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MINISTRY OF
SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY



MK Yadav Sir

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Left-wing extremism will be eliminated in 2 yrs: Shah

Neeraj Chauhan
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NEW DELHI: India will eliminate the left-wing extremism (LWE) in next two years, Union home minister Amit Shah said on Friday, while stressing that areas where influence of red ultras has ended need to be monitored continuously to avoid revival of activities.

He also asked agencies to ensure that Maoists do not switch their base(s) to new territories.

"We have achieved significant success against the left-wing extremism in 2022 and 2023, and this year we must resolve to end it completely in the next two years. This fight has now reached a decisive stage," Shah said.

The home minister was chairing a LWE review meeting, which was also attended by National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval, Union home secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla, chiefs of all central armed police forces (CAPFs), central intelligence and investigation agencies, and representatives of states affected by Maoist activities.

Underlining that the security vacuum areas in states affected by



Amit Shah

LWE have been shrinking since 2019, Shah said security forces have established 195 new camps (inside the core Maoist areas), while 44 more camps will be established. "Deployment of CAPFs against left-wing extremism, rationalisation of development and setting up camps in vacuum areas are the priorities of the (Prime Minister) Narendra Modi government," he said.

Shah also emphasised on "a need to maintain constant surveillance in the areas liberated from LWE so that this problem does not revive there again". "There is also a need to monitor that left-wing extremists from areas where this problem has been eliminated do not take shelter in other states."

Referring to the government's

zero tolerance policy against LWE since 2014, the home minister said it has resulted in reduced number of violent incidents and deaths recorded in 2022, lowest in the past four decades.

"There has been a decline of more than 52% in LWE-related violence, 69% in deaths, 72% in security forces deaths and 68% in civilian deaths between 2014 and 2023 [as] compared to the period from 2005 to 2014," Shah said.

Asserting that federal agencies such as the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) are working closely with all state agencies to attack the funding of LWE, Shah asked affected states to make efforts by forming a joint team of civil and police administration to choke the financial support.

On the development projects undertaken in affected states, Shah said that "special attention is being given to areas like road construction, telecommunication, financial inclusion, skill development and education." Currently, LWE violence is being reported from just 45 districts, as compared to 96 districts in 2010, the MHA data stated.

Context: The Union home minister of India recently declared that India aims to eliminate **Left-Wing Extremism (LWE)** within the next two years.

Left-Wing Extremism (LWE)

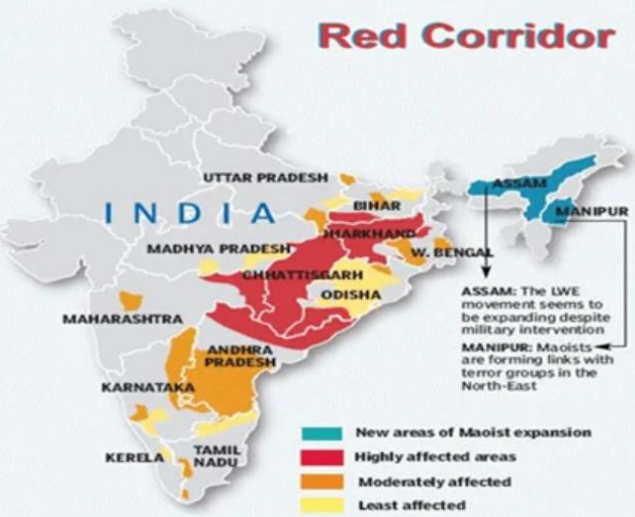
- **About:** Left-wing extremists, known globally as Maoists and in India as Naxalites/Naxalism, have posed a significant threat to India since the 1960s.
- **Origin of Naxalism:** The term "Naxalism" is **derived from Naxalbari**, a village in West Bengal. In 1967, a peasant uprising occurred in Naxalbari, triggered by a land dispute with local landlords.
- **Historical Roots:** The roots of LWE in India can be traced back to the Telangana peasant rebellion, which occurred from 1946 to 1951.
- However, the movement **gained prominence in 1967** when peasants, landless laborers, and Adivasis (tribal people) raided a landlord's granaries in Naxalbari, West Bengal.

Maoism

- Maoism, created by **Mao Tse Tung**, represents a variant of communism.
- It serves as a doctrine aimed at seizing control of the State through a **blend of armed insurgency**, widespread mobilisation, and strategic partnerships.

Initiatives to fight LWE

- **SAMADHAN doctrine:** It is a strategy to frame short term and long-term policies to tackle LWE. It includes: S- Smart Leadership; A- Aggressive Strategy; M-Motivation and Training; A- Actionable Intelligence; D- Dashboard Based KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and KRAs (Key Result Areas); H- Harnessing Technology; A- Action plan for each Theatre; N- No access to Financing.
- **National strategy to counter LWE** was formed in 2015.
- **Greyhounds:** It was raised in 1989 as an elite anti-naxal force.
- **Operation Green Hunt:** Started in 2009-10 it aims for massive deployment of security forces was done in the naxal-affected areas.



RBI bond sale googly stumps mkt amid policy status quo

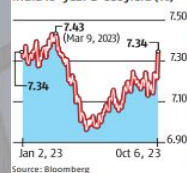
MPC keeps repo rate unchanged; retains growth, inflation forecast

HANJOIT SAHA
Mumbai, 6 October

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) six-member monetary policy committee (MPC) decided to keep the policy repo rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent for the fourth consecutive meeting, and also maintained its GDP growth and inflation forecasts for 2023-24. These decisions were expected, but the central bank caught bond street off guard on Friday with talks of open market sales of bonds at a time when liquidity is in deficit mode.

SUDDEN SPIKE

India 10-year G-sec yield (%)



policy. The timing and quantum of such operations will depend on the evolving liquidity conditions," said RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, while announcing the monetary policy review.

Commenting that excessive liquidity can pose risks to price and financial stability, Das stressed: "The monetary policy has to be in absolute readiness to take appropriate and timely action to prevent any spillovers from food and fuel price shocks to underlying inflation trends and risks to anchoring of inflation expectations. These are non-negotiable necessities." Despite retail inflation easing in August, it remained above the central bank's upper tolerance zone of 6 per cent.

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RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das at the central bank's headquarters in Mumbai to announce the monetary policy review on Friday. PHOTO: PTI

"IT'S A TURNING PITCH AND I WOULD LIKE TO PLAY MY SHOTS VERY CAREFULLY"
SHAKTIKANTA DAS, RBI governor (on liquidity in the system)

DAS-SPEAK: TO THE NINES

- Domestic economic activity remains resilient; India to become the new growth engine of the world
- Declining core inflation is a silver lining but headline CPI inflation remains vulnerable
- MPC to take timely and appropriate action if situation warrants
- The inflation target is 4%, and not 2-6%
- Liquidity will be actively managed, consistent with the monetary policy
- Banks with surplus funds are encouraged to lend in interbank call market
- Banks & NBFCs are expected to strengthen internal surveillance mechanisms
- Financial stability is fundamental to price stability
- External sector is eminently manageable

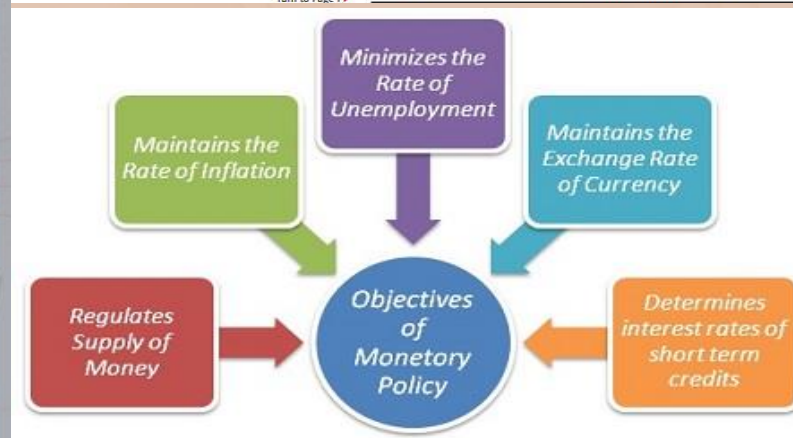
Context: The Reserve Bank of India's **monetary policy committee** recently held the policy **repo rate steady at 6.5%** for the fourth consecutive meeting, while keeping its 2023-24 GDP growth and inflation forecasts unchanged.

Monetary Policy Committee

- About:** It was established based on the **recommendation of the Urjit Patel Committee**.
- Set up:** Under Section 45ZB of the RBI Act of 1934 by the Union government.
- Composition:** It is a 6 member committee. There are in total three internal members and three external experts. The RBI Governor and Deputy Governor are also members of the MPC Committee.
- Objectives:** To improve the repo rate, reverse repo rate, liquidity, etc.
- Instruments of Committee:** Repo rate, Reverse Repo rate, Marginal Standing Facility (MSF), Bank Rate, Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR), Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR), Open Market Operations (OMOs).

Repo rate: The Repo Rate is the interest rate at which the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) loans money to commercial banks.

Reverse repo rate: Reverse repo is the inverse contract to the repo rate. The reverse repo rate is the rate at which the RBI borrows funds from the country's commercial banks.



Over 1.36 crore school students from across the country participate in Veer Gatha Project 3.0

Context: The **Ministry of Defence (MoD)** in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE) has now decided to launch **Project Veer Gatha 3.0**.

Project Veer Gatha 3.0

- **About:** This initiative is part of the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav and is introduced in schools with the purpose of creating awareness about Gallantry Awards.
- **Objective:** The primary aim is to educate school students about the courageous deeds and sacrifices made by Gallantry Award recipients.
- **Activities Held:** Various projects are organized, with an interdisciplinary approach, allowing students to express themselves through mediums like poems, paintings, essays, videos, etc.
- **Awareness Programs:** Awareness programs and sessions are conducted for schools all across the country, both virtually and face-to-face.
- **National Recognition:** The Ministry of Defence rewards the best project nationally on the upcoming Republic Day.
- **Participant Increase:** While the first two editions had 25 winners known as the "Super 25," the third edition, Veer Gatha Project 3.0, aims to select 100 winners, referred to as the "Super 100."
- **Cash Prizes:** Each winner in this initiative receives a cash prize of Rs. 10,000.

Gallantry Awards

- **About:** Gallantry Awards are a recognition of acts of courage and self-sacrifice performed by members of the Armed Forces, legally constituted forces, and civilians.
- **Categories of Awards:** Wartime Gallantry Awards and Peacetime Gallantry Awards.
 - **Wartime Gallantry Awards:** Param Vir Chakra (PVC), Mahavir Chakra (MVC), and Vir Chakra
 - **Peacetime Gallantry Awards:** Ashok Chakra, Kirti Chakra, Shaurya Chakra
 - **Other Recognitions:** Sena Medal, Nao Sena Medal, and Vayu Sena Medal.

Climate crisis in forests: Dandeli losing its distinctive grasses & hornbills to erratic weather



Context: Recent studies show that **Dandeli Wildlife Sanctuary** is losing its distinctive grasses & and hornbills to erratic weather.

Kali Tiger Reserve

- **About:** Kali Tiger Reserve, previously named Dandeli-Anshi Tiger Reserve.
- **Location:** Uttara Kannada is part of the Western Ghats.
- **Composition of The Tiger Reserve:** Dandeli Wildlife Sanctuary and Anshi National Park.
- Dandeli Wildlife Sanctuary covers an area of 475.018 square kilometers, while Anshi National Park spans 339.866 square kilometers.
- **River Flow:** The Kali River, which serves as a crucial water source for Uttara Kannada, flows through the tiger reserve, giving it its name.
- **Vegetation:** The primary forest types in the reserve consist of moist deciduous and semi-evergreen forests.
- **Flora:** Eucalyptus, Tectona grandis, Grevillea robusta, T. bellerica, Adina cordifolia, Mitragyna parviflora, Acacia etc.
- **Fauna:** Malabar Giant Squirrel or Ratufa Indica, Barking Deer, Gaur, Indian Pangolin, tigers, flycatchers, woodpeckers, etc.

Arunachal Yak churpi, Khamti rice & Tangsa textile get GI tag

GI Tag

- **About:** It is a symbol used on items that come from a particular geographical area and have qualities or a reputation linked to that place of origin.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **Tenure:** 10 Years
- **Regulated By:** Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration & Protection) Act, 1999.
- **India's First GI Product:** Darjeeling Tea (2004-05)



Context: Recently, **Churpi** was granted the Geographical Indication tag, and in a similar vein, two other distinctive products from the state, **Khaw Tai (Khamti rice)** and **Tangsa textile**, have also secured GI certifications.

Yak Churpi

- **Origin:** Churpi is a dairy product crafted from the milk of the native Arunachali yak breed.
- **Brokpas:** This dairy product is produced by Brokpas, a group of tribal yak pastoralists. They follow a seasonal migration pattern, taking their yaks to high-altitude areas (10,000 ft and higher) during summers.
- **Yak Habitat:** The distinctive Arunachali yak breed is primarily found in the **West Kameng and Tawang districts** of the state.

Khaw Tai Rice

- **About:** The Khaw Tai rice variety is a sticky rice type grown in the Namsai region, primarily by traditional Khampti tribal farmers.
- **Khautoum:** When Khaw Tai rice is steamed, rolled, and wrapped in a leaf, it is known as khautoum. A related variation is the ball-shaped khautek, made by roasting sticky Khaw Tai rice mixed with molasses.

Tangsa Tribe Textile Products

- The textile products crafted by the Tangsa tribe in Changlang district are renowned for their unique designs and vibrant colors.

Invasive plant species threaten 66% of India's natural systems

Context: A new study recently **highlighted that over half of India's natural systems are threatened** by invasive plant species.

Key Points

- The findings are a result of a national-level survey conducted in India, which noted that 158,000 plots in 358,000 square kilometres of **wild area are invaded by alien species**.
- The 11 high-concern invasive plant species that showed presence in 20 states of the country included **Lantana camara, Prosopis juliflora** and **Chromolaena odorata**.
- **Project Tiger was envisaged** to serve as a flagship to monitor the changing status of carnivores, herbivores, and their habitat.
- **Plant invasions alter habitats** and reveal intricate ecological changes across biomes,” Qureshi said in a press statement issued by WII.
- **Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve** in Western Ghats was one of the **largest impacted hotspot areas** due to invasion dominated by Lantana camara, Prosopis juliflora and Chromolaena odorata.

Invasive Species

- **About:** An invasive or alien species is a **species introduced to a new environment** that multiplies excessively and causes harm to its new surroundings.
- **Modes:** Invasive species can be introduced to an area through various means, including **ship ballast water, accidental releases**, and most commonly, human activities.
- **Characteristics of Invasive Species**
- Invasive species possess several key characteristics:
 - Rapid Reproduction and Growth
 - High Dispersal Ability
 - Phenotypic Plasticity (the capacity to adapt physiologically to new conditions)
 - Versatility in Surviving on Different Food Sources and in a Wide Range of Environmental Conditions.

RuPay Domestic Card Scheme Agreement between India and the UAE

Context: Recently, **NPCI** International Payments Limited (NIPL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), inked a strategic partnership agreement with **Al Etihad Payments (AEP)** for the implementation of Domestic Card Scheme (DCS) in the UAE. The DCS solution provided by NIPL consists of a RuPay stack and value-added services like fraud monitoring services and analytics.

RuPay

- **About:** RuPay is an indigenous and highly secure card payment network that is widely accepted within India.
- **Launched by:** National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- **Card Propositions:** RuPay cards offer three different propositions: debit, credit, and prepaid.

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)

- **Establishment:** In 2008, it operated as an umbrella organization.
- **Founded by:** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Indian Banks' Association (IBA).
- It is collectively owned by a consortium of banks.
- **Objective:** The primary objective is to build strong and reliable payment and settlement systems.
- It operates under the provisions of the **Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007**.

India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)

- It includes digital identity, digital payments, and digital data exchange layers - a combination of these three is the force behind the fintech revolution in India.
- A combination of these factors makes **India the third largest fintech ecosystem** in the world, with rapidly surfacing unicorns. India has witnessed an **exponential growth of 367%** in customers participating in digital transactions in the **last five years**.

SUPREME COURT DIRECTION ON SYL CANAL

Punjab-Haryana ties hit troubled waters again

VARINDER BHATIA
CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 6

THE SUTLEJ-YAMUNA Link (SYL) canal issue is in focus again in Haryana and Punjab politics following the Supreme Court's direction on Wednesday ordering the government of Punjab to complete the construction of the project. This has strengthened the hand of the Manohar Lal Khattar-led BJP government in Haryana, placing a massive strain on the relationship between the neighbouring states.

Khattar on Friday called the AAP government in Punjab two-faced. The Haryana CM said: "Instead of finding an amicable solution to this issue, the Punjab government is shedding crocodile tears. The Supreme Court has given a three-month deadline to the central government to take possession of the land which has been acquired."

Parties in both states have stuck together for the "larger interests of the state". The Congress, Indian National Lok Dal (INLD), Jannayak Janta Party (JJP), and BJP in Haryana are in favour of the canal's construction while the BJP, Congress, and AAP in Punjab oppose the project. Hardline Sikh group Dal Khalsa has warned that any attempt to construct the canal can potentially trigger a "rebellion in Punjab".

The SYL canal has been a flashpoint between Punjab and Haryana for decades now. Since 2002, the Supreme Court has been directing both the states



The canal being constructed in 1987. Archive

and the Union government to find an amicable solution to the dispute, underlining that the canal needs to be constructed. The construction of the canal in Haryana's jurisdiction has been completed and the top court has now asked Punjab to assess the work done so far and expedite it.

The court on Wednesday asked the Union government to "survey the portion of the land allocated for the project in Punjab to ensure that the land is protected..." and find out "how much has been made and what has been made".

Since then, both states have hardened their position. After a Cabinet meeting on Thursday, Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann said "not even a single drop" of additional water would be shared with any state. A legal route would be explored, he added.

With the court issuing directions to the Union government, the pressure is now on it to nav-

igate the situation. In Haryana, the BJP's alliance with the JJP is under strain and it cannot afford to go soft on the water issue as it cannot afford any adverse electoral impact in a state where it has won all 10 parliamentary seats the last two elections. In Punjab, the party holds just two of the state's 13 Lok Sabha seats and is trying to find its footing.

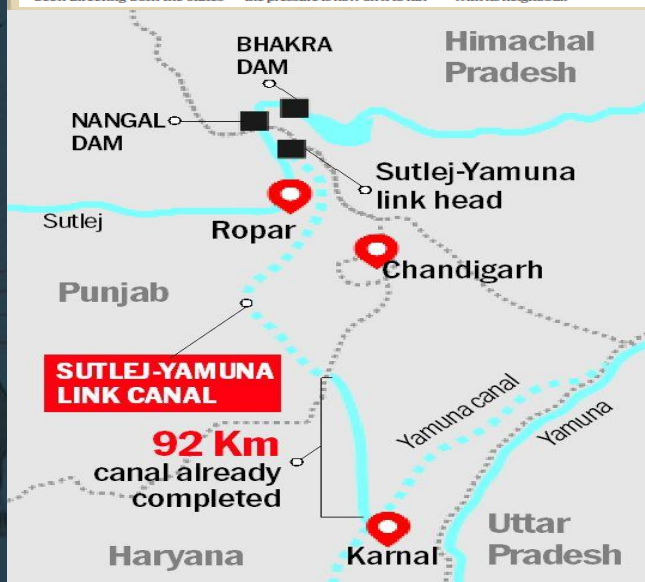
After the Ajay Chautala-led INLD attempted to dig the Punjab portion of the SYL canal in February 2017, a major clash between the people of the two states was averted because of caution exercised by the police.

Subsequently, multiple rounds of talks between Punjab and Haryana CMs, a few even in the presence of Union Ministers, were held but a breakthrough proved elusive. Ever since Mann assumed power last year, he has been maintaining that Punjab has no surplus water to share with its neighbour.

Context: Recently, the Sulej-Yamuna Link (SYL) canal issue has regained prominence in Haryana and Punjab politics due to the Supreme Court's directive, mandating Punjab's government to resume the construction of the project.

Sulej-Yamuna Link (SYL) Dispute

- **About:** This is a 214-kilometer-long canal planned to link the Sulej River in Punjab with the Yamuna Canal in Haryana.
- **Aim:** To facilitate the equitable distribution of water resources between these two states.
- **Origins of Dispute:** The longstanding dispute surrounding the canal revolves around its purpose of transporting water from Punjab to Haryana.
- **Confluence of Rivers:** In Punjab, the river Beas flows into the river Sulej, adding to the complexity of water distribution in the region.
- **Post-1966 Reorganization:** The conflict regarding the sharing of river water emerged following the reorganization of Punjab in 1966, which led to the creation of the state of Haryana as a separate entity from Punjab.
- **Punjab's Refusal:** After this reorganization, Punjab declined to share the waters of the Ravi and Beas rivers with Haryana, triggering the ongoing dispute.



National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance 2.0

WHAT'S AMR?

Resistance of a micro-organism to an antibiotic that was originally effective in treating infections caused by it

Why India needs to curb antibiotic overuse

- ▶ India's bacterial disease burden is highest in the world
- ▶ Large population suffers from diseases like diabetes, heart ailments and cancer, making them prone to infections
- ▶ 40% children are malnourished and at risk of infections
- ▶ More and more drug-resistant bacteria are being identified



Context: The Union health ministry is preparing to introduce the second iteration of the **National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance**, referred to as NAP 2.0.

- This **initiative aims to tackle** the growing problem of disease-causing microorganisms becoming resistant to medications.

Antimicrobial Resistance

- **About:** It refers to the acquired resistance of microorganisms, such as **bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites** etc, to the effectiveness of antimicrobial drugs utilized for infection treatment.
- In this, microorganisms evolve over time, rendering them unresponsive to medications. This, in turn, complicates the treatment of infections, elevates the likelihood of disease transmission, and raises the potential for severe illness and mortality.
- **Causes:** Injudicious use of antibiotics, self-medication, industry pollution, untreated disposal of sewage water bodies, etc.

India's Efforts Against AMR

- The National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (2017-21) highlighted the **government's success in promoting hand hygiene and sanitation** through initiatives like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Kayakalp, and Swachh Swasth Sarvatra.
- The **2017 National Health Policy provided** clear directives on antibiotic usage, restricting over-the-counter access and curbing antibiotic use for livestock growth promotion.
- **Red Line awareness campaign:** Urging people not to use medicines marked with a red vertical line, including antibiotics, without a doctor's prescription.

UN launches 10 principles to close Asia-Pacific sustainable finance gap

Aimed at mobilising and deploying financing for key Sustainable Development Goals, particularly around climate action

Context: A new report by the **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)** has put forward **10 principles for action** for policymakers, regulators and private finance for mobilising and deploying financing for key **UN-mandated Sustainable Development Goals**, particularly around climate action.

Important Principles

- Developing new climate finance partnerships
- Developing policy coherence and capacities across key government ministries
- Taking decisive regulatory action to shift capital in **Asia and the Pacific towards** the Net Zero transition
- Driving investment in the capacities of financial personnel
- Committing to **Net Zero pledges for 2050** with credible transition pathways and including 2030 goals
- **Increasing local-currency** financing of energy transition projects as well as green technologies and other net-zero investments
- Expanding and accelerating concessional financing and risk-sharing by **multilateral development banks, bilateral development financial institutions**, and public development banks

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

- **About:** It is the regional development arm of the United Nations for the Asia-Pacific region.
- **Establishment:** 1947
- **Headquarters:** Bangkok, Thailand
- **Members:** 53 Member States and 9 Associate Members

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