



Daily Current Affairs



To The Point

by Dhananjay Gautam

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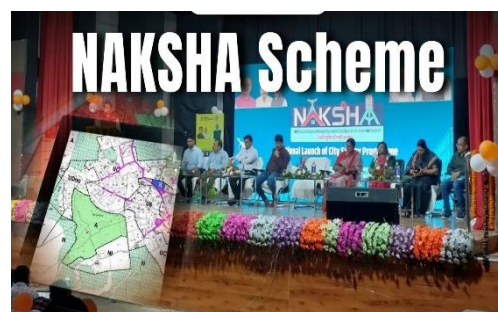


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1 NAKSHA Scheme: Revolutionizing Urban Land Records

Context: The **NAKSHA** (NAtional Geospatial Knowledge-based Land Survey of Urban Habitations) scheme is an ambitious project aimed at modernizing urban land records in India. Launched under the **Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP)**, this initiative strives to improve transparency in land ownership and transactions, helping to streamline urban governance. The **Department of Land Resources (DoLR)**, Ministry of Rural Development, is spearheading the implementation of this scheme.



NAKSHA Scheme: Scope, Funding, and Implementation:

Mapping Urban Areas for Better Governance:

The **NAKSHA** initiative focuses on mapping **towns and cities** across India, ensuring improved **land governance**. In its initial phase, it has been introduced as a pilot project across **152 urban local bodies** in **26 states**. It targets cities with a **land area less than 35 sq km** and a **population under 2 lakh**, and is set to be completed within a year. The pilot phase will serve as a model for expanding the project to cover more urban areas.

100% Centrally Funded:

NAKSHA is a **100% centrally funded** project, with an aim to gradually expand its coverage. The government's plan includes covering **4,142.63 sq km** in the initial phase, with future expansion to **4,912 urban local bodies** across the country.

Objectives and Benefits of NAKSHA:

A Comprehensive Geospatial Database:

NAKSHA will establish a **comprehensive geospatial database** for urban land records, integrating **aerial surveys** and **field data** with **Geographical Information Systems (GIS)** technology. The key objectives of the scheme are to:

- **Enhance land governance** and simplify **property record management**.
- Support **efficient urban planning** by improving data accuracy.
- Facilitate **faster property transactions**, ensuring smoother and transparent dealings.
- Improve decision-making, leading to better urban development policies.

Addressing Urban Land Record Challenges:

Urban Land Record Update Needs:

While rural land records have seen significant improvements, many cities still struggle with **outdated** or **unstructured land records**. Except for a few states like **Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Goa**, many urban areas still lack proper land maps. This creates inefficiencies in **governance** and **taxation**. The **NAKSHA** initiative seeks to fill these gaps, addressing the historical challenges of urban land record maintenance.

Government Support and Budget Announcements:

The **NAKSHA** scheme was first proposed in the **Union Budget 2024**, which highlighted the importance of **GIS mapping** for urban land records. The government also focused on:

- **Digitization of urban land records.**
- Introducing an **IT-based system** for property administration and **tax management**.
- Strengthening the **financial position of urban local bodies**. The initiative was reaffirmed in **Budget 2025**, where emphasis was placed on urban reforms and the launch of the **National Geospatial Mission** under **PM Gati Shakti**.

How the NAKSHA Survey Will Be Conducted:

Innovative Use of Drone Technology:

One of the highlights of the NAKSHA scheme is its use of **drone technology** for precise aerial surveys. The drones are equipped with **high-resolution cameras**:

- **Simple cameras** for general imagery.
- **Oblique angle cameras** with **LiDAR sensors**, offering **5 cm resolution**—much sharper than satellite imagery. These drones will capture detailed images that are then processed to create accurate maps and land records.

Three-Stage Survey Process:

1. Drone Survey & Data Collection:

- Aerial drones capture detailed images of the survey area.
- The collected data is processed to create visual land records.

2. Field Survey & Data Verification:

- Ground surveys will be conducted to verify the property **tax, ownership, and registration records**.
- Based on this, **2D/3D models** are created, and a draft of the **land ownership** details is published.

3. Public Review & Finalization:

- A public review process is held where **claims** and **objections** are considered.
- Grievances are addressed, and the final **land maps** are published.

Conclusion: The Future of Urban Land Records:

The **NAKSHA** initiative is a transformative step towards modernizing **urban land records**, making them more **accurate, transparent, and efficient**. By leveraging **geospatial data** and cutting-edge **survey technology**, NAKSHA will enhance **urban planning**, streamline **property transactions**, and improve governance. As the project progresses, it promises to bring about significant changes in how land records are managed, benefiting urban dwellers and municipal authorities alike.

2

Madras High Court's Ruling on Night Arrests of Women: Understanding BNSS & CrPC Provisions

Context: The Madras High Court has recently addressed the issue of **nighttime arrests of women**, ruling that the restriction on such arrests under the **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023**, is **directory, not mandatory**. This decision has sparked discussions on the balance between **women's rights, law enforcement duties, and public safety**.



BNSS Nighttime Arrest of Women: Latest Developments:

The **Madurai Bench** of the **Madras High Court** examined the validity of an **arrest made at 8 PM**, initially ruling it a violation of **Section 46(4) of the CrPC**. However, a **larger bench later clarified** that the restriction on night arrests is **not absolute**, meaning that while safeguards exist, violations do not automatically render an arrest illegal.

Key Safeguards for Arresting Women at Night:

- 1. Restrictions on Arrest Timing:** As per **Section 43(5) of BNSS** (earlier **Section 46(4) of CrPC**), a woman cannot be arrested between sunset and sunrise, except under **exceptional circumstances**.
- 2. Magistrate's Permission Requirement:** In exceptional cases, a woman police officer must obtain **prior written approval** from the **jurisdictional magistrate** before making an arrest.
- 3. Protection Against Physical Contact:** The arresting officer must **not touch the woman**, except in cases where the arrest is made by a woman police officer or circumstances require it.
- 4. Ambiguity in 'Exceptional Circumstances':** While the provision is meant to ensure **women's safety**, it does not clearly define what qualifies as an exceptional case, leading to **uncertainty** in its application.

Madras High Court's Ruling on Section 46(4) of CrPC:

- 1. The Provision is Directory, Not Mandatory:** The Court observed that **Section 46(4) does not specify penalties for non-compliance**, suggesting that it is a **guideline rather than a strict rule**.
- 2. Public Duty of Police Officers:** Law enforcement officers perform a **public duty**, and **rigid adherence** to procedural restrictions should **not hinder their ability to act swiftly** in serious cases.
- 3. Practical Challenges in Heinous Cases:**
 - In cases of grave crimes committed by women at night**, immediate arrest may be necessary.
 - If a **magistrate is unavailable**, delayed action could allow the accused to escape, which may pose a risk to public safety.

Historical Background of Section 46(4) of CrPC:

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**135th Law Commission Report (1989):**

- Recommended that **women should not be arrested between sunset and sunrise.**
- In urgent cases, an **arrest report** with reasons had to be **submitted to a superior officer and the magistrate.**

154th Law Commission Report (1996):

- Reaffirmed the **135th report's recommendations** regarding **night arrests of women.**

Incorporation into CrPC (2005):

- Based on these recommendations, **Section 46(4)** was added to the **Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC)** to **enhance safeguards for women.**

Supreme Court's Perspective on Night Arrests of Women:

- The **Nagpur Bench of the Bombay High Court** had ruled that **no woman should be detained without a lady constable and never after sunset or before sunrise.**
- The **Supreme Court** later noted that **strict adherence** to this rule **could create practical difficulties** in certain situations.

Impact of the Madras High Court Ruling:**1. The Rule is Not Absolute:**

- The **Court clarified** that the restriction under **Section 46(4) of CrPC/43(5) of BNSS** is **not an absolute prohibition.**

2. Justification Required for Non-Compliance:

- **Failure to comply** with the rule **does not make an arrest automatically illegal.** However, the **police must provide a valid reason** for any **deviation from the procedure.**

3. Need for Clear Guidelines:

- The **Court directed police authorities** to establish **clear guidelines** defining what constitutes **"exceptional circumstances"** to ensure the **provision is not misused.**

Conclusion:

The **Madras High Court's ruling** on **night arrests of women** seeks to balance **women's legal protections** with **practical law enforcement needs.** While the **BNSS and CrPC provisions** offer **safeguards**, they are **not absolute**, meaning that **law enforcement agencies must justify any deviation from the standard procedure.** The ruling also highlights the **need for clearer guidelines** to ensure that **women's rights and public safety** are both upheld effectively.

3

Rise in Women's Workforce Participation: Insights from the Time Use Survey 2024

Context: The **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** has released the **Time Use Survey (TUS) 2024**, offering valuable insights into how Indians allocate their time across work, caregiving, and leisure activities. This is the **second all-India survey**, following the first one conducted in **2019**.



A significant takeaway from the latest survey is the **increase in women's participation in employment-related activities**, marking a shift from **unpaid domestic work to paid employment**. This change reflects **evolving labor market dynamics, economic progress, and social transformation** in India.

Key Findings of the Time Use Survey 2024:

Increase in Workforce Participation:

- Women's engagement in **employment-related activities** has grown from **21.8% in 2019 to 25% in 2024**.
- For men, the participation rate increased from **70.9% to 75%**.
- Although the **gender gap remains considerable**, the upward trend for women signifies a positive economic shift.

Decline in Time Spent on Unpaid Domestic Work:

- Women spent **305 minutes per day** on unpaid domestic work in 2024, down from **315 minutes in 2019**, reflecting a gradual transition to paid employment.
- In contrast, **men spent only 88 minutes per day** on domestic chores, highlighting the **persistent gender imbalance in household responsibilities**.

Women's Role in Caregiving:

- **41% of women (aged 15-59) engaged in caregiving**, compared to only **21.4% of men** in the same age group.
- Women spent an average of **137 minutes per day** on caregiving, almost **double the 75 minutes spent by men**.
- Despite the increase in paid work participation, **women continue to bear a disproportionate caregiving burden**.

Impact of Changing Work Dynamics:

Economic Benefits:

The **shift of women from unpaid domestic duties to paid jobs** brings several economic advantages:

- **Higher Household Incomes** – More earning members contribute to financial stability.
- **Boost to Economic Growth** – Increased female labor force participation enhances national productivity.
- **Labor Formalization** – More women in paid jobs mean **better social security and workplace protections**.

Social and Policy Implications:

While progress is evident, **gender disparities persist**, necessitating:

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- **Skill Development Programs** to help women secure higher-paying jobs.
- **Flexible Work Policies**, including **remote work** and **part-time options**, to balance professional and domestic responsibilities.
- **Government Support Measures**, such as **maternity benefits**, **affordable childcare**, and **financial incentives** to encourage women's workforce participation.

Leisure and Cultural Activities:

- On average, individuals aged **6 and above** spent **171 minutes daily** on leisure, cultural, and mass-media activities.
- **Men (177 minutes)** spent slightly more time than **women (164 minutes)** on these activities, reflecting the **gendered division of time use**.

Education and Self-Care Trends:

- **89.3% of children (aged 6-14)** participated in educational activities, spending **413 minutes per day on studies**.
- Across all age groups, individuals dedicated **708 minutes daily to self-care and personal maintenance**.

Future Outlook and Recommendations:

1. Strengthening Skill Training:

- Expanding **vocational training programs** for women in **IT, healthcare, and entrepreneurship**.

2. Creating More Job Opportunities:

- Encouraging industries to hire more women through **affirmative action and policy incentives**.

3. Enhancing Social Security Benefits:

- Strengthening **maternity benefits, pension schemes, and workplace protections** for female workers.

4. Workplace Inclusivity Initiatives:

- Promoting **gender-sensitive policies** in both urban and rural employment sectors to ensure **equal opportunities**.

Conclusion:

The **Time Use Survey 2024** highlights a **positive shift toward greater female workforce participation** in India. However, **gender disparities in employment, domestic work, and caregiving remain significant**. **Strategic policy interventions, skill development, and supportive work environments** are essential to **empower more women to transition from unpaid labor to meaningful employment**.

A continued **focus on gender equity** will not only enhance **economic growth** but also contribute to **India's social progress** and overall development.



4 U.S. Aligns with Russia at UN, Calls for 'Swift End' to War

Context: On the third anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted a U.S.-drafted resolution urging an end to the ongoing conflict and the establishment of lasting peace. The resolution, which takes a **neutral stance**, was described by Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia as reflecting "**constructive changes**" in the U.S. position on the war.



Key Aspects of the Resolution:

- The resolution **does not explicitly side** with either Russia or Ukraine but encourages a **peaceful resolution** to the war.
- It underscores the **UN's commitment** to maintaining **global peace, security, and diplomatic conflict resolution**.
- It expresses **mourning for the loss of lives** and calls for a **swift and lasting peace**.
- **Voting Outcome:**
 - The resolution passed with **10 votes in favor**.
 - **France, Britain, Denmark, Greece, and Slovenia abstained**.
 - **Russia voted in favor**, despite its **failed attempt to amend** the draft.

UN Security Council's Past Actions on the Conflict:

Russia's Veto Power:

- The **Security Council has remained deadlocked** for much of the war due to **Russia's veto power**, which has blocked any significant action against its military actions in Ukraine.

Support from the General Assembly:

- Despite the **Security Council's limitations**, the **UN General Assembly (with 193 member states)** has consistently supported **Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity**.
- The General Assembly has advocated for a **just and lasting peace**, in accordance with the **UN Charter**.

UN Security Council: Decision-Making Dynamics:

- The **Security Council** consists of **15 members**:
 - **5 permanent members** (U.S., Russia, China, France, and the U.K.)
 - **10 non-permanent members**, elected for two-year terms.
- Each member has **one vote**, and decisions require **at least 9 votes in favor**, including the support of all **five permanent members**.
- A "**No**" vote from any permanent member can block the resolution from passing.

Shifting U.S. Stance on the Russia-Ukraine Conflict:

- **Historically**, the **United States has been one of Ukraine's strongest allies**, providing extensive **military and financial aid** while leading **global sanctions** against Russia.
- The U.S. has spearheaded efforts to **punish Russia** through **economic sanctions** targeting **finance, defense, energy, and technology sectors**.



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- Previously, the U.S. backed Ukraine's position in **peace negotiations** while insisting that **Russia must face severe consequences** for its actions.
- **Recent Shift:** Under the **Trump administration**, the U.S. has **adopted a more neutral stance**, moving away from direct **confrontation with Russia** and instead **focusing on diplomatic resolutions**.

This latest **UN resolution signals a notable shift in U.S. policy**, reflecting a **more balanced approach** to the Russia-Ukraine conflict and emphasizing the urgency of **ending hostilities through diplomacy**.



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India-EU Strengthen Strategic Ties: Focus on Defence, Security, and Trade Amid Ukraine Crisis

Context: India and the **European Union (EU)** are set to **deepen their defence, security, and economic collaboration** in **2025**, with multiple key proposals under discussion. The two sides aim to strengthen their **strategic partnership**, addressing areas such as **maritime security, counter-terrorism, and trade negotiations**, especially in the backdrop of the **Ukraine conflict** and ongoing **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** talks.



Key Areas of Cooperation:

1. Defence and Security Partnership:

- The **EU plans to deploy a liaison officer** at **India's Navy's Information Fusion Centre**, reinforcing **maritime security in the Indian Ocean**.
- **Counter-terrorism cooperation** will be a priority, focusing on the **growing security risks posed by commercial drones** and other emerging threats.

2. India's Stance on the Ukraine Conflict:

- The **EU is seeking India's support** in **enforcing sanctions against Russia**, amid growing concerns over **Russia's economic resilience**.
- **India maintains a neutral position**, emphasizing the need for **dialogue and diplomatic resolutions** to ensure **regional stability**.

3. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Talks:

- India and the EU are actively **negotiating an FTA**, with the **tenth round of discussions** scheduled for **March 2025 in Brussels**.
- The **EU aims to lower tariffs** on key exports such as **whiskey, wine, and automobiles**, which currently face **high trade barriers in India**.
- However, **India is focused on protecting its domestic industries**, particularly **small businesses, steel, and aluminium sectors**, which could be impacted by the **EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)**.

4. Boosting Connectivity and Technology Collaboration:

- Both sides are working on strengthening connectivity through initiatives like the **India-Middle East-Europe Corridor** and expanding **undersea cable networks**.
- **Technology cooperation** remains a priority, particularly in areas such as **green hydrogen, electric vehicle (EV) battery innovation, and space technology**.

Understanding Open and Closed Economies:

What Defines an Open or Closed Economy?

Economies are categorized based on **the movement of goods, services, capital, and labor across borders**.

Closed Economy: Characteristics & Example:

A **closed economy** is one that does **not engage in international trade**, meaning **no exports or imports**.

Features:

- **Self-sufficient**, relying entirely on **domestic production**.



- **No foreign investments** or capital inflows.
- **No dependence on global markets** for essential resources.
- **Example:** North Korea follows a largely closed economic model.

Open Economy: Characteristics & Example:

An **open economy** actively engages in **international trade and investment**.

Features::

- **Imports and exports** of goods and services.
- **Foreign direct investment (FDI)** and cross-border capital flows.
- **Integrated with global markets**, making it susceptible to external economic fluctuations.
- In an **open economy**, residents can **work, trade, and invest freely across international borders**.
- **Example:** The United States and most modern economies function as open economies.

India's Economic Model: A Balance Between Open and Closed Policies:

- **India follows a mixed economic model**, combining aspects of an **open economy** while retaining **protectionist policies** in certain sectors.
- **Liberalization in 1991** marked a turning point, **opening India's markets** to global trade and investment.
- Despite increased global integration, **India continues to impose tariffs and trade barriers** on key imports to **protect domestic industries**.

Conclusion:

The **India-EU partnership** is entering a new phase, with expanded **cooperation in defence, security, and trade**. While India remains cautious on **sanctions against Russia**, its commitment to **FTA negotiations, maritime security, and technological collaboration** highlights the growing significance of its ties with the EU. **Striking a balance between economic openness and protectionism will be crucial for India** as it navigates global trade and geopolitical challenges.

6

CBSE to Introduce Biannual Board Exams from 2025-26

Context: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has proposed a **new draft policy** to conduct **Class 10 board exams twice a year**, starting from the **academic session 2025-26**. This initiative is aligned with the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, aiming to provide students with an **opportunity to enhance their performance and reduce academic stress**.



Key Highlights of the Proposed Policy:

1. Exam Schedule and Structure:

- The **first board exam** will take place from **February 17 to March 6**.
- The **second board exam** is scheduled from **May 5 to 20**.
- The policy has been **released for public feedback**, inviting opinions from **schools, teachers, parents, and students**.

2. National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 Influence:

- The **NEP 2020** recommends **multiple opportunities** for students to **enhance their scores** instead of relying on a **single exam attempt**.
- This system aims to **reduce exam pressure**, allowing students to perform **at their best**.

Implementation Plan:

- The **biannual exam system** will be introduced for both **Class 10 and Class 12** board exams.
- The first board exam will begin on the **first Tuesday after February 15, 2026**.
- The **improvement exam** (second attempt) will take place in **July 2026**.

Students' Choice and Result Mechanism:

1. Flexibility for Students:

- Students can **choose to appear for the second exam** if they wish to **improve their scores**.
- If a student is **satisfied with their first attempt**, they can **opt-out** of the second exam.

2. Result Calculation and Marksheet Details:

- The **first attempt score** will be available on **DigiLocker** for **Class 11 admissions** if a student decides not to take the second exam.
- The final **mark sheet and pass certificate** will include:
 - **Marks obtained in the first exam.**
 - **Marks obtained in the second exam** (if attempted).
 - **Marks from internal assessments and practicals.**
- The **higher of the two scores** will be considered for the final result.

Conclusion:

The **proposed policy** is a **student-friendly reform**, aiming to **reduce academic stress** and provide **multiple chances for better performance**. CBSE will finalize the policy **after reviewing feedback** from all stakeholders, ensuring a **well-structured and effective implementation**.