

DIA, DEOGHAR IAS ACADEMY

Daily News Feed

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**Sabaijor Complex, Near Jamunajor Pul,
Castair Town**

Deoghar, Mob: -9162500508

Leh stir explodes into deadly violence; govt. blames activist

BJP office torched and Ladakh Hill Council premises vandalised as protesters seeking Statehood, tribal status for region go on a rampage; Centre says an unruly crowd destroyed public property, attacked the police; 30 security personnel injured



Public outcry: A vehicle belonging to the security forces was set on fire during the protests in Leh demanding Statehood for the Union Territory of Ladakh, on Wednesday. AP

Vijaita Singh
Peerzada Ashiq
NEW DELHI/SRINAGAR

Several people were feared dead and many injured in Leh city in the Union Territory of Ladakh on Wednesday after an ongoing protest demanding the constitutional safeguards of Statehood and tribal status for the region bordering China turned violent.

The Union Home Ministry, in a statement, said an unruly mob destroyed public property and attacked the police, injuring around 30 security personnel. The police had to resort to firing, in which “unfortunately some casualties are reported”, it said.

The Ministry said a hunger strike was started by climate activist Sonam Wangchuk on September 10 to press for Statehood and inclusion of Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule (tribal status). It said the

Government of India had been actively engaging with the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), and despite a planned meeting on September 26 with the leaders, “a mob guided by Sonam Wangchuk’s provocative statements” caused violence.

“The government stands committed to the aspiration of people of Ladakh by providing adequate constitutional safeguards,” the Ministry said.

It added that the demands on which Mr. Wangchuk was on hunger strike were an integral part of the discussion of a high-powered committee.

‘Mislead the people’

“In spite of many leaders urging to call off the hunger strike, he continued with the hunger strike and misleading the people through provocative mention of Arab Spring-style protest and references to

Gen Z protests in Nepal... Amidst these violent developments, he broke his fast and left for his village in an ambulance without making serious efforts to control the situation,” it said. The protesters, mostly youth, torched the BJP office and vandalised the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council premises.

The Ministry added that the process of dialogue through the high-powered committee had yielded phenomenal results, such as increasing reservation for Ladakh Scheduled Tribe from 45% to 84%, providing one-third reservation for women in the councils, and declaring Bhoti and Purgi as official languages. The process for recruitment for 1,800 posts had also commenced, the Ministry said.

Ladakh Lieutenant-Governor Kavinder Gupta, in a televised address, confirmed the deaths but did

not specify the number, adding that curfew had been imposed as a precautionary measure.

“Deployment of security personnel was made in the wake of a shutdown call to maintain law and order in Leh. The security personnel were provided with *lathis* (batons). However, there was an attempt to burn down a CRPF vehicle with personnel in it. The vehicle of the Director-General of Police was attacked with stones,” Mr. Gupta said.

On Tuesday, Home Ministry officials had called a delegation of seven leaders from Ladakh to Delhi on September 26 for a preliminary meeting. Cherring Dorjay Lakruk, the president of the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA), told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Lakruk, who is also the co-convenor of the Leh Apex Body (LAB), which had been spearheading the protests, told *The Hindu* that a large number of peo-

ple in the age group of 14-25 joined the protests on Wednesday, a day after two elderly protesters, who were on hunger strike along with Mr. Wangchuk for 14 days, were hospitalised.

Following the violence, Mr. Wangchuk called off the hunger strike. Addressing a virtual press conference, he said that “nobody had an inkling something like this will happen”.

“Many leaders who came here said that peaceful protests are not enough. We never thought it will explode like this. Ladakh witnessed Gen Z frenzy today. They were not listening to anybody. They were not even afraid of bullets. This is the fifth time we have sat on a hunger strike. The youth said peaceful protests are not working... we were being told by the youth for the past few days,” Mr. Wangchuk said.

RELATED REPORT
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Leh stir explodes into deadly violence; govt. blames activist

th.th_international.25_09_2025

GS Paper: GS-II (Polity & Governance – Centre-State Relations, Tribal Rights, Sixth Schedule)

Summary (English):

Protests in Leh demanding Statehood and Sixth Schedule status for Ladakh turned violent. Several casualties were reported, police personnel injured, and public property torched. Activist Sonam Wangchuk's hunger strike escalated tensions. Centre claimed it is committed to Ladakh's constitutional safeguards and highlighted steps like ST reservation enhancement, women's quota, and recognition of local languages.

सारांश (हिन्दी):

लेह में राज्य का दर्जा और छठी अनुसूची की मांग को लेकर विरोध प्रदर्शन हिंसक हो गया। कई मौतें और पुलिसकर्मियों के घायल होने की खबर है। सोनम वांगचुक का भूख हड़ताल तनाव का कारण बना। केंद्र ने कहा कि लद्दाख को संवैधानिक सुरक्षा देने के लिए प्रतिबद्ध है और पहले ही अनुसूचित जनजाति आरक्षण, महिला कोटा और भाषाओं की मान्यता जैसे कदम उठाए हैं।

No relief

The Karnataka High Court rejected X Corp.'s petition challenging blocking orders issued under the Information Technology Act

■ Regulation of information in this domain is neither novel nor unique. Every sovereign nation regulates it. India likewise cannot, by any stretch of constitutional imagination, be branded unlawful for doing so, says court

■ Content on social media must be regulated, particularly in cases of offences against women, failing which the right to dignity of citizens is undermined, it says



HC rejects appeal by X Corp. against takedown orders

The Hindu Bureau

BENGALURU

Observing that “social media, as a modern amphitheatre of ideas, cannot be left in a state of anarchic freedom”, the Karnataka High Court on Wednesday rejected a petition filed by X Corp. challenging orders issued by Central and State authorities to take down certain content on its micro-blogging platform, X, under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act.

Justice M. Nagaprasanna, while reading out the operative portions of the judgment, said: “Content on social media must be regulated, particularly in cases of offences against women, failing which the right to dignity of citizens is undermined.” “Order is the architecture of our democracy. Every platform that seeks to operate within the jurisdiction of our nation must accept that liberty is yoked with responsibility, and the privilege of access carries with it the solemn duty of accountability,” the court said.

‘Matter of regulation’

Pointing out that information and communication and its spread or its speed have never been left unchecked or unregulated but have always been the subject matter of regulation, the court said, “As and when technology developed, from messengers to the postal age till the age of WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat, all have been regulated by regulatory regimes subsisting

then and subsisting today, both globally and locally; and regulation of information in this domain is neither novel nor unique.”

Referring to laws in the U.S. on social media, the court said, “The United States of America regulates it, every sovereign nation regulates it, and India’s result likewise cannot, by any stretch of constitutional imagination, be branded as unlawful. Unregulated speech under the guise of liberty becomes a licence for lawlessness.”

Noting that X Corp. is subjected to a regulatory regime in the U.S., which is the platform’s birthplace, the court said that “under the Take It Down Act of the United States, it [X Corp.] chooses to follow the said Act as it criminalises the violation of orders of takedown, but the same petitioner refuses to follow the same in the shores of this nation...”

Regulated speech preserves both liberty and order, the twin pillars upon which a democracy must stand, the court said, while emphasising that “no social media platform in the modern day agora may even feign the semblance of exemption from rigour or discipline of the laws of the land.”

“None may presume to treat the Indian marketplace as a mere playground where information can be disseminated in defiance of statutes or disregard to legality, and later adopting a posture of detachment or a hands-off,” Justice Nagaprasanna said.

HC rejects appeal by X Corp. against takedown orders
th.th_international.25_09_2025

GS Paper: GS-II (Polity – IT Act, Regulation of Social Media, Right to Freedom of Speech vs Reasonable Restrictions)

Summary (English):

Karnataka HC upheld government's authority to order takedowns on social media. Court ruled that unregulated social media threatens dignity and law & order. Liberty must come with responsibility; India's regulatory stance is consistent with global norms.

सारांश (हिन्दी):

कर्नाटक उच्च न्यायालय ने सोशल मीडिया प्लेटफॉर्म X (ट्विटर) की याचिका खारिज की। कोर्ट ने कहा कि बिना नियंत्रण के सोशल मीडिया नागरिकों की गरिमा और कानून-व्यवस्था के लिए खतरा है। अभिव्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता जिम्मेदारी के साथ संतुलित होनी चाहिए।

Language consultation panel passes resolution to scrap committee on Maharashtra three-language policy

Vinaya Deshpande Pandit

MUMBAI

The chairperson of the Maharashtra government's Language Consultation Committee said on Wednesday that the panel has passed a resolution seeking the scrapping of the Narendra Jadhav Committee set up to study the implementation of the three-language policy as per the National Education Policy 2020 in primary classes in State-run schools.

Of the 29 members of the Language Consultation Committee, 23 were present for the meeting held in Nagpur and 20 of them supported the resolution, said its chairperson Laxmikant Deshmukh. It will now be sent to the Chief Minister, he added.

The Narendra Jadhav Committee was set up in June this year to review the policy and submit its re-

The Narendra Jadhav Committee was set up in June this year to review the policy and submit its report within three months

port within three months after holding public consultations with stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and educational institutions. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis had said the State government would accept the committee's recommendation.

Mr. Deshmukh said the government should have referred the issue to his committee instead of appointing a new panel under Dr. Jadhav. "This committee will speak with the principals of all State-run schools and educational institutions. Which State-run school will go beyond the mandate of the govern-

ment? Will they have the freedom to express their independent opinion? At such a time, making such announcements is a farce of democracy," he said.

Mr. Deshmukh said several objections were raised by experts during the meeting. "There are specific directions under the National School Education Curriculum Framework that the third language should be introduced only in Class 6. Why are we still insistent on introducing Hindi as the third language from Class 1?" he said.

"This will mean that within 25-30 years, Maharashtra will become a Hindi-speaking State, a part of the Hindi belt," he added.

When approached for comment on the resolution, Dr. Jadhav said his report will be his response. "I do not want to get into this controversy or reply to these accusations."

Language panel seeks scrapping of Jadhav Committee on 3-language policy
th.th_international.25_09_2025

GS Paper: GS-II (Polity – Education Policy, Federal Issues)

Summary (English):

Maharashtra's Language Consultation Committee opposed the Jadhav Committee reviewing NEP's

3-language policy. It argued third language should be introduced only from Class 6, not Class 1. Fears raised over imposition of Hindi in Maharashtra.

सारांश (हिन्दी):

महाराष्ट्र भाषा परामर्श समिति ने नई शिक्षा नीति की तीन-भाषा नीति की समीक्षा कर रही जाधव समिति को रद्द करने की मांग की। समिति का कहना है कि तीसरी भाषा केवल कक्षा 6 से लागू होनी चाहिए। हिंदी थोपे जाने की आशंका जताई गई।

Community groups say U.P. ban on caste-based rallies hits mobilisation

Office-bearers of Dalit, Gurjar and Kurmi organisations argue that decision may discourage marginalised communities seeking representation through organised movements against caste

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government notification on Sunday prohibiting caste-based political rallies, mention of the caste of accused persons in police stations and on vehicles, signboards, etc. has created ferment on the ground among several social organisations centred around caste. Some of these outfits, primarily comprising Other Backward Classes (OBCs) communities or Dalit groups, said the move – prompted by a September 16 directive from a single-judge Bench of the Allahabad High Court to curb glorification of caste – may discourage increasing awareness of marginalised communities that are seeking representation and recognition in political and social circles through organised movements against caste-based discrimination.

“Decades back, mostly privileged caste groups



The U.P. government's September 21 notification prohibited caste-based political rallies, display of caste on vehicles and signboards and identification of accused persons by caste in police stations. FILE PHOTO

used to have social associations that would work as a pressure group to push their cause of representation and community benefits with the government. In the past few decades, different agrarian and marginalised castes gained awareness and formed organisations to back their case for a stake in power. This decision will discourage such mobilisations for democratic and rightful

participation,” said Rohit Bhadana, an office-bearer of the Akhil Bharatiya Veer Gurjar Mahasabha in Ghaziabad.

‘Ban useless’

Suraj Jatav, joint secretary of the Bijnor-based Scheduled Castes Democratic Federation, said that the recent directive will hinder a broader organising of communities through markers and symbols and

promoting self-respect among Dalits. Concurring with Mr. Bhadana and Mr. Jatav, Suresh Patel of the Lakhimpur Kheri-based All India United Kurmi Mahasangh wondered if the decision will indeed end caste-centric discrimination inherent in many upper-caste individuals and often evident in the public sphere. “Such a ban will be useless until we fail to check casteism,” he said.

Community groups say U.P. ban on caste-based rallies hits mobilisation
th.th_international.25_09_2025

GS Paper: GS-I/II (Society – Caste System; Polity – Fundamental Rights, Political Mobilisation)

Summary (English):

UP Govt. banned caste-based political rallies and display of caste identities. Social organisations argue it restricts marginalised communities’ mobilisation and political assertion. Experts say

casteism cannot be curbed merely by banning rallies.

सारांश (हिन्दी):

उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार ने जाति आधारित रैलियों और प्रतीकों पर प्रतिबंध लगाया है। कई सामाजिक संगठनों ने कहा कि यह निर्णय वंचित वर्गों की राजनीतिक भागीदारी को कमजोर करेगा। विशेषज्ञों के अनुसार केवल प्रतिबंध से जातिवाद खत्म नहीं होगा।

Global South must work together, says Jaishankar

India hosts meet of 20 'like-minded' countries on sidelines of UNGA; External Affairs Minister says multilateralism under attack and international organisations are being rendered ineffective

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

The concept of multilateralism is “under attack”, even as countries of the Global South are seeking more solutions from international organisations such as the United Nations, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has said.

Speaking at a specially convened “high-level meeting of like-minded Global South countries” in New York on Tuesday, Mr. Jaishankar pitched for more consultations between developing countries and a joint push for UN reforms.

He said the state of the world was a cause for concern for all countries, listing a number of “shocks”, including the pandemic, conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza, climate change, and trade uncertainties. He also called for an “urgent resolution of conflicts that are impacting food, fertilizer and energy security”. Twenty countries took part in the meeting hosted by India, including 10 at the Ministerial level.

“In face of such proliferation of concerns and multiplicity of risks, it is natural that the Global South would turn to multilateralism for solutions,” Mr.



On one platform: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar speaks at a high-level meeting of like-minded Global South countries in New York on Wednesday. ANI

Jaishankar said. “Unfortunately, there too we are presented with a very disappointing prospect. The very concept of multilateralism is under attack. International organisations are being rendered ineffective or starved of resources,” he added.

Nine countries from Asia, five from the Americas (South and North, including the Caribbean), and six from Africa took part in the meeting held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. Only Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and Mauritius were present from India’s neighbourhood among the group. The meeting was the first of its kind, although officials did not confirm whether India now

planned to hold such meetings regularly. India has hosted the “Voice of Global South Summit” in which about 125 countries have been invited for the past three years. It is unclear why the 20 countries present at the UN meeting had been chosen as “like-minded” rather than others, and whether more others had also been invited but declined due to scheduling issues.

The countries represented at the meeting included Bahrain, Indonesia, Qatar, Singapore, and Vietnam from Asia; St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Cuba, and Jamaica from North America; Suriname from South America; and Chad, Ghana, Lesotho, Morocco, Nigeria, and Soma-

lia from Africa.

Mr. Jaishankar did not name any country for the “attacks on multilateralism”, but his comments came a day after U.S. President Donald Trump’s UNGA address. In his address, Mr. Trump criticised the UN system for not delivering peace in various conflicts, claiming he had resolved seven conflicts in the past few months, including the India-Pakistan conflict, without any help from the UN.

The U.S. has drastically cut its funding for the UN this year and withdrawn from several UN organisations, including the UN Human Rights Council and UNESCO. It has called for a review of other memberships in the UN system.

GS Paper: GS-II (International Relations – Multilateralism, UN Reforms, Global South)

Summary (English):

At UNGA sidelines, EAM Jaishankar warned that multilateralism is “under attack.” He called for Global South unity to push for UN reforms and address challenges like conflicts, climate change, food & energy security.

सारांश (हिन्दी):

विदेश मंत्री एस. जयशंकर ने कहा कि बहुपक्षवाद खतरे में है और ग्लोबल साउथ देशों को संयुक्त रूप से काम करना चाहिए। उन्होंने संयुक्त राष्ट्र सुधार और खाद्य, ऊर्जा व जलवायु संकटों से निपटने की जरूरत पर जोर दिया।

Follow the rains, not the calendar, to fight floods

Each year, urban India braces for the monsoon – contractors are deployed, drains desilted, and emergency protocols rehearsed. Yet, when the rain finally arrives – often untimely and more intense than expected – headlines are dominated by flooded roads, waterlogged homes, and stranded commuters. The deeper issue is that our cities are often still designed for a climate that no longer exists.

Northern States are seeing heavy flooding even in September, with all of Punjab's 23 districts being hit by floods. Delhi and Gurugram have been inundated by intense rains, and Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh are experiencing frequent cloudbursts. In the east, Kolkata is facing torrential rains.

Timing, amount, and intensity

But the rains came early too. In May, Mumbai recorded 135.4 mm of rainfall in just 24 hours, followed by 161.9 mm the next day. Delhi recorded 81 mm fall within a few hours on the same day, overwhelming the drainage systems. This shift in rainfall timings is not new; yet our preparedness remains tethered to outdated schedules. Drain cleaning, for instance, still follows the June monsoon calendar.

Cities must follow the rain to be able to bridge the gap between schedules, and readiness and reality. An analysis by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water shows that about 64% of Indian tehsils have seen a rise in the frequency of heavy rainfall days by 1-15 days, especially in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, and Karnataka. The consequences for urban systems are significant, from localised flooding to disruptions in essential services. In the last two decades, floods have caused most of the loss to life and property from natural disasters in India. Today, a single flood can cause damages of some ₹8,700 crore, with such events becoming increasingly frequent.



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Indian cities are often designed for a climate that no longer exists

The challenge is not just the amount of rainfall, but also the intensity. Intensity, Duration, Frequency (IDF) curves, which track rainfall patterns over time, offer an interesting picture. For instance, CEEW's analysis of daily rainfall from 1970 to 2021 in the coastal city of Thane shows that one-hour rainfall now reaches 50 mm once every two years, and about 80 mm per hour once every 50 years. This means such heavy rainfall can be expected to occur within hours, leaving little room for cities to respond. There is also a sharp difference between how much rain falls in one hour versus three hours, revealing that rainfall that once spread across a day may now have a higher chance of falling within an hour. We propose three interlinked actions to prepare Indian cities better for the monsoons and flood-proof them.

Preparing for the monsoon

First, city authorities should incorporate sub-daily rainfall analysis into city monsoon planning. Municipalities must move beyond long-term averages and integrate recent patterns and short-duration, high-intensity rainfall events that unfold within a few hours, into infrastructure design. Real-time data on sub-daily rainfall, which occurs over intervals shorter than 24 hours, must inform citizens about drainage operations and upgrades. For instance, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has announced this year that it will widen its drains to handle up to 120 mm of rainfall in an hour.

While India's monsoon officially spans 100-120 days, just a few hours of intense rain across select days account for most of the seasonal rainfall. Yet, maintenance and planning assume a uniform spread. This illusion of consistency leads to systems that fail not due to excessive seasonal totals, but hourly extremes. Recognising this compression is the first step towards resilience.

Second, align cleaning of storm water drains and municipal solid

waste management calendars. An overlooked cause of urban flooding is unmanaged waste – plastic, debris, and litter frequently block drains. Yet storm water and waste are handled by separate departments on different schedules. While the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs recommends drain cleaning before, during, and after the monsoon, its effectiveness hinges on coordination with waste collection. Even a freshly cleaned drain can clog again if garbage is left uncollected nearby. Ideally, storm water and sanitation departments must coordinate, especially during high-risk periods. Rainfall alerts from the India Meteorological Department should automatically trigger joint sanitation drives and drain inspections in vulnerable areas. In Vijayawada, such coordination – through monsoon response teams composed of officials from the sanitation, engineering, and planning departments – has reduced waterlogging and eased conditions for residents.

Third, city authorities must update IDF curves every 5-10 years to ensure that infrastructure keeps pace with evolving rainfall patterns. Without this, new drainage systems will continue to rely on outdated data, leaving them ill-equipped to handle present day storm water run-off volumes. In response to recent intensifying rains, the BMC has also proposed expanding storm water capacity and preparing a new drainage master plan based on updated trends. Drainage design should also be based on micro-catchment-level hydrological analysis that accounts for topography, which affects peak discharge during storms. New systems must be separated from the sewerage networks to avoid overload and ensure efficiency. We are not losing to the rain, but to the idea that the rain fits into seasonal boxes. Instead of asking when the monsoon will begin, we need to ask, are we prepared for the rain already falling?

Follow the rains, not the calendar, to fight floods

GS Paper Mapping:

- **GS-I (Geography):** Monsoons, rainfall patterns, climate variability.

- **GS-II (Governance):** Urban governance, disaster management, inter-agency coordination.
 - **GS-III (Environment & Disaster Management):** Flood management, climate resilience, sustainable urban planning.
-

Summary (English):

The article highlights how Indian cities are ill-prepared for floods because urban planning still follows outdated monsoon calendars instead of actual rainfall patterns.

- Recent data shows heavy rainfall is becoming more intense and frequent, overwhelming drainage systems and causing urban flooding.
 - Traditional maintenance tied to the June monsoon calendar fails to match current realities; for instance, Delhi and Chennai saw record-breaking rainfall outside the expected monsoon timeline.
 - CEED and CEEW studies reveal a rising trend in sub-daily, high-intensity rainfall, which city drainage systems are not designed to handle.
 - The article suggests three interventions:
 1. **Incorporating sub-daily rainfall data** into urban planning and drainage designs.
 2. **Expanding stormwater capacity** and updating Drainage Master Plans every 5–10 years.
 3. **Integrated flood management**, including sanitation, waste management, hydrological mapping, and micro-catchment analysis.
 - It emphasizes a climate-resilient approach: instead of asking “*when will monsoon begin?*”, cities must ask “*how intense will the rains be?*” to prepare effectively.
-

सारांश (हिन्दी):

लेख में बताया गया है कि भारतीय शहर बाढ़ से निपटने के लिए अभी भी पुराने मानसून कैलेंडर पर आधारित तैयारी करते हैं, जबकि वास्तविकता बदल चुकी है।

- हाल के वर्षों में अल्पावधि (sub-daily) और तीव्र वर्षा की घटनाएँ बढ़ी हैं, जिससे जल-निकासी प्रणाली ध्वस्त हो जाती है और शहरी बाढ़ की समस्या गंभीर हो जाती है।
- दिल्ली और चेन्नई जैसे शहरों में रिकॉर्ड तोड़ बारिश कैलेंडर से बाहर समय पर हुई, जिससे तैयारी की कमी उजागर हुई।
- अध्ययनों से पता चला है कि 64% भारतीय शहरों में भारी वर्षा की घटनाओं की आवृत्ति बढ़ी है।
- लेख में तीन प्रमुख कदम सुझाए गए हैं:
 1. शहरी नियोजन में उप-दैनिक वर्षा डेटा का उपयोग करना।
 2. जल-निकासी क्षमता को बढ़ाना और मास्टर प्लान को हर 5–10 साल में अपडेट करना।
 3. एकीकृत बाढ़ प्रबंधन – जिसमें स्वच्छता, अपशिष्ट प्रबंधन, जल-वैज्ञानिक अध्ययन और सूक्ष्म स्तर पर जलग्रहण क्षेत्र का विश्लेषण शामिल हो।
- लेख का संदेश है कि शहरों को अब यह पूछना चाहिए – “*बारिश कब होगी?*” नहीं बल्कि “*बारिश कितनी तीव्र होगी?*” ताकि बाढ़ प्रबंधन बेहतर हो सके।

How are courts protecting personality rights?

How are Bollywood actors like Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and Abhishek Bachchan flagging the misuse of their voices and likeness through AI-generated content? What are personality rights? Will such injunctions by the judiciary restrict free speech?

EXPLAINER

Aaratrika Bhaumik

The story so far:

The Delhi High Court has recently issued a series of orders protecting the personality rights of Bollywood celebrities from unauthorised commercial use. On September 9 and 10, Justice Tejas Karia granted relief to actors Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and Abhishek Bachchan, after they flagged the misuse of their images and voices through AI-generated content and merchandise. A week later, Justice Manmeet P.S. Arora extended similar protections to filmmaker Karan Johar, by barring the unauthorised use of his persona through deepfakes, and other digital manipulation. Actors Amitabh Bachchan, Anil Kapoor, and Jackie Shroff have already secured such protections. These petitions signal a wider push for judicial recognition of personality rights in the digital era.

Are personality rights protected?

Personality rights safeguard an individual's name, likeness, image, voice, signature, and other distinctive traits from unauthorised commercial exploitation. Though not codified in a single statute, personality rights in India are grounded in common law doctrines of privacy, defamation, and publicity rights, and reinforced through judicial precedents. Courts may grant injunctions, award damages, or issue takedown orders to curb misuse in advertisements, merchandise, AI-generated content, or digital platforms.

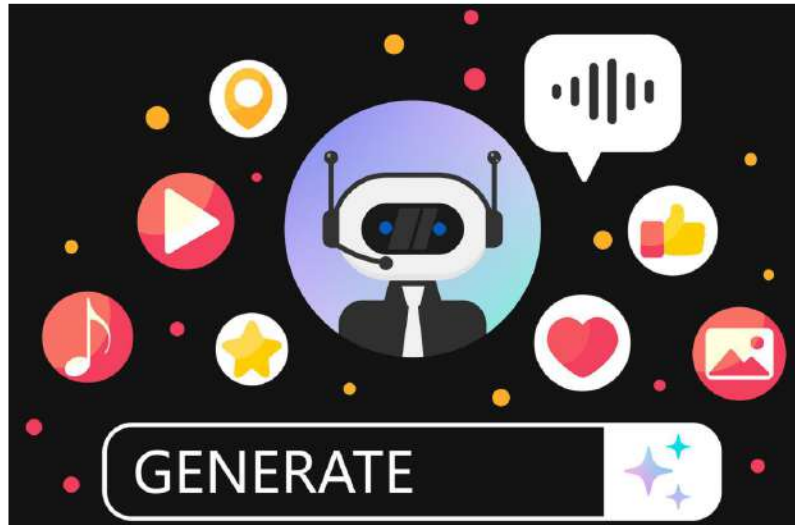
Statutory protection is dispersed across intellectual property laws. The Copyright Act, 1957, grants performers both exclusive rights under Section 38A and moral rights under Section 38B, allowing them to control how their performances are reproduced and to object to any distortion or misuse. The Trade Marks Act, 1999, permits individuals, particularly celebrities, to register distinctive attributes of their persona, such as names, signatures, or even catchphrases, as trademarks.

For instance, actors such as Shah Rukh Khan, Priyanka Chopra, Ajay Devgn, and Amitabh Bachchan have registered their names as trademarks. However, the most robust safeguard lies in the common law tort of "passing off" under Section 27 of the Act, which protects the goodwill of an unregistered mark and prevents misrepresentation that could deceive the public or imply false endorsement. This protection is neither automatic nor absolute, as courts generally require clear evidence of reputation and goodwill before granting relief.

At the heart of personality rights lies the right to autonomy and privacy rooted in Article 21 of the Constitution. When a celebrity consents to appear in a film, advertisement, or public campaign, they exercise control over their public identity. But when third parties print their image on merchandise or use AI tools to generate deepfakes or chatbots without authorisation, that autonomy is stripped away and the individual's dignity and agency are compromised.

What have courts ruled so far?

The jurisprudence on personality rights in India traces its origins to the seminal 1994 judgment in *R. Rajagopal versus State of Tamil Nadu*, where a magazine sought to publish the autobiography of Auto Shankar, a death-row convict, recounting details of his private life and alleged links



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with State officials. The government moved to restrain the publication on grounds of privacy and defamation. The Supreme Court recognised that individuals possess a legitimate interest in controlling the use of their identity, grounding this protection in the constitutional right to privacy. However, it clarified that remedies for privacy violations must follow publication, through actions such as defamation suits, rather than through prior restraint by the state. The court held that personal details may be published without consent if they are already part of the public record.

Two decades later, the Madras High Court crystallised the emerging doctrine in a case involving actor Rajinikanth. The lawsuit, filed against the producers of the film *Main Hoon Rajinikanth*, alleged misuse of the actor's name, image, and distinctive style of delivering dialogues. The court stressed that infringement does not require proof of falsity, confusion, or deception if the celebrity is readily identifiable, and accordingly upheld the actor's right to restrain the unauthorised commercial exploitation of his persona.

With the advent of AI, courts have had to grapple with novel threats to identity. In 2023, the Delhi High Court granted actor Anil Kapoor wide-ranging protection over his personality rights, restraining 16 online entities from exploiting his name, image, voice, likeness, or his catchphrase "Jhakaas," which he popularised in films. Justice Prathiba Singh clarified that free speech extends to "genuine write-ups, parody, satires and criticism" but cannot be stretched to justify commercial exploitation. She cautioned that when such use "crosses the line and results in tarnishing, blackening or jeopardising the individual's personality and elements associated with them, it would be illegal." Referring to morphed images of the actor with other actresses, she said this was "not merely offensive" to him but also to third parties, adding that the court "can't turn a blind eye to such misuse," particularly where dilution and tarnishment are actionable torts. Similarly, in May 2024, the Delhi High Court protected the personality and publicity rights of actor Jackie Shroff,

restraining e-commerce platforms and AI chatbots from misusing his name, image, voice, and likeness without consent. The court observed that the "unauthorised use of these characteristics for commercial purposes not only infringes upon these rights but also dilutes the brand equity painstakingly built by the plaintiff over the years."

A few months later, the Bombay High Court delivered a significant ruling in favour of singer Arijit Singh, who alleged that Codible Ventures LLP had used AI tools to create artificial recordings of his voice, a practice known as voice cloning. The court reiterated that the singer's "name, voice, image, likeness, persona and other traits" are protected under his personality rights. Expressing concern over the risks of generative AI, Justice R.L. Chagla observed, "What shocks the conscience of this court is the manner in which celebrities, particularly performers such as the present Plaintiff, are vulnerable to being targeted by unauthorised generative AI content."

To what extent can such rights curtail free expression?

Critics argue that the expansive protection of personality rights could stifle free expression.

Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution guarantees every citizen the right to freedom of speech, which includes the creative freedom to criticise, parody, or satirise public figures. However, Indian courts have repeatedly affirmed that this right is not absolute and must be balanced against an individual's dignity and autonomy.

In *DM Entertainment Pvt. Ltd. versus Baby Gift House* (2010), the Delhi High Court dealt with a petition filed by a company to which singer Daler Mehndi had assigned his personality rights. The company had alleged that gift shops were selling dolls that were "cheap imitations of, and identical to the likeness" of Mr. Mehndi, amounting to the unauthorised commercial exploitation of his persona. While granting an injunction, Justice S. Ravindra Bhat cautioned that caricatures, lampooning, and parodies would not ordinarily infringe publicity rights. He warned that an "overemphasis on a

famous person's publicity rights" could chill free speech and deprive the public of an entire genre of expression.

This principle was reaffirmed more than a decade later in *Digital Collectibles PTE Ltd. versus Galactus Fumware Technology Pvt. Ltd.* (2023), which involved the unauthorised use of sports stars' likenesses despite exclusive licences held by the plaintiff.

The Delhi High Court refused to broaden publicity rights at the expense of free expression, noting that material already in the public domain could not reasonably mislead the public into believing there was an endorsement. Justice Amit Bansal clarified that the use of celebrity names or images for "lampooning, satire, parodies, art, scholarship, music, academics, news and other similar uses" is a legitimate exercise of Article 19(1)(a) and does not amount to infringement of publicity rights.

What are the concerns?

Jwalika Balaji, research fellow at the Vichi Centre for Legal Policy, told *The Hindu* that a comprehensive legislative framework is the need of the hour to ensure that the enforcement of such rights is not reliant on piecemeal judicial precedents. "In the absence of a regulatory regime, responses remain fragmented and ad hoc. More importantly, there is a fine line between artistic creation and a breach of personality rights. Exceptions must be clearly identified and firmly respected, especially in times when concerns over censorship loom large," she said.

She further pointed out that personality rights are not the exclusive privilege of celebrities, since all individuals enjoy the right to privacy. "Ordinary citizens, especially women, are increasingly targeted through deepfakes and revenge pornography. Laws must be tailor-made to address this disproportionate impact on women," she said. She noted that in such cases, courts often direct the government to block URLs impersonating an individual or misusing their images without consent. However, she cautioned that tracking every such breach and acting on it remains a herculean task.

THE GIST

Personality rights safeguard an individual's name, likeness, image, voice, signature, and other distinctive traits from unauthorised commercial exploitation.

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GS Paper Mapping:

- **GS-II (Polity & Governance):** Fundamental Rights – Right to Privacy, Right to Freedom of Speech.
- **GS-III (Cybersecurity, Technology & IPR):** AI-generated content, misuse of digital identity, regulation of tech platforms.

- **GS-IV (Ethics):** Misuse of celebrity image, moral rights, public interest vs commercial exploitation.

Summary (English):

The Delhi High Court has recently issued injunctions to protect Bollywood celebrities like Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and Abhishek Bachchan against the misuse of their voices and images through AI-generated content and deepfakes.

Key points:

- **What are personality rights?** Safeguards for an individual's name, likeness, image, voice, and distinctive traits from unauthorized commercial use. They include privacy, reputation, and publicity rights.
- **Legal basis:**
 - *Copyright Act, 1957* (Sections 38, 38A, 38B) – performers' exclusive rights over performances.
 - *Trade Marks Act, 1999* – permits protection of distinctive attributes.
 - Judicial precedents (e.g., *ICC Development v. Arvee Enterprises*; *Titan v. Ramkumar Jewellers*) affirm protection against misappropriation.
- **Judicial action:** Courts have granted injunctions against misuse of AI content, deepfakes, and endorsements without consent.
- **Concerns:**
 - Over-expansion may restrict free speech, parody, criticism, and scholarship.
 - Enforcement mechanisms are weak; courts rely heavily on precedents without a clear legislative framework.
 - Balancing privacy/publicity rights with artistic freedom and public interest is challenging.

Overall: Courts are moving towards recognizing digital personality rights in India, but a comprehensive legal framework is still missing.

सारांश (हिन्दी):

दिल्ली उच्च न्यायालय ने हाल ही में ऐश्वर्या राय बच्चन और अभिषेक बच्चन जैसे बॉलीवुड कलाकारों की आवाज़ और छवि का एआई-जनित सामग्री और डीपफेक्स में दुरुपयोग रोकने के लिए आदेश दिए हैं।

मुख्य बिंदु:

- **पर्सनैलिटी राइट्स क्या हैं?** किसी व्यक्ति के नाम, छवि, आवाज़ और विशिष्ट लक्षणों को बिना अनुमति के व्यावसायिक उपयोग से सुरक्षा। इसमें निजता, प्रतिष्ठा और प्रचार अधिकार शामिल हैं।
- **कानूनी आधार:**
 - *कॉपीराइट अधिनियम, 1957* – कलाकारों को प्रदर्शन पर विशेषाधिकार।
 - *ट्रेड मार्क अधिनियम, 1999* – विशिष्ट विशेषताओं की सुरक्षा।
 - न्यायिक नज़ीरें (जैसे *ICC Development v. Arvee Enterprises*, *Titan v. Ramkumar Jewellers*)।
- **न्यायिक कार्रवाई:** अदालतों ने एआई सामग्री, डीपफेक और बिना अनुमति प्रचार-प्रसार पर रोक लगाई है।
- **चिंताएँ:**
 - अधिकारों का अति-विस्तार अभिव्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता, पैरोडी, आलोचना और शोध पर अंकुश लगा सकता है।
 - स्पष्ट कानून नहीं होने से प्रवर्तन तंत्र कमजोर है, अदालतें केवल पुरानी नज़ीरों पर निर्भर हैं।
 - निजता व व्यक्तित्व अधिकारों और सार्वजनिक हित/कला स्वतंत्रता के बीच संतुलन चुनौतीपूर्ण है।

निष्कर्ष: भारत में डिजिटल युग में पर्सनैलिटी राइट्स की न्यायिक मान्यता बढ़ रही है, लेकिन समग्र कानूनी ढांचा अभी भी अनुपस्थित है।

India-U.S. to increase energy trade in coming years, says Goyal

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan

NEW DELHI

India expects to increase its energy trade with the U.S. in the coming years, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Tuesday, adding that India's energy security would have a "high element" of U.S. involvement going ahead.

Speaking at an event organised by the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) in New York, Mr. Goyal also said that the two countries would be working closely on nuclear power.

The Commerce Minister is in the U.S. to take forward talks on a bilateral trade agreement between India and the U.S.

"India is a big player in the energy trade," Mr. Goyal said. "We are big importers of energy from across the world, including from the U.S. We expect to increase our trade with the U.S. on energy products in the years to come."



Piyush Goyal

"And, being close friends and natural partners, our energy security goals will have a very high element of U.S. involvement, which will ensure price stability, diversified sources of energy for India, and help us unlock limitless possibilities with the U.S. on various fronts – energy and beyond," he added.

This comes at a time when the U.S. has imposed a 25% additional tariff on Indian imports as a "penalty" for importing Russian oil. U.S. President Donald Trump has previously talked about how he wants India to instead buy American oil.

India-U.S. to increase energy trade in coming years, says Goyal

GS Paper Mapping:

- **GS-II (International Relations):** India-U.S. bilateral relations, energy cooperation.
 - **GS-III (Economy & Energy Security):** Energy diversification, nuclear cooperation, trade policies.
 - **Essay/GS-IV (Ethics in IR):** Strategic partnerships and global energy responsibility.
-

Summary (English):

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal announced that India and the U.S. plan to increase bilateral energy trade in the coming years. Speaking at the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum in New York, he underlined:

- **Energy security:** U.S. involvement will play a “high element” role in India’s energy future by ensuring price stability and diversified sources.
- **Nuclear cooperation:** Both countries to work closely on nuclear power.
- **Bilateral trade agreement:** Forward talks are ongoing between the two countries.
- **Geopolitical context:** The U.S. imposed an additional 25% tariff on Indian imports as a penalty for India’s purchase of Russian oil. U.S. leadership has urged India to import more American oil instead.

Key Significance:

This highlights India’s energy diplomacy, diversification of imports, and balancing relations amid global geopolitical tensions.

सारांश (हिन्दी):

वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्री पीयूष गोयल ने कहा कि आने वाले वर्षों में भारत और अमेरिका के बीच ऊर्जा व्यापार में वृद्धि होगी। उन्होंने न्यूयॉर्क में आयोजित *यू.एस.-इंडिया स्ट्रैटेजिक पार्टनरशिप फोरम* में कहा:

- **ऊर्जा सुरक्षा:** भारत की ऊर्जा नीति में अमेरिकी भागीदारी महत्वपूर्ण होगी, जिससे मूल्य स्थिरता और ऊर्जा स्रोतों का विविधीकरण सुनिश्चित होगा।
- **नाभिकीय सहयोग:** भारत और अमेरिका परमाणु ऊर्जा क्षेत्र में करीबी सहयोग करेंगे।
- **व्यापार समझौता:** दोनों देशों के बीच द्विपक्षीय व्यापार समझौते पर वार्ता जारी है।
- **भूराजनीतिक संदर्भ:** अमेरिका ने रूसी तेल आयात के चलते भारतीय आयात पर 25% अतिरिक्त शुल्क लगाया है और भारत को अमेरिकी तेल आयात बढ़ाने की सलाह दी है।

महत्व:

यह भारत की ऊर्जा कूटनीति, आयात विविधीकरण और वैश्विक भू-राजनीतिक दबावों के बीच संतुलन की रणनीति को दर्शाता है।

₹70,000 cr. maritime, shipbuilding package gets Cabinet nod

Shishir Sinha

NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved about a ₹70,000 crore package for the shipbuilding and maritime sector.

“The Cabinet approved a package to rejuvenate India’s shipbuilding and maritime sector. This historic move will unlock 4.5 million gross tonnage capacity, generate jobs, and attract investments,” PM Narendra Modi had said.

According to a government statement, the package comprises a four-pillar approach designed to strengthen domestic capacity, improve long-term financing, promote greenfield and brownfield ship-

The move is likely to create 30 lakh jobs, attract ₹4.5 lakh-cr. investments into the maritime sector

yard development, enhance technical capabilities and skilling, and implementation of legal, taxation and policy reforms to create a robust maritime infrastructure.

“A National Shipbuilding Mission will also be established,” the government said in the statement.

The move is expected to create almost 30 lakh jobs, and attract investments of about ₹4.5 lakh crore into the maritime sector.

(The writer is with The Hindu businessline)

GS Paper Mapping:

- **GS-III (Economy & Infrastructure):** Shipping industry, industrial policy, employment generation.
- **GS-II (Governance & Policy):** Government schemes, reforms in taxation and legal frameworks.
- **GS-I (Geography – Economic Geography):** Ports, maritime infrastructure.

Summary (English):

The Union Cabinet approved a **₹70,000 crore package** for the shipbuilding and maritime sector.

Key Highlights:

- **Objective:** To rejuvenate India's shipbuilding and maritime sector.
- **Targets:** Unlock 4.5 million gross tonnage capacity, generate jobs, and attract investment.
- **Four-pillar approach:**
 1. Strengthen domestic capacity.
 2. Improve long-term financing.
 3. Promote green shipping.
 4. Brownfield shipyard development.
- **Implementation:** A *National Shipbuilding Mission* will be launched.
- **Impact:** Expected to create **30 lakh jobs** and attract **₹4.5 lakh crore investment**.
- **Focus areas:** Skill enhancement, legal/taxation reforms, and robust maritime infrastructure.

Significance:

This initiative will boost India's maritime economy, support "Atmanirbhar Bharat," and position India strategically in global shipping and trade networks.

सारांश (हिन्दी):

केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल ने ₹70,000 करोड़ के पैकेज को मंजूरी दी है, जिसका उद्देश्य भारत के जहाज निर्माण और समुद्री क्षेत्र को पुनर्जीवित करना है।

मुख्य बिंदु:

- **लक्ष्य:** 4.5 मिलियन ग्राँस टन क्षमता विकसित करना, रोजगार सृजन करना और निवेश आकर्षित करना।
- **चार स्तंभ योजना:**
 1. घरेलू क्षमता को मजबूत करना।
 2. दीर्घकालिक वित्तपोषण सुधार।
 3. हरित शिपिंग को बढ़ावा।
 4. पुराने शिपयार्ड का विकास।
- **कार्यान्वयन:** राष्ट्रीय शिपबिल्डिंग मिशन शुरू किया जाएगा।
- **प्रभाव:** लगभग 30 लाख रोजगार और ₹4.5 लाख करोड़ निवेश की उम्मीद।
- **अन्य पहलू:** कौशल विकास, कानूनी और कर सुधार, मजबूत समुद्री अवसंरचना।

महत्व:

यह पैकेज भारत की समुद्री अर्थव्यवस्था को सशक्त करेगा, "आत्मनिर्भर भारत" को बढ़ावा देगा और भारत को वैश्विक शिपिंग एवं व्यापार नेटवर्क में रणनीतिक स्थिति दिलाएगा।

Typhoon Ragasa makes landfall in southern China

Agence France-Presse

YANGJIANG

Typhoon Ragasa made landfall in southern China on Wednesday, after battering Hong Kong and killing at least 15 in Taiwan. “Ragasa made landfall along the coast of Hailing Island, Yangjiang City, Guangdong Province around 5 p.m. (0900 GMT) on September 24,” the National Meteorological Centre said.

In Yangjiang, ferocious winds ripped signs off buildings, downing trees and destroying fences. For a period of several hours on Wednesday, the typhoon shook buildings as sheets of rain poured down on the city of more than two million people.

The weather service said that at the time of landfall, the maximum wind speed near the centre of the storm was close to 145 kmph.

GS Paper Mapping:

- **GS-I (Geography):** Climatic phenomena, tropical cyclones, disaster geography.
- **GS-III (Disaster Management):** Preparedness, impact assessment, and mitigation strategies.
- **Essay/GS-IV:** Climate change, ethics of disaster preparedness and international cooperation.

Summary (English):

- **Event:** Typhoon Ragasa struck **southern China** on September 24, making landfall along the coast of **Hailing Island, Yangjiang City, Guangdong Province**.
 - **Impact:**
 - Earlier battered **Hong Kong** and killed **at least 15 people in Taiwan**.
 - In **Yangjiang**, ferocious winds ripped signs off buildings, uprooted trees, destroyed fences, and shook buildings.
 - Heavy rainfall impacted **over 2 million people** in the city.
 - **Meteorological details:** At landfall, the maximum wind speed near the storm’s centre was **145 kmph**.
 - **Significance:** Demonstrates the increasing intensity of tropical cyclones in East Asia, raising concerns of climate change, urban vulnerability, and disaster preparedness.
-

सारांश (हिन्दी):

- **घटना:** टाइफून *रगासा* ने 24 सितम्बर को दक्षिणी चीन के हैलिंग द्वीप, यांगजियांग सिटी, ग्वांगडोंग प्रांत के तट पर लैंडफॉल किया।
- **प्रभाव:**
 - इससे पहले हांगकांग में तबाही और ताइवान में कम से कम 15 मौतें।
 - यांगजियांग में तेज हवाओं ने इमारतों से साइनबोर्ड उखाड़ दिए, पेड़ गिराए, बाड़ तोड़ी और कई इमारतें हिल गईं।
 - मूसलधार बारिश से 20 लाख से अधिक लोग प्रभावित हुए।
- **मौसम संबंधी तथ्य:** लैंडफॉल के समय तूफान की अधिकतम गति 145 किमी/घंटा दर्ज की गई।
- **महत्व:** यह घटना पूर्वी एशिया में उष्णकटिबंधीय चक्रवातों की बढ़ती तीव्रता को दर्शाती है, जिससे जलवायु परिवर्तन, शहरी संवेदनशीलता और आपदा प्रबंधन पर गंभीर सवाल उठते हैं।