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FORTNIGHTLY ON POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT,
ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

**Science
Reporter**



MK Yadav Sir

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Govt to intensify measures to control inflation: Fin secy

Decisions must be taken with a medium-term view, says Somanathan

SHRIMI CHOUDHARY
New Delhi, 16 August

The central government will take a medium-term view while intensifying efforts to reduce the inflationary burden, and will avoid any knee-jerk reaction to transitory price rises, Finance Secretary T V Somanathan told *Business Standard* in New Delhi.

"The government has taken a number of measures for inflation control. They are ongoing and will be intensified. But I would also say that these decisions have to be taken with a medium-term view, and not necessarily based on one-two weeks/months figures, as they may have an impact on trade policies and have consequences over a longer period. So they have to be taken carefully," Somanathan said.

India's retail inflation hit a 15-month

high of 7.44 per cent in July, breaching the Reserve Bank of India's upper tolerance level of 6 per cent for the first time in five months.

Citing measures taken by the government to cool down inflation, the senior-most bureaucrat in the finance ministry said: "We are engaging in substantial open market sales of both wheat and rice to control food inflation; special measures of market intervention in vegetables, pulses and oil seeds were also taken to cushion the impact."

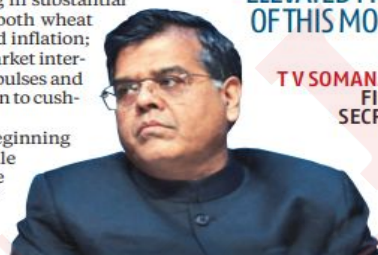
"Some steps are beginning to take effect while some will continue to take effect," Somanathan added.

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**I WOULD NOT
ADVOCATE TAKING
POLICY ACTION
BASED ON THE ONE
ELEVATED FIGURE
OF THIS MONTH"**

**T V SOMANATHAN
FINANCE
SECRETARY**



Internal causes of inflation



A large surge in property prices



Higher wages / labour costs



Boom in credit / money supply



Rise in business taxes e.g. VAT

External causes of inflation



Increase in world oil / gas prices



Inflation in global commodity prices



Depreciation of the exchange rate



Higher inflation in other countries

Context: The central government will take a medium-term view while intensifying efforts to reduce the inflationary burden, and will avoid any knee-jerk reaction to transitory price rises, Finance Secretary said.

Measures to control inflation

To control demand-pull inflation	Monetary measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the supply of money in the economy can be decreased, prices will fall. If the government withdraws paper notes and coins from circulation, the money supply will decrease. The lion's share of the total money supply is bank deposits or bank credit. If we can reduce the rate of lending by banks, we can reduce the total supply of money significantly. The Central bank of a country can reduce the lending of commercial banks by raising the bank rate and reserve requirements of banks, by open market sales of securities, etc
	Fiscal policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy of changing tax rates or the rate of Government expenditure. An inflationary gap arises when aggregate demand exceeds the maximum potential supply in an economy. To overcome, the following types of fiscal measures can be undertaken — <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A decrease in the Government expenditure; or, A decrease in the Government transfer payments; or An increase in taxes imposed by the Government; or, A combination of all these measures. — These are regarded as contractionary fiscal policies.
To control cost-push inflation	Direct control	such measures as wage freeze, putting upper limits on the prices of such important inputs as electricity, coal, steel, etc.
Other measures		<p>These measures are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> augmenting the supplies of commodities in the domestic market by increasing imports. increasing domestic production, etc.

Cabinet approves “PM-eBus Sewa” for augmenting city bus operations; priority to cities having no organized bus service

Context: The Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has approved a bus scheme “**PM-eBus Sewa**” for augmenting city bus operation by 10,000 e-buses on PPP model.

- The Scheme would have an **estimated cost of Rs.57,613 crore**, out of which support of Rs.20,000 crore will be provided by the Central government. The Scheme will support bus operations for 10 years.

Key Points

- The scheme will **cover cities of Three lakh and above population** as per census 2011 including all the Capital cities of Union Territories, North Eastern Region and Hill States.
 - Under this scheme priority will be given to cities having no organized bus service.
- **The Scheme has two segments:**
 - **Segment A – Augmenting the City bus services:(169 cities)**
 - The approved bus scheme will augment city bus operations with 10,000 e-buses on **Public Private Partnership (PPP) model**.
 - Associated Infrastructure will provide support for Development/ up-gradation of depot infrastructure; and Creation of behind-the-meter power infrastructure (substation, etc.) for e-buses.
 - **Segment B– Green Urban Mobility Initiatives (GUMI): (181 cities)**
 - The scheme envisages green initiatives like bus priority, infrastructure, multimodal interchange facilities, **NCMC-based Automated Fare Collection Systems**, Charging infrastructure, etc.
 - **Support for Operation:** Under the scheme, States/Cities shall be responsible for running the bus services and making payments to the bus operators.
 - The Central Government will support these bus operations by providing subsidy to the extent specified in the proposed scheme.

12th Report on States/UTs performance on CPGRAMS released by DARPG for the month of July, 2023

Context: The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) released the **Centralized Public Grievance Redressal and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS)** 12th monthly report for States for July, 2023.

- The said report provides a detailed analysis of types and categories of public grievances and the nature of disposal.
- The report mentions that in July, 2023, the **BSNL Call Centre collected feedback from 1,00,186 citizens**, which is the highest number of feedbacks collected since its inception in July, 2022.
- Out of these, approximately 35% citizens gave outstanding / very good rating with the resolution provided to their respective grievances.

Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS)

- It is an **online platform available to the citizens 24x7** to lodge their grievances to the public authorities on any subject related to service delivery.
- It is a single portal connected to all the **Ministries/Departments of Government of India and States**.
- Every Ministry and States have **role-based access to this system**.
- It is also accessible to the citizens through standalone mobile applications downloadable through Google Play store and mobile applications integrated with **UMANG**.
- **Tracking of status :**
 - The status of the grievance filed in CPGRAMS can be tracked with the **unique registration ID** provided at the time of registration of the complainant.
 - CPGRAMS also **provides an appeal facility** to the citizens if they are not satisfied with the resolution by the Grievance Officer.

SC Handbook 'Aims to Combat Gender Stereotypes'

Highlights unjust terms, suggests alternatives for judges, legal community

Our Political Bureau

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday released a handbook to 'combat gender stereotypes'. It 'aims to assist judges and legal community in identifying, understanding and combating stereotypes about women'. The handbook has a glossary of 'gender unjust' terms and suggests 'alternative words or phrases, which may be used while drafting pleadings as well as orders and judgements'.

The handbook was released by CJI DY Chandrachud.

It says the aim is to help judges identify and avoid stereotypes by identifying language that promotes stereotypes and offering alternative words and phrases; identifying common reasoning patterns based on stereotypes; and highlighting binding decisions of Supreme Court that have rejected these stereotypes and can be utilised by judges to dispel stereotypes.

The handbook identifies three kinds of stereotypes — based on the so-called inherent characteristics of women; based on gender roles of women; and related to sex, sexuality and sexual violence:

BASED ON 'SO-CALLED INHERENT CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN'

Women are physically weaker than men; unmarried women are incapable of taking important decisions about their life; women want to have children.

BASED ON GENDER ROLES OF WOMEN

Women should do all the household

chores; wives should take care of husband's parents; women should be submissive or subordinate to men; women who do not work outside home do not contribute to household or contribute very little in comparison to their husbands.

RELATED TO 'SEX, SEXUAL VIOLENCE'

'Women who dress in clothes that are not considered to be traditional want to engage in sexual relations with men'. The handbook says 'clothing or attire of a woman neither indicates that she wishes to engage in sexual relations nor is it an invitation to touch her. Women are capable of verbally communicating with others and their choice of clothing represents a form of self-expression that is independent of questions of sexual relations'.

OTHER STEREOTYPES

'Women who consume alcohol or smoke cigarettes want to engage in sexual relations with men; men who sexually assault or rape women are typically strangers and are not known to the woman; transgender individuals cannot be raped'.

'Women who say no to sexual advances are shy and they actually mean to say yes and welcome sexual advances'. The handbook says 'women who say no mean no and there exists no further ambiguity. Women who wish to welcome sexual advances will communicate their consent using clear language such as the word yes'.

Instead of using the word 'eve-teasing', 'street sexual harassment' be used. Instead of 'forcible rape', correct expression is 'rape'. Instead of 'child prostitute', 'child who has been trafficked' should be used.

On using 'survivor or victim', the handbook says individuals 'affected by sexual violence may identify themselves as survivor or victim'.

HANDBOOK ON GENDER STEREOTYPES

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - Issue Related to Women)

Context: In a new handbook, the Supreme Court offered the correct terms that should be used instead: woman, woman, wife, street sexual harassment, intersex.

- The 30-page Handbook on Combating Gender Stereotypes aims to free the judiciary and the legal community from the mechanical application of gender stereotypical language in judgments, orders, and court pleadings.
- The handbook deals with the "so-called inherent characteristics" of women.

Stereotype promoting language (INCORRECT)	Alternative language (PREFERRED)
Adulteress	Woman who has engaged in sexual relations outside of marriage
Affair	Relationship outside of marriage
Bastard	Non-marital child or, a child whose parents were not married
Biological sex / biological male / biological female	Sex assigned at birth
Born a girl / boy	Assigned female / male at birth
Career woman	Woman
Carnal intercourse	Sexual intercourse
Chaste woman	Woman
Child prostitute	Child who has been trafficked
Concubine / keep	Woman with whom a man has had romantic or sexual relations outside of marriage

Odisha government withdraws the controversial 'deemed forest' order

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

The Odisha government has withdrawn a controversial order issued on August 11, which told district officials that 'deemed forests' as a category would cease to exist under the recently amended Forest Act.

"The order has been withdrawn," C.P. Goyal, Director-General (Forests), told *The Hindu* in a text message but did not give details of the reason for doing so.

'Deemed forests' are forests that aren't classified so, by the Centre or States,



The updated Act says only forests classified as such after 1980 would be protected.

in their records. However, a 1996 judgment of the Supreme Court in the *Godavarman* case entrusted States with identifying parcels of land "that conformed to the dictionary

meaning of forest...irrespective of ownership" and expanding protections available under the Forest Act to them too.

An updated Forest Act, passed by Parliament this month, said that only forests classified and recorded as such after 1980 would be protected. Forest land officially diverted by the government for non-forestry purposes between 1980 and 1996 would also not be protected.

However, Environment Ministry clarified to a Joint Parliamentary Committee, constituted to examine provisions of the Bill, that the amendments did not

fall afoul of the 1996 SC judgment. Tracts of forest land or "...deemed forest lands, identified by the Expert Committee of the State, have been taken on record and hence the provisions of the Act will be applicable in such lands also," according to the Ministry.

The Odisha government, since 1996, had with the help of expert committees at the district-level, identified nearly 66 lakh acres as 'deemed forest' but many of them were not officially notified as such in government records, Tushar Dash, a researcher, told *The Hindu*.

Context: The Odisha government has withdrawn a controversial order issued on August 11, which told district officials that 'deemed forests' as a category would cease to exist under the recently amended Forest Act.

- The Odisha government, since 1996, had with the help of expert committees at the district-level, identified nearly **66 lakh acres as 'deemed forest'** but many of them were not officially notified as such in government records.

Deemed forests

- 'Deemed forests' are forests that **aren't classified so, by the Centre or States, in their records.**
- However, a 1996 judgment of the Supreme Court in the **Godavarman case** entrusted States with identifying parcels of land "that conformed to the dictionary meaning of forest irrespective of ownership" and expanding protections available under the Forest Act to them too.
- An **updated Forest Act** said that only forests classified and recorded as such after 1980 would be protected.
- Forest land officially diverted by the government for non-forestry purposes between 1980 and 1996 would also not be protected.
- However, the **Environment Ministry clarified to a Joint Parliamentary Committee**, constituted to examine provisions of the Bill, that the amendments did not fall afoul of the 1996 Supreme Court judgment.
- **Tracts of forest land** or "...deemed forest lands, identified by the Expert Committee of the State, have been taken on record and hence the provisions of the Act will be applicable in such lands also."

Touching a raw nerve

The proposed amendments to the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 have attracted objections on various grounds:

■ 'Dilution' of the Supreme Court's 1996 judgment in the *Godavarman* case that extended protection to wide tracts of forests, even if they were not recorded as forests

■ In geographically sensitive areas within 100 km of the International Borders or the Line of Control, no forest

clearance required to construct highways, hydel power projects and so on

■ No Central protection for vast tracts of so-called 'deemed forest' (forests not officially recorded as forests) and permitting activities such as tourism, compromising their integrity

INCLUSIVE CONSERVATION INITIATIVE**(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)****Less than 1% mitigation & adaptation funding went to world's indigenous groups despite more commitment: Report**

A Global Biological Framework Fund (GBFF) will be launched in the upcoming 7th Global Environment Facility Assembly from August 22-26, 2023



NEXT NEWS >

By Shagun
Published: Friday 11 August 2023



- **Technical support and supervision by:** Conservation International and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- **Significance:** Indigenous Peoples and local communities **make up just 5% of the world's population**. But they steward 25% of land and 40% of intact ecosystems on Earth. Yet, many have lacked financial support to improve and scale their sustainable management of these territories.
 - This initiative will **provide financial support** to these Indigenous and locally-led initiatives.

Context: A recent report focusing on the first phase of the **Inclusive Conservation Initiative (ICI)** highlights that although there has been an increase in funding commitments for Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IP and LC) to enhance conservation efforts, the overall funding landscape for them remains largely unchanged.

Key Points

- The report, on the **International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples**, notes that despite growing evidence of the positive impact of IP and LC involvement in conservation, donors have allocated less than 1% of climate change mitigation and adaptation funding to them.
- The report highlights that in Latin America, while national and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) implement 26% of disbursements, Indigenous Peoples' organizations are attributed with 41% of the funding, emphasizing the central role of local efforts in conservation financing.
- In June 2023, during the **Subsidiary Bodies 58 (SB 58) conference** in Bonn, Germany, Indigenous Peoples' groups from around the world, including India, called for representation on the Transitional Committee (TC) for the establishment of a **Loss and Damage Fund (LDF)**.
- The committee is composed of 24 members, 10 of whom are from developed countries and 14 from developing countries.

Inclusive Conservation Initiative (ICI)

- **About:** The Inclusive Conservation Initiative (ICI) was **endorsed by Global Environment Facility (GEF) in 2022**.
- **Aim:** To enhance **Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities' (IPs and LCs)** efforts to protect land, waters and natural resources to deliver global environmental benefits.
 - The initiative will support enhanced Indigenous and community stewardship across 7.5 million hectares of landscapes, seascapes, and territories with high biodiversity and irreplaceable ecosystems.

Critical mineral explorers may get revenue share over 50 years

Subhash Narayan

subhash.narayan@livemint.com

NEW DELHI

Miners discovering critical and deep-seated minerals may be allowed a revenue share from the block over the entire 50-year lease period, two people aware of the plans said.

Miners may also be given the right to carve out as many mineral blocks from the prospected areas that would be auctioned for mining lease later, ensuring recurring returns for the standalone mining entity over the life of different mines with varied mineral deposits.

These would be part of the rules for the auction exploration licence (EL) that would be given for the first time after Parliament's monsoon session cleared amendments to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act.

The revenue-share plan is expected to attract so-called junior mining companies into



The first set of licences may be issued this year. BLOOMBERG NEWS

mineral exploration and aid the discovery and production of 29 critical and deep-seated minerals, including lithium, copper, gold, silver, diamond, molybdenum and cadmium, which are largely imported.

"The proposal on exploration licence and reward for discovery is expected to enhance exploration coverage in the country and facilitate faster adoption of advanced technologies required for these difficult and expensive mineral

exploration projects," said one of the two people cited above, an official overseeing the implementation of the amended MMDR Act.

The mines ministry did not respond to a query till press time. But the official cited above said rules governing the grant of new ELs would be finalized over the next few weeks, and the first set of licences may be issued before the year ends.

Before MMDR was amended, there were only two types of mineral concessions for private entities through auction—mining lease for undertaking mining operations and composite licence for undertaking prospecting operations followed by mining operations. There was no provision for the grant of a mineral concession for undertaking the full range of exploration, starting from reconnaissance to prospecting operations.

TURN TO PAGE 6

Context: Miners discovering **critical and deep-seated minerals** may be allowed a revenue share from the block over the entire 50-year lease period.

- Miners may also be given the **right to carve out** as many mineral blocks from the prospected areas that would be auctioned for mining lease later, ensuring recurring returns for the standalone mining entity over the life of different mines with varied mineral deposits.
- These would be part of the rules for the auction exploration licence (EL) that would be given for the first time after Parliament's monsoon session cleared amendments to the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act**.

Critical Minerals

- Critical minerals 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.
- Critical Minerals List prioritizes minerals essential for industrial sectors like **high-tech electronics, telecommunications, transport, and defence**.
- India just joined **Mineral Security Partnership (MSP)** as the newest partner, which aims to strengthen critical mineral supply chains.
- The **Geological Survey of India (GSI)** is currently focused on exploring critical and deep-seated minerals to boost the growth of the mining sector.
- A Joint Venture Company among NALCO, HCL and MECL named **Khanij Bidesh India Limited (KABIL)** has been formed in August 2019 to ensure the supply of Critical Minerals.

ASI to start work on restoring Alai Darwaza's elegance

Anuja.Jaiswal@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) will start the first phase of conservation work on the 13th-century Alai Darwaza, the southern gateway of the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque in the Qutub complex, next month after the G20 Summit in the city.

In the first phase, intricate carvings of red sandstones, which have eroded over time, will be replaced.

According to ASI officials, Alai Darwaza, built by Sultan Alauddin Khilji of the Khilji dynasty in 1311, is believed to be the first Indian monument that used the Islamic style of construction and geometric ornamentation. With its elegant carvings and inscriptional bands, it is regarded as one of the most treasured gems of Islamic architecture.

Superintending archaeologist (Delhi circle) Praveen



NIP & TUCK: In the first phase, handmade intricate carvings of red sandstones, which have eroded over time, will be replaced

Singh said conservation work will start in mid-September and is likely to be completed by mid-December. The project is estimated to cost Rs 35 lakh.

"The idea of conservation of the monument is to strengthen it and have intricate carvings in places where the or-

namental design has vanished. Nearly two dozen stones, which are 1-2 feet wide and 1-5 feet long, have eroded. The carvings of these stones will take time to restore," said conservation architect Misbah Noorie, ASI incharge of Qutub complex.

Work up to five feet above



the ground will be done during the first phase while in the next phase, work that is 8-10-foot above ground level will be covered.

ASI officials said the entire darwaza is made of red sandstone with white marbles on the exterior walls. The arch facing Qutub Minar is

horseshoe-shaped, which was a first in India. The façade has pre-Turkish carvings and patterns while the windows have marble lattices. The surface decoration consists of interweaved floral tendrils and is repeated with symmetry on three doorways. There is extensive Arabic

ARCHITECT SAYS

The idea of conservation of the monument is to strengthen it and have intricate carvings in places where the ornamental design has vanished

calligraphy on the walls of the darwaza.

Although Khilji had planned to extend the mosque on four sides, only Alai Darwaza could be completed due to his death in 1316. The darwaza is made up of a single hall whose interior part measures 34.5 feet and exterior part measures 56.5 feet. It is 60 feet tall and its walls are 11 feet thick. The dome is 47 feet high and is considered the first true dome built in India.

Context: The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) will start the first phase of conservation work on the **13th-century Alai Darwaza**, the southern gateway of the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque in the Qutub complex, next month after the G20 Summit in the city.

Alai Darwaza

- Ala'i Darwaza is the **southern gateway of the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque** in Qutb complex, Mehrauli, Delhi, India.
- Built by **Sultan Alauddin Khalji** in 1311 and made of red sandstone, it is a square domed gatehouse with arched entrances and houses a single chamber.
- Although he planned to construct four gates, only the **Alai Darwaza could be completed as he died in 1316**.
- It has a special significance in **Indo-Islamic architecture** as the first Indian monument to be built using Islamic methods of construction and ornamentation.
- In 1993, the Darwaza and the other monuments of the complex were designated a **World Heritage Site**.

Indian scientist develops novel method to improve accuracy and precision of nanomechanical testing technology

Context: A novel method to test **nanomechanical properties** of materials at very minute scales with high precision and accuracy has been developed by an Indian scientist in collaboration with two international institutions.

- **Nanomechanics** is that branch of nanoscience which deals with the study and application of fundamental mechanical properties of physical systems at the nanoscale, such as elastic, thermal and kinetic material properties.

Key Points

- The new method **enables faster testing of mechanical strength** of extremely small volumes of materials for a wide range of fields from medicine to space.
- The new methodology not only **significantly improves the precision and accuracy** of what is known as nanoindentation technique or testing of mechanical strength, but enables testing at much higher rates, thus facilitating high throughput.
- The technique has been widely used to **measure the strength of semiconductor devices** and structural materials that have ubiquitously penetrated every aspect of our daily life through electronic gadgets.
- The technique has been **used for a wide range of applications** from identifying cancerous cells to establishing how meteorites are formed in deep space.

A software solution for preventing attacks on 5G networks

Context: IITM Pravartak Technologies Foundation at IIT Madras, a Technology Innovation Hub for Sensors, Networking, Actuators and Control Systems (SNACS), supported by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) under **National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical Systems (NM-ICPS)**, along with its incubated startup, is developing an indigenous security testing solution for 5G core network functions and Radio Access Network (RAN) software..

Key Points

- This technology solution can **automatically identify zero-day vulnerabilities** in the network in advance by using techniques such as fuzzing and test oracles.
- This can help **smoothen countrywide communication as 5G networks** become its lifeline in the near future.
- Around ninety percent of the 5G technology is implemented into software by integrating **several latest technologies (NFV, SDN, control plane/user plane segregation)** which enable testing the technology easily.
- But attack surface area is increased multifold in this process and is impossible to **manage manually**.
- Automating the whole testing process and continuous monitoring is the only **sustainable solution**.

National Mission in Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems

- **About:** It was launched in **2018** at a total outlay of Rs.3660 Crores for a period of five years.
 - **Cyber-physical system** combines digital/cyber elements with physical objects (e.g. machines, autonomous vehicles) and data with capabilities of communication, data collection & processing, computing, decision making and action
- **Objectives:** It is **comprehensive mission to address technology development**, application development, human resource development & skill enhancement, entrepreneurship and start-up development in CPS and associated technologies.
 - As part of the **Mission implementation**, 25 Technology Innovation Hubs (TIHs) have been established in advanced technologies in reputed institutes across the country.
- **Nodal Ministry:** It is being implemented by **Department of Science & Technology under the Ministry of Science and Technology**.

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