DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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Article 371 & Demand From Ladakh for 6th schedule

Ladakh delegates offered terms of Article 371 by govt.

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

A month after four persons, including a Kargil war veteran, were killed in police action against protestors seeking Ladakhi Statehood, civil society groups resumed talks on the region's status with Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) officials on Wednesday.

The MHA officials indicated to the two groups – the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) – that special provisions guaranteed under Article 371 of the Constitution can be considered for Ladakh, people who attended the meeting told *The Hindu*.

nachal Pradesh, Goa, Sikkim, and Karnataka.

Cherring Dorjay Lakruk, co-convenor of the LAB and the president of the influential Ladakh Buddhist Association, said the civil society groups were still holding out for Statehood. "It was indicated to us by MHA officials that Article 371 can be considered for Ladakh, but we were adamant on inclusion under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. The officials heard us patiently, took notes of our demands, and said they will come back to us soon. No assurance was given as they also need time to discuss," he said.

"We strongly demanded the release of Sonam Wangchuk and other detai-

However, both groups said they continued to demand inclusion under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, which recognises tribal status and provides a measure of autonomy and self-governance. They also continued to demand the release of Sonam Wangchuk and other protesters detained after last month's violence in Leh.

Article 371 deals with "Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions", and exists under Part XXI of the Constitution. It is currently applicable in 12 States: Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra

Background

- After **Article 370 was abrogated** in August 2019, **Ladakh became a separate Union Territory (without legislature)**.
- Ladakh is **over 97% tribal** (Ladakhis, Baltis, Boto, Brokpa, etc.).
- However, since it's a **UT**, it does not automatically get any **state-level protections** like those under Article 371 or Sixth Schedule.

Article 371

Article 371 of the Indian Constitution is part of a special set of provisions — from **Articles 371 to 371J** — that grant **special powers and responsibilities to certain states** for their **social, economic, and cultural development.**

This was added because, after the **bifurcation of the Bombay State** in 1960, there were regional development imbalances. Hence applicable to MHR and Gujarat.

Article 371

Article	State(s)	Purpose
371A	Nagaland	Protects Naga religious and social practices, customary law, and ownership of land/resources.

371B	Assam	Provides for a committee of the Assembly for certain tribal areas.
371C	Manipur	Ensures administrative arrangements for the hill areas.
371D & 371E	Andhra Pradesh/Telangana	Ensures equitable opportunities in public employment and education.
371F	Sikkim	Special provisions for integrating Sikkim into India.
371G	Mizoram	Safeguards Mizo customary law and land rights.
371H	Arunachal Pradesh	Gives the Governor special responsibility for law and order.
371I	Goa	Special consideration for Goa's size and development needs.
371J	Karnataka (Hyderabad-Karnataka region)	Provides for regional development boards and reservation in education and jobs.

6th Schedule

What is the Sixth Schedule?

The **Sixth Schedule** of the Indian Constitution provides for **autonomous administration** in certain **tribal areas** of the **North-Eastern states** — to protect their culture, land, and traditions.

- Applies to Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura.
- Provides for creation of Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) with legislative, executive, and judicial powers on local matters.
- Autonomous District Councils: Democratically elected bodies governing tribal areas.
- Law-making power on land, forests, agriculture, village administration, and social customs.
- Revenue powers to levy and collect taxes on land, markets, and trade.
- Non-tribals cannot buy tribal land
- Judicial power to constitute village courts for certain disputes.

Labelling of synthetic AI-generated content on social media

Union govt. proposes mandatory labelling of synthetic AI-generated content on social media

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

The Electronics and Information Technology Ministry on Wednesday proposed mandatory disclosure and labelling of artificial intelligence (AI)-generated "synthetic" content on social media platforms.

The Ministry released a draft amendment to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, that requires social media companies to allow users to self-declare if the content they upload is AI-generated. In cases where users fail to make such declarations, platforms must proactively detect and label AI-generated content.

Disclosure mandate

The draft amendment to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, outlines the Ministry's proposed approach to **regulating synthetic content**

- All synthetic content — whether video, photo, audio, or text — must **carry a disclosure**
- The disclosure should cover **at least 10% of the surface area** in all AI-generated audiovisual posts
- Users must be given the **option to self-declare** AI-generated posts

The declaration must cover 10% of the content's area, and applies to all types of synthetic content, including text, video, and audio, and is not limited to photorealistic content, according to officials and the draft text.

"In Parliament as well as many other fora, people have demanded that something should be done about the deepfakes which are harming society," IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told presspersons.

"People are using some prominent persons' images and creating deepfakes, which are then affecting their personal lives, privacy as well as [creating] various misconceptions in society. So the step we have taken is making sure that users get to know whether something is synthetic or real. Once users know, they can take a call. That distinction will be led through mandatory data labelling."

The proposal marks a shift in the Ministry's approach to synthetic content. It had previously contended that existing penalties against impersonation were sufficient to address the worst harms from AI-generated content. The proposal brings a long-foreshadowed "tweak" to that stand, a senior official said.

It says that "[w]here an intermediary offers a computer resource which may enable, permit, or facilitate the creation, generation, modification or alteration of information as synthetically generated information, it shall ensure that every such information is prominently labelled or embedded with a permanent unique metadata or identifier, by whatever name called, in a manner that such label, metadata or identifier is visibly displayed or made audible in a prominent manner on or within that synthetically generated information, covering at least ten per cent of the surface area of the visual display".

The Ministry has sought feedback on the draft amendment to the IT Rules till November 6. Officials claimed that in private conversations, social media platforms had indicated that they had the technical capabilities to implement what these rules require.

The tailwinds from lower global oil prices

The tailwinds from lower global oil prices

Mahesh Sachdev

is a retired Indian Ambassador specialising in West Asia and oil affairs

If asked about the most consequential current foreign trend for India, the replies may range from Gaza to Ukraine and even United States President Donald Trump's tariff war. But we are also approaching an even more impactful battle: for the global oil market. It is being waged between the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)-Plus and the remaining oil exporters, with consumers playing an increasingly decisive part. Depending on who prevails, the gains for India, the world's third-largest importer, could vary from tangible to substantive.

Crude is the world's most valued commodity, with over 100 million barrels per day (mbpd) produced, nearly half of which is traded globally. Depending upon the prevailing unit price, the daily global crude trade currently tops $3 billion. Thus, crude is not only a vital input for transport and petrochemicals; it is also a financial lubricant.

Consumption trends

Over the past two decades, technology and economics have had a profound and largely bearish impact on the oil market. From the supply side, new technological disruptions such as shale, horizontal drilling, and ultra-deep continental shelf drilling have greatly enhanced production.

On the other hand, global demand seems to be approaching a peak. While relatively robust growth in crude consumption continues in the Global South from a low base, the consumption of fossil fuels has been stagnant in the industrialised countries due to factors such as an anaemic post-COVID-19 economic recovery, climatic concerns and the growing popularity of electric vehicles (EVs). Thus, for example, in 2025, the global crude demand is expected to grow by 1.3 mbpd or 1.2%, with only a tenth of that coming from the 38 countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) with 46% of the world's GDP. Crucially, the consumption in China, the world's largest importer, has been curbed largely by an economic slowdown and by the growth of EVs, which now account for half of the vehicles sold.

On the other hand, production of crude has surged by 5.6 mbpd last month over last year, with 3.1 mbpd coming from the OPEC+ (as it unwound COVID-19-era production cuts) and the rest mainly from higher production from (in order of their growth) the U.S., Canada, Brazil, Guyana and Argentina.

The resulting supply overhang is beginning to be felt. The Brent oil prices, currently at $61 a barrel, have declined by 16% since the beginning of the year, with nearly half of that fall coming over the last month. The drop would have been even steeper but for the consumers leveraging the low prices to replenish their strategic petroleum reserves, and the producers hoarding over 100 million barrels of unsold crude on tankers on high seas.

Global events as disruptor

The decline is despite geopolitical disruptions such as the China-U.S. tariff war and concerted Ukrainian drone attacks on Russian hydrocarbon infrastructure. The looming supply glut has affected the inner dynamics of the OPEC+ group of producers: while Saudi Arabia, the leading exporter, wants to quickly unwind the remaining production cuts to regain its market share and reverse the revenue shortfall, Russia, under severe crude exports sanctions, favours a more gradual course.

There are several imponderables, however. First, although it is normal for producers and consumers to see the crude market differently, there is an unusually poignant dispute in the analyses this time. OPEC and the International Energy Agency (IEA), in their respective monthly reports in mid-October, reached diametrically opposite conclusions.

While OPEC sees the global supplies in 2026 being some 50,000 bpd short of the demand, the IEA projects an unprecedented overhang of 4 mbpd. The majority of other think-tanks largely agree with the IEA projection and predict an oversupplied market next year, with Brent prices declining to the low fifties per barrel, a further 10% to 20% fall from their current level.

Technicals apart, the proverbially slippery oil market can also be affected by several geopolitical developments, including the end of sanctions on Russia, Iran and Venezuela, resumed West Asian tensions and the de-escalation of the Trumpian tariff wars.

Further, the International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook (WEO) released on October 16, describes the global economy as "in Flux, Prospects Remain Dim", predicting a marginal slowdown of the global economic growth rates to 3.2% in 2025 and 3.1% in 2026, with risks to the downside. Further, it sees world trade growth come down to 2.9% in 2025-26, significantly slower than the 3.5% in 2024. Most of these factors tilt towards downside risk to the oil prices.

The outlook for India

The simultaneous decline in both oil price and the U.S. dollar it is priced in is likely to have a net positive impact on India. India's oil imports in 2024-25 were $137 billion, and a dollar's decline in oil prices improves its current account deficit by $1.6 billion.

It also reduces the subsidy burden and inflation. With the government keeping most of the gains from lower prices, the fiscal balance improves, boosting capital expenditure and giving a tailwind to growth.

The oil glut may also reduce the reliance on discounted Russian crude, thus removing the underlying cause for the tariff frictions with the U.S. On the flip side, the remittances, exports and investments may stagnate as the West Asian economies attenuate.

However, given the highly cyclical nature of the global oil market, any relief may be short-lived. India would be well advised to keep its consumption mitigation strategies on course.

But relief may be short-lived for India, given the cyclical nature of the oil market

Israel must ease passage of aid into Gaza, provide 'basic needs', says ICJ

Israel is under an obligation to agree to and facilitate relief schemes provided by the UN and its entities, says ICJ President Yuji Iwasawa; Israel categorically rejects the ICJ's 'advisory opinion; Norway to propose UN General Assembly resolution

Agence France-Presse
THE HAGUE

The International Court of Justice said on Wednesday that Israel was obliged to ease the passage of aid into Gaza, stressing it had to provide Palestinians with the "basic needs" to survive.

The wide-ranging ICJ ruling, quickly rejected by Israel, came as aid groups scrambled to scale up much-needed humanitarian assistance into Gaza, seizing upon a fragile ceasefire agreed earlier this month.

The ICJ's "Advisory Opinion" is not legally binding but the court believes it carries "great legal weight and moral authority".

ICJ President Yuji Iwasawa said Israel was "under an obligation to agree to and facilitate relief schemes provided by the United Nations and its entities". That included UNRWA, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, which Israel has banned after accusing some of its staff of taking part in the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack that sparked the war.

Seeking closure: Palestinians bury 54 unidentified bodies in Deir al-Balah on Wednesday after they were returned by Israel. AFP

The ICJ ruled that Israel had not substantiated the allegations. Israel did not take part in the proceedings and hit back at the findings.

"Israel categorically rejects the ICJ's 'advisory opinion,' which was entirely predictable from the outset regarding UNRWA," foreign ministry spokesman, Oren Marmorstein, posted on X. "This is yet another political attempt to impose political measures against Israel under the guise of 'International Law.'"

Mr. Iwasawa said the ICJ "rejects the argument that the request abuses and weaponises the international judicial process".

Another Israeli official added that Israel "cooperates with international organisations, with other UN agencies regarding Gaza. But Israel will not cooperate with UNRWA".

Within hours of the ruling, Norway said it would propose a UN General Assembly resolution demanding that Israel lift restrictions on Gaza aid.

And the Palestinian delegate to the ICJ, Ammar Hijazi, urged nations to ensure Israel complies with the court to let aid into Gaza. "The responsibility is on the international community to uphold these values and oblige Israel, bring Israel into compliance," he told reporters.

Iran ratifies law to join UN convention against terror finance

Iran ratifies law to join UN convention against terror finance

Agence France-Presse
TEHRAN

Some in Iran argue that joining the CFT would grant enemy countries access to sensitive information

Iran ratified a law joining a United Nations convention against terror financing, local media reported Wednesday, in hopes it will lead to access to global banking, an easing of trade and relieving pressure on its sanctions-hit economy.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian was elected last year on a promise to ease relations with the West and secure the lifting of sanctions that are hurting the economy. His administration is trying to bring the country into line with the demands of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which monitors money laundering and terrorist financing.

"President Pezeshkian has promulgated... the law on Iran's accession to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (CFT)," Tasnim news agency said.

Joining the CFT treaty has been the subject of a heated debate, with ultraconservatives arguing it could grant "enemy" countries access to sensitive economic and military information

Background

- Iran has long been under U.S. sanctions for its nuclear programme and alleged support for militant groups.
- Isolated from the global financial system.
- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) — an international body that fights money laundering and terror financing — has kept Iran on its "blacklist" for not meeting global standards.
- Iran's previous hardline governments resisted joining the CFT (Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism), claiming it would expose national security and financial networks to Western scrutiny.
- President Masoud Pezeshkian, elected in 2024, is seen as a moderate reformist who wants to improve relations with the West and revive the economy by aligning Iran with FATF norms.

Iran ratifies law to join UN convention against terror finance

Forward Linkage (Implications & What's Next)

- If implemented properly, joining the CFT could help Iran move closer to FATF compliance, which is essential to reconnect with international banks.
- For India and other Asian countries, Iran's financial reintegration could mean easier oil trade, investment opportunities, and revival of projects like Chabahar Port.
- The success of this step will depend on how the West responds — especially whether the U.S. softens sanctions or continues to block Iran's global financial access.

Other important news

1. Modi, Trump speak; U.S., India call accounts differ
2. By November 1, Kerala will officially be first State ‘free of extreme poverty’
3. Officers issuing content notice to be made more ‘accountable’
4. Extradition saga: no reprieve for Choksi from Belgian court
5. NHRC issues notice to three States over attack on journalists
6. NSCN(I-M) leader Thuingaleng Muivah returns home in Manipur after six decades
7. Indian Embassy in Kabul will help ‘regional peace’: Taliban spokesman
8. NHAI to deploy 3D sensors to identify potholes, road cracks across 23 States
9. SC Collegium’s shift in Justice Sreedharan’s posting triggers judicial independence concerns