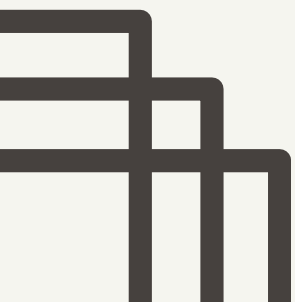


08 - 13TH JULY

# HINDU EDITORIAL



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# Climate Law Development

## THE SUPREME COURT'S LANDMARK DECISION EMPHASIZES THE NEED FOR SYSTEMIC, EQUITABLE CLIMATE LAWS IN INDIA TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT.

In a landmark decision, the Supreme Court of India recognized the right to be free from adverse climate impacts, rooted in the right to life and equality. This decision emphasizes the importance of establishing a systemic approach to climate change in India. The new government faces the challenge of tailoring climate laws to the Indian context, ensuring that development choices at all levels prioritize low-carbon and climate-resilient futures.



Effective climate laws should involve continuous, detailed consideration of development impacts and trade-offs, focusing on social justice. A fragmented, top-down approach is inadequate; instead, coordinated efforts across sectors and governance levels are essential. This includes improving policy integration and developing mechanisms for evaluation and enforcement.

A proposed solution is the creation of a "low-carbon development commission," composed of experts and representatives from both national and state levels. This body would guide practical climate-resilient development and facilitate knowledge-sharing. Additionally, comprehensive climate laws should incorporate social equity, prioritizing vulnerable communities and fostering a transition towards a sustainable, resilient society. Institutional reforms are necessary to implement climate laws effectively, requiring collaboration among various ministries and a robust local administrative capacity. The commission would help address climate impacts systematically, recommending long-term strategies and overseeing the integration of climate policies into all aspects of development.

The proposed framework aims to navigate development choices, ensuring that India's growth is both sustainable and resilient, safeguarding the future against climate change impacts.

# INDIGENOUS HPV VACCINE

## INDIA'S INDIGENOUS HPV VACCINE, CERVAVAC, FACES SCRUTINY OVER ITS EFFICACY, PRICING, AND THE BROADER IMPLICATIONS OF TRANSITIONING VACCINE DEVELOPMENT FROM PUBLIC TO PRIVATE SECTORS.



India's public health sphere recently engaged in a debate about the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine's role in preventing cervical cancer. Despite HPV's association with cervical cancer, it's not proven that HPV causes it, as only a few of the 200 strains are linked to cancer. Studies by the Population Based Cancer Registries (PBCR) and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) reveal declining trends in cervical cancer in India and globally, regardless of vaccine coverage. The overzealous push for universal vaccination against HPV overlooks the need for targeted immunization of high-risk groups, such as sexually active teenagers.

The Serum Institute of India (SII) developed and promoted 'Cervavac' as an affordable indigenous HPV vaccine. However, it took nearly two decades to introduce a patented HPV vaccine globally. Vaccine development underwent changes due to the TRIPS agreement, leading to a shift from public research to private development and monopolization. This transition facilitated private production but also increased costs significantly.

India's focus on promoting indigenous HPV vaccines comes amid concerns about pricing and availability compared to existing vaccines. For example, Shantha Biotechnics Bharat Biotech, among others, have HPV vaccines in the pipeline, with competitive pricing essential for success.

Public health experts emphasize the need for rigorous scrutiny and cost-effective strategies to ensure the widespread success of HPV vaccination programs.





# Budget Overview

**The final Budget for 2024-25 focuses on medium-term growth and employment opportunities through domestic growth drivers amid global economic slowdown.**

The final Budget for 2024-25, set to be presented on July 23, 2024, aims to provide medium-term growth and employment opportunities, focusing on domestic growth drivers due to global economic slowdown. The short-term goal is a minimum 7% growth, with a medium-term target of sustaining real GDP growth at 7-7.5%. The fiscal deficit to GDP ratio is expected to reduce to 3% over the next three to four years. Investment needs to grow sustainably, with a gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) of 35% of GDP to achieve 7% growth. The employment objective emphasizes labor-intensive sectors.



The Budget projects gross tax revenues (GTR) at ₹34.65 lakh crore, a 10% increase from 2023-24. Expected real GDP growth is 5-8%, with a GTR magnitude of ₹38.8 lakh crore. Non-tax revenues are also projected to increase. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) aims for a liquidity deficit of ₹2.1 lakh crore, with tax rationalization expected without major sacrifices.

Increased rural income and investment are anticipated, driven by supportive policies. Government investment and private investment are expected to drive growth. The budget aims for a stable fiscal policy with the fiscal deficit to GDP ratio to reduce to 5.1% in 2024-25 and 3% over three to four years. This budget is crucial for maintaining economic stability and promoting long-term growth.





# INDIA'S DEMOGRAPHIC *TRENDS*

**India's demographic journey highlights significant progress in health and fertility but faces challenges in poverty, gender inequality, and urbanization, requiring comprehensive efforts to meet Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.**

India's demographic journey has seen significant progress and challenges. The world population reached five billion in 1987, and today, India faces issues such as poverty, gender inequality, and ageing. Despite predictions of widespread poverty and hunger in the 1960s and 1970s, India's fertility rates declined, and health parameters improved, with notable reductions in maternal and child mortality. The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasize the importance of addressing gender equality, urban migration, and political representation.

initiatives like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana have made strides in addressing poverty and healthcare needs. However, the proportion of the population under poverty remains significant, necessitating a comprehensive understanding of India's demographic shifts for sustainable development. Achieving the SDGs by 2030 requires addressing demographic transitions, improving job opportunities, and strengthening social safety nets for vulnerable populations.

Rapid urbanization threatens infrastructure, while silent issues like the low political representation of women persist. The SDGs aim to tackle food security, health, poverty, and gender equality, but India's progress must consider its demographic changes. Key



# MUSLIM WOMEN MAINTENANCE

**The Supreme Court affirmed that divorced Muslim women can seek maintenance under secular laws, clarifying their rights under the CrPC and the 1986 Act coexist.**

The Supreme Court of India has affirmed that divorced Muslim women can seek maintenance under the secular Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), despite the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986, which appeared to limit their relief to



Muslim personal law. This 1986 Act aimed to counter the Shah Bano case (1985) verdict, which allowed Muslim women to seek maintenance under Section 125 of CrPC. Although the 1986 law was upheld in 2001, its provisions were interpreted to not exclude secular remedies. Different High Courts had varied interpretations on whether Muslim women should use Section 3 of the 1986 Act or Section 125 of CrPC.

The recent Supreme Court verdict by Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Augustine George Masih clarifies that the 1986 Act's codification of a Muslim woman's rights, including maintenance during the Iddat period and return of mehr and dowry, is supplementary to her right to seek maintenance under CrPC. Justice Masih emphasized that both personal law and secular remedies for maintenance can coexist. Justice Nagarathna highlighted that the CrPC aims to prevent vagrancy among women by mandating husband support. This verdict expands Muslim women's rights and secures their access to secular maintenance provisions, neutralizing the belief that these rights were extinguished by the 1986 Act.





# PDS Impact on Household Expenditure



**The Public Distribution System (PDS) significantly impacts household expenditure by increasing the ability of poorer households to purchase a wider variety of foods and services, enhancing overall food security and well-being.**



The Public Distribution System (PDS) aims to ensure food security in India, with up to 75% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population eligible for subsidised food grains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013. Subsidising food grains can free up household resources for other items like vegetables, milk, pulses, eggs, fish, meat, and protein-rich foods, potentially diversifying their consumption.

The Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) 2022-23, by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), investigates the impact of PDS food items on household expenditure. The survey includes data on both food and non-food items, focusing on out-of-pocket expenses and services utilized. Insurance is considered an investment and not included in the survey.

The report uses the Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE) to analyze household spending. The NSSO suggests values for food and non-food items for each state and sector (rural and urban). For instance, the value of items consumed by the bottom 5% of the rural population is estimated at ₹1,373, and ₹2,001 for urban areas. The study indicates that imputed values for food items at subsidised rates increase the MPCE, particularly for the poorest households.

Imputations show that PDS significantly affects household expenditure, particularly for those at the bottom of the income distribution, increasing their ability to purchase a wider variety of foods and services. The study underscores the importance of PDS in enhancing food security and overall household well-being.