

2024



01 to 31

# AUGUST EDITORIALS

# Awaited

## MONEY BILL VERDICT



**The Supreme Court's decision on the Money Bill's classification will impact India's federal structure and legislative process.**



A seven-judge Bench of the Supreme Court of India will soon address the classification of Money Bills, a ruling that will affect India's legislative balance, especially regarding the Rajya Sabha's role. The case arises from the 2017 Finance Act, which was certified as a Money Bill, significantly altering tribunal structures. Petitioners argue that these changes fail to meet the constitutional definition of a Money Bill, which should focus on financial matters as specified in Article 110 of the Constitution.

The Finance Act's classification as a Money Bill is contentious because it included broader legislative changes not strictly related to financial issues. The Act granted the executive significant powers, including rule-making authority over tribunals, which typically wouldn't fall under a Money Bill's scope. The Supreme Court's decision will clarify the interpretation of Article 110 and the appropriate use of Money Bills, impacting the legislative power balance between the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.

Justice Sikri's earlier ruling in the Aadhaar case highlighted the need for stricter adherence to the constitutional definition of a Money Bill. The Supreme Court's verdict is expected to provide crucial guidance on maintaining India's federal structure and ensuring that legislative processes adhere to constitutional requirements. The decision will also address concerns about bypassing the Rajya Sabha, thereby reinforcing the integrity of India's bicameral legislative system.

## Sub-Quota

# JUSTIFICATION

“ The editorial discusses the Supreme Court's endorsement of sub-quotas among Scheduled Castes to promote substantive equality. ”



This decision marks a shift towards deeper equality by recognizing diversity and accommodating historical and social disabilities. The ruling overturns a 2005 verdict (*E.V. Chinnaiah vs AP*) that deemed sub-classification within SCs unconstitutional. The majority opinion, supported by six judges against one, acknowledges that SCs are not a homogenous group and have varying levels of social and economic advancement. The court's decision enables States to identify and support the weakest sections within SCs, aligning with the principle that affirmative action should benefit the most disadvantaged. The introduction of the "creamy layer" concept, previously applied only to Other Backward Classes (OBCs), is discussed. Justice B.R. Gavai highlights that the creamy layer norms for SCs should differ from those for OBCs. While excluding the advanced sections among Dalits was not a core issue in this judgment, the opinions suggest it might become relevant in future discussions. The focus remains on preventing marginalization within Dalit communities by ensuring the weakest benefit from affirmative action policies.

The jurisprudence of affirmative action has progressed from formal equality to substantive equality, focusing on non-discrimination. The recent Supreme Court judgment allows States to categorize Scheduled Castes (SCs) into groups, granting preferential treatment to the most backward among them.

# Psychology OF WEALTH

“ The extravagant display of wealth by billionaires, its social implications, and psychological underpinnings. ”



The ostentatious display of wealth by billionaires and its stark contrast with the widespread poverty and inequality in contemporary society. A study by economists highlights the severe wealth disparity in India, where the top 1% hold 40 times more wealth than the average Indian, while the bottom 50% and middle 40% hold significantly less. The NITI Aayog's report reveals that despite some poverty alleviation, wealth is still concentrated among the upper castes. The editorial references sociologist Thorstein Veblen's "The Theory of the Leisure Class," which critiques the conspicuous consumption of the affluent as a means of gaining social status. Harvard professor Michael J. Sandel's "The Tyranny of Merit" and John Rawls' "egalitarian argument" are discussed to illustrate the ethical and psychological motivations behind wealth accumulation and the neglect of social responsibility. Sandel's ideas on the rights of the underprivileged are also examined, emphasizing that success often stems from unearned advantages rather than merit. The editorial concludes by highlighting the enduring power of wealth in shaping societal perceptions and perpetuating inequality.



# Stock Market SPECULATION

“The positive impacts of stock market speculation on the economy.”

The misconceptions surrounding stock market speculation, often seen as gambling, and highlights its benefits for the economy. It begins by noting the Indian government's recent decision to raise taxes on capital gains and the securities transaction tax on derivatives, based on the belief that stock market profits are akin to gambling. Contrary to this belief, the editorial explains how capital gains play a crucial role in efficient capital allocation. It argues that when investors buy undervalued stocks and bid up their prices, they help direct resources to promising businesses, thus supporting economic growth.

Moreover, the speculation allows for better risk management and efficient allocation of resources. During crises like pandemics, the availability of capital for essential sectors, such as healthcare and infrastructure, is vital. Speculators, by forecasting future market trends and making informed investment decisions, contribute to this allocation.



The importance of derivatives in managing risks and providing liquidity. Derivatives allow investors to hedge against price fluctuations and ensure market stability. The criticism that trading derivatives is similar to gambling is addressed by clarifying that these financial instruments serve to manage risks, not create them.

Lastly, understanding the role of speculators and the benefits of speculation can lead to better public policy and economic outcomes, emphasizing that speculation, when conducted responsibly, is far from mere gambling and significantly benefits the economy.

# India's ECONOMIC GROWTH



“India's rapid economic growth needs strategic policies and inclusive development to achieve a \$30 trillion economy by 2047.”

India's remarkable economic growth, with a 7%+ GDP growth rate positioning it as the world's fastest-growing major economy. Despite this, the goal of achieving a \$30 trillion economy by 2047 requires inclusive growth policies to avoid past pitfalls experienced by other countries. India must focus on leveraging its large working-age population, which has the potential to drive significant economic growth if employed productively. The editorial highlights the necessity for rapid economic growth while addressing income inequality, and stresses the importance of manufacturing and industrial development, drawing lessons from successful East Asian economies.

Policies must emphasize high employment, low-skilled manufacturing, and robust exports. To avoid the middle-income trap, India needs to integrate into global supply chains, invest in quality education, healthcare, and infrastructure, and ensure ease of doing business. Additionally, India must focus on creating a skilled labor force and developing a cluster-led industrial model to attract investments and drive economic diversification. These steps are essential for sustainable economic growth and achieving the ambitious \$30 trillion economy target.



# *Strengthening* **COUNTER-TERROR GRID**

“The measures being taken to enhance counter-terrorism efforts in Jammu and Kashmir by inducting additional troops and leveraging local support.”

The challenges faced by security forces in Jammu and Kashmir due to weakened counter-terrorism grid caused by the redeployment of troops after the Galwan incident in June 2020. To address this, approximately 3,000 Army troops and 500 special forces have been inducted into the region. Additionally, Assam Rifles troops have been deployed to strengthen operations, emphasizing the seriousness of the deteriorating security scenario. The key focus is on integrating these troops with the local population to gain support and enhance operational effectiveness. This involves sub-units engaging in psychological operations and gaining the confidence of the locals. The outlines the classical teaching of counter-insurgency, dividing the local population into sub-sets, with success depending on sustaining minority support and winning over the majority. Historical context is provided by referencing the Operation Dudhi in 1991, underscoring the importance of experienced commanders. The piece concludes that while newly-inducted troops face challenges, their deployment must be strategic and integrated to ensure long-term success and stability in the region.



# Just Transition LITIGATION

“ The potential of just transition litigation in India, particularly in the context of the Supreme Court's handling of climate and biodiversity issues.”

The editorial examines the Supreme Court of India's April 2024 decision in *M.K. Ranjinisha and Others vs Union of India*, which addresses the adverse impacts of climate change. While the decision has sparked debate, especially regarding its approach to biodiversity protection, the article emphasizes the importance of framing the core issue—climate action—within the concept of just transition.



Just transition, though traditionally focused on protecting workers affected by environmental regulations, is now expanding to include equitable climate action. The editorial argues that framing the Supreme Court's decision in this context will facilitate fair and inclusive climate action, recognizing the interconnectedness of human and non-human environments. This approach could prevent the adversarial framing of biodiversity protection and decarbonization, allowing courts to balance competing interests without sacrificing one for the other.

Moreover, the editorial suggests that this case is an opportunity for the Court to apply the just transition concept more broadly, particularly in renewable energy projects and other areas impacting biodiversity. If successful, just transition litigation could guide future legal developments and research, potentially influencing climate litigation in India and internationally. As the country moves towards net-zero, the need for a fair distribution of the burdens and benefits of decarbonization will only grow, making just transition an increasingly relevant legal framework.



# Gendered DISPLACEMENT

“The gender-specific challenges faced by displaced women, particularly in India, highlighting the need for inclusive refugee rights and policies.”



The gendered nature of displacement, emphasizing that women and girls comprise a significant portion of the refugee population globally, including in India. Displaced women face unique challenges, including gender-based violence, psychological trauma, and a disproportionate burden of caregiving. The article explains how social and gender inequalities further marginalize these women, particularly those with disabilities, who often lack access to essential services and mental health care. The editorial critiques the lack of adequate support systems for these vulnerable groups and calls for stronger community participation and policy reforms to address their needs. It also discusses India's obligations under international conventions, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), and the gaps in the implementation of these rights domestically. The piece concludes by urging for a more inclusive and effective framework to support displaced women, especially those with disabilities, in India.

# Precision NUTRITION IN SPORTS

“Precision nutrition strategies are essential in sports to enhance performance and avoid health risks like disqualification due to weight issues.”

The disqualification of Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat from the Paris Olympics 2024 due to weight issues, emphasizing the need for precision nutrition in sports. It highlights the importance of integrating individual dietary recommendations tailored to an athlete's unique characteristics and circumstances. Precision nutrition involves understanding an athlete's metabolism, microbiome, and other biological factors to make evidence-based nutritional decisions. This personalized approach can help athletes maintain optimal health and performance, avoiding the pitfalls of a one-size-fits-all dietary plan. The role of continuous monitoring using devices like Continuous Glucose Monitors (CGMs), which help track glucose responses and other health parameters in real-time. Such monitoring can assist in making informed dietary decisions during training and competitions, ultimately helping athletes stay within required weight limits and avoid health issues like dehydration and muscle loss.

The involvement of sports nutritionists in developing and monitoring tailored nutritional plans for athletes, emphasizing the importance of real-time data to ensure athletes are in peak condition. The case of Phogat is presented as a reminder of the critical role that targeted nutrition plays in high-level sports, stressing the need for a more scientific and individualized approach to athlete nutrition to avoid such setbacks.



# *Disinformation* **AND AI THREATS**

**“The growing security threats posed by AI and disinformation, emphasizing the need for vigilance in the face of evolving cyber dangers. ”**



The year 2024 has seen an alarming rise in security threats, particularly from AI-driven disinformation and cyberattacks. The article highlights the increasing concerns of experts worldwide, especially with major global events like the 2024 Summer Olympics, which were potential targets for digital attacks. Although no significant incidents occurred during the Games, the absence of attacks does not eliminate the looming threats. The editorial points to the growing use of AI to create and spread disinformation, manipulate media, and disrupt critical infrastructure, with references to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine as a case study. A recent preview of such a scenario was the CrowdStrike outage, showing how a minor software glitch could lead to a significant cyberattack affecting millions of devices. The article also revisits past cyber incidents like the WannaCry ransomware attack, emphasizing that current systems may not be equipped to handle the more sophisticated AI-enabled threats of today. The author stresses the urgent need for global cooperation and preparedness to counter these evolving dangers, noting that AI can be both a tool and a weapon in the hands of those seeking to exploit vulnerabilities in digital systems.



# South Asia's TUMULT



“ India faces repeated challenges in South Asia, necessitating a pragmatic and inclusive approach to regional diplomacy. ”

The series of political upheavals in South Asia, highlighting India's struggles to navigate its relationships with neighboring countries. Events such as the Taliban's rise in Afghanistan, political changes in Sri Lanka and Nepal, and shifts in Bangladesh's governance have put India in a challenging position. India's approach, often seen as supporting one side over another, has led to strained relationships, particularly in Bangladesh where the current government's actions have alienated many. The editorial argues that India must avoid appearing partisan and adopt a more inclusive and pragmatic foreign policy, emphasizing the need to maintain stability, avoid reputational damage, and engage with all political factions in the region. This includes acknowledging the influence of global powers like China and the need for a balanced approach that considers internal and external perspectives. By learning from past mistakes and adopting a more flexible and diplomatic stance, India can better manage the complexities of its neighborhood.

# India's Path to INDEPENDENCE

“ The rapid progression towards India's independence, highlighting the key events, trials, and political dynamics that catalyzed the country's eventual freedom. ”



Seventy-nine years ago, Britain's global dominance, lasting over three centuries, began to wane following World War II. The Labour Party's victory in 1945 under Clement Attlee marked the beginning of the end for British rule in India. Winston Churchill's reluctance to grant self-governance was overridden by post-war economic challenges and growing Indian resistance. The Red Fort trials, particularly the trial of the Indian National Army (INA) officers, galvanized India's freedom movement, uniting people across religious and regional lines against British rule. The British, desperate to maintain control, sought to exploit religious divisions, but their efforts backfired, igniting widespread protests and a renewed sense of unity among Indians. The editorial also reflects on how these trials, along with increasing global awareness and political pressures, contributed to the rapid movement towards India's independence and partition, culminating in the final transfer of power on August 15, 1947. The trials of the INA officers, in particular, became a symbol of resistance and Indian nationalism, ultimately leading to the collapse of British authority in India.



# Welfare NEGLECT IN BUDGET

“ The Indian government's persistent underfunding of welfare schemes, highlighting the adverse impact on the marginalized population. ”

The Union Budget's failure to address the critical needs of India's marginalized population by consistently underfunding key welfare schemes. Despite repeated calls to increase expenditure on welfare, the government has continued to reduce allocations, especially for crucial programs like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and the National Food Security Act (NFSA). These schemes, which serve as lifelines for the poor, have seen significant budget cuts over the years, leading to a decline in their effectiveness. The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government's approach has particularly impacted vulnerable groups, including widows, the elderly, and those living below the poverty line. The article also highlights the inadequate funding for nutrition and health programs, which have resulted in high rates of malnutrition and chronic illness among children. While there has been a slight increase in the Budget allocation for health, it is deemed insufficient given the vast needs of the population. The editorial concludes by contrasting the government's focus on fiscal consolidation with the urgent need to address the widening inequality in the country, arguing that a more inclusive and welfare-oriented approach is necessary to support India's poorest citizens.



# India's challenge

## INFLATION CHALLENGE

“ India's inflation control measures, especially regarding food prices, require reevaluation due to their significant impact on the economy and household expenditures. ”

The critical issue of inflation in India, particularly the role of food prices in shaping inflationary trends. The recent suggestions to exclude food prices from the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) inflation targets may undermine efforts to control inflation effectively. Food prices have been highly volatile, with a sharp year-on-year increase recently. This has elevated overall inflation to historically high levels, even before the impact of global events like the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine war.

The practice of 'inflation targeting,' where the RBI adjusts its policies to meet a specific inflation target, has faced challenges, especially with food inflation. The ignoring food price fluctuations in inflation measurement is misguided since food comprises a significant portion of household expenditures. It notes that, unlike in other economies where food inflation is less impactful, India's unique economic structure makes food price changes crucial to overall inflation. Moreover, historical data suggests that the RBI's measures have not significantly impacted inflation rates.

The more comprehensive approach to inflation control that considers the broader implications of agricultural production and supply chain dynamics, urging policymakers to address the root causes of inflation rather than merely focusing on monetary policy adjustments.



# Migrant Realities

## INGIG ECONOMY

“ The challenges and exploitation faced by migrant workers in Karnataka's booming gig economy, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. ”

The increasing presence of migrant workers in Karnataka's gig economy, particularly those employed by home delivery services and aggregator platforms like Uber and Ola. The pandemic led to a significant rise in the number of migrants engaging in gig work as traditional job opportunities dwindled. However, these workers often face exploitation, earning less due to platform policies that favor local workers and penalize migrants who speak out against unfair practices.

The Karnataka government proposed a 'quota-for-local' bill, aimed at ensuring job security for locals, but its impact on migrant gig workers remains unclear. The article points out that while such legislation might protect local workers, it may further marginalize migrant workers, leading to more precarious working conditions. The lack of local support and the dominance of non-local migrant workers in certain regions exacerbate the situation.

The various platforms and delivery companies are adopting schemes to reduce their reliance on migrant workers, either by encouraging local participation or offering alternative models such as fleet ownership. Ultimately, the editorial questions whether these developments will improve or worsen the already precarious situation for migrant workers in Karnataka's gig sector.





# *Protecting Indian* **INVESTMENTS**

“ **The legal frameworks available to safeguard Indian investments in Bangladesh amidst political uncertainties.** ”

There is potential risks to Indian investments in Bangladesh due to the political instability following Sheikh Hasina's resignation. Indian companies have significantly invested in various sectors, and these investments could be jeopardized by new regulatory measures or a hostile shift in government policies. The three key legal frameworks available to protect these investments: the domestic laws of the host country, contracts between investors and the host state, and international law, particularly bilateral investment treaties (BITs). The India-Bangladesh BIT, signed in 2009, plays a crucial role in protecting Indian investments by preventing unlawful expropriation and ensuring fair and equitable treatment (FET). However, the Joint Interpretative Notes (JIN) introduced by India and Bangladesh in 2017 dilute these protections by focusing more on the capital-importing country's regulatory rights. The editorial argues that while the immediate concern is Bangladesh, India must strengthen its investment protection mechanisms globally to safeguard its expanding outbound investments.



# *Sustainable* MASSEMPLOYMENT

“ The editorial discusses a strategic roadmap for creating sustainable mass employment in India, emphasizing skill development, community engagement, and institutional reforms.”

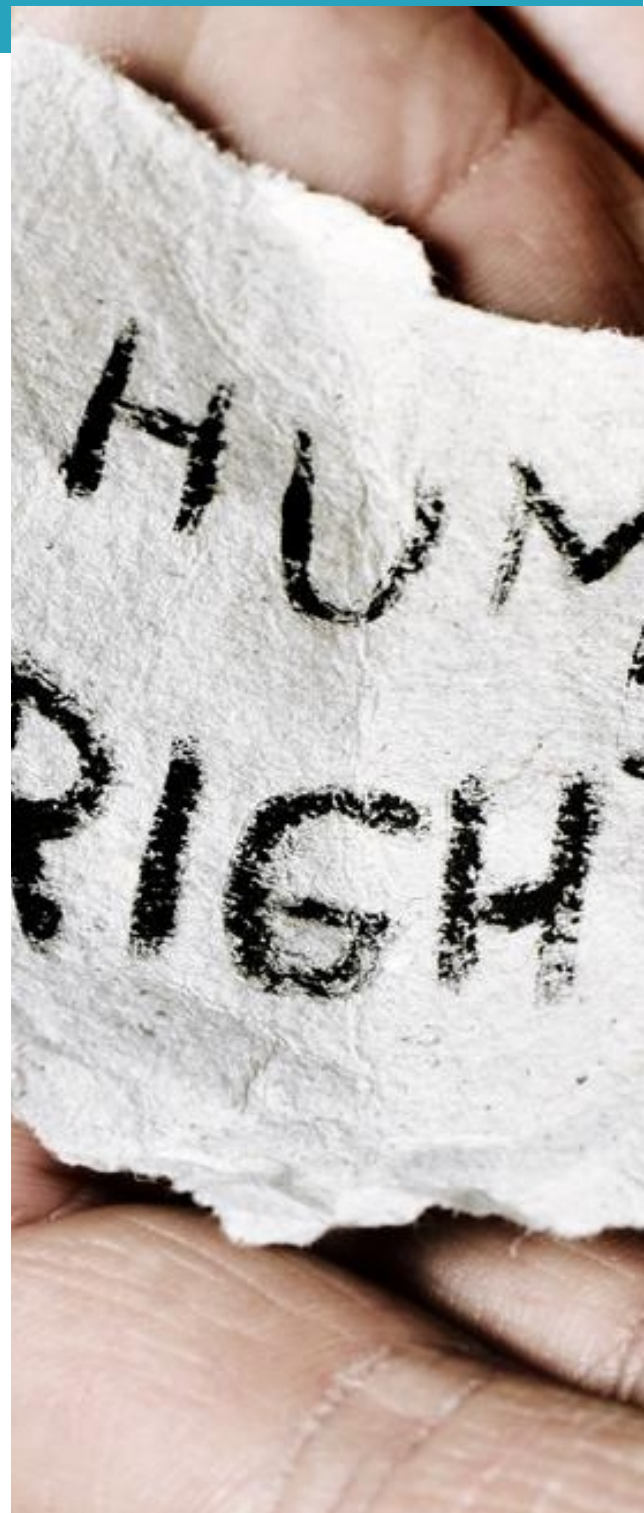


The article outlines a comprehensive approach to sustainable mass employment in India, emphasizing the need for evidence-based policies that address the bottom of the wage pyramid. It highlights the importance of skill development, education, and decentralised community action in creating dignified and sustainable employment opportunities. The article suggests creating a report on the skill training needs of every youth and involving professionals in these efforts. It also stresses the need to integrate need-based vocational courses alongside undergraduate programs and standardize healthcare professional training according to international standards. The role of community institutions in running childcare centers, training creche care-givers, and fostering local entrepreneurship is underscored. Additionally, the article advocates for incentivizing start-ups and innovation, particularly in sectors like banking, through measures like credit facilitation and new financing products. Finally, the importance of integrating technology and enterprise education in schools is highlighted, to prepare students for a rapidly evolving job market.

# Moral Pressure ON HUMAN RIGHTS

“ The editorial discusses the role of moral pressure and international law in ensuring compliance with human rights, especially against authoritarian regimes. ”

The article explores the two main approaches to enforcing human rights compliance: economic sanctions or military action, and moral pressure. While economic sanctions and military force are effective against powerful nations, moral pressure is the key strategy for influencing regimes lacking international power. The practice of "naming and shaming," highlighting violations by specific governments, can sometimes push them towards compliance, although authoritarian regimes often resist such pressure. The article emphasizes that while moral pressure, especially from international bodies like Amnesty International or the United Nations, can bring human rights violations to light, it frequently faces resistance. Governments may react by denying allegations, making superficial changes, or dismissing international scrutiny. Despite these challenges, the importance of moral pressure remains undeniable. However, there is a need for a stronger global consensus and legal mechanisms that protect human rights universally, even in the face of political and cultural opposition. The article concludes by stressing the necessity for the state to uphold human rights as a binding principle, not just as a moral obligation, but as a fundamental aspect of legal and political governance in a rapidly evolving world.



# Waqf BILL REFORMS

“The 2024 Waqf Bill aims to address issues and introduce positive changes to the family waqf system, balancing tradition with modern reforms.”

The Waqf Bill 2024, recently referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee, seeks to address various concerns surrounding the family waqf system. Key issues include the abolition of waqf by usage, protection against illegal encroachment, and the inclusion of women and non-Muslims in waqf boards. While the Bill faces opposition, it also introduces positive changes such as digitization and the inclusion of family waqfs in the legal framework. The Bill also acknowledges the colonial impact on waqfs and aims to modernize the system. Family waqfs, historically used to protect family property and ensure its charitable use, have faced varying degrees of restriction and abolition across the Muslim world. The proposed Section 3A(2) of the 2024 Bill addresses inheritance rights, allowing a Muslim to create a family waqf only if he does not exclude his heirs. This reform aligns with broader legal trends and aims to integrate the waqf system more effectively into contemporary Indian law. The article emphasizes that while preserving the unique tradition of waqf, the Bill's changes are essential for adapting to modern societal needs.





# Board Exam MARK INFLATION



**“The article discusses the recurring allegations of mark inflation in Indian board exams, its impact on education, and the need for transparency in the evaluation process.”**

The editorial addresses the widespread perception that Indian school boards inflate marks in classes 10 and 12, leading to concerns about the credibility of board examinations. Despite a consistent increase in pass percentages across various boards, the editorial highlights the variation in students scoring above 60%, which indicates mark compression—particularly in high-achieving students. This compression is seen as detrimental, as it clusters marks at the higher levels, reducing their value.

The editorial also emphasizes the flaws in the current system, where marks are increasingly seen as an inadequate measure of a student's knowledge and potential. The focus shifts to entrance exams for higher education, which are becoming more significant as a result. The article calls for a standardized approach to board exams, suggesting the adoption of scientific assessments like the National Achievement Survey (NAS) to provide a more accurate reflection of student performance.

Furthermore, the editorial advocates for transparency in the awarding process, urging for a reformation in the publication of marks, consideration for difficult questions, and the establishment of a fair moderation system. Ultimately, the article stresses the need for educational reforms that ensure fairness and credibility in evaluating students, preventing mark inflation and fostering genuine academic achievement.



# Reality OF EXPLOITATION

“The Hema Committee report highlights the exploitation and gender discrimination faced by women in the Malayalam film industry, calling for structural reforms and greater government intervention.”

The Justice K. Hema Committee report, released by the Kerala government in August 2024, exposes the deep-rooted exploitation and gender discrimination prevalent in the Malayalam film industry. The report identifies two primary issues: the sexual exploitation of women, where refusal to comply with demands often results in career sabotage, and discriminatory practices, including the lack of basic facilities for women. These issues, reflective of broader societal problems, are exacerbated by patriarchal norms and the objectification of women, which perpetuate a culture of sexual assault and workplace harassment.

The report questions the effectiveness of the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) in the film industry, suggesting that it is vulnerable to influence by powerful individuals. Instead, it advocates for the creation of an independent forum, overseen by the government, to address these issues. Furthermore, the report underscores the need for the government to lead structural reforms, focusing on improving working conditions, ensuring accountability, and addressing the specific challenges faced by women in lower strata of the industry.

The findings of the Hema Committee are seen as a crucial step toward empowering women in the workplace, urging society and the government to take collective responsibility in combating gender inequality and exploitation.

# Caste CENSUS DELAY

“The editorial discusses the implications and urgency of conducting the delayed Census, emphasizing that caste enumeration should not cause further delays.”



The editorial addresses the Union government's consideration of including caste enumeration in the long-delayed Census, a demand strongly pushed by several political parties. However, it cautions against rushing into this inclusion due to the previous issues with the 2011 Socio-Economic and Caste Census, which was deemed inaccurate and unusable. The government is urged to set a clear time frame for the Census rather than using the caste enumeration as a reason for further delays. The editorial criticizes the government for not conducting the Census yet, noting that India is one of the few countries globally that hasn't done so in this decade, citing the pandemic as a reason. However, 143 other countries managed to conduct their Census post-2020 despite facing various challenges.

The editorial emphasizes the critical role the Census plays in public policy, administrative boundary determination, and various social welfare schemes. The continued delay is leading to outdated data, affecting surveys and public policies, as well as fueling debates over methodology. The reliance on outdated 2011 Census data is seen as inadequate for addressing current socio-economic issues like migration, urbanization, and suburbanization. The Union government is urged to expedite the Census process without further delay, ensuring that caste enumeration does not hinder the overall progress.



# Advancing EQUITY IN HEALTH

“The article discusses global efforts to address the Mpox outbreak by leveraging COVID-19 lessons to ensure equitable access to vaccines and strengthen international health cooperation.”



Less than five years after the COVID-19 pandemic, the world faces the threat of another global health crisis with the resurgence of Mpox. The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared Mpox a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), marking the first time regional and global health emergencies have been declared concurrently for the same disease. The declaration emphasizes the importance of international cooperation, the need for coordinated responses, and the inclusion of equity as a core principle in global health regulations.

The Mpox outbreak presents an opportunity to apply lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic by scaling up vaccine production in the Global South, particularly in India, which is well-positioned to lead these efforts. Ensuring technology transfers, especially for low-cost production and equitable access, is critical. The collaboration between international organizations, governments, and non-governmental organizations is essential for effective responses.

The article highlights the need for comprehensive technology transfer and the sharing of knowledge beyond just vaccine doses to support long-term preparedness. Indian manufacturers, with experience from COVID-19, can play a crucial role in ensuring equitable vaccine distribution. Regulatory authorities and international cooperation will be key in navigating the challenges posed by the ongoing Mpox outbreak, emphasizing the importance of a coordinated global response to future health emergencies.

29-08-2024

# Strengthening INDIA'S TBFIGHT

“India must innovate and utilize new treatments and technologies to eliminate tuberculosis (TB) efficiently.”



India bears a significant global burden of tuberculosis (TB), with political commitment driving efforts to combat the disease. The recent focus is on eliminating TB, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi urging citizens to participate in this mission. The editorial emphasizes the need to adopt new shorter treatment regimens for drug-resistant TB, as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO). These regimens, like the BPaL/M, are more effective, require fewer tablets, and have higher success rates, with countries already beginning to roll them out. The savings from transitioning to BPaL/M could be substantial, with global health systems potentially saving \$740 million annually. The article further stresses the importance of advanced diagnostic tools, including AI-driven portable X-rays and rapid molecular tests, to quickly identify and treat TB cases. With these advancements, India can improve treatment outcomes, especially in vulnerable and underserved populations. The editorial concludes by advocating for a focused and proactive approach to eliminating TB, aligning new technologies and treatments with public health strategies to ensure timely and accurate diagnosis and care.

# Strengthening STATE ELECTION COMMISSIONS

“ Empowering and reforming State Election Commissions (SECs) is essential for safeguarding grassroots democracy in India.”



State Election Commissions (SECs) play a crucial role in overseeing elections for local government bodies, such as panchayats and urban local governments. Established by constitutional amendments, these commissions have faced increasing interference and disempowerment by state governments, resulting in delayed elections and reduced autonomy. Regular and timely local elections are essential for ensuring effective grassroots democracy and delivering services at the local level. SECs must be empowered with greater independence, including the establishment of a multi-member commission to ensure impartiality. Regular review and delimitation of electoral boundaries and reservation of seats every ten years are necessary to prevent manipulation by state governments.

SECs should also be responsible for overseeing the elections of local officials, such as mayors and council heads, to prevent undue influence from state authorities. These reforms are vital for enhancing transparency, accountability, and the effective functioning of local self-governance, thereby strengthening the democratic framework at the grassroots level in India.



# *Collapse*

## COLLAPSE OF CATEGORIES

“ The article explores the fluidity of gender and identity categories and their implications on societal norms and individual autonomy. ”



The editorial delves into the evolving and increasingly fluid nature of categories such as gender and identity, challenging the rigid boundaries that have traditionally defined individuals and their roles in society. It discusses instances from the 2024 Paris Olympics, where athletes faced disqualification based on outdated gender classifications, and examines how gender, once seen as a biological fact, is now viewed as a spectrum, particularly in Western societies. The article highlights the debate over sex as a choice, influenced by social, legal, and medical interpretations, and reflects on how individual autonomy has shifted from mind-body unity to a preference for mental over physical identity. It also discusses the broader implications of this shift on societal norms, political ideologies, and the law, emphasizing the tension between maintaining traditional categories and embracing a more fluid understanding of human identity. The article concludes by considering the impact of these changes on liberalism, societal structures, and the ongoing debate over gender affirming treatments.