

CROSS & CLIMB ROHTAK

School of Research Based Learning & Competition

Current Affairs - 25 July 2026

NEW LAW ON EXAM PAPER LEAKS

- Following the announcement by PM Modi, the Union Cabinet has approved a draft Bill to amend the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024.
- The Bill is expected to be introduced in Parliament shortly.

Key Amendments Proposed

- **Stricter Punishments**
 - The proposed amendments significantly enhance the penalties for exam-related offences:
 - **Imprisonment:** Up to 10 years
 - **Fine:** Up to Rs 10 crore
 - The stricter penalties are expected to strengthen deterrence against all forms of exam fraud.
- **Time-Bound Investigation and Trial**
 - Investigation: Must be completed within two months.
 - Trial: Must be completed within three months.
 - Total timeline: Cases must be concluded within five months.
 - This addresses one of the most serious weaknesses in the existing framework, prolonged delays in investigation and judicial proceedings.
- **Statutory Backing for Fast-Track Courts**
 - The Bill provides statutory backing for the establishment of fast-track courts specifically to handle exam paper leak cases.
 - Law and Justice Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal announced that fast-track courts would initially be set up in the **High Courts of Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Madhya Pradesh**.
 - These are the states where cases pertaining to the NEET paper leak are currently ongoing.

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Significance of the Amendments

- **Stronger Deterrence**
 - The enhanced punishment of up to 10 years imprisonment and Rs 10 crore fine sends a strong signal that exam fraud will not be tolerated.
- **Speedier Justice**
 - The five-month deadline for investigation and trial addresses the problem of delayed justice.

Challenges Ahead

- **Implementation**
 - Setting up fast-track courts across the country will require significant judicial infrastructure.
 - Ensuring that investigating agencies have adequate resources to meet the two-month deadline.
- **Legal and Procedural**
 - Balancing speed with fairness: ensuring that time-bound trials do not compromise the rights of the accused.
 - Coordination between investigating agencies and the judiciary to meet timelines.
 - Managing a high volume of cases that may arise with stricter enforcement.
- **Systemic Issues**
 - Addressing the root causes of exam leaks, including corruption in recruitment and examination bodies.
 - Strengthening internal controls in institutions like the NTA, UPSC, and SSC.
 - Improving the digital security of examination systems to prevent leaks.
- **Judicial Capacity**
 - The High Courts of Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, and Madhya Pradesh will need additional judges and staff.
 - Managing existing backlog while adding new fast-track cases.

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A GROWTH STORY THAT NEEDS WOMEN AT WORK

- India aims to become a **Viksit Bharat** by **2047**, but achieving this goal requires sustained **8–9% GDP growth**, productive employment, and inclusive development.
- Rising youth unemployment, slowing structural transformation, increasing **income inequality**, and low **Female Work Participation Rate (WPR)** have weakened the economy.
- While external shocks such as the **West Asia conflict** have exposed these vulnerabilities, domestic policy shocks since 2016 have already slowed job creation and reduced private investment.
- Unlocking women's employment is essential for restoring growth.

Women's Employment: A Powerful Growth Multiplier

- Expanding women's participation in the workforce is one of the strongest drivers of economic growth.
- A **10-percentage-point** increase in female WPR could raise GDP growth by nearly **2 percentage points**.
- Greater female employment:
 - Expands the **labour supply** and productive capacity.
 - Raises household incomes, consumption, and savings.
 - Improves **nutrition**, education, and healthcare, strengthening **human capital**.
 - Promotes **productivity**, innovation, and competitiveness through gender-diverse workplaces.
- Women's employment is therefore both an economic necessity and a tool for inclusive development.

Why India's Female Work Participation Remains Low?

- India's female WPR remains below **30%**, among the lowest globally.
- During the 1980s and early 1990s, women's participation was high because of agricultural employment.

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Manufacturing: The Missing Link

- India's growth has been concentrated in capital-intensive sectors such as finance, IT, and organised manufacturing, which generate limited employment.
- Labour-intensive industries like **textiles**, garments, footwear, food processing, and MSMEs experienced declining employment between **2013 and 2019**.
- Despite **Make in India** and the **Production-Linked Incentive (PLI)** scheme, women's manufacturing employment in 2019 remained below its 2004 level, recovering only by 2022.

The Crisis of Educated Young Women

- Although secondary education has achieved near gender parity, employment opportunities have not kept pace.
- Rising unemployment among educated women represents a major loss of India's demographic dividend.

Way Forward

- India should promote **labour- intensive manufacturing**, strengthen **MSMEs**, improve public education and healthcare, enhance women's safety, transport, childcare, and hostel facilities, expand skill development, and encourage women's entrepreneurship.
- Replicating the **Tamil Nadu model** in northern states through industrial clusters and gender-friendly infrastructure can substantially increase female employment and accelerate inclusive growth.

Conclusion

- India cannot achieve Viksit Bharat by excluding half of its population from productive employment.
- Higher female labour force participation, stronger manufacturing, investment in **human capital**, and greater **gender equality** are essential for generating employment, boosting productivity, and sustaining long-term economic growth.
- Women's employment is not merely a social objective but the missing engine of India's development.

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START-UP VILLAGE ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME



- It was launched in 2016.
- It is a sub-scheme of the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM).
- **Objective:** To implement the Government's efforts to stimulate economic growth and reduce poverty and unemployment in the villages by helping start and support rural enterprises.
- **Features of Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme**
 - The programme supports Self Help Groups (SHGs) and their family members in establishing small enterprises in the non-farm sector.
 - It provides financial assistance, institutional support, business management training, soft skill development, and business development services.
 - SVEP also facilitates access to banking linkages and convergence with government schemes.
 - A key feature of SVEP has been community-based decision-making for funding and supporting enterprises locally.
 - It has adopted an all-inclusive approach, with a strong focus on supporting women, marginalized communities, and individuals with limited educational attainment.
 - **Implemented By:** SVEP is implemented through the State Rural Livelihoods Missions (SRLMs).
 - At the block level, Block Resource Centres–Enterprise Promotion (BRC-EPs) coordinate programme implementation.
 - Trained Community Resource Persons–Enterprise Promotion (CRP-EPs) provide technical assistance to the Block Resource Centres on enterprise promotion.

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BHAVYA RASAYAN SCHEME



Recently, the Union Cabinet approved the Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojana Rasayan (BHAVYA Rasayan) scheme.

- It was launched for the **establishment of three dedicated chemical parks** across the country.
- It is designed to promote the **development of the chemical industry** across the **entire value chain**, including upstream, downstream and ancillary industries.

Time Period: The scheme will be implemented over **five years, from FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31.**

Features of BHAVYA Rasayan Scheme:

- **Financial Assistance:** The Centre will provide financial assistance of **up to ₹1,000 crore** for each chemical park, subject to a **minimum contribution of ₹500 crore** by the respective state government.
- **Selection Process:** The chemical parks will be **developed by state governments through a challenge-based selection** process, with each park requiring **at least 2,000 acres** (8 sq. km.) of contiguous, encumbrance-free land.
- The parks will feature **plug-and-play infrastructure** tailored to the needs of the chemical sector, including
 - Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs), Treatment, Storage and Disposal Facilities (TSDFs), water supply and distribution systems, solvent recovery and distillation facilities, steam generation and distribution networks, interconnected pipeline systems, and logistics and warehousing infrastructure.

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PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT SERVICE



- It is registered under the SEBI (Portfolio Managers) Regulations, 2020.
- It is a professional investment service where a **qualified fund manager takes charge of the equity, debt and other securities portfolio** of a customer — who is a high net-worth individual.
- **Who can offer:** Only corporate entities, companies or LLPs with SEBI registration can legally offer these services in India.
- **Types of PMS:**
 - **Discretionary PMS:** In this type of PMS services, the **portfolio manager has complete autonomy** to make investment decisions on behalf of the investor.
 - **Non-Discretionary PMS:** In non-discretionary PMS, the **portfolio manager provides recommendations**, but the final decision to buy or sell rests with the investors themselves.
 - **Advisory PMS:** In Advisory PMS, the **portfolio manager offers investment advice**, and the investor executes transactions independently.
- **Key regulations about PMS:**
 - **Registration:** All PMS providers must register with SEBI.
 - **Minimum Investment Requirement:** SEBI mandates a **₹50 lakhs minimum** investment, targeting high net worth investors capable of managing associated risks.
 - **Disclosure Obligations:** PMS providers must **regularly update investors** with performance reports, fees, and risk disclosures.
 - **Custodian Engagement:** An independent custodian is required to hold investor assets to eliminate conflicts of interest.
 - **Compliance Monitoring:** Each PMS provider is required to **appoint a compliance officer** to ensure adherence to SEBI regulations.

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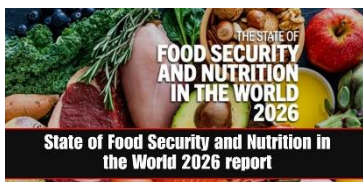
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KEY FACTS ABOUT LAKE MANSAROVAR



The wish of pilgrims undertaking the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra to take a holy dip in Lake Mansarovar remained unfulfilled yet again this year, as Chinese authorities continued to prohibit bathing in the lake.

- It is a large freshwater lake situated in China's Tibet Autonomous Region.
- It is regarded as one of the holiest lakes in Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Bon.
- It is one of the highest freshwater lakes in the world.
- It is located adjacent to Lake Rakshastal, which is a saltwater lake. The two lakes are connected by the Ganga Chhu channel.
- The highest peak in the surrounding range is Gurla Mandata (7694 meters). To the north of the lake is magnificent Mount Kailash.
- The Kailash Manasarovar region is a source of the Karnali (a major tributary of the Ganges and the longest river in Nepal) Indus, the Sutlej, and the Brahmaputra (the Yarlung Tsangpo) rivers.
- At present, along with the shores of Mansarovar, there are 5 Buddhist monasteries, and out of those five, Chiu Monastery is the most popular and is located on the northwest shore of the lake.



STATE OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION IN THE WORLD 2026 REPORT

- It is the UN system's flagship assessment of global hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition,
- It is produced jointly by FAO, IFAD, (International Fund for Agricultural Development), UNICEF and WFP (World Food Programme).
- It tracks progress toward SDG 2 through the latest global and regional estimates on food insecurity, diet quality and the global nutrition targets.

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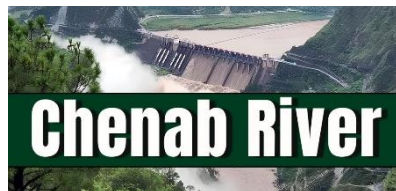
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Key Highlights of the report 2026

- It showed that while global **food security and nutrition improved modestly** in 2025, progress remains uneven and insufficient to meet the 2030 targets.
- **Hunger affected 7.8 percent of the world's population**, and 2.1 billion people experienced moderate or severe food insecurity.
- **Persistent disparities remain**, particularly for women, young children and rural communities, and diet quality continues to lag worldwide.
- The share of **undernourished Indians has more than halved** over the past two decades, from 21.1 per cent in 2004-06 to 9.8 per cent in 2023-25.
- **India's healthy-diet cost has risen faster** since 2017 — up nearly 48 per cent — compared to about 32 per cent in the US over the same period.

CHENAB RIVER



- It is a **tributary of the Indus River**.
- **Origin:** It is formed by the confluence of two streams, **Chandra and Bhaga**, in the Lahaul and Spiti Districts of Himachal Pradesh.
- In its upper reaches, it is also known as the
- It flows through **Jammu and Kashmir union territory, Himachal Pradesh** and after receiving the **Jhelum River** near Trimmu, the Chenab empties into the **Sutlej River**.
- **Major Tributaries:**
 - **Left Bank:** Niru, Tawi, Neeru, and Liddrari
 - **Right Bank:** Ans, Bhut Nalla, Bichleri, Kalnai Marusudar and Miyar Nalla.
- **Major Dams on Chenab River:** Salal (rockfill dam), Baglihar, and Dul.
- The waters of the Chenab are shared by **India and Pakistan** as per the terms of the **Indus Water Treaty**.