

A Coordinated approach to regulating crypto assets, managing debt vulnerabilities and reorienting global financial institutions have been identified as critical focus areas of the Finance Track agenda for India's G-20 Presidency, which will kick off with the first meeting of G-20 finance and central bank deputies in Bengaluru on Tuesday. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das will steer the overall Finance Track during India's G-20 Presidency, with the first meeting of Finance Ministers and central bank Governors of member countries also scheduled to be held in the Karnataka capital from February 23 to 25.

The Bill to amend the Multistate Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002, was introduced in the Lok Sabha on December 7. Multistate cooperatives are societies that have operations in more than one State — for instance, a farmer producers organisation which procures grains from farmers of multiple States. The amendments have been introduced to improve governance, reform the electoral process, strengthen monitoring mechanisms and enhance transparency and accountability. The Bill also seeks to improve the composition of the board and ensure financial discipline, besides enabling the raising of funds in multistate cooperative societies.

In post independent India, Odisha became the first State to enact a law restricting religious conversions, which later became a model framework for other States. Since 2017, multiple States enacted or revised their ant conversion laws, restricting religious conversions on the additional ground of marriage, supposedly to curb what has been described as "love jihad". The Himachal Pradesh High Court said that the individual converting their faith enjoyed their right to privacy.

The era of classifying terrorists as "bad" or "good" based on "political convenience" must end immediately, a concept note circulated by India in the UN Security Council here has said, underlining that categorising terror acts by intent as religious or ideologically motivated will dilute the shared global commitment to fighting terrorism. Stressing that terrorism cannot be associated with any religion, nationality, civilisation or ethnic group, the note said all acts of terrorism were criminal.

India and other countries should "respect" and follow the ASEAN's policy on Myanmar rather than taking

ACTION AGAINST PHARMA POLLUTION

1. According to a paper published in the journal The Lancet, pharmaceutical pollution is an overlooked but urgent issue that needs coordinated action from across the pharmaceutical, healthcare and environmental sectors.
2. **About drug or pharmaceutical pollution:** It is mainly a form of water pollution, caused by pharmaceutical drugs and their molecules which reach the aquatic environment (groundwater, rivers, lakes, and oceans) through wastewater. It is now detected in waters throughout the world and its causes include – Effluents from pharmaceutical manufacturing, Ageing infrastructure (such as water treatment plants which cannot filter out too small molecules), Sewage overflows (drugs in urine and excreta) and Agricultural runoff (antibiotic use in livestock).
3. **Effects: On human health:** For example, Endocrine disruptor chemicals (EDCs) (e.g. endosulfan) directly influence sex hormones. On aquatic life: A suspected contributor in fish kills, amphibian die-offs, etc.
4. **Key highlights of The Lancet study:** Almost 43% of the world's rivers are contaminated with active pharmaceutical ingredients in concentrations that can have disastrous ramifications on health. Medicines are a vital part of the human healthcare system, so there is a need to find ways to use them without poisoning the environment.
5. **Way ahead:** Returning unused drugs to pharmacies rather than disposing of them down the sink or toilet. The domestic pharmaceutical industry needs to take the lead in limiting antibiotic pollution. Upgrading existing water treatment plants to use advanced oxidation processes that can remove small molecules.

BEHIND MUMBAI'S UNUSUALLY FOUL AIR, CHANGES IN WIND PATTERNS

1. **Context:** Over the last month, air quality in India's financial hub, Mumbai, has been noticeably worse than in prior years, giving Mumbaikars a taste of what people in Delhi have become used to at this time of year. Background: Since December 5, the AQI in Mumbai has consistently been in the "very poor" range (AQI > 300), according to the SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research) network.
2. **Why is this unusual?** This is not the first time Mumbai's air has been so toxic, but it has never lasted more than 1-2 days. Though Mumbai generates pollutants in equivalent amounts as compared to Delhi, it has an important location advantage. Mumbai's relatively clean air is the result of strong sea breezes that sweep air pollutants away from the land.
3. **Reasons for this unusual pattern:** Change in flow patterns: In Mumbai, winds move from land to sea for a few days and then from sea to land and this cyclic pattern usually repeats every 3-4 days. When the wind is not moving away from the land, air pollutants accumulate over the city. But then the wind direction changes, and it all gets cleaned. This cycle is delayed this year. Instead of repeating every 3-4 days, it is happening after a week, even 10 days. Even when the wind direction turns favourable, the lack of adequate speed means that the air is not entirely cleaned.
4. **Probable causes:** Though the meteorological reasons behind this change needed to be probed, this can be attributed to some unusual global events like the third consecutive year of La Niña. La Nina is an abnormal cooling of the Pacific Ocean that impacts weather events across the world. More construction activities: Large infrastructure projects, like the Mumbai Metro or the Coastal Road Project, could be generating significantly higher amounts of pollutants. This could be possible, as Mumbai is currently witnessing a rise in PM10 (particulate matter of the size of 10 micrometres or smaller) levels as well.

ILO DECLARATION URGES COUNTRIES TO ENSURE LABOUR PROTECTION

1. The 17th Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting (APRM) of the ILO set 10-point priorities of national action for the members to deal with the issue of dwindling wages, inflation and unemployment. Background: The tripartite (governments, employers and workers) declaration – the "Singapore Declaration", adopted by the delegates agreed to address labour market challenges and find solutions to crises like the pandemic, natural disasters and economic uncertainty.

a “different” path, Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi says. In comments to about India’s decision to engage the Myanmar military government that came to power in February 2021 after deposing the elected National Unity Government and jailing thousands of leaders, including Aung San Suu Kyi, Ms. Marsudi said that it could make efforts of the 10 member Association of South East Asian Nations towards democracy “less effective”.

22 percentage by which the average wholesale price of wheat rose across India to ₹2,721 per quintal in November from ₹2,228 per quintal in January this year. Wheat production has declined from 109.59 million tonnes in 2020-21 to 106.84 million tonnes in 2021-22 due to heat wave in March and April, according to agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar.

13.92 lakh, is the number of cancer cases recorded in India in 2020. The number is expected to increase by 12.8%, according to Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya who cited National Cancer Registry Programme data. Replying to a question, Mr.Mandaviya said patients with cancer are getting treatment at various health facilities.

40 number of newly elected MLAs who are facing criminal charges, according to the Association for Democratic Reforms and the Gujarat Election Watch.

A pastoral letter read out at the churches under the Latin Archdiocese, Thiruvananthapuram, which spearheaded the fishermen’s agitation against the Vizhinjam International Seaport, said the protest against the port was temporarily called off to restore peace along the coastline.

A coordinated crackdown on pro-Khalistan elements within and outside the country has started yielding results for the law enforcement organisations, with the National Investigation Agency (NIA) succeeding in making two key arrests this month. About two dozen accused and suspects currently operating from overseas are under the scanner.

2. **Highlights of the Singapore Declaration:** The governments must strengthen governance frameworks and ensure – Labour protection through the promotion of freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining. Rights of migrant workers, including improved accommodation, protection of wages and extension of social protection, etc. It called for closing gender gaps through measures that – Increase women’s labour force participation, Promote equal pay for equal work and responsibilities, and Promote women’s leadership. Governments and social partners should urgently take effective measures to address allegations of serious violations of these rights.
3. **Measures suggested in the declaration:** Governments must – Develop inclusive labour market programmes and policies. Implement collective and determined efforts to accelerate a smooth transition from the informal to formal economy. Facilitate the transition to peace, security and decent work in situations of crisis. Recognise the impact of climate change and develop national plans that help build environmentally sustainable economies and societies. Frame policies to regulate labour migration to coordinate labour mobility and social protection and harness opportunities arising from labour migration.
4. **Way ahead in the declaration:** Strengthening the foundation for social and employment protection, especially for workers in the informal economy. The capacities and skills of the employer, worker representatives and governments must be strengthened. Recognising that strong and representative organisations of workers and employers are key to achieving social justice and decent work.

GHAR- GO HOME AND RE-UNITE

1. **National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), has developed and launched a portal namely GHAR – GO Home and Re-Unite (Portal for Restoration and Repatriation of Child).**
2. **GHAR:** The GHAR portal has been developed to digitally monitor and track the restoration and repatriation of children according to the protocol. NCPCR is a statutory body (set up in 2007) under the administrative control of the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India.

JOB RESERVATION FOR WOMEN IN UTTARAKHAND

1. Uttarakhand has passed a bill giving 30% horizontal reservation for women in public services and posts, in addition to existing quotas applicable in the state.
2. **What are ‘Horizontal Reservation’ and ‘Vertical Reservation’?** Vertical reservation – applies separately for each of the groups specified under the law. Ex- SC, ST, OBC Horizontal reservation – applies separately to each vertical category, and not across the board. Ex-women, veterans, the transgender community, and individuals with disabilities, cutting through the vertical categories.
3. **Why did the bill end up in court?** In 2006 Uttarakhand issued a government order to provide 30% horizontal reservation to women domiciled in the state, irrespective of their caste, creed, place of birth, place of origin, and social status. It was challenged by women from outside the state belonging to the unreserved category who had appeared for the state civil examination. The Uttarakhand HC stayed the order and said the quota should be interpreted as a horizontal reservation for women irrespective of their domicile or place of residence.
4. **State government’s argument to justify ‘Quota based on domicile’ at the Supreme Court:** The state’s terrain and climate forced its youth to migrate elsewhere in search of livelihood, leaving the responsibility to run the household and raise children to women. So state made the initiative to include such women under the quota system. SC accepted this argument and lifted the stay by HC.



*“If the target is 100%,
99 is just mid-way”*

DR. KHAN
(KSG)