

**DIA, DEOGHAR IAS ACADEMY**

# ***Daily News Feed***

---

***D.N.F***

***17.06.2025***

**Sabaijor Complex, Near Jamunajor Pul, Castair Town  
Deoghar, Mob:-9162500508**



# What are the ambiguities in India's nuclear liability law?

What are the provisions of the Indian nuclear liability law? What does it say about supplier liability in the event of a nuclear accident? Why do some provisions in the law continue to make foreign companies wary?

Diksha Munjal

## The story so far:

**A**s per a Reuters reports, India is reportedly planning to ease its nuclear liability laws, with respect to accident-related fines on equipment suppliers, in order to attract more U.S. firms which have been holding back due to the risk of unlimited exposure.

## What is the law governing nuclear liability in India?

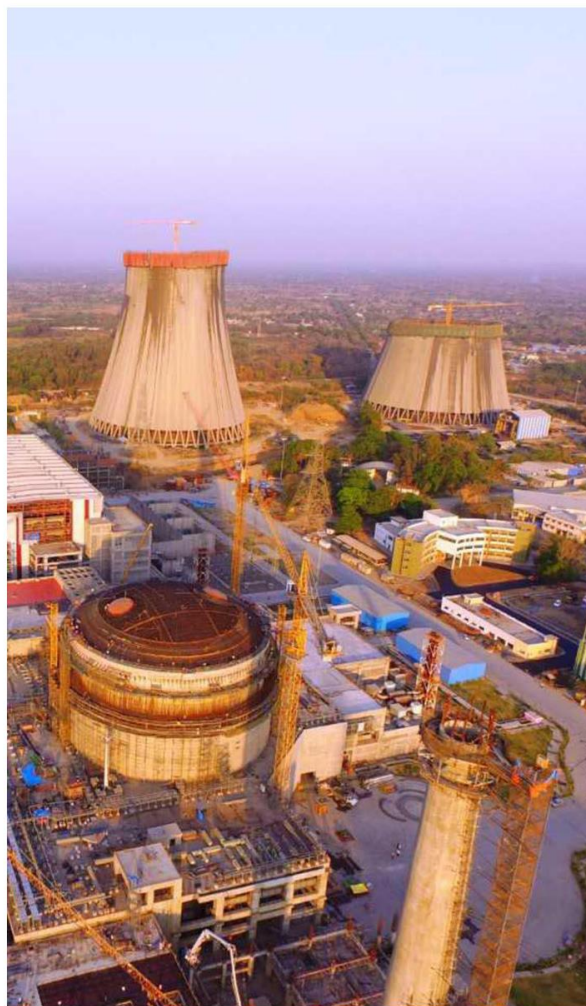
Laws on civil nuclear liability ensure that compensation is available to the victims for nuclear damage caused by a nuclear incident or disaster and set out who will be liable for those damages. The international nuclear liability regime consists of multiple treaties and was strengthened after the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear accident. The umbrella Convention on Supplementary Compensation (CSC) was adopted in 1997 with the aim of establishing a minimum national compensation amount. The amount can further be increased through public funds (to be made available by the contracting parties), should the national amount be insufficient to compensate the damage caused by a nuclear incident.

Even though India was a signatory to the CSC, Parliament ratified the convention only in 2016. To keep in line with the international convention, India enacted the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act (CLNDA) in 2010, to put in place a speedy compensation mechanism for victims of a nuclear accident. The CLNDA provides for strict and no-fault liability on the operator of the nuclear plant, where it will be held liable for damage regardless of any fault on its part. It also specifies the amount the operator will have to shell out in case of damage caused by an accident at ₹1,500 crore and requires the operator to cover liability through insurance or other financial security. In case the damage claims exceed ₹1,500 crore, the CLNDA expects the government to step in and has limited the government liability amount to the rupee equivalent of 300 million Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) or about ₹2,100 to ₹2,300 crore. The Act also specifies the limitations on the amount and time when action for compensation can be brought against the operator.

India currently has 22 nuclear reactors with over a dozen more projects planned. All the existing reactors are operated by the state-owned Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL).

## What does the CLNDA say on supplier liability?

The international legal framework on civil nuclear liability, including the annex of the CSC is based on the central principle of exclusive liability of the operator of a nuclear installation and no other person. In the initial stages of the nuclear industry's development, foreign governments and the industry agreed that excessive liability claims against suppliers of nuclear equipment would make their business unviable and hinder the growth of nuclear energy, and it became an accepted practice for national laws of countries to channel nuclear liability to the operators of the plant with only some exceptions. Two other points of rationale were also stated while accepting the



**Easing laws:** A view of a Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR) in Gujarat in 2017. FILE PHOTO

exclusive operator liability principle – one was to avoid legal complications in establishing separate liability in each case and the second was to make just one entity in the chain, that is the operator to take out insurance, instead of having suppliers, construction contractors and so on take out their own insurance.

Section 10 of the annex of the CSC lays down “only” two conditions under which the national law of a country may provide the operator with the “right of recourse”, where they can extract liability from the supplier – one, if it is expressly agreed upon in the contract or two, if the nuclear incident “results from an act or omission done with intent to cause damage”.

However, India, going beyond these two conditions, for the first time introduced the concept of supplier liability over and above that of the operator's in its civil nuclear liability law, the CLNDA. The architects of the law recognised that defective parts were partly responsible for historical incidents

such as the Bhopal gas tragedy in 1984 and added the clause on supplier liability. So, apart from the contractual right of recourse or when “intent to cause damage” is established, the CLNDA has a Section 17(b) which states that the operator of the nuclear plant, after paying their share of compensation for damage in accordance with the Act, shall have the right of recourse where the “nuclear incident has resulted as a consequence of an act of supplier or his employee, which includes supply of equipment or material with patent or latent defects or sub-standard services”.

## Why is the supplier liability clause an issue in nuclear deals?

Foreign suppliers of nuclear equipment from countries as well as domestic suppliers have been wary of operationalising nuclear deals with India as it has the only law where suppliers can be asked to pay damages. Concerns about potentially getting exposed to unlimited

liability under the CLNDA and ambiguity over how much insurance to set aside in case of damage claims have been sticking points for suppliers.

Suppliers have taken issue with two specific provisions in the law, Section 17(b) and Section 46.

The latter clause goes against the Act's central purpose of serving as a special mechanism enforcing the channelling of liability to the operator to ensure prompt compensation for victims. Section 46 provides that nothing would prevent proceedings other than those which can be brought under the Act, to be brought against the operator. This is not uncommon, as it allows criminal liability to be pursued where applicable. However, in the absence of a comprehensive definition on the types of ‘nuclear damage’ being notified by the Central Government, Section 46 potentially allows civil liability claims to be brought against the operator and suppliers through other civil laws such as the law of tort. While liability for operators is capped by the CLNDA, this exposes suppliers to unlimited amounts of liability.

## What are existing projects in India?

The Jaitapur nuclear project has been stuck for more than a decade – the original MoU was signed in 2009. In 2016, Électricité de France (EDF) and NPCIL signed a revised MoU, and in 2018, the heads of both signed an agreement on the “industrial way forward” in the presence of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron. In 2020, the EDF submitted its techno-commercial offer for the construction of six nuclear power reactors but an EDF official told that the issue arising from India's nuclear liability law remains an item on the “agenda for both countries”. Multiple rounds of talks have not yet led to a convergence on the issue. Other nuclear projects, including the nuclear project proposed in Kovvada, Andhra Pradesh, have also been stalled. Despite signing civil nuclear deals with a number of countries, including the U.S., France and Japan, the only foreign presence in India is that of Russia in Kudankulam – which predates the nuclear liability law.

## What is the government's stand?

The central government has maintained that the Indian law is in consonance with the CSC till now. About Section 17(b), it said that the provision “permits” but “does not require” an operator to include in the contract or exercise the right to recourse.

However, legal experts have pointed out that a plain reading of Section 17 of the CLNDA suggests that Section 17(a), (b) and (c) are distinctive and separate, meaning even if the right to recourse against the supplier is not mentioned in the contract [as provided by Section 17 (a)], the other two clauses stand. This effectively means that the supplier can be sued if defective equipment was provided or if it can be established that the damage resulted from an act of intent. Besides, it would not be sound public policy if the NPCIL, a government entity, entered into a contract with a supplier and waived its right to recourse in the contract, despite the fact that the law provides for such recourse. Further, the Ministry of External Affairs had said that Parliament debates over the CLNDA had rejected amendments to include the supplier, and therefore the supplier cannot be liable under this kind of “class-action suit”. However, private sector players were not convinced and experts point out that during a trial, what would be considered is what is enshrined in the statute and not what was discussed in Parliament.

This article was first published on April 26, 2023.



# What is the significance of the Shipki La pass?

Why was tourism and trade stopped at the Shipki La pass? What is the cultural and spiritual connection that binds people on both sides of the border? Did the Shipki La pass account for a great volume of bilateral trade between India and China? Will its reopening encourage religious tourism?

## EXPLAINER

**Tikender Singh Panwar**

### The story so far:

**H**imachal Pradesh has opened the Shipki La pass, a motorable mountain pass in the Kinnaur district, to domestic tourists, a step which locals hope will revitalise tourism and trade.

### What is its historical importance?

Centuries before national borders and geopolitical tensions defined regions, the Shipki La Pass in Himachal Pradesh's Kinnaur district served as a vital trade route between India and Tibet (now part of China). Situated at an elevation of 3,930 metres above sea level, the pass has been part of documented trade since the 15th century, although oral histories suggest its legacy extends even further back. According to folklore, cross-border trade was based on an oath sworn by communities on both sides – "Till the water in Kailash Man Sarovar Lake does not dry, a black crow does not turn white, and the highest peak Rijo Fugal does not flatten, this trade agreement shall continue." This poetic pledge symbolised an enduring bond that withstood centuries, until political realities disrupted it.

### Why was the trade route closed?

The once-thriving commerce through Shipki La came to a standstill due to a series of geopolitical events. It was first disrupted after the Sino-India War of 1962, followed by further breakdowns post the Doklam standoff and the COVID-19 pandemic. The trade route remains shut to commercial exchange.

### Why has the recent intervention sparked enthusiasm?

The Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh inaugurated tourism access to Shipki La without the previously mandatory permit system. Indian tourists can now visit



**New beginnings:** Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu takes part in a performance during the launch of tourism activities, at Shipki La pass in Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh, on June 10. PTI

using just their Aadhaar card, a move that has stirred optimism across the region.

The communities of Kinnaur, particularly those from Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes, share a deep-rooted cultural and economic relationship with Tibetan counterparts. Historically, the Bushahr State (now Rampur) in India and Gule in Tibet were principal players in the region's trade. The Kinnaur Indo-China Trade Association, based in Reckong Peo, has voiced a formal appeal to reopen the trade route through Shipki La. The Chief Minister has assured that the issue will be taken up with the Ministry of External Affairs.

### What goods were traded?

The commodities exchanged between India and Tibet through Shipki La were

both diverse and valuable.

Imports from Tibet included wool (the most profitable item), pack and saddle horses, goats, sheep, mutton, yak and goatskins, yak hair (used for ropes and saddlebags), devotional items such as prayer wheels, thangkhas, rosaries, and bowls, as well as borax, turquoise, and gold. Exports to Tibet from India included grains such as barley, wheat, rice, millet, lentils, chickpeas, and oil, dried fruits, vegetables, spices, tobacco, timber, copper and brass utensils, and iron tools.

Gold and turquoise were particularly cherished, which were integral to traditional Kinnauri women's jewellery – creating constant local demand and sustaining artisan communities. These exchanges weren't just transactional; they shaped cultural practices, local crafts, and even dietary habits across generations.

### If trade volume is limited, why is there still so much excitement?

It's true that trade through the three land passes with China – including those in Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand – does not account for a significant volume of bilateral trade.

But enthusiasm for trade and tourism lie in connectivity and opportunity. Reopening Shipki La could shorten the journey from Delhi to Mansarovar by 14 days, a potential game-changer for religious tourism and cross-border travel. This could also boost employment for local youth, enhance regional trade infrastructure, and catalyse growth in hospitality and allied sectors.

Additionally, the reopening may serve a strategic purpose as well – a soft diplomatic gesture and a community-led model of cross-border trust-building, independent of high-level state diplomacy. For a region often sidelined in national dialogues, such grassroots engagement could play a crucial role in shaping future peace corridors.

### What is the cultural connection?

Unlike the India-Pakistan border, where cross-border blood relations exist, the India-China border around Shipki La is defined more by shared lifestyles than lineage. The people on both sides are primarily pastoralists, and many surnames overlap – for instance, the Namgyal surname is found both in Leh and across the Tibetan plateau.

Cultural ties also endure through religion. Upper Kinnaur and the adjacent Tibetan region predominantly follow Buddhism, sustaining a spiritual and civilisational continuity even in the face of political divisions. Monastic traditions, festivals, and oral lore reflect a shared heritage that survives despite barriers of nationhood. Reopening Shipki La could become more than a regional story – it might just be a case study in diplomacy through development and heritage.

*Tikender Singh Panwar is former deputy mayor of Shimla, and member of the Kerala Urban Commission.*

## THE GIST

Centuries before national borders and geopolitical tensions defined regions, the Shipki La Pass in Himachal Pradesh's Kinnaur district served as a vital trade route between India and Tibet (now part of China).

The commodities exchanged between India and Tibet through Shipki La were both diverse and valuable.

Reopening Shipki La could shorten the journey from Delhi to Mansarovar by 14 days, a potential game-changer for religious tourism and cross-border travel.



# India's uneasy balancing act in the Bay of Bengal

India's economic engagements in the Bay of Bengal appear to be entering a new phase. On the face of it, there is reason for quiet confidence. Trade volumes through India's eastern ports are up. Cargo throughput at Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), Paradip (Odisha), and Haldia (West Bengal) has grown steadily. The signing of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Maritime Transport Cooperation Agreement earlier this year promises to ease regulatory frictions and reduce port costs. For a region long characterised by low trade integration, these are welcome signs.

## The decision on Bangladesh

And yet, the optimism sits uneasily alongside a decision that has raised more than a few eyebrows. In early April, India withdrew the transshipment facility it had granted to Bangladesh – an arrangement that had allowed Dhaka to route exports through Indian ports to third-country destinations. The official explanation was logistical: Indian terminals were congested, and delays were hurting exporters. That may well be true. But in Dhaka, the move was read differently – as a quiet assertion of Indian disapproval, possibly linked to Bangladesh's recent diplomatic overtures toward China. The timing was hardly a coincidence. The announcement came after Bangladesh's interim Chief Adviser, in a speech in Beijing, described India's northeastern States as 'landlocked' and cast Bangladesh as the region's maritime lifeline – a claim that did not sit well in New Delhi. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has repeatedly underscored the strategic and economic importance of the Northeast, with Indian Ministers also championing its role in regional connectivity. The suggestion that these States are dependent on Bangladesh for maritime access struck a nerve.

This came as India has doubled down to position itself as a regional integrator. In recent years, New Delhi has invested heavily in port infrastructure through the Sagarmala programme to improve coastal logistics and connectivity. Cargo movement on the east coast has more than doubled in a decade, aided by policy changes such as Goods and Services Tax (GST) cuts on



**Abhijit Singh**

is the former head of maritime policy at the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), New Delhi

India risks undermining the idea of cooperative regionalism if it begins using trade access to signal political displeasure

bunker fuel and incentives for coastal shipping. Maritime trade is, by all measures, a national priority.

## Tensions amid reenergised BIMSTEC

At the regional level, India has sought to reinvigorate BIMSTEC. The BIMSTEC Maritime Transport Cooperation Agreement, for instance, aims to harmonise customs procedures and foster multimodal linkages, with the broader goal of reducing the cost and friction of trade within the Bay. For smaller economies such as Bhutan, Myanmar and Nepal, improved access through Indian ports remains a lifeline.

That is what makes the rollback of Bangladesh's transshipment facility seem somewhat jarring. It reintroduces conditionality into what had been presented as a neutral economic architecture – one where trade facilitation serves regional integration, not shifting political winds. For Bangladesh, the impact is immediate: exporters, particularly in the ready-made garment sector (which accounts for over 85% of the country's foreign earnings), will likely bear the brunt. Many had come to rely on Indian gateways for faster, cheaper access to global markets. The alternatives – via Sri Lanka or Southeast Asia – are costlier and less time-efficient. The move injects uncertainty into Bangladesh's export logistics at a time of already fragile demand.

Tensions have since escalated. In mid-May, India placed restrictions on the import of seven categories of Bangladeshi goods, which include garments, plastics, and processed foods, through land ports in the Northeast. These products can now only enter India through seaports such as Kolkata and Nhava Sheva (Maharashtra), which raises costs and delays. Indian officials cited Dhaka's restriction on yarn imports via land routes as justification, though India's revocation of the transshipment facility had preceded that move. Many in Bangladesh, nonetheless, view New Delhi's response as disproportionate.

Some in Delhi argue that Dhaka is being reminded of the risks of strategic hedging. Bangladesh has, after all, stepped up diplomatic engagement with China, reopened maritime trade with Pakistan, and asserted its role as a regional connector. But these are choices Dhaka

is entitled to make. If India recalibrates trade access to signal political displeasure, it risks undermining the very idea of cooperative regionalism it has sought to promote.

This is not just a bilateral issue. What affects Dhaka will be noted in Naypyidaw, Bangkok, and Colombo. The concern is not that India has used leverage – major powers often do. The concern is that India has done so in a domain once insulated from overt geopolitical contest. Maritime trade corridors, once seen as shared infrastructure, are beginning to feel more transactional.

## The issue is about credibility

India still holds many cards. Its port infrastructure remains the most extensive and efficient in the region. Cargo-handling capacity is expanding rapidly, and coastal shipping and multimodal linkages are more developed than those of any other BIMSTEC partner. But infrastructure alone does not confer leadership. In a region as fragmented and wary as the Bay, credibility matters as much as capacity. If neighbours begin to view Indian trade facilitation as shifting with the political winds, they will hedge – and the regional architecture India hopes to build will inevitably stall.

The Bay of Bengal, then, is at an inflection point. On one level, it is a zone of opportunity. With improved connectivity, it could emerge as a self-sustaining corridor between South and Southeast Asia. A proposed BIMSTEC free trade agreement, if concluded and implemented well, could reshape regional trade patterns. On another level, the region remains vulnerable to strategic anxieties. The line between economic policy and geopolitical preference is beginning to blur.

There may still be time to draw that line more clearly. India could clarify the circumstances under which the transshipment arrangement with Bangladesh might be reinstated – or, better yet, replace it with a rules-based mechanism that insulates trade from political cycles. That would send a reassuring signal not only to Dhaka but to the rest of the Bay.

The larger question is whether India can maintain the balance between asserting strategic interests and cultivating regional trust. So far, the signals are mixed.



# Escalation spiral

Global powers must persuade Israel to end its reckless war

**I**srael's unprovoked aggression against Iran has not only plunged West Asia into its gravest regional crisis since the 1973 Arab-Israeli war but also pushed the Jewish nation into an unprecedented security calamity. If Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu expected the June 13 attack on Iran, hitting its nuclear facilities and assassinating its top generals and nuclear scientists, to cripple Tehran – like how Israel destroyed the Egyptian air force on June 5, 1967 during the Six-Day War – he appears to have made a mistake. Iran, in a swift and forceful response, rained ballistic missiles on Israeli cities. Until Monday morning, it had fired over 370 missiles, hitting an oil refinery in Haifa, a top research institute in Rehovot near Tel Aviv and even residential areas. At least 24 Israelis have been killed and over 500 wounded. While Israel has established air supremacy in Iran, it has not managed to destroy Iran's nuclear programme, which is dispersed and buried across the country. Israel keeps targeting Iran's military and intelligence leadership, with the aim of weakening the government. On Sunday, Mr. Netanyahu said regime change in Iran could be one of the outcomes of Israel's attack. But every time Israel hits Iran, Tehran fires dozens of ballistic missiles back. While Israel is trying to take escalation dominance, Iran is trying to establish deterrence through offence. The result is an escalation spiral.

Mr. Netanyahu should have carefully considered the consequences and avoided launching this reckless, illegal war. The Israeli attack came just days before the United States and Iran were to hold the sixth round of nuclear talks. The war has practically killed the possibility of a diplomatic solution to the nuclear crisis. This also raises questions about Israel's endgame. If Israel is not able to completely dismantle Iran's nuclear programme, it may, as Mr. Netanyahu has suggested, push for a state collapse or regime change in Tehran. Nobody knows what comes next. U.S. President Donald Trump has said that he is still open to a deal with Iran. But Mr. Trump wants Tehran to completely abandon its nuclear enrichment programme, which Iranian leaders are not ready to do – not yet. This deadlock only makes the conflict more dangerous. If the war drags on, the risk of U.S. involvement increases. And if Iran retaliates by bombing American bases in the Persian Gulf, shutting down the Strait of Hormuz or targeting tankers in the Gulf of Oman, it could trigger a security and economic catastrophe. This is another reason why a ceasefire between Iran and Israel is urgently needed. Global powers, particularly the U.S., Israel's chief patron, and Russia, an Iranian ally, must play a more proactive role in mediation and peacemaking. If Mr. Trump is really a man of peace, as he claims to be, this is his moment to take the lead in restoring order in West Asia.





# The war on Gaza, exposing Israel's hidden ambition

**T**he discrepancy between Israel's declared goals for its war on Gaza and its actual actions is staggering. While Tel Aviv continues to repeat hollow slogans—returning hostages, dismantling Hamas, disarming Gaza—these narratives function more as propaganda tools aimed at securing international legitimacy than genuine military objectives.

For global media consumption and western political cover, these slogans serve to justify an onslaught now surpassing 612 days – one that has claimed the lives of over 54,000 civilians in direct bombardments, caused more than triple that number in injuries, unleashed mass destruction, led to near-total displacement, criminalized UN humanitarian agencies, and waged a war of starvation—just to name a few.

This propaganda machine has successfully framed the ongoing, televised slaughter campaign as a just response. Alarming, much of the western world has accepted and echoed this narrative – rationalising the live-streamed brutality unfolding in Gaza, where civilians are enduring what experts have identified as genocide.

## The sinister reality, from seven decades ago

Initially, public discourse focused on Israel's stated objectives. More recently, attention shifted to the claim that the war exists primarily to save Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's political career, preserving his coalition and shielding him from corruption charges. While these factors play a role, reducing this genocide to Mr. Netanyahu's survival obscures a far more sinister and enduring reality.

This war is a continuation of a long-term strategy to complete what David Ben-Gurion, Israel's founding father, initiated in 1948 – the mass expulsion of the Palestinian people. Many Israelis chillingly refer to this as “finishing the job”.

Among the vast majority of Israelis, there is a deeply rooted belief that Ben-Gurion missed a historic opportunity in 1948 by not expelling all Palestinians beyond the Jordan River. Today's military operations, along with mounting calls for mass expulsion represent efforts to finally “complete the job”.

The expulsion of Palestinians is neither a new



**Abdullah M. Abu Shawesh**

is the Ambassador of the State of Palestine to the Republic of India

Israel's war is about 'finishing the job' – one that began in 1948

policy nor a hidden agenda. It is a foundational and repeatedly tested strategy of the Zionist project. The Nakba of 1948, when Zionist militias ethnically cleansed over 9,50,000 Palestinians, was not a tragic byproduct of war but a deliberate, meticulously planned act aimed at establishing a Jewish-majority state.

This strategy resurfaced in 1956 during the Sinai Campaign, when Israel briefly occupied Gaza. One key objective was the forced removal of Palestinian refugees from Gaza into Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. Although only partially executed due to Gazan resistance and international pressure, the intention was clear and well-documented. Israeli historian Avi Raz and others have demonstrated that the concept of “voluntary transfer” or engineered displacement was actively discussed by Israeli officials during and after the war. Ben-Gurion and other leaders viewed the 1956 war as a second opportunity to “finish the job”.

This policy's continuity was exposed in a *Haaretz* investigative report dated December 5, 2024, titled “We Give Them 48 Hours to Leave: Israel's Plans to Transfer Gazans Go Back 60 Years”. The article reveals that from the 1960s onward, Israeli officials quietly formulated policies aimed at reducing Gaza's Palestinian population – a central policy rather than a fringe idea.

## A demographic engineering

On May 15, 2025, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics reported that 7.4 million Palestinians – Muslims and Christians – now live in historic Palestine, equalling the Jewish population. Despite decades of Israeli policies aimed at boosting Jewish birth rates and displacing Palestinians, the demographic balance now favours the indigenous Palestinian population. From the Israeli perspective, this “demographic threat” is under constant scrutiny. The prospect of a Jewish minority ruling over a Palestinian majority is politically and morally untenable. To preserve its identity as a “Jewish state”, Israel has increasingly relied on apartheid, violent expulsions, and demographic engineering.

On October 9, 2023, just two days after the war began, the Israeli government announced a special inter-ministerial committee tasked with facilitating the forced transfer of Palestinians

from Gaza. It is no secret that Israeli officials have discussed relocating Palestinians to Egypt's Sinai Peninsula or even to African countries such as Rwanda and Uganda under the pretence of “voluntary resettlement” – a thin veil for forced population transfer, which constitutes a war crime under international law.

The concept of transforming Gaza's coast into a luxury zone devoid of Palestinians – the so-called “Middle East Riviera” – was openly proposed by United States President Donald Trump, whose real estate background shaped his vision of the region as prime beachfront property rather than a homeland for a dispossessed people. Under the guise of regional development, Mr. Trump's real estate proposal repackaged ethnic cleansing as economic opportunity. Mr. Netanyahu embraced this vision wholeheartedly, describing it as “the only viable plan to enable a different future for the region”.

## Deliberate erasure

The widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure and life in Gaza cannot be explained by military necessity or any declared war aims. Entire neighbourhoods, homes, towers, roads, and sewage systems have been obliterated. Schools, universities, hospitals, and water infrastructure have been systematically targeted. Agricultural lands have been scorched. Starvation has been weaponised. Over 1,50,000 people have been killed or wounded, many of them civilians. Thousands more have died indirectly due to hunger, thirst, disease and the collapse of Gaza's besieged health system. And all of this is just the tip of the iceberg.

This is not collateral damage or incidental. It is a deliberate, methodical erasure of Palestinian life and society. It is the continuation of a long-standing project to “finish the job” begun in 1948 and enact a final solution to the “Palestinian demographic threat”.

The real final goal of this war transcends military objectives or Mr. Netanyahu's political survival. It is a war over geography and demography – a campaign that began 77 years ago and still rages today. It aims to erase the indigenous Palestinian people from their homeland, uproot their presence from the map, and entrench Jewish supremacy from the river to the sea.



# Modi to reach Canada for G7 Outreach Summit, will hold bilateral meets

This is his first multilateral event after the conclusion of Operation Sindoor; the summit is being watched keenly as it is being held against the backdrop of Israel-Iran and Russia-Ukraine conflicts

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**  
NEW DELHI

**P**rime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to reach Calgary, Canada on Monday to attend the G7 Outreach Summit.

The summit is being watched keenly as it is being held against the backdrop of escalating Israel-Iran and Russia-Ukraine conflicts.

Apart from Mr. Modi, Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy will be among the guests in the summit that will be held in Kananaskis, Alberta.

The Group of Seven (G7) is an informal grouping of the world's advanced economies. It is made up of seven member countries – France, the U.S., the U.K., Germany, Japan, Italy, and Canada – and the European Union.

Mr. Modi's visit to Canada, taking place after a brief visit to Cyprus, is being viewed with interest here as it will give an opportunity to him and the new Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney to warm up India-Canada ties that had nosedived during the Premiership of Justin Trudeau after he alleged in September 2023 that In-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi departs from Cyprus to attend the G7 Outreach Summit in Canada. ANI

dian state actors were behind the June 18, 2023 murder of pro-Khalistan activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. Earlier, Mr. Carney had taken a step forward to normalisation of ties by highlighting India's global profile that he said required engagement.

"At the summit, the Prime Minister will exchange views with leaders of G7 countries, other invited outreach countries and Heads of International Organisations on crucial global issues, including energy security, technology and innovation, particu-

larly the AI-energy nexus and Quantum-related issues," the External Affairs Ministry had said in New Delhi. The G7 summit is the first multilateral event that Mr. Modi will attend after the conclusion of Operation Sindoor against terror targets in Pakistan in May. Apart from Prime Minister Carney, Mr. Modi is expected to meet multiple other leaders of the G7 and the guest countries.

## Three core issues

The G-7 Outreach Summit is scheduled for Tuesday noon which will be themed

around three core issues of "Protecting our communities around the world", "Building energy security and accelerating the digital transition" and "securing the partnerships of the future". Apart from Mr. Modi, and Mr. Zelenskyy, host Canada has invited leaders of Australia, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, and South Korea.

Following his engagements in Canada, Mr. Modi will leave on Tuesday evening for Zagreb, Croatia which is last of his three-nation tour.

(With PTI inputs)

# Shah launches tech platforms for better disaster management

**Press Trust of India**

NEW DELHI


Union Home Minister Amit Shah unveiled three major technology platforms on Monday to improve the speed and precision of disaster management.

Mr. Shah launched the Integrated Control Room for Emergency Response (ICR-ER), National Database for Emergency Management Lite 2.0 (NDEM Lite 2.0) and Flood Hazard Zonation Atlas of Assam at the annual conference of Relief Commissioners, Secretaries of Disaster Management and State Disaster Response Forces.

In a post on X, Mr. Shah said the three platforms “will equip our disaster management apparatus with the speed and preci-

**Tool for real-time response, a national database and flood hazard atlas of Assam were unveiled**

sion of the new age technologies”. “The ICR-ER will prompt real-time response to disaster(s) across the nation by streaming satellite data to rescue agencies, and the NDEM Lite 2.0 will provide our response forces spread across nooks and corners with the agility to confront any calamity as a single unit,” he said. The flood hazard atlas for Assam will help in disaster mitigation by providing real-time data related to floods, their impact, and water levels in rivers, the Minister said.





# Census will include caste enumeration, says Home Ministry

**The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Home Affairs, in a post on X on Monday, reiterated that caste will be enumerated in the forthcoming Census.

“The notification to conduct Census has been published in the Official Gazette today. The Census will include caste enumeration as well. However, some misleading information is being spread that there is no mention of caste census in the notification. It has already been mentioned in the Press Releases dated 30 April, 4 June and 15 June, 2025 that Census will also have caste enumeration,” the MHA said.

Earlier in the day, the Congress had said the notification by the Centre was a “damp squib” and was silent on the inclusion of caste enumeration.

“It is quite a damp squib and merely repeats what had already been announced on April 30, 2025,” Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh said in a post on X.

“Is this yet another U-turn by the *ustad* of U-turns? Or will details be announced later?” Mr. Ramesh asked. He said that Mr. Modi had consistently opposed the caste census. On 28 April 2024, Mr. Modi termed those wanting a caste census “urban Nax-

**Earlier in the day, the Congress said the notification was silent on the issue of caste count**

als”, he said.

Mr. Ramesh said it was entirely because of the persistence and insistence of the Congress that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had “surrendered” to the demand for a caste count.

The Congress leader said that according to the Constitution of India, the Seventh Schedule, the Census is the responsibility of the Union government. If the Centre does not want to carry out the census, there is no alternative left for States except to do caste surveys. Thus, various states have done caste surveys, including Telangana, Karnataka, and Bihar.

“The Indian National Congress wants the Telangana model to be adopted at the national level. In Telangana, it’s not just the caste enumeration that’s been done – it also includes getting information on the socio-economic status. All this is missing in this notification by the government,” he said.

Congress leader Manickam Tagore said: “The Telangana model has helped the State government for planning future programmes.”



# Socio-economic survey serves social justice: Karnataka CM

Defending the fresh survey being taken up in the State after objections to the earlier exercise from all sections of society, he says the caste census announced by the Centre is of a different nature

**The Hindu Bureau**  
HUBBALLI

**M**aintaining that the Centre's proposed caste survey is not a socio-economic and educational survey, which, according to him, is needed to initiate measures for social justice, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has defended the State government's decision to conduct a fresh caste census.

Speaking to presspersons in Davangere on Monday, the Chief Minister said that the fresh socio-educational and economic survey has been taken up as there have been objections to the previous survey from all sections of the society.



The CM says knowing the socio-economic status of communities is necessary to deliver social justice. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Mr. Siddaramaiah said that the general census being taken by the Union government is different from the socio-educational, economic census being con-

ducted by the State government. "Knowing the socio-economic status of the communities is necessary to provide social justice and that's why the

caste census is being conducted now," he said. He further clarified that the State government has no qualms about the census of the Union government.

"It is different from our socio-economic census. Moreover, the Centre has not said anything on conducting a socio-economic census. We are conducting a caste census along with the socio-economic census," he said.

## 'Re-survey is a must'

"Moreover, as per Section 11(1) of the Backward Classes Commission Act, after the expiry of 10 years of a report, a re-survey should be conducted. That is why re-survey has been ordered," Mr. Siddaramaiah said.





# India's total trade deficit narrows to \$6.6 billion as total exports grow

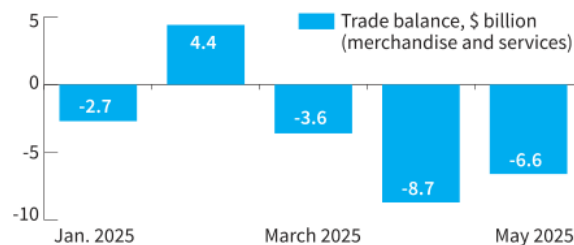
**T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan**  
NEW DELHI

India's overall trade deficit narrowed to \$6.6 billion in May 2025, down nearly 30% from its level in May last year, as total imports fell largely due to a fall in oil prices while total exports grew on the back of a strong performance by the services sector, official data show.

According to the monthly data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on Monday, total exports grew 2.8% to \$71.1 billion in May 2025 – up from \$69.2 billion in May 2024 – with exports in the service sector growing 9.4% to \$32.4 billion. Merchandise exports, on the other hand, contracted

## Dip in deficit

Strong showing by service exports, which grew by 9.4% to \$32.4 billion in May 2025, boosted overall exports



SOURCE: MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

2.2% to \$38.7 billion, while non-petroleum exports reported a 5.1% growth.

The data shows that India's non-petroleum exports grew 5.1% in May 2025.

Merchandise imports too were impacted by falling oil prices. While total

merchandise imports contracted 1.7% in May 2025, the non-petroleum imports grew 10% in the same month. Services imports grew 1.5%. Taken together, total imports contracted 1% in May 2025.

According to Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal, a

**Total exports grew 2.8% to \$71.1 billion in May 2025 – up from \$69.2 billion in May 2024**

large part of the reason for the subdued performance in merchandise exports is the fall in global oil prices.

“For May, there is positive growth in non-petroleum exports because petroleum, in times of crisis, there is a lot of volatility,” Mr. Barthwal said at a briefing on the trade data. “Currently, there is new volatility that has come. And we have also seen, in the last two months, there was a sustained fall in prices in petroleum, which has got a dampening impact on exports.”



# India backs a ‘peaceful resolution of the Cyprus question’: Prime Minister

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday held talks with Cyprus President Nikos Christodoulides, and sent an indirect message to Türkiye while renewing India's support for the unity of Cyprus and “peaceful resolution” of the “Cyprus question”.

He also reiterated his call for ending the Israel-Iran and Russia-Ukraine conflicts through dialogue and diplomacy. A joint statement issued at the end of the visit called for “lasting settlement” of the Cyprus question.

Since 1974, Cyprus has been divided between Türkiye-backed Northern Cyprus and the internationally recognised Republic of Cyprus, and the dispute has been known as the Cyprus question.

## Message to Turkey

Cyprus is the first foreign destination that Mr. Modi has visited after the conclusion of Operation Sindoor against Pakistan in May and sources hinted that the visit is a message to Türkiye that is viewed as a key ally of Pakistan. The joint statement mentioned India's “unwavering and consistent support for the Independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and unity of the Republic of Cyprus”. In an indirect reference to Türkiye's support to Northern Cyprus, the joint statement said, “Both sides emphasised the need to avoid unilateral actions as essential for creating a conducive environment for the resumption of meaningful negotiations.”



PM Modi with Cyprus President Nikos Christodoulides after he was honoured with the Grand Cross of the Order of Macarios III. PTI

Northern Cyprus, consisting of the north and eastern part of Cyprus, is backed by Türkiye. Mr. Modi toured the divided capital of Cyprus, Nicosia, and parts of Northern Cyprus featured in a photograph of Mr. Modi that was taken during the tour.

In remarks to the media, Tanmay Lal, Secretary West, Ministry of External Affairs, further emphasised India's support for the territorial integrity of Cyprus and said, “The friendship and the trusted partnership between India and Cyprus has a long history. In the 1950s, India had advocated for the Independence of Cyprus. Cyprus supports India for a permanent membership in a reformed and expanded UN Security Council and India supports Cyprus on the Cyprus question.”

## The Cyprus question

The joint statement said, “Cyprus and India expressed their strong commitment to the resumption of UN-facilitated efforts to achieve a comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Cyprus question on the

basis of a bizonal, bicomunal federation with political equality, in accordance with the agreed UN framework and the relevant United Nations Security Council [UNSC] Resolutions.”

The visit is also a timely revival of India-Cyprus political contact ahead of Cyprus taking over the Presidency of Council of the European Union in the first half of 2026. Cyprus had condemned the terror attack in Pahalgam on April 22. Indicating the deepening cooperation between India and Cyprus at the EU, Mr. Modi said, “Cyprus is a trusted partner of India in the European Union.” Earlier, Cyprus bestowed its highest honour, the Grand Cross of the Order of Macarios III on Mr. Modi. Speaking at the ceremony, Mr. Modi said, “I dedicate this honour to the friendly ties between India and Cyprus and our shared values and mutual understanding.”

Cyprus has been consistent in its support to India on the Kashmir issue and has been opposing cross-border terrorism from Pakistan.