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MK Yadav Sir

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Govt initiates review of CVD imposition on stainless steel

Krishna Yadav & Mihir Mishra
NEW DELHI

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has initiated discussions on the potential imposition of countervailing duty (CVD) on stainless steel, raising hopes within the industry that such an action will curb cheap imports from China and support small and medium producers in India, two people familiar with the development said.

The PMO has started talks with the industry and the ministries of steel and commerce, the people said, requesting anonymity. "The PMO has sought details on the impact of not implementing CVD on local producers," one of the two people said.

The PMO intervened after the finance ministry ruled out imposing the duty to offset the effects of subsidies provided by foreign governments to their producers despite the steel and commerce ministries supporting the implementation, *Mint* reported on 2 July.

Context: The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has initiated discussions on the potential imposition of **countervailing duty (CVD)** on stainless steel, raising hopes within the industry that such an action will curb cheap imports from China and support small and medium producers in India.

Countervailing duty

- The PMO intervened after the finance ministry **ruled out imposing the duty to offset the effects of subsidies** provided by foreign governments to their producers despite the steel and commerce ministries supporting the implementation.
- As cheap imports flood the market, domestic steelmakers, especially smaller ones, are freezing hiring and expansion plans and resorting to commodity trading. India had previously imposed CVD on steel, but removed it in the **Union Budget 2021-22**.
- The steel ministry and the **Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR)** under the commerce ministry had recommended a 19% CVD to the finance ministry, the ultimate authority in duty matters.

Countervailing duty (CVD)

- **About:** It is a specific form of duty that the government imposes in order to protect domestic producers by **countering the negative impact of import subsidies**.
 - CVD is thus an **import tax** by the importing country on imported products.
 - The **World Trade Organization (WTO)** permits the imposition of countervailing duty by its member countries.
 - In India, the **CVD is imposed as an additional duty besides customs** on imported products when such products are given tax concession in the country of their origin.
 - The levy of anti-dumping duty is both **exporter-specific and country-specific**.
 - It **extends to the imports** from only that country in respect of which dumping has been alleged and the complaint has been filed and duty recommended.
 - Such duty **does not apply to imports from other countries** in respect of which the domestic industry has not alleged dumping.
- **Imposition of countervailing measures in India:** The countervailing measures in India are administered by the **Directorate General of Anti-dumping and Allied Duties (DGAD)**, in the commerce and industry ministry's department of commerce.
 - While the department of commerce recommends anti-dumping duty, provisional or final, it is the department of revenue in the finance ministry that acts upon the **recommendation within three months** and imposes such duties.

SC Raps Delhi Govt on Ad Spend, Asks it to Ensure Funding for Rapid Rail Project

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New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday came down heavily on the Delhi government for spending around ₹1,100 crore on advertisements in three years but throwing up its hands when it came to contributing its share for the Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transport System (RRTS).

It directed the Arvind Kejriwal government to finance infrastructure projects including the court-monitored RRTS project.

“If ₹1,100 crore can be spent on ads in the last three years, certainly infrastructure projects can be financed,” the apex court said, while directing the Delhi government to make budgetary provisions in line with the proposed schedule for RRTS project. “Your one-year advertisement budget is more than you are giving for the project,” the top court told the Delhi government.

On July 3, the Delhi government had told the Supreme Court that it didn't have funds for the project, prompting the SC to seek a detailed account of its spending on advertisements for the rapid rail project in the past three financial years.

The Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System, a semi-high-speed rail corridor, connects the cities of Delhi, Ghaziabad and Meerut.



Context: The Supreme Court came down heavily on the Delhi government for spending around ₹1,100 crore on advertisements in three years but throwing up its hands when it came to contributing its share for the Delhi-Meerut **Regional Rapid Transport System (RRTS)**.

Regional rapid transit system (RRTS)

- **About:** It is a **new, dedicated, high speed, high capacity, comfortable commuter service** connecting regional nodes in NCR.
 - It is **different from conventional Railway** as it will provide reliable, high frequency, point to point regional travel at high speed along dedicated path way.
 - It is **different from metro** as it caters to passengers looking to travel a relatively longer distance with fewer stops and at higher speed.
- **Key features:**
 - **Speed:** Design speed - 180 km/h, Operational speed - 160 km/h, Average speed of 100 km/h.
 - Three times the speed of Metro.
 - **Aerodynamic trains with airline-like transverse seating arrangements:** In general, the train aerodynamics are related to aerodynamic drag, pressure variations inside train, train-induced flows, cross-wind effects, ground effects, pressure waves inside tunnel, impulse waves at the exit of tunnel, noise and vibration, etc.
 - **Interoperability:** Trains will **move from one corridor to another**, facilitating commuter travel from one corridor station to another without train changes.
 - **Multimodal integration:** It will be integrated with various modes of public transport systems like airports, Indian Railway stations, inter-state bus terminals, and Delhi Metro stations, wherever possible.

NeGD Organises its 38th CISO Deep Dive Training Programme Under MeitY's initiative Cyber Surakshit Bharat

Context: National e-Governance Division (NeGD), under its Capacity Building scheme, organised the 38th batch of **Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs)** Deep-Dive training programme from 24th-28th July 2023 at Central Academy for Police Training (CAPT), Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

Key Points

- The course was inaugurated with 23 participants from **Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Odisha, Kerala, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh.**
- The purpose of the program is to **spread awareness, build capacity** as well as enable Government departments on steps that need to be taken to create a cyber resilient ecosystem.
- This programme **aims to sensitize and orient participants** on cyber safety and security in taking Digital India programme forward for integrated delivery of various Govt. services to citizens, present a holistic information and knowledge and understanding about cyber security, spreading awareness, build capacities as well as enable government departments to look after their cyber hygiene, safety, and security.

CISO training

- Launched in 2018, the CISO training is the first-of-its-kind of **partnership between the Government and industry consortium under Public Private Partnership (PPP) model.**
- Since June 2018 until July 2023, NeGD has efficaciously conducted 38 batches of CISO **deep-dive training programmes** for over 1,464 CISOs and frontline IT officials.
- **Cyber Surakshit Bharat initiative** of MeitY was conceptualised with the mission to spread awareness about cyber-crime and build capacities of Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) and frontline IT officials, across all government departments, for ensuring adequate safety measures to combat the growing menace - Organizations need to defend their digital infrastructures and become future-ready in tackling cyber-attacks.

HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Health)

Integrate mpox with HIV, STI prevention & control programmes: WHO

New HIV guidelines on viral suppression unveiled at international AIDS conference

HIV

VERSUS

AIDS

HIV is the acronym for Human Deficiency Virus

AIDS is the acronym for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

Virus that invades the immunity system

Last stage of a spectrum of conditions, initially caused by the infection of (HIV)

Patients will suffer minor difficulties; symptoms will be similar to flu

Patients will experience severe signs and symptoms, disrupting the quality of life

Context: The **World Health Organization (WHO)** released new scientific and normative guidance for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) at the 12th International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Science on July 23, 2023.

Key Points

- The United Nations' health agency also **recommended countries integrate mpox detection, prevention and care** with existing and innovative HIV and sexually transmitted infection prevention and control programmes.
- The new recommendations shed light on the **critical role of HIV viral suppression and undetectable virus levels in enhancing individual health and preventing transmission of the virus.**
- The WHO guidelines **described key HIV viral load thresholds** as well as methods for measuring virus levels in relation to these thresholds.
- People living with HIV, for example, who achieve an undetectable level of virus through consistent use of **antiretroviral therapy (ART)** do not transmit HIV to their sexual partner(s) and are at low risk of vertically transmitting HIV to their children.

Human immunodeficiency virus or HIV

- **About:** It is an infection that **attacks the immune system** by destroying the body's immune cells called **CD4**, which help it respond to infection.
 - Once HIV attacks the **CD4 cells**, it starts replicating and destroying the cells, weakening the body's immune system and making it more prone to certain "opportunistic infections" that take advantage of the weak immune system.
 - In a nutshell, **if HIV is not treated, it can lead to AIDS** (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome).
- **Transmission:** **Bodily fluids such as blood, semen, vaginal fluids, rectal fluids and breastmilk** can be carriers for HIV.
 - It can be **transmitted through unprotected sex**, transfusion of contaminated blood, sharing needles and syringes, and from a mother with HIV to her infant during pregnancy.
 - Typically, the time between HIV transmission and AIDS diagnosis is 10-15 years, although it may occur sooner.
- **Prevention:** There's **no vaccine to prevent HIV infection** and no cure for AIDS. Protecting oneself from infection is the way ahead.

Pocso Cases Go Up By 12% Till June, Arrests Up By 35%

870 Cases Reported In 6 Mths, Number Stood At 776 Last Yr

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New Delhi: There was an increase of 12% in Pocso cases reported till June this year in the city compared to the same period last year. Arrests also saw a sharp rise of nearly 35%.

According to Delhi Police's data till last month, nearly 870 cases were reported, whereas in 2022, during the same period, it was 776. The data also shows that as many as 1,109 people were arrested in 2023, whereas last year it was 822.

According to the police, in most of the cases, crimes were committed by known persons such as relatives and neighbours.

Another trend that stakeholders who deal with cases of child abuse have found is that children are exposed to sexual abuse or harassment through social media.

A child welfare committee (CWC) official said they have found several cases related to blackmailing of children. "In these cases, the accused, on some pretext or in some way, took their private pictures or videos and blackmailed them. They sexually harassed the kids after threatening them that they would post their pictures on social media," the official said.

CHILDREN UNDER ATTACK



What the cops found

- ▶ In most cases, crimes were committed by people known to the child, including relatives and neighbours
- ▶ Children are exposed to

sexual abuse or harassment through social media
▶ Several cases related to blackmailing of children have been reported

Police action

- ▶ They have also launched many initiatives, which include self-defense training, installation of Nirbheek boxes at schools, and awareness campaigns in print and radio
- ▶ Crackdown on child

pornography
▶ Visiting slums to create awareness about good and bad touch
▶ Speaking to parents to make them aware and ensure that they report harassment cases

Delhi Police PRO Suman Nalwa said they took cases related to crimes against children seriously due to which there has been a rise in arrests. "During our investigation, we have found that in most cases, the accused were known to the victims. There are chances that due to social

stigma or family pressure, victims turn hostile, so as soon as a POC SO case is reported, there is proper counselling for the victim," she said.

She added that they have also launched various initiatives, which include self-defence training, the installation of Nirbheek Boxes at schools,

and awareness campaigns in print and radio.

In one such case reported in May, a 52-year-old man was arrested for allegedly molesting two girls in Dwarka. The siblings could not confide in anybody due to the fear of social stigma but one of them dropped a letter in the Nirbheek complaint box in their school, following which the accused was arrested.

An official said lack of parenting or family support is one of the reasons behind child abuse. "Due to a lack of parenting skills, there is a lack of trust between the child and the parents. They start trusting strangers, which results in abuse," an officer said.

Another official said parents should speak to children about good and bad touch. "If the child informs them about abuse that happened to her, they should immediately report the incident to police," an officer said.

About the lives of POC SO survivors, a CWC member said: "It leaves deep scars on children. Their mental health is affected and they lose trust in people."

Society plays an important role and they should help bring survivors to the mainstream, the member added.

Context: There was an increase of 12% in Pocso cases reported till June this year in the city compared to the same period last year.

- Arrests also saw a sharp rise of nearly 35%.
- According to Delhi Police's data till last month, nearly 870 cases were reported, whereas in 2022, during the same period, it was 776.
- The data also shows that as many as 1,109 people were arrested in 2023, whereas last year it was 822.

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocso) Act

- **About:** The POC SO Act was enacted in 2012 to provide a robust legal framework for the protection of children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography while safeguarding the interests of children at every stage of the judicial process.
- **Salient features**
 - The act defines child as any individual aged below 18 years of age.
 - There are multiple forms and acts of sexual abuse defined under this act that is not just limited to pornography, harassment, or penetrative/non-penetrative offenses.
 - These acts would be considered 'aggravated' if the child is mentally ill and/or the perpetrator comes from a position of authority and/or trust like a family member, doctor, teacher, etc.
 - The prevention of 're-victimization' of the child within the judicial system is of utmost importance as this act allows a policeman to act under the role of a child protector throughout the investigation.
 - The process of investigation is to be made as child-friendly as possible, and justice to be served promptly within a year from the reporting of the incident.
 - The setting up of 'Special Courts' has been done under this act which will exclusively deal with such offenses with the sensibility and sensitivity they need.
 - The central government is given the authority to make rules under the 45th section of the act.
 - The State Commissions for the Protection of Child Rights (SCPCRs) and the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) have been given the authority to monitor the implementation of the act's provisions.
 - The act makes the reporting of a sexual offense mandatory.
 - Misuse of these laws with the purpose of defamation of the person is punishable.
 - It provides stringent deterrents for the commission of offenses against children ranging from a minimum of 20 years of imprisonment to the death penalty in case of aggravated penetrative sexual assault.

MERI MAATI MERA DESH CAMPAIGN**(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)****Govt. launches
*Meri Maati,
Mera Desh*
campaign****The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

The Union government has launched the *Meri Maati, Mera Desh* campaign envisaged as a culminating event of the *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* celebration. Under the campaign, soil collected from different parts of the country in August will be used to develop a garden along the Kartavya Path in Delhi.

Events have been planned at the panchayat, village, block, urban local body, and State and national levels, respectively. The panchayat-level programmes will be organised between August 9 and 15.

The five-point agenda includes the installation of a *shilaphalakam* (memorial plaque), bearing the “names of those who have made the supreme sacrifice”. “For this purpose, *veers* (bravehearts) include freedom fighters, defence personnel, CAPF personnel, and State Police,” an official said.

Context: The Union government has launched the ‘*Meri Maati Mera Desh*’ campaign, envisaged as a culminating event of the ‘*Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*’ celebration of 75 years of Indian Independence, in which soil collected from different parts of the country in August will be used to develop a garden along the Kartavya Path in Delhi.

Key Points

- Events have been planned at the panchayat, village, block, urban local body, and State and national levels, respectively.
- The **five-point agenda** includes the installation of a **shilaphalakam** (memorial plaque), as per specifications, bearing the “names of those who have made the supreme sacrifice”.
- Work for the **shilaphalakam** may be executed through the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)**, leveraging local materials and resources.
- ‘**Vasudha Vandhan**’ envisages every gram panchayat or village renewing “Mother Earth by planting 75 saplings of indigenous species and developing an Amrit Vatika”.
- ‘**Veroon Ka Vandan**’ will felicitate freedom fighters, and the families of deceased freedom fighters.
- **Young volunteers** and others will collect soil from every panchayat/village and bring it to the block, from where the ‘Mitti Kalash’ will be transported to Delhi.
- In urban areas, events will be organised at **local bodies, notified area councils, Cantonment Boards, and town panchayats** from August 9 and 15, and in bigger municipalities and municipal corporations from August 16 to 20.
- The ‘**Mitti Kalash**’ are to be brought ceremoniously to the larger municipalities/corporations and transported to Kartavya Path.
- The finale of the campaign will be held in Delhi between August 27 to 30.
- **State governments may organise programmes** dedicated to the campaign from August 16 to 25.

INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - Resources)

UN body can face litigation if seabed mining is approved before developing regulations: Paper

Council of the International Seabed Authority needs to discuss appropriate means for equitable sharing of benefits, among other things



NEXT NEWS >

By Rohini Krishnamurthy
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UNCLOS

- **About:** An international agreement that establishes a **legal framework for all maritime and marine activities.**
- **Origin:** signed on 10 December 1982 in Montego Bay, Jamaica, and came into effect on 16 November 1994.
- **Members:** The agreement has 168 countries as parties to it, and 157 countries have signed this international agreement.
 - **India has been a party to the convention since 1995.**

Context: The Council of the **International Seabed Authority (ISA)**, a United Nations body tasked with developing mining regulations, is in a tight spot, could likely face litigation if they favour or block mining activities on the high seas.

Key Points

- The ISA finds itself in a sticky situation after **Nauru, a tiny island northeast of Australia, invoked the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in June 2021.**
- This gave the ISA a two-year deadline to either develop regulations for deep-sea mining or allow mining proposals sans international consensus on rules. The **deadline expired on July 9, 2023.**
- Nations are **divided over deep-sea mining.** Several nations, including India, have their eyes set on deep-sea mining while more than 18 states have opposed it.

International Seabed Authority (ISA)

- The ISA was established in 1982 by **UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the 'Law of the Sea')** and is an autonomous intergovernmental body with 167 members.
- ISA is the institution through which Parties to **UNCLOS design and control all the mineral-related resources activities in the area.**
- ISA became operational as an **autonomous international institution** in June 1996 and has 168 members, including the European Union.
- The main activity of ISA is to regulate the **exploration of poly-metallic nodules.**
- The ISA considers applications for exploration and exploitation of deepsea resources from contractors, assesses environmental impact assessments and supervises **mining activities in the 'Area'.**
- India actively participates in the work of the International Seabed Authority. **India was re-elected as a member of ISA in 2020.**

Urban migration twist in NITI's poverty index

May have led to an increase in poverty in 24 districts in 10 states and UTs

SHIVA RAJORA
New Delhi, 24 July

While the multidimensional poverty index (MPI), released by the NITI Aayog last week, showed a sharp decline in poverty between 2015-16 and 2019-21 at national level, urban migration seems to have led to its increase in 24 districts in 10 states and Union Territories during the same period.

Five of the 11 districts in Delhi (Central, North, West, Southwest and New Delhi) saw an increase in multidimensional poverty, followed by five in Punjab (Bathinda, Faridkot, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Rupnagar), four in Kerala (Kasargod, Kottayam, Kozhikode, Palakkad), and two each in Haryana (Ambala, Yamunanagar), Tamil Nadu (Chennai, Dindigul), and Sikkim (Mangan, Namchi). Poverty increased also in one district each in Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Himachal Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh during the period.

Himanshu, assistant professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, said the increase in the ratio of multidimensionally poor people living in these districts could be due to the continuous influx of migrants from the interior regions of the country.

"Since towns and cities in India face a continuous influx of people from interior regions, and as most of the districts that saw an increase are towns, providing them with basic facilities becomes a task for the government. This

NUMBER OF DISTRICTS THAT SAW INCREASE IN THE INDEX



should bring our attention to urban poverty, which continues to get scant attention from policymakers," he added.

Between the National Family Health



TOP 5 DISTRICTS WITH HIGHEST INCREASE IN THE INDEX



Survey-4 (NFHS-4) and NFHS-5, West Khasi hills district in Meghalaya saw the largest increase in the share of multidimensionally poor population by 12.9 percentage points to

52.5 per cent from 39.6 per cent previously, followed by Bijapur, North Delhi, Faridkot and Bathinda.

R Ramkumar, professor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), however, said the MPI should be interpreted as a deprivation index and not a poverty index, as it had a large number of variables and components, which make it difficult to interpret.

"No single reason can be attributed to the rise of multidimensional poverty in these districts, which are spread far and wide and that too on the basis of indicators as diverse as nutrition, housing, or financial inclusion. While migration can somewhat explain these trends, more than that the performance and delivery of government schemes in these areas should be scrutinised, as a lot of indicators taken for computing MPI are input indicators," he added.

The National MPI captures overlapping deprivations in health, education, and living standards represented by the 12 indicators aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. The index complements income poverty measurements because it measures and compares deprivations directly. The earlier poverty estimates predominantly relied on expenditure as the sole indicator.

The MPI report noted of the 112 aspirational districts, barring Bijapur in Chhattisgarh, the others saw a decline in the share of people living in multidimensional poverty.

The MPI showed 135 million people in India escaped multidimensional poverty between 2015-16 and 2019-21 as the share of multidimensionally poor in India declined sharply to 14.96 per cent from 24.85 per cent in the corresponding period.

Context: While the multidimensional poverty index (MPI), released by the NITI Aayog last week, showed a sharp decline in poverty between 2015-16 and 2019-21 at national level, urban migration seems to have led to its increase in 24 districts in 10 states and Union Territories during the same period.

Key Points

- **Five of the 11 districts** in Delhi (Central, North, West, Southwest and New Delhi) saw an increase in multidimensional poverty, followed by five in Punjab (Bathinda, Faridkot, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Rupnagar), four in Kerala (Kasargod, Kottayam, Kozhikode, Palakkad), and two each in Haryana (Ambala, Yamunanagar), Tamil Nadu (Chennai, Dindigul), and Sikkim (Mangan, Namchi).
- **Poverty increased also in one district** each in Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Himachal Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh during the period.
- Between the **National Family Health Survey 4 (NFHS4) and NFHS-5**, West Khasi hills district in Meghalaya saw the largest increase in the share of multidimensionally poor population by 12.9 percentage points to 52.5 percent from 39.6 percent previously, followed by Bijapur, North Delhi, Faridkot and Bathinda.

President of India presents National Geoscience Awards

Context: The President of India presented the **National Geoscience Awards-2022** at a ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre.

National Geoscience Award

- **About:** It was instituted by the **Ministry of Mines** in 1966 and given annually.
- **Objectives:** To honour individuals and teams for extraordinary **achievements and outstanding contributions in various fields of geosciences.**
- **Eligibility:** Any citizen of India with a significant contribution in any of the fields specified in Clause-2 of the NGA Regulation 2022 will be eligible for these awards.
- **Disciplines:**
 - Mineral Discovery & Exploration
 - Mining, Mineral Beneficiation & Sustainable Mineral Development
 - Basic Geosciences
 - Applied Geosciences
- **Categories:**
 - **National Geoscience Award for Lifetime Achievement:** Given to an individual with an exceptionally high lifetime achievement.
 - **National Geoscience Award:** Given to individuals or team(s) in recognition of meritorious contribution.

Novel features spotted on radiation emitted from black hole due to atoms falling into it could help understand unification of quantum theory with gravity

Context: Scientists have explored **novel quantum effects on the radiation emitted from a black hole** due to atoms freely falling into it.

Key Points

- Scientists have investigated the radiation of atoms falling into a black hole having **quantum corrections** embedded into it.
- This investigation of atoms falling into a black hole could throw new light on the efforts of scientists towards unification of quantum mechanics which plays out at the smallest scales of matter and the general theory of relativity propounded by Einstein which is applicable at the largest **cosmological scales**.
- Their mathematical calculations reproduced earlier results that this radiation is similar to the **Hawking radiation (emitted by black holes)** and has special features that provide insights to the Einstein principle of equivalence.
- The radiation which arises due to the relative acceleration between the atom and the field surrounding it is generated from the two-level atoms unlike the radiation emitted from the black hole as predicted by Hawking.
- The amount of disorder known as entropy was calculated for this radiation emitted from the atoms, and this was called the **“horizon brightened acceleration radiation entropy” (HBAR entropy)**.
- While similar work has been undertaken previously, this research stands out due to the finding that the HBAR entropy obeyed the area law along with **logarithmic leading order area corrections** and the inverse order of area subleading corrections.
- Considering the effects of quantum mechanics on a black hole, Stephen Hawking predicted that they can also emit radiation—termed the **Hawking radiation**.
- It has not been possible to **detect Hawking radiation** till date because the cold radiation from the black holes gets drowned in the 2.7-degree Kelvin cosmic microwave background radiation of the universe.

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