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MK Yadav Sir

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INDIAN EXPRESS | Pg 20/Aug 14

BHARATIYA NYAYA SANHITA, 2023

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

Why Delhi HC is hearing a plea against exclusion of IPC Sec 377 in BNS

AJOY SINHA KARPURAM
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 14

THE DELHI High Court on Tuesday asked the Centre to clarify its stance on non-consensual sexual offences against LGBTQIA+ persons and men under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS). The new criminal law came into force on July 1, 2024, and replaced the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (IPC).

Issue before the court

The Supreme Court in *Navtej Singh Johar v. Union of India* (2018) decriminalised homosexuality by ruling that Section 377 (unnatural offences) of the IPC would not punish people in same-sex relationships. This provision punished anyone who "voluntarily has carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal".

Despite the SC's reinterpretation, however, Section 377 remained in the text of the IPC until the BNS came into force — where it was deleted entirely.

However, this may have had unforeseen consequences, according to the petitioners who have approached the Delhi HC. They have argued that Section 377 provided protections to men and LGBTQIA+ individuals from non-consensual sexual intercourse even after the *Navtej Johar* verdict.

Rape in BNS, IPC

Chapter V of the BNS is titled "Of offences against women and child" and provides the definition and punishment for the crime of rape under Section 63. But the language of the section is gendered — it only considers rape in the context of a man committing the crime against a woman. On the other hand, Section 377 (while it was still on the books) punished non-consensual intercourse "with any man, woman or animal".

The SC's 2018 verdict referred to those areas of Section 377 that criminalised consensual unnatural sex as "irrational, indefensible and manifestly arbitrary". The court noted that the section was used as a weapon to harass and discriminate against members of the LGBTQIA+ community. However, the court clarified that its judgment was limited to decriminalising consensual sex between adults.

This is why, in its 2023 report on the BNS, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs recommended retaining Section 377 in the new law. It said: "In the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, no provision for non-consensual sexual offence against male, female, transgender and for bestiality has been made."

EXPLAINED LAW

In BNS, alternative protections

That said, Section 36 of the BNS provides every person with the "right of private defence" to protect their own body or the body of another person "against any offence affecting the human body".

Section 38 details the situations where this right allows the "voluntary causing of death or of any other harm to the assailant". This includes situations where a person is faced with "an assault with the intention of committing rape" or "an assault with the intention of gratifying unnatural lust". Unlike the offence of rape, these provisions are not limited to women or any specific gender.

Section 140 of the BNS punishes kidnapping or abduction where the victim is "subjected to grievous hurt, or slavery, or to the unnatural lust of any person".

However, in both cases (private defence and kidnapping) the phrase "unnatural lust" has not been defined.

Arguments in Delhi HC

On Monday, a Delhi HC Bench comprising Acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela began to hear a PIL filed by lawyer Gantavya Gulati. The petitioner argued that "Section 377 of IPC in its absence poses threat to every individual but especially LGBTQ persons". The petitioner also said the BNS does not contain any protections for a man who is sexually assaulted by another man.

The Centre, however, argued that the court could not direct the legislature to enact a provision even if there was an anomaly in the law. The government counsel pointed out that a representation had already been filed flagging this issue with the Union government, and was pending consideration.

The Bench directed the Centre to return on August 28 to clarify its stance on non-consensual sexual offences following the deletion of Section 377.

Context: The Delhi High Court has requested the Centre to clarify its position on non-consensual sexual offences against LGBTQIA+ individuals and men under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS).

Alternative protections under the BNS

- **Section 36:** It grants individuals the right to defend their own body or another person's body against any offence, as well as to protect property from theft, robbery, mischief, or trespassing.
- **Section 38**: It allows the voluntary causing of death or harm to an assailant in situations involving serious threats, such as an assault with the intent to commit rape or satisfy "unnatural lust."
- **Section 140**: It penalizes kidnapping or abduction where the victim is subjected to grievous hurt, slavery, or "unnatural lust," but the term "unnatural lust" remains undefined in the law.

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023

- **Reform and Modernization**: The BNS 2023 aims to overhaul India's outdated criminal justice system, proposing a replacement for the Indian Penal Code (IPC) of 1860.
- **Retained Provisions:** The BNS maintains existing IPC provisions against murder, abetment of suicide, assault, and causing grievous hurt.
- **New Offenses**: Introduces offenses related to organized crime, terrorism, and group-led violence based on specific grounds.
- **Age Threshold Increase**: Raises the age threshold for victims to be considered minors in gangrape cases from 16 to 18 years.
- **Sedition Removal**: The BNS removes the offense of sedition from the law.
- **Terrorism Definition**: Defines terrorism broadly, covering acts that threaten national unity, public order, or intimidate the public.
- Prescribes death or life imprisonment with fines for terrorist acts resulting in death.
- **Organized Crime**: Covers organized crimes like kidnapping, extortion, contract killings, land grabbing, financial scams, and cybercrime by crime syndicates.
- **Mob Lynching:** Introduces offenses related to mob lynching, defined as murder or grievous hurt by five or more individuals based on discriminatory factors.

THE HINDU Pg14/Aug 14

INDIA'S RAMSAR SITES

(Syllabus GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

Three more Ramsar wetland sites now in India, taking total to 85

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

The Environment Ministry on Wednesday said three more wetlands in India had been designated Ramsar sites. This brings the total number of such sites in India to 85. The new sites are the Nanjarayan and Kazhuveli bird sanctuaries in Tamil Nadu and the Tawa reservoir in Madhya Pradesh.

"As the nation gears up to celebrate its Independence Day, thrilled to share that we have added three Ramsar sites to our network. This takes our tally to 85 Ramsar sites, covering an area of 13,58,068 hectares in India," Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav posted on the social media platform X.

India is one of the "contracting parties" to the Ramsar Convention, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. It became a signatory in 1982. From 1982 to 2013, a total of 26 sites were added to the list of Ramsar sites in the country. From 2014 to 2024, the country has added 59 wetlands to the list. Currently, Tamil Nadu has the highest number of Ramsar sites (18), followed by Uttar Pradesh (10).

India's Ramsar wetlands make up around 10% of the total wetland area in the country across 18 States. No other South Asian country has as many sites though this has much to do with India's geographical breadth and tropical diversity.

The United Kingdom (175) and Mexico (142) – smaller countries than India – have the most Ramsar sites, whereas Bolivia spans the largest area, with 1,48,000 sq. km under the convention's protection.

Being designated a Ramsar site does not necessarily invite extra international funds, but the Centre and States must ensure these tracts of land are conserved and saved from man-made encroachment. Acquiring this label also helps with a locale's tourism potential and its international visibility.

To be a Ramsar site, a wetland must meet at least one of the nine criteria defined by the Ramsar Convention such as supporting vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species or threatened ecological communities; regularly supporting 20,000 or more waterbirds; or is an important source of food for fish, spawning ground, nursery and/or migration path on which fish stocks are dependent upon.



On safe territory: Ruddy Shelducks at the Nanjarayan Bird Sanctuary in Tiruppur, Tamil Nadu. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Context: The Environment Ministry announced the designation of three additional wetlands in India as 'Ramsar sites,' raising the country's total to 85.

India's Ramsar Sites

- **Percentage of Wetland Area**: India's Ramsar wetlands comprise around 10% of the total wetland area in the country.
- **States Covered:** These wetlands are spread across 18 States in India.
- **Ramsar Sites in South Asia**: No other South Asian country has as many Ramsar sites as India.
- **Global Comparison:** The United Kingdom (175) and Mexico (142) have more Ramsar sites than India, despite being smaller countries.
- **The three new sites are**: The Nanjarayan Bird Sanctuary; the Kazhuveli Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu; and the Tawa Reservoir in Madhya Pradesh.

Ramsar Convention

- **About:** It is the intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.
- **Timeline**: The Convention was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 and came into force in 1975.
- **Contracting Parties**: Almost 90% of UN member states have become "Contracting Parties" (172).
- **Membership of India**: India is a part of the Ramsar Convention and signed in 1982.
- **Criteria**: To be Ramsar site, however, it must meet at least one of the nine criteria defined by the Ramsar Convention of 1971, including supporting vulnerable, endangered, or
    - Critically endangered species
    - Threatened ecological communities; or regularly supports 20,000 or more waterbirds; or
    - It is an important source of food for fishes, spawning ground, nursery and/or migration path on which fish stocks are dependent upon.

LIVEMINT Aug 15

GURMAR PLANT
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env and Eco)

Anti-diabetic herb Gurmar found on Gaya's Brahmayoni Hill

Context: A team of researchers recently discovered a variety of medicinal plants, including Gymnema sylvestre (Gurmar), at Brahmayoni Hill in Gaya, Bihar.

Gurmar Plant

- **About:** It is a perennial plant, commonly recognized as an anti-diabetic herb.
- **Also known as**: Gymnema, Australian cowplant, and Periploca of the woods.
- **Distribution**: Gurmar is indigenous to India and thrives in the tropical forests of central, western, and southern regions.
- **Global Presence:** The plant also grows in tropical areas of Africa, Australia, and China.
- **Active Compounds**: The plant is rich in compounds such as gymnemic acid, gymnemasides, anthraquinones, flavones, hentriacontane, pentatriacontane, phytin, resins, tartaric acid, and formic acid.
- **Blood Sugar Regulation**: Gymnemic acid in Gurmar reduces blood sugar levels by occupying receptor sites in the intestine, thereby reducing cravings for sweetness.
- **Applications**
  - **Anti-Diabetic Drug Development:** Gurmar was used in the development of the anti-diabetic drug BGR-34 by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).
  - **Medicinal Significance**: Found on Brahmayoni Hill, Gurmar is a key medicinal plant known for its anti-diabetic properties and is part of a traditional treasure trove of natural remedies.
- **Research and Validation**
  - **BGR-34 Ingredient**: Gurmar was identified as a crucial ingredient in the ayurvedic formulation BGR-34, developed by CSIR and marketed by Aimil Pharma.
  - **Scientific Validation**: A 2022 study by AIIMS, Delhi, confirmed that BGR-34 is effective in reducing obesity, lowering blood sugar levels, and improving the body's metabolic system.

PIB Aug 15

FLOODWATCH INDIA

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Disaster Management)

Union Minister Shri C.R. Paatil launches Version 2.0 of 'FloodWatch India' mobile app; to enable extensive and detailed overview of flood conditions across the country

Context: Recently, the Union Minister for Jal Shakti launched the Version 2.0 of the 'FloodWatch India' mobile application developed by the Central Water Commission (CWC).

FloodWatch India

- **About**: It provides real-time information on the flood situation and forecasts up to 7 days ahead for the public.
- **Feature**:
  - **Advance Flood Forecasting**: The app can forecast the likelihood of floods a day in advance and offers a seven-day advisory on potential flooding at various stations.
  - **Visual Risk Indicators:** A map of India in the app shows colored circles at water stations across the country to indicate the current flood risk—green for 'normal,' yellow for 'above normal,' orange for 'severe,' and red for 'extreme.'
  - **Station Information**: Clicking on a circle reveals details such as the current water level, the highest historical level, the danger level, and the warning level at that station.
  - **Multilingual Warnings**: The warnings are provided in English or Hindi, with an option for voice-enabled prompts.
  - **State-wise Forecasts**: The app offers State-wise or basin-wide flood forecasts for up to 24 hours and flood advisories for up to seven days, accessible by selecting specific stations.
  - **Advanced Technologies**: Floodwatch utilizes satellite data analysis, mathematical modeling, and real-time monitoring to deliver accurate and timely flood forecasts.
  - **Essential Flood Information Access**: The app allows users to access crucial information regarding flood situations, ensuring they are well-informed and prepared.

THE HINDU Page 6

SOLAR CYCLE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Sci and Tech)

Indian astronomers find new method to predict amplitude of next solar cycle

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Astronomers from the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) have found a new method to predict the amplitude of the upcoming solar cycle. Besides, their research can also help in space weather forecasting.

The astronomers have discovered a new correlation using 100 years of solar data from the IIA's Kodaikanal Solar Observatory.

The intricacies of the solar cycle and forecasting space weather are important fields of current research, including in India.

What is space weather?

"The main components of space weather are the solar wind, coronal mass ejections, and solar flares. They can compress the magnetosphere of the Earth and trigger geomagnetic storms, which can affect communication and power transmission, damage spacecraft electronics, and threaten the lives of astronauts. Thus, space weather has a profound influence on modern civilization," said the Department of Science and Technology.



The astronomers have discovered a new correlation using 100 years of solar data. TAMILNADUTOURISM.TN.GOV.IN

Astronomers use many different ways to forecast the strength of the next solar cycle. This includes theoretical calculations based on dynamo models, extrapolations, precursor methods, etc.

The precursor method uses the value of some measure of solar activity at a specified time to predict the strength of the following solar maximum.

Number of sun spots

In a recently-published work, IIA researchers discovered that the width of the supergranular cells on the solar surface during the minimum year of the solar cycle is related to the number of sunspots seen during the subsequent solar cycle maximum. This simple method can be used in space weather forecasting.

Effects of Space Weather:

- Space weather can compress Earth's magnetosphere, the protective shield against solar wind.
- Space weather can trigger geomagnetic storms that disrupt communication and power systems.
- It can damage spacecraft electronics and pose risks to astronauts' safety.

Context: Astronomers from the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) have found a new method to predict the amplitude of the upcoming solar cycle.

Solar Cycle

- **About**: It is the cycle that the Sun's magnetic field goes through approximately every 11 years.
- **Magnetic Field:** The Sun's magnetic field goes through a cycle, called the solar cycle.
  - Every 11 years or so, the Sun's magnetic field completely flips.
  - It takes about another 11 years for the Sun's north and south poles to flip back again.
- **Effects on Sun's Surface**:
  - The solar cycle affects activity on the surface of the Sun, such as sunspots caused by the Sun's magnetic fields.
  - The middle of the solar cycle is the solar maximum, characterized by the most sunspots.
  - As the cycle ends, it fades back to the solar minimum, signaling the start of a new cycle.

Space Weather

- **About***:* Activity on the Sun's surface creates a type of weather called space weather.
- **Main Components of Space Weather:**
  - **Solar Wind**: A continuous flow of charged particles released from the upper atmosphere of the sun.
  - **Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs):** Large expulsions of plasma and magnetic field from the sun's corona.
  - **Solar Flares**: Sudden, intense bursts of radiation from the sun's surface.

EXERCISE MITRA SHAKTI
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – IR)

Indian Army's K-9 squad participate in 10th edition of India-Sri Lanka joint military exercise

Context: The India-Sri Lanka Joint Military Exercise Mitra Shakti began at the Army Training School, Maduru Oya, Sri Lanka.

Exercise Mitra Shakti

- **About:** It is a bilateral military exercise between India and Sri Lanka.
- **Edition:** 10th edition. The 'Mitra Shakti' military exercise is conducted alternately between India and Sri Lanka.
- **India's Participant:** K-9 Squad
- **Indian contingent**: It comprising 106 personnel is being represented by a Battalion of Rajputana Rifles along with personnel from other arms and services.
- **Sri Lankan contingent**: Represented by personnel from the Gajaba Regiment of the Sri Lankan Army.
- **Objective**: The exercise aims to enhance the joint military capability of both sides to undertake counter-insurgency operations in a sub-conventional scenario under Chapter VII of the United Nations Mandate.
    - The exercise will focus on operations in the semi-urban environment.
- **Other Points of Exercise:**
    - **Tactical Drills:** The exercise will include rehearsals of anti-terrorism responses, joint command post establishment, intelligence and surveillance setup, and special heliborne operations.
    - **Joint Operations**: It aims to share best practices in tactics, techniques, and procedures, fostering inter-operability between the two armies.
    - **Defence Cooperation**: The exercise will strengthen defence ties and enhance camaraderie, further improving bilateral relations between the participating nations.
    - **Counter-Drone Measures**: Deployment of drones and counter-drone systems will be part of the exercise, reflecting a focus on modern warfare tactics.

THE HINDU Page 1

NATIONAL PEST SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Agriculture)

Centre launches new AI-based surveillance system to manage pests, connect scientists with farmers

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



Tech solution: The AI-based system will help in identifying pests and controlling them. A.M. FARUQUI

The Union government on Thursday launched the National Pest Surveillance System (NPSS) powered by artificial intelligence to help farmers to connect with agriculture scientists and experts by mobile phones on controlling pests.

Launching the programme, Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the aim was to reduce the dependence of farmers on pesticide retailers and to inculcate a scientific approach among them towards pest management. The NPSS will analyse latest data using AI tools to help farmers and experts in pest control and management.

Releasing the system at an event at the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Mr. Chouhan said, "All new developments in the field of agriculture should be beneficial for the farmers." He added that increasing yield was a priority for the Modi government. "Farmers need better seeds for increasing productivity. Our scientific community is working along with the farmers towards this," he said.

He said technology should reach the fields and NPSS is such an effort. "If we get to know about the pest attack at the beginning of the attack, it will help in a fast cure. This system will help in identifying pests and controlling them. The benefit of this technology must go to farmers," the Minister said.

The Ministry said the NPSS would help about 14 crore farmers in the country. The Centre envisages connecting scientists with farmers using it. Farmers can take photos of the infested crops or the insect using the system on their phones and this will reach scientists and experts.

'Help cure diseases'

"Using the correct quantity of correct pesticide at the correct time is the challenge and this system will help farmers to address this challenge," Union Agriculture Secretary Devesh Chaturvedi told *The Hindu*.

He said it will also help in addressing the problem of using excessive pesticides.

"This system can help cure diseases at the proper time using technology. It will help in accurate diagnosis and accurate treatment. This will build confidence among farmers and production will also increase. This can save the soil too. It is a technological platform and needs no additional funding," he said.

Mr. Chaturvedi added that the technology will be sent to the States and they can propagate this using their outreach programmes. "We have succesfully done pilot schemes on this system and it was released based on proper trials," he said.

Context: The Union Government launched the AI-based National Pest Surveillance System (NPSS).

National Pest Surveillance System (NPSS)

- **About**: It is a digital initiative leveraging AI and machine learning to provide timely pest management advisories.
- **Objective**: It will help farmers to connect with agriculture scientists and experts on controlling pests using their phone.
  - Aims to reduce farmers' reliance on pesticide retailers by promoting a scientific approach to pest management.
- **Features:**
  - **AI-Driven Pest Analysis:** Utilizes AI tools to analyze the latest pest data, aiding farmers and experts in effective pest control and management.
  - **Technological Innovation in Agriculture**: The Centre is focused on bringing advanced agricultural technologies to farmers through platforms like NPSS.
  - **Connecting Scientists and Farmers**: NPSS allows farmers to upload photos of infested crops, which are then analyzed by scientists for expert advice.
  - **Accurate Diagnosis and Treatment**: The system ensures timely disease management, improving diagnosis and treatment accuracy, boosting farmer confidence, and increasing production.
  - **Soil Conservation**: The platform helps in soil conservation and operates without the need for additional funding.

BUSINESS STANDARD

Aug 15

UK-INDIA TECHNOLOGY SECURITY INITIATIVE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – IR)

India, UK explore green technology for recycling critical minerals

Context: Recently, India has begun negotiations with the UK to enhance collaboration on critical minerals under the new UK-India Technology Security Initiative (TSI).

UK-India Technology Security Initiative (TSI)

- **About:** It is a collaborative framework established between the United Kingdom and India to enhance technological security and cooperation.
- **Purpose**: The initiative provides a strategic framework for collaboration in critical areas such as critical minerals, semiconductors, AI, quantum technologies, biotechnology, and advanced materials.
- **Coordinated by**: NSAs of both India and the UK
- **Objective**: To reduce dependency on China and to lead the global critical minerals supply chain.
- **Focus Areas:** The initiative focuses on developing economically viable and environmentally sustainable technologies for extracting and recycling critical minerals.
- **Joint Initiative**: A potential establishment of a Critical Minerals Recycling Centre in India is being explored, focusing on advanced military waste recycling.
- **Other initiatives are linked to the TSI:**
    - The initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) with the US.
    - The Trade and Technology Council with the European Union.

Critical Minerals

- **About:** These are a group of minerals that are essential for various industrial sectors and have strategic importance for a country's economy and security.
- These minerals are characterized by their scarcity, high economic value, and criticality in the production of advanced technologies and defence systems.

PIB Aug 15

LONG RANGE GLIDE BOMB GAURAV

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Sci and Tech)

DRDO carries out successful maiden flight test of Long Range Glide Bomb 'GAURAV' from Su-30 MK-I platform off Odisha coast

Context: Recently, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has carried out a successful maiden flight test of Long Range Glide Bomb (LRGB), GAURAV from Su-30 MK-I platform of the Indian Air Force (IAF).

Long Range Glide Bomb GAURAV

- **About:** The LRGB is a 1,000 kg class glide bomb capable of hitting targets at long distances when launched from the air.
- **Developed by**: The LRGB, named GAURAV, has been indigenously developed by the Research Centre Imarat (RCI) in Hyderabad.
- **Launched from:** Indian Air Force (IAF) Su-30 MK-I aircraft.
    - The Sukhoi Su-30 MKI is a twin-jet multirole air superiority fighter
- **Features of LRGB:**
    - **Air-to-Surface Weapon**: The LRGB is designed to destroy enemy airstrips, bunkers, hard installations, and buildings using conventional warheads.
    - **Capability**: GAURAV is a 1,000kg class glide bomb designed to engage targets at extended ranges using a hybrid navigation system combining inertial navigation with GPS data.
    - **Fighter Aircraft Integration**: It is specifically engineered to be compatible with fighter aircraft.
    - **Inertial Navigation System:** The bomb uses an Inertial Navigation System (INS) combined with Digital Control for precise guidance.
    - **Hybrid Navigation Scheme**: After launch, the bomb steers toward its target using a hybrid navigation system that integrates INS and GPS data.
    - **Target Accuracy:** During testing, the LRGB successfully hit a target at Long Wheeler's island with pinpoint precision.
    - **Data Collection**: Complete flight data was captured using Telemetry and Electro-Optical tracking systems along the coastline during the test launch.

BUSINESS STANDARD
Aug 15

GLOBAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS FOR YOUTH 2024

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

Youth employment: Why it's a more pressing issue for India than others

Context: The International Labour Organization (ILO) has released its report, "Global Employment Trends for Youth 2024 (GET for Youth)," highlighting the latest trends in youth employment worldwide.

Global Employment Trends for Youth 2024

- **About:** This report represents the 20th anniversary publication of the ILO's Global Employment Trends for Youth. (hereafter "GET for Youth").
- **Focus:** The report has explored where, why, and how young people face vulnerabilities in the labor market.
- **Major Highlights:**
  - **Youth Unemployment Rate**: The 2023 youth unemployment rate stands at 13%, marking a 15-year low and a decrease from the pre-pandemic rate of approx 14% in 2019.
  - **Future Projections**: The youth unemployment rate is expected to fall further to approx 13% this year and the next.
  - **NEET Youth Concerns:** The report highlights a 'concerning' number of young people not in employment, education, or training (NEET), standing at approx 20%, with two in three of these being women.
  - **Services Sector Employment:** Since 2008, the services sector has become the largest employer of young people worldwide, with its share rising to approx 46%.
  - **Future Unemployment in Asia-Pacific**: By 2025, the youth unemployment rate in the Asia-Pacific region is expected to decline further to 13.7%.



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