



TATHASTU
Institute Of Civil Services

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

14th October, 2025



TATHASTU
Institute Of Civil Services



9560300770



www.tathastuics.com



enquiry@tathastuics.com

Plot No.B 22, Bada Bazar Road, Old Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi-110060

Topics Covered

- Gaza Declaration, Pg-1
- Retail Inflation , Pg-1
- Karur Stampede, Pg-1
- Sawalkote Hydroelectric Project, Pg-6
- A green transition , Pg-6
- Economics Nobel Prize, Pg-13
- Number of birth declines, Pg-12
- Snow Leopards (Science Section)

Page -1

Gaza declaration inked as Hamas sets hostages free

Trump, leaders of Egypt, Qatar and Turkiye sign document meant to cement the ceasefire; Hamas releases last of the 20 surviving hostages and Israel hands over 1,968 mostly Palestinian prisoners

Agence France-Presse
SHARM EL SHEIKH

U.S. President Donald Trump hailed a "tremendous day for the Middle East [West Asia]" as he and regional leaders signed a declaration on Monday meant to cement a ceasefire in Gaza, hours after Israel and Hamas exchanged hostages and prisoners.

Arriving to a hero's welcome earlier in Israel, Mr. Trump had said, "This is a great day. This is a new beginning." Asked if the two-year Gaza war was over, he said: "Yes."

Mr. Trump sat down at a resort in Sharm el-Sheikh with more than two dozen world leaders to discuss the deal. The U.S. President along with leaders of Egypt, Qatar and Turkiye



Sweet relief: A released Israeli hostage, held in Gaza since the October 7, 2023 attack by Hamas, with his mother; and (right) a freed Palestinian hugging a relative after his release from an Israeli jail. REUTERS



signed the declaration as guarantors to the Gaza deal.

"The document is going to spell out rules and regulations and lots of other things," Mr. Trump said before signing, repeating

twice that "it's going to hold up."

As part of Mr. Trump's plan to end the Gaza war, Hamas on Monday freed the last 20 surviving hostages it held after two years of captivity in Gaza. In ex-

change, Israel released 1,968 mostly Palestinian prisoners held in its jails.

CONTINUED ON
» **PAGE 10**
TRUMP'S SPEECH
» **PAGE 14**

Historic low

India's retail inflation slipped to 1.54% this month, the lowest since June 2017. The chart shows Y-o-Y inflation rate (in %)



Retail inflation eases to 8-year low of 1.54%

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

Retail inflation fell to a more than eight-year-low of 1.54% in September on falling food and fuel prices, official data showed on Monday. This is once again below the Reserve Bank of India's lower comfort bound of 2%.

Inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, was last lower in June 2017, when it stood at 1.46%. Inflation had fallen below the

RBI's lower comfort limit in July 2025, before rising marginally to 2.1% in August.

The food and beverages grouping saw a contraction of 1.4% in September, compared with a growth of 0.05% in August and 8.4% inflation in September last year. "Looking ahead, food inflation is likely to stay benign supported by a favourable base and good monsoon," Rajani Sinha, chief economist at CareEdge Ratings, said.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

SC orders CBI probe into stampede at Karur

Aaratrika Bhaumik
NEW DELHI

Describing the September 27 stampede in Tamil Nadu's Karur as one that "shook the national conscience", the Supreme Court on Monday ordered a probe by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

As many as 41 people died at a rally organised by the Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) led by actor Vijay.

A Bench of Justices J.K. Maheshwari and N.V. Anjaria said the incident had "left an imprint in the minds of citizens across the country" and that the kin of the deceased had knocked on its "doors" seeking an "unbiased" probe. It formed a three-member panel, chaired by



The site where 41 people died in a rally organised by the TVK.

former Supreme Court judge Justice Ajay Rastogi, to supervise progress.

"Looking to the fact that the issue involved certainly has a bearing on the fundamental rights of the citizens, and the incident which has shaken the national conscience, deserves fair and impartial in-

vestigation. As such, by way of an interim measure, a direction deserves to be issued to hand over the investigation to the CBI, which would lead to fair administration of justice. There cannot be any doubt that fair investigation is the right of a citizen," the Bench said in its interim order.

'Publicly exonerated'

The Bench observed that entrusting the investigation to the same police force whose senior officials had publicly exonerated their subordinates would compromise the credibility of the probe.

It pointed out that "top officials" of the State administration had conducted press conferences to "absjure the fault of the subor-

dinate officials".

"This fact in itself creates a doubt in the minds of the general public about the independence and impartiality of the investigation... caught in the doldrums are the families of the deceased, injured victims and kith and kin of those who lost their lives in this tragedy. For them, the political tussle between the two sides is of little solace," the Bench remarked while transferring the probe to the Central agency.

The court clarified that its direction is "prima facie" in nature and subject to the filing of counter-affidavits by the parties concerned.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10



A green transition accelerating at express speed

The successful trial of India's first hydrogen-powered coach at the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in July 2025 is more than a technological breakthrough. It is a testament to Indian Railways' accelerating green transition.

As one of the largest rail networks in the world, the Indian Railways is undertaking a transformation with few global parallels, with the aim of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030, four decades ahead of the national target.

This ambitious shift is not just limited to clean energy adoption but also extends to a fundamental rethinking of infrastructure, operations and financing models, placing the Indian Railways at the forefront of India's sustainable development agenda.

With over 24 million passengers and three million tonnes of freight moved daily, the decarbonisation of India's railways has direct implications for national climate targets.

The initiatives undertaken

In the last 10 years, the Railways has electrified close to 45,000 kilometres of its broad gauge network. As a result, over 98% of its broad gauge network stands electrified, reducing diesel dependence and cutting emissions sharply. The transition is complemented by large-scale renewable integration, with 553 MW of solar, 103 MW of wind and 100 MW of hybrid capacity (756 MW in total) already commissioned. More than 2,000 stations and service buildings are powered by solar energy, while several railway buildings, including in the Northeast Frontier zone, have secured the Bureau of Energy Efficiency's "Shunya" net-zero label. Innovation in clean traction is exemplified by the first hydrogen-powered train, part of a wider "Hydrogen for Heritage" initiative to deploy 35 such units.

Parallel measures include shifting freight from road to rail to raise its modal share to 45% by 2030, introducing biofuel blends, constructing green buildings, and operationalising Dedicated Freight Corridors which are expected to avert 457 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂) over 30 years. These steps signal a technological



Ishaan Sharma

is an IRAS officer, currently posted as Deputy Financial Adviser and Chief Accounts Officer, South Western Railway. He is also a recipient of the Chevening Scholarship from the Government of U.K., 2023

If done right, the decarbonisation plan of the Indian Railways can prove that state-run systems can bring about change without derailing fiscal discipline

transformation and a systemic reimagining of the Indian Railways as a climate-positive backbone of national mobility.

Climate finance takes the main line

The decarbonisation drive is increasingly underpinned by a robust and evolving green finance architecture. Since FY2023, the government has issued sovereign green bonds worth ₹58,000 crore, with the transport sector emerging as a major beneficiary. According to data from the Ministry of Finance, approximately ₹42,000 crore has been allocated for the procurement of electric locomotives and metro and suburban rail expansions. These allocations integrate climate objectives into the very core of capital budgeting.

At the institutional level, the Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) has played a pivotal role in mobilising climate-aligned capital. Beginning with its \$500 million green bond issuance in 2017 which was utilised for the re-financing procurement of electric locomotives, the IRFC has steadily expanded its green financing footprint. Most recently, it extended a ₹7,500 crore loan to NTPC Green Energy for the development of renewable power capacity, signalling a growing trend of cross-sectoral financing aimed at strengthening India's low-carbon infrastructure.

Multilateral agencies have also supported the green transition of the Indian Railways. In June 2022, the World Bank approved a \$245 million loan for the Rail Logistics Project, aimed at enhancing rail freight infrastructure, decongesting corridors and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Yet, more can be done. The first priority is to match electrification with genuinely decarbonised electricity. If the additional traction power is drawn from a coal-heavy grid, climate gains will be diluted. A solution lies in directly procuring large volumes of renewable energy through long-term contracts with solar and wind producers, a step that has already seen some progress. This would ensure that "green trains" are powered by truly green power, making emissions reductions real rather than notional.

Second, last-mile connectivity must be approached with a climate lens. Railway stations should evolve into multi-modal green hubs, seamlessly integrating electric buses, bicycle-sharing networks and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. For freight, the low-carbon advantage of rail must be preserved through cleaner first-and-last-mile links, whether through electric trucks, Liquefied natural gas-powered vehicles, or emerging hydrogen mobility solutions.

Third, rolling stock innovation must keep pace with global benchmarks. Hydrogen fuel cell trains could be piloted on select non-electrified branch and heritage lines where full electrification is not cost-effective. In parallel, the adoption of lightweight coaches, aerodynamic locomotive designs and Artificial Intelligence-driven energy optimisation systems can reduce traction energy needs and improve operational efficiency.

Finally, technology alone will not drive transformation; behavioural change is equally critical. Green certification for trains, carbon labelling of freight services and public awareness campaigns can make passengers and businesses conscious participants in climate action. With its vast daily reach, the Indian Railways can shape public perception of sustainable mobility in a way no other transport system can.

Meeting the challenge

By 2030, if the net zero target is achieved, Indian Railways could prevent over 60 million tonnes of annual CO₂ emissions which is equivalent to taking 13 million cars off the road. The financial case is equally compelling: electrification and energy efficiency measures are projected to generate cumulative fuel cost savings of over ₹1 lakh crore by the end of the decade.

The challenge is not in setting targets but in mobilising and managing the capital to meet them. Done right, India's railway decarbonisation plan could become a global benchmark, proving that large, state-run transport systems can transition to low-carbon operations without derailing fiscal discipline.

The views expressed are personal

Page -13

Mokyr, Aghion and Howitt win Nobel economics prize

Winners are professors in U.S, French and British universities; prize worth \$1.2 mn highlights work on innovation-driven economic growth

Reuters
STOCKHOLM

Joel Mokyr, Philippe Aghion and Peter Howitt won the 2025 Nobel economics prize for "having explained innovation-driven economic growth", the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said on Monday.

The prestigious award, formally known as the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, is the final prize to be given out this year and is worth 11 million Swedish Kronor (\$1.2 million).

"The laureates have taught us that sustained growth cannot be taken for granted," the prize-awarding body said in a statement. Economic stagnation, not growth, has been the norm for most of human history. Their work shows that we must be aware of, and counteract, threats to continued growth."

Mr. Mokyr is a professor at Northwestern University, in Evanston in the United States, while Mr. Aghion is professor at the College de France and INSEAD, in Paris, and at the London School of Economics and Political Science, in Britain. Mr. Howitt is a professor at Brown University, in Providence in the United States. Mr. Mokyr was



Moment of pride: Visuals of Joel Mokyr, Philippe Aghion and Peter Howitt, recipients of the Nobel Economics prize. REUTERS

awarded half the prize with the other half being shared between Aghion and Howitt.

"Joel Mokyr used historical observations to identify the factors necessary for sustained growth based on technological innovation," John Hassler, member of the Nobel Committee, said.

Creative destruction

"Philippe Aghion and Peter Howitt produced a mathematical model of creative destruction, an endless process in which new and better products replace the old."

The awards for medicine, physics, chemistry, peace and literature were announced last week.

Those prizes were established in the will of Swedish dynamite inventor and businessman Alfred Nobel and have been handed out since 1901, with a few interruptions mostly due to the

world wars.

The economics prize was established much later, being given out first in 1969 when it was won by Norway's Ragnar Frisch and Jan Tinbergen from the Netherlands for work in dynamic economic modelling. Tinbergen's brother Nikolaas also won a prize, taking home Medicine in 1973.

While few economists are household names, relatively well-known winners include former U.S. Federal Reserve chairman Ben Bernanke, and Paul Krugman and Milton Friedman. Last year's economics award went to U.S.-based academics Simon Johnson, James Robinson and Daron Acemoglu for research that explored the relationship between colonisation and the establishment of public institutions to explain why some countries have been mired in poverty for decades.



Number of births declines; deaths rise slightly: report

The Vital Statistics of India, based on the Civil Registration System report for 2023, shows 866 lakh deaths were registered that year, recording a marginal increase from the 86.5 lakh in 2022

Vijaya Singh
NEW DELHI

India registered 2.52 crore births in 2023, around 2.32 lakh fewer than in 2022, the Vital Statistics of India based on the Civil Registration System (CRS) report for the year 2023 shows.

The report, compiled by the Registrar-General of India (RGI) and released on Monday, stated that 86.6 lakh deaths were registered in 2023, a marginal increase from 86.5 lakh deaths in 2022.

The report shows that there was no major spike in deaths in 2022 and 2023, despite the COVID-19 dashboard maintained by the Health Ministry showing that the total number of pandemic-induced deaths stood at 5,33,665 as on May 5.

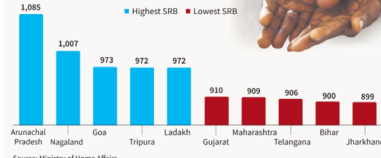
However, there was a significant rise in deaths in 2021, the second-year of COVID-19 lockdown, which recorded an excess of 21 lakh deaths from the 2020 count.

There were 81.2 lakh deaths in 2020 and 102.2 lakh in 2021.

The report also said that

Gender imbalance

The chart shows five States/Union Territories each with the highest and lowest sex ratios at birth (SRB) in 2023. SRB is commonly defined as the number of female births for every 1,000 male births



Jharkhand recorded the lowest sex ratio at birth at 899, followed by Bihar at 900, Telangana at 906, Maharashtra at 909, Gujarat at 911, Haryana at 911 and Mizoram at 911. Since 2020, Bihar has been recording the lowest sex ratio, which is defined as the number of females born per 1,000 males.

Sex ratio count

The highest sex ratio was reported by Arunachal Pradesh at 1,085, followed by Nagaland at 1,007, Goa at 973, Ladakh and Tripura at

972, and Kerala at 967.

The share of institutional births in total registered births is 74.7% in 2023. However, the report did not include information from Sikkim. Overall registration of births for the year 2023 stood at 98.4%.

Statewide data

The report said that II States/Union Territories achieved more than 90% registration of births within the prescribed time limit of 21 days.

These States are Gujarat, Puducherry, Chandigarh,

Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Tamil Nadu, Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Goa and Punjab. Five States – Odisha, Mizoram, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh – reported 80-90% registration, while in 14 States – Assam, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Telangana, Kerala, Karnataka, Bihar, Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Meghalaya and Uttar Pradesh – the registration stood at 50-80%.

Science Section

Snow leopards are the world's least genetically diverse big cat

A new Stanford-based study explains the implications of this phenomenon for the future of the elusive feline; researchers used whole-genome sequencing data for 37 snow leopards and concluded that the low genetic diversity is likely due to a persistently small population size

Bhavya Gaudhli

The snow leopard, the agile "ghost of the mountains" that inhabits the rugged ranges of 12 Asian countries, including India, has the lowest genetic diversity of any big cat species in the world, even lower than that of the dwindling cheetah. A new study led by researchers at Stanford University, published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)* on October 7, explained the implications of this phenomenon.

The researchers used whole-genome sequencing data for 37 snow leopards and concluded that the low genetic diversity is, however, "likely due to a persistently small population size throughout their evolutionary history rather than recent inbreeding."

Purging of mutations
This means that "mutations that could potentially cause health issues in snow leopards have been removed from the population over many generations," lead author Kate Sletten, a research scientist in biology at Stanford, told *The Hindu*.

The PNAS paper added, "We found snow leopards to have the lowest heterozygosity of any big cat species, with heterozygosity for every snow leopard sample included in this study falling lower than that observed in any other big cat."

This included cheetahs, "which have long been considered the archetype of low heterozygosity in big cats."

The good news is that snow leopards, compared to several feline species, have a significantly lower highly deleterious heterozygous load – genes inherited from the mother and father that have fewer instances of duplicated copies of potentially harmful mutations that are connected with health issues.

This, the authors said, suggests effective "purging" of bad mutations during their evolutionary history at small population sizes.

"If a negative trait surfaced, those individuals died before reproducing, or their progeny were less successful. This purging, facilitated by historic inbreeding, allowed the snow leopard population to remain relatively healthy even at their small population sizes."

In fact, "the inbreeding coefficient of snow leopards is significantly higher than other big cats and was even significantly lower than the Asian leopard and puma, indicating that the lower genetic diversity observed in snow leopards is not explained by higher inbreeding," per the research paper.

Dr. Sletten told *The Hindu* that the very low genetic diversity and small population sizes mean they may not be able to adapt well to future anthropogenic challenges.

Critical to Asia's mountains
The wild feline indeed faces a long list of threats today: climate change, habitat loss, decreased availability of primary prey (mountain ungulates such as the Tibetan ibex), retaliatory killings for livestock predation, and poaching for their skin. All this while climate change in Asia's high mountains threatens their future. Despite this, snow leopards, which were first listed as "endangered," were



The snow leopard is distinguished by an unusually long tail that it uses like a rudder to stay balanced as it traverses rough terrain, roams across

controversially downlisted to "vulnerable" in 2007, as they did not meet certain criteria for population size.

There are no more than 4,500 to 7,500 individuals, each critical to the Asian mountain ecosystem "that offers immense ecosystem services – acting as an important source of carbon storage and providing water to almost two billion people."

Hearteningly, however, the international community has worked for decades to establish a sustainable zoo population. In 2008, there were 445 snow leopards across 205 institutions globally, the paper read.

The snow leopard, distinguished by an unusually long tail, which acts as a rudder to help it keep its balance as it traverses its rough terrain, happens to be the least genetically studied of all big cat species. There is, however, evidence of the high habitat connectivity across at least 75 km in Pakistan and around 1,000 km in Mongolia, and the animal is known to cross long distances between mountain ranges, according to the study.

"Very poorly studied"
As for India, a pioneering survey last year estimated that 78 snow leopards exist in the wild. 47 in Ladakh, 21 in Uttarakhand, 5 in Himachal Pradesh, 36 in Arunachal Pradesh, 21 in Sikkim, and nine in Jammu and Kashmir. The Indian snow leopard is more than 10-15 percent of the global population.

"Of the 12 countries with wild snow leopards, India has the highest numbers after China and Mongolia. That makes

international border. Large-scale infrastructure is changing the face of this region. Climate change-induced warming and floods are impacting the wildlife of this landscape, including the snow leopards, to a large extent."

Maintaining integrity
Dr. Suryawanshi, who is a co-author of the paper, said the main challenge of studying snow leopards is in "getting the samples." Bureaucratic hurdles in getting permissions to study snow leopards generally slow down research, he said.

"In addition, the timelines of funding and permissions often do not match. The Stanford study collaborated with researchers around the world, and only then were they able to put together enough samples to make an assessment of the genetic diversity of snow leopards. We need to collect a similar number of samples from within India to understand the genetic diversity of snow leopards in the country."

On the future fate of snow leopards of the fragile high-elevation landscape of the Himalayas, "we need to treat these landscapes and the people that live here with respect," said Dr. Suryawanshi. "The effects of rampant large infrastructure projects are clearly visible in the scale of destruction in the recurrent floods that occur every monsoon."

Maintaining the integrity of the snow leopard's habitat is critical to the long-term conservation of this charismatic species of the Himalayas, Dr. Suryawanshi added.

"Almost the entire snow leopard habitat in India is within 50-600 km of the



SNOW LEOPARD PRESENCE IN INDIA

India one of the most important countries for the conservation of this species."

"India's Project Snow Leopard, dedicated to the conservation of snow leopards, and NGOs such as the NCF, have been working on snow leopard conservation for 27 years. Local community members from snow leopard habitats such as Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and Arunachal are key partners in the conservation of snow leopards," said Dr. Suryawanshi.

But the snow leopard in India is threatened by land use change and climate change, he said.

"Almost the entire snow leopard habitat in India is within 50-600 km of the

dravya.gaudhli@stanford.edu