2
(c)	2	1	4	3
(d)	2	4	1	3

1. UNIFIL Mandate Nears End: Lebanon's Security and UN Peacekeeping

GS Paper: GS-2 – United Nations, International Relations, International Peace and Security

Context: The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) is scheduled to end its mandate on 31 December 2026, with withdrawal planned during 2027, raising concerns about security along the Israel–Lebanon border.

1. UNIFIL: Establishment and Mandate

1. **Established in 1978** under United Nations Security Council Resolutions 425 and 426, following Israel's invasion of Lebanon.
2. **Headquarters:** Naqoura, southern Lebanon.
3. **Objectives:** Verify Israel's withdrawal, restore international peace and security, and assist the Lebanese government in restoring its authority in southern Lebanon.
4. **Functions:** Monitor hostilities, report violations, patrol the Blue Line area, coordinate between Israeli and Lebanese forces, and support the deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces.
5. **Senior UN official:** Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations.

2. Israel–Lebanon Conflict: Key Concepts

1. **Hezbollah:** A Lebanon-based Shia political and armed organisation supported by Iran that has engaged in repeated conflicts with Israel.
2. **Blue Line:** Identified by the United Nations in 2000 to verify Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon. It is not an agreed international border.
3. **Litani River:** A major river in southern Lebanon. The area between the Blue Line and the Litani River is central to the security arrangements under Resolution 1701.

4. **United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 (2006):** Adopted after the Israel–Hezbollah conflict. It called for a cessation of hostilities, supported the deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces in southern Lebanon, and expanded UNIFIL's role.
5. **Important distinction:** UNIFIL is a peacekeeping and monitoring force; it does not have a specific mandate to disarm Hezbollah by force.

3. Why Is UNIFIL's Mandate Ending?

1. **Resolution 2790 (2025):** Adopted by the Security Council on 28 August 2025, extending UNIFIL's mandate for the final time until 31 December 2026.
2. **Withdrawal:** UNIFIL is to cease operations at the end of 2026, followed by an orderly withdrawal during 2027.
3. **Criticism:** The United States and Israel have questioned the mission's effectiveness in preventing Hezbollah's military activities in southern Lebanon.
4. **Major concern:** The withdrawal could weaken border monitoring unless credible security arrangements are established.

4. How Can a UN Peacekeeping Mandate Be Extended?

1. **Competent authority:** The United Nations Security Council decides whether to establish, extend, modify or terminate UNIFIL's mandate.
2. **Voting procedure:** Under Article 27 of the UN Charter, a substantive decision requires at least 9 affirmative votes out of 15, without a veto from any permanent member.
3. **Permanent members:** China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States.
4. **General Assembly:** Under Article 18, the General Assembly follows its own voting rules and can discuss international peace and security and make recommendations. It cannot independently renew UNIFIL's Security Council mandate.

5. Other Important UN Peacekeeping Missions

1. **UNMIL – United Nations Mission in Liberia (2003–2018):** Supported peace, security and post-conflict recovery following Liberia's civil war.

2. **MINURCAT – United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (2007–2010):** Supported civilian protection, refugees, displaced persons and humanitarian operations.
3. **MINUSTAH – United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (2004–2017):** Supported security, political stability and the strengthening of Haitian institutions.
4. **UNMISET – United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (2002–2005):** Supported security and the development of state institutions in newly independent East Timor, now Timor-Leste.

Bauxite mining proposal in Odisha's Balda hills threatens future of rare ground gecko

Divya Gandhi
BENGALURU

In the crevices of boulders and beneath the rustle of leaf litter in the hills of the Eastern Ghats in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh lives a tiny population of the strikingly-patterned Jeypore ground gecko, which was presumed extinct for 130 years until it was rediscovered in 2010.

Just four individuals of this endangered species have been documented in the past year in Odisha's Balda hills, worryingly, within the site of a proposed bauxite mining project by an Adani-linked group.

The nocturnal gecko, some 3.6 inches long, with a comparatively large head, and a yellow-orange body, was originally documented in 1878 by the British



Facing oblivion: The Jeypore ground gecko was presumed extinct for 130 years until it was rediscovered in 2010. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ish naturalist Richard Henry Beddome. More than a century later, in 2010, herpetologists Ishan Agarwal and Aniruddha Datta-Roy rediscovered a specimen in Odisha's Koraput district.

Later, there were more sightings: one in 2025, and three this year, including one this month. The gecko's behaviour, habits and li-

fecycle continue to elude scientists.

What is known, however, is that its habitat is fast shrinking. In fact, the habitat where it was first sighted in the 1870s, Potangi in Odisha, has already been lost to bauxite mining by the National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO), where the animal is

believed to be now extinct.

And today, the spectre of Adani's opencast bauxite mine proposal, covering 147 hectares of forest in the Balda hills, within the Nageswari reserve forest, threatens the future of this vulnerable species.

Adivasi uprising

The bauxite mining project has also been the site of much contention among resident Adivasis of the Nageswari reserve forest, who have protested the proposal for the past two years. The Bondo and Porja Adivasis, whose ancestral land this is, lodged a complaint against the Adani subsidiary Kalinga Alumina Ltd. in February, but to no avail.

"The communities have also applied for forest rights over the hill, which the government has re-

fused to recognise," naturalist Yuvan Aves told *The Hindu*. "There was a demonstration earlier this month too, and when the Adani group flew drones to scope the area, the Adivasi people stopped the exercise, asserting that this is their ancestral land."

Mr. Agarwal said that the gecko is "an ecologically and biogeographically significant species having split from its closest relatives over 20 million years ago." This is a relatively range-restricted species that is only found in high-elevation (900-1,400 metres) forests in the Eastern Ghats. "Anything that threatens their habitat is the major risk. Coffee [though we don't understand to what extent], hydel, mining are all potential threats," he told *The Hindu*.

2. Bauxite Mining in Odisha's Balda Hills Threatens the Jeypore Ground Gecko

Source: The Hindu

GS Paper: GS-3 – Environment and Biodiversity; GS-2 – Tribal Rights

Context: A proposed 147-hectare bauxite mine in Odisha's Balda Hills threatens the endangered Jeypore ground gecko and raises concerns over biodiversity conservation and tribal rights.

1. Balda Hills: Location, Ecology and Tribal Communities

1. **Location:** Situated in Odisha's Eastern Ghats, an ecologically significant region rich in mineral resources, including bauxite, the principal ore of aluminium.
2. **Biodiversity:** The forest ecosystem supports rare and range-restricted species, including the Jeypore ground gecko.
3. **Tribal communities:** The Bonda and Porja Adivasi communities have opposed the proposed mining project, citing ancestral land and forest rights.
4. **Bonda tribe:** A Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) concentrated in Malkangiri district, Odisha. Its language, Remo, belongs to the Austroasiatic family.
5. **Legal relevance:** The Forest Rights Act, 2006, provides for recognition of eligible individual and community forest rights.

2. Jeypore Ground Gecko: Species Profile

1. **Scientific name:** *Cyrtodactylus jeyporensis*; a small, nocturnal, ground-dwelling reptile.
2. **Distribution:** Restricted to the Eastern Ghats of Odisha and adjoining Andhra Pradesh.
3. **Habitat:** High-elevation forests, rocky crevices and leaf litter.
4. **Discovery:** First documented by Richard Henry Beddome in the 19th century; rediscovered in 2010 by Ishan Agarwal and Aniruddha Datta-Roy.
5. **Conservation status:** Endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List; listed in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).
6. **Evolutionary significance:** Its lineage diverged from its closest relatives over 20 million years ago.

3. Mining Project and Threats to the Gecko

1. **Proposed mine:** Kalinga Alumina Limited, an Adani-linked company, proposes open-cast bauxite mining across 147 hectares of Nageswari Reserve Forest.
2. **Population concern:** Only four individuals were reportedly documented in Balda Hills over the preceding year.
3. **Habitat destruction:** Forest clearance and excavation threaten the gecko's shelter, breeding habitat and survival.
4. **Habitat fragmentation:** Mining pits and access roads can isolate populations and disrupt breeding.
5. **Previous habitat loss:** The species is believed to have disappeared from Potangi, Odisha, following bauxite mining by National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO).
6. **Wider ecological impact:** Mining may damage habitats of other poorly studied species and increase the risk of local extinction.

Cabinet okays IDBI Bank sale to Fairfax for ₹52,878 cr.

Largest FDI deal in the financial sector in India's history; with the sale, the government's stake in the bank will decline to 15% and the Life Insurance Corporation's stake will come down to 19%

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the 'strategic restructuring' of IDBI Bank, with Fairfax set to acquire a stake in the lender for ₹52,878 crore, the Centre announced. With this, the government's stake in the bank will fall to 15% and Life Insurance Corporation's (LIC) stake will come down to 19%.

The government termed the deal a strategic restructuring rather than strategic disinvestment, adding that it would be the largest foreign direct investment in the financial sector in India's history. The government currently holds 45.5% of IDBI Bank, while LIC holds 49.2%.

IDBI Bank, having suffered from poor financial



Ailment history: IDBI Bank, which suffered from poor financial health, was put under Prompt Corrective Action in 2017. REUTERS

health for years, had been put under a Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework in 2017.

In January 2019, LIC took over controlling stake in the bank by infusing ₹21,624 crore into it and being allotted preferential shares in return.

As a result, the government's stake in the bank fell below 51% and the RBI classified it as a private bank since then.

"It was against this backdrop that the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved strategic restructuring of the IDBI Bank Ltd., and in compliance thereof, it was decided that an aggregate 60.72% of the equity stake in the IDBI Bank Ltd be sold to a strategic buyer, of which, the GoI share would be 30.48% and the LIC share would be 30.24%, leaving a residual

shareholding of 15% with the GoI and 19% with the LIC," the government said.

It further said that the winning bidder, out of two parties that finally qualified for bidding, was Canada-headquartered Fairfax Financial Holdings with a bid fixed at ₹81 per share.

Sources in the Ministry of Finance said this strategic restructuring does not change anything for the regulation of the banks or its customer-facing duties.

The bank has seen a significant turnaround in its financial health since it became a private bank. Its gross non-performing asset ratio fell from 31.8% in September 2018 to 2.3% as of March 2026. Its capital adequacy ratio rebounded from 6.22% in 2018 to 26.65% in March 2026. It recorded a net profit of ₹9,513 crore in FY26.

3. Cabinet Approves IDBI Bank Stake Sale to Fairfax for ₹52,878 Crore

Source: The Hindu

GS Paper: GS-3 – Indian Economy, Banking and Financial Sector

Context: The Union Cabinet approved the sale of a 60.72% stake in IDBI Bank to Canada-based Fairfax Financial Holdings for ₹52,878 crore, subject to regulatory approvals.

1. Deal Structure and Investment

1. **Stake sold:** Government of India (30.48%) and LIC (30.24%); Fairfax will acquire 60.72% and management control.
2. **Transaction value:** ₹52,878 crore at ₹81 per share.
3. **Post-sale ownership:** Fairfax 60.72%, Government of India 15% and LIC 19%.
4. **Nature of investment:** Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) through acquisition of existing shares. The sale proceeds go to the government and LIC, not directly into the bank as fresh capital.

2. FDI Policy in Banking

1. **Private-sector banks:** Up to 74% foreign investment—49% under the automatic route and above 49% up to 74% under the government-approval route.
2. **Public-sector banks:** Up to 20% foreign investment under the government-approval route.
3. Fairfax's proposed 60.72% stake falls within the general 74% ceiling for private-sector banks, subject to applicable RBI and other approvals.

3. Rationale and Financial Performance

1. **Strategic disinvestment:** Transfers majority ownership and management control to a private investor, potentially bringing capital, technology and management expertise.
2. **Financial recovery:** Gross NPA ratio fell from 31.8% in September 2018 to 2.3% in March 2026; net profit reached ₹9,513 crore in FY 2025–26.
3. **Background:** RBI placed IDBI Bank under Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) in 2017 due to financial stress; restrictions were lifted in 2021 following improvement.
4. **Policy debate:** Whether the government should retain a recovered bank or transfer management control to a strategic investor.

4. Significance and Safeguards

1. The government describes the deal—approximately US\$5.56 billion—as the **largest FDI transaction in India's financial sector**, not across all sectors.

2. The sale generates proceeds for the government and LIC while reducing their ownership.
3. Completion requires the RBI's fit-and-proper assessment and other applicable regulatory approvals.

India's China+1 lessons lie within its own States

Don't look at India – look at what's happening with specific States," a veteran investor told these writers in one of 50 interviews with senior industry executives, policymakers and experts for a 2026 study at the East Asian Institute on how global firms are reworking their China+1 plans.

However, the national conversation tends to run the other way. Every few months, someone advises India to study Vietnam's industrial parks, Mexico's nearshoring or Poland's supply chains. Meanwhile, two instructive case studies sit right at home – in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Global firms do not choose "India" as a homogenous monolithic edifice. They choose a State, and with it, the land, power supply, approvals, workers and suppliers.

Two States, their approaches

At Sriperumbudur, near Chennai, Foxconn employs tens of thousands of people assembling iPhones. Tata Electronics has expanded at Hosur. In January 2026, the Centre approved projects in Tamil Nadu under its Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS), including mobile-phone enclosure units by Yuzhan Technology, a Foxconn-linked firm, and Tata Electronics. These are commitments rather than finished factories, but they reflect the advantages of an industrial ecosystem that has taken decades to build.

None of this began with China+1. Tamil Nadu invested in technical education, built an automobile and components industry around Chennai, and developed the suppliers, skills and administrative experience that new manufacturers look for. Several investors told us that policy continuity is essential and that commitments must be honoured regardless of political turnover. That is now being tested following the change of government in Tamil Nadu in May 2026. One academic respondent argued that Tamil Nadu would have done well irrespective of China. Its industrial base took four or five decades to build; no announcement of an industrial park or round of subsidies can conjure



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Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are leading examples of how industrial ecosystems attract global manufacturers

that up. Karnataka followed a different path. Bengaluru began with software and engineering talent, and not Chennai's automobile base. Foxconn's 300-acre campus at Devanahalli, where women reportedly form about 80% of the workforce, aims to create around 50,000 jobs. Tata Electronics took over Wistron's iPhone plant at Narsapura, in a deal agreed in late 2023, and has grown rapidly since.

Tamil Nadu faces limits in land, power and labour, and relies on migrant workers from the northern and central States. It is now seeking to move beyond labour-intensive assembly towards more capital-intensive manufacturing and innovation-led exports.

National policy, State-level delivery

National incentives are integral, too. One manufacturer explained the combined effect of tariffs and production-linked incentives (PLI): "If the duty is 20 per cent and I get a PLI of 6 per cent, competitors cannot compete with me. This is working right here." The PLI scheme for large-scale electronics manufacturing ended on March 31, 2026, and the Cabinet approved a successor on July 15. In January, the Centre cleared 22 proposals under the ECMS, worth ₹41,863 crore and expected to create 33,791 direct jobs across eight States. The Centre describes this spread as "geographically balanced industrial growth". In March, the Cabinet approved easing Press Note 3, which introduced curbs in 2020 on investment from countries sharing a land border with India. These measures help attract investment, but whether that investment takes root depends on what individual States can offer. The factory still has to come up somewhere.

Still, Tamil Nadu ranks only fifth in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade's (DPIIT) data on foreign direct investment (FDI) equity inflows for October 2019 to March 2026, accounting for about 6%. This is behind Maharashtra (31%), Karnataka (21%), Gujarat (15%) and Delhi (13%).

However, DPIIT records FDI against the State in which the receiving company has its head office, rather than where the money is spent. So,

the figures tell us little about where factories are being built.

Assembly is only the first step. One electronics executive told us that "very few components are manufactured in India" and that there is still a "huge reliance on China for major parts and supply chains". Backward linkages remain thin. Another respondent said his firm had set a billion-dollar target for sourcing in India but, after two or three years, had managed to source "about 600 million out of that". Such ecosystems cannot be built in a hurry: "Value addition is a process which takes time – it is a four-to-five year process."

Electronics exports touched about \$48 billion in 2025-26, while imports stood at about \$116 billion. Although export growth is impressive, the trade gap suggests that India still has considerable ground to cover in component manufacturing. One executive described the exports as "assembled products with 20 per cent inputs in India".

India's industrial divide

Concentration also carries risks. One respondent said growth is "largely happening in the southern and western parts, not in the most populous States such as Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand".

Spreading subsidies thinly will not, by itself, replicate Tamil Nadu's supplier networks or Karnataka's technical labour pool. The key questions are what these States did to prepare land, train workers, clear approvals, nurture suppliers and retain investors, and which of these measures can be replicated, and what rests on decades of accumulated capacity.

India's China+1 debate keeps looking abroad for a model, even as some of the most instructive factories have been coming up all along on the outskirts of Chennai and Bengaluru.

This article draws on 50 interviews for the EAI Special Report, "India, China, and the 'China+1' Strategies of Global Firms" (September 2026), and on P.S. Srinivas, Frank N. Pieke and Alfred Schipke, "India, China and the China+1 Strategy", Global Policy (2026)

4. India's China+1 Strategy: Lessons from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka

GS Paper: GS-3 – Indian Economy, Industrialisation and Investment

Context: Global companies are diversifying manufacturing beyond China, creating an opportunity for India to attract investment, strengthen domestic supply chains and generate employment.

1. China+1 Strategy

1. **Meaning:** Companies diversify production beyond China to reduce supply-chain concentration and geopolitical risks.
2. **Opportunity for India:** Attract foreign investment, increase exports, create jobs and develop domestic manufacturing.
3. **Key requirement:** Competitive industrial ecosystems at the state level, rather than subsidies alone.

2. Why Tamil Nadu and Karnataka Attract Manufacturers

1. **Tamil Nadu – Manufacturing ecosystem:** Chennai, Sriperumbudur and Hosur have established automobile, electronics and component industries. Foxconn and Tata Electronics illustrate this manufacturing base.
2. **Karnataka – Technology and skills:** Bengaluru's engineering talent, software capabilities and skilled workforce support electronics and higher-value manufacturing.
3. **Common advantages:** Reliable infrastructure, skilled labour, established suppliers, efficient clearances and policy continuity.
4. **Long-term capacity:** These advantages have developed over decades and cannot be replicated through short-term incentives alone.

3. India's Electronics Manufacturing Challenge

1. **Assembly versus value addition:** India has expanded electronics assembly but remains dependent on imported components.
2. **Trade imbalance:** In 2025–26, electronics exports were approximately US\$48 billion, while imports reached about US\$116 billion.
3. **Weak domestic supply chains:** Limited component manufacturing reduces domestic value addition and increases exposure to external supply disruptions.
4. **Time-intensive development:** Supplier networks, technical capabilities and manufacturing ecosystems require sustained investment over several years.

4. FDI and Regional Imbalance

1. **Investment concentration:** Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat and Delhi were among the leading recipients of FDI equity inflows reported in the article.

2. **Uneven industrialisation:** Investment concentration can widen regional disparities in employment, infrastructure and economic growth.
3. **Lagging states:** Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand need stronger infrastructure, skilled labour, logistics and supplier networks to attract manufacturing.
4. **Policy lesson:** Successful industrial models must be adapted to local conditions rather than replicated through subsidies alone.

5. Way Forward

1. **Deepen domestic manufacturing:** Move from final-product assembly to components, electronics inputs and advanced manufacturing.
2. **Build state capacity:** Improve industrial infrastructure, technical education, logistics and time-bound clearances.
3. **Ensure policy stability:** Maintain predictable regulations and honour investment commitments across changes in government.
4. **Promote balanced growth:** Develop manufacturing clusters in less-industrialised states according to their local strengths.
5. **Measure outcomes:** Evaluate policies through operational factories, domestic sourcing, exports, employment and technology transfer.




EXPERTS EXPLAIN
DURWOOD ZAELKE
& ZERIN OSHO

India will confront this problem at unusual scale. What Kigali does next may therefore matter as much as what it has already achieved.

What is the Kigali Amendment?
The Montreal Protocol was agreed in 1987 to phase out CFCs and other chemicals that damage the ozone layer. Countries have since eliminated nearly 99% of the controlled ozone-depleting substances, and the layer is recovering.

Hydrofluorocarbons, or HFCs, became common substitutes in refrigeration and air-conditioning. These chemicals carry heat out of the space being cooled. If they escape, many have hundreds or thousands of times the warming impact of carbon dioxide over a century, weight for weight.

As the use of HFCs grew, the Federated States of Micronesia and Mauritius proposed bringing them under the Protocol in 2009. Governments adopted the amendment in Kigali, Rwanda, on October 15, 2016; it entered into force in January 2019. It sets

binding schedules for reducing HFC production and consumption.

How much warming could it prevent?
Full implementation could avoid about 0.3°C to 0.5°C of global warming by 2100, according to the UN-backed scientific assessment of ozone depletion. That is the difference between projected temperatures with the HFC controls and those without them. Even a fraction of a degree matters when the Paris Agreement seeks to keep warming well below 2°C and pursue a limit of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

However, Kigali has yet to achieve universal participation: 175 parties had joined by early October.

Why has cooling become central to Kigali's next decade?
Cooling contributes to warming in two ways. Refrigerants can escape into the atmosphere, while the electricity used to run the equipment causes emissions wherever fossil fuels supply the power. Switching to

a refrigerant with a lower warming impact addresses the first problem. A more efficient machine reduces the second.

Manufacturers changing refrigerants often need to redesign their equipment. Improving efficiency during that redesign can reduce electricity use for the lifetime of the appliance. The UN Environment Programme and the International Energy Agency estimate that combining the HFC transition with better cooling efficiency could roughly double the climate benefit.

For India, the electricity savings would be substantial. Cooling already accounts for slightly more than a tenth of annual electricity demand, according to the IEA. On hot summer nights, air-conditioners can account for as much as a third of power consumption. Under current policies, India's cooling demand is projected to more than double by 2035.

What must India do under Kigali?
India ratified the amendment in 2021 and must freeze HFC production and con-

sumption in 2028. This caps them at an agreed baseline. The first cut, of 10% below that baseline, is due in 2032; reductions reach 85% in 2047. The limits are calculated according to the gases' warming impact. Equipment bought before the first cuts may remain in use well into the 2030s.

Who pays for the transition in developing countries?
The Montreal Protocol's Multilateral Fund helps meet the agreed additional costs of compliance. Established in 1990 and operating since 1991, it receives contributions from developed countries to help poorer countries change technologies. Its support includes converting factories and training the people whose service cooling equipment.

Could a parallel approach work for other short-lived climate pollutants?
The four main short-lived climate pollutants, or SLCPs, are methane, black carbon, HFCs and tropospheric, or ground-level,

ozone. Often called super pollutants, they have strong warming effects and generally remain in the atmosphere for much less time than carbon dioxide. Reducing them can therefore slow warming relatively quickly, alongside the carbon dioxide cuts needed to limit warming over the longer term.

Kigali already addresses HFCs. Other sources would need different rules. For example, in India, measures to reduce methane from cattle have to account for small farmers' incomes and food production. Black carbon, the soot produced by incomplete combustion, requires action on sources such as diesel engines and household cooking fuels.

The case for agreements covering particular sectors rests on these differences: each can set obligations suited to the sources of pollution and provide support for those who must comply.

Zaelke is President of the Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development. Osho is Director of its India Programme.

5. Kigali Amendment: India's Cooling Challenge

GS-3 – Environment, Climate Change and International Agreements

Context: Rising demand for air conditioning and refrigeration creates a dual challenge for India: phasing down high-warming refrigerants and reducing emissions from electricity used for cooling.

1. Kigali Amendment: Background and Objective

1. **Adopted:** October 2016 in Kigali, Rwanda; entered into force on 1 January 2019.
2. **Parent agreement:** Montreal Protocol (1987), which aims to protect the ozone layer by phasing out ozone-depleting substances.
3. **Objective:** Phase down hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), widely used in air conditioners and refrigerators. HFCs do not generally deplete the ozone layer but are powerful greenhouse gases.
4. **Climate benefit:** Full implementation could prevent approximately **0.3°C–0.5°C of global warming by 2100.**

2. Evolution of International Agreements

1. **Vienna Convention (1985):** Established international cooperation to protect the ozone layer.
2. **Montreal Protocol (1987):** Introduced binding controls to phase out ozone-depleting substances, particularly chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).
3. **Kigali Amendment (2016):** Extended the Montreal Protocol framework to reduce HFCs, linking ozone protection with climate-change mitigation.

3. India's HFC Phase-Down Timeline

India ratified the Kigali Amendment in 2021 and follows the applicable developing-country schedule.

- **2028:** Freeze HFC consumption at the agreed baseline.
- **2032:** Reduce consumption by 10%.
- **2037:** Reduce by 20%.
- **2042:** Reduce by 30%.
- **2047:** Reduce by 85%.

These targets apply to controlled HFC consumption relative to the prescribed baseline. They do not mean a ban on air conditioners or refrigeration.

4. Why Is Implementation Challenging for India?

1. **Rising cooling demand:** Higher temperatures, urbanisation and rising incomes are increasing demand for air conditioning and refrigeration.

2. **Dual emissions:** HFC leakage contributes directly to global warming, while electricity used by cooling equipment generates additional emissions when produced from fossil fuels.
3. **Power demand:** Cooling accounts for more than one-tenth of India's annual electricity demand; the article projects cooling demand to more than double by 2035.
4. **Technology transition:** Manufacturers must redesign equipment to accommodate alternative refrigerants and improve energy efficiency.
5. **Affordability:** Cleaner, efficient cooling technologies must remain accessible to households and businesses.

5. Measures Required

1. **Low-GWP refrigerants:** Shift towards alternatives with lower global warming potential (GWP).
2. **Energy efficiency:** Promote efficient appliances, better building design, insulation and passive cooling.
3. **Leakage control:** Improve refrigerant recovery, recycling, servicing and safe disposal.
4. **Cleaner electricity:** Expand renewable energy to reduce emissions associated with operating cooling equipment.
5. **Industrial transition:** Support manufacturers and technicians in adopting new technologies while keeping cooling affordable.

Food, fuel nudge wholesale inflation in Sept. to 11.4%

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan

NEW DELHI

Wholesale price inflation rose to 11.4% in September, a record-breaking high during the 2.5 years for which there is data for the new series of the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and a 49-month-high as per the much longer old series on pricier food and fuel.

The new series of the WPI has 2022-23 as base year and so the data goes back till only April 2024. The older series, with base year of 2011-12, has a much longer historical database.

“The non-food manufactured goods (core WPI) segment accounted for more than half of the 147 bps uptick in the headline inflation print in September relative to August 2026, reflecting the impact of the pass-through of in-



Inflation in fuel and power rose to 25.85% in September.

put cost pressures,” Rahul Agrawal, principal economist at ICRA said.

Food sharply up

Inflation in the food articles component of the WPI came in at 8.1% in September 2026, up sharply from 5.7% in the previous month. However, this was also on a low base as prices in this component had

contracted 6.8% in September last year.

The non-food primary articles segment also saw elevated inflation levels of 10.3% in September though this was the lowest in four months. Inflation in manufactured goods stood at a series-high of 9.8%, up from 8.4% in August 2026.

“The increase in wholesale inflation across food articles, fuel and power, and manufactured products highlights the need for businesses to closely monitor input costs and pricing conditions,” Anil Gupta, president, of the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry said.

Inflation in fuel and power rose to 25.85% in September though this was the highest in only three months with the pace of price rise having been higher in May and June.

6. Wholesale Price Inflation Rises to 11.4% in September 2026

GS Paper 3: Indian Economy – Inflation and Price Stability

1. Key Findings: September 2026

Overall WPI Inflation: Increased to 11.4%, rising by 1.47 percentage points from August.

Food Articles: Inflation increased from 5.7% to 8.1%.

Fuel and Power: Inflation reached 25.85%.

Non-food Primary Articles: Inflation stood at 10.3%.

Manufactured Products: Inflation rose from 8.4% to 9.8%.

Major Contributor: Non-food manufactured products accounted for more than half of the monthly increase in headline WPI inflation.

2. Wholesale Price Index (WPI): Basic Concepts

Definition: Measures changes in the prices of goods at the wholesale level.

Purpose: Indicates price pressures on producers and businesses before goods reach consumers.

Base Year: 2022–23.

Compiled by: Office of the Economic Adviser, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

3. Category-wise Weightage in WPI

Manufactured Products — 63.13%: Industrial and processed goods.

Primary Articles — 22.76%: Food articles, non-food articles and minerals.

Fuel and Power — 14.11%: Coal, mineral oils, electricity, crude petroleum and natural gas.

Total Weightage — 100%.

4. Why Does Weightage Matter?

Weightage: Indicates the relative importance of a category in the overall index.

Inflation rate: Indicates how rapidly prices in that category are rising.

Example: Fuel and Power has a weightage of 14.11%, but its inflation rate reached 25.85% in September.

A category with a higher weight can have a greater influence on overall WPI movements, depending on its price changes.

5. Economic Implications of Rising WPI

Higher Production Costs: Rising fuel, electricity and raw-material prices increase manufacturing and transportation expenses.

Cost-Push Inflation: Businesses may pass higher input costs on to consumers.

Industrial Profitability: Companies may face lower profit margins if they cannot increase selling prices.

Retail Inflation Risk: Higher wholesale costs may eventually raise Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation.

Monetary Policy Challenge: Persistent price pressures may complicate the Reserve Bank of India's efforts to maintain price stability.