

Rio G20 Summit

The G20 Rio de Janeiro Declaration focuses on tackling global challenges and crises while fostering strong, sustainable, and inclusive growth.

About G20 Overview:

- **Host Country:** Brazil
- **Theme:** “Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet”
- **History:** Formed in 1999 to address global economic challenges; evolved into a forum for economic and social issues, representing 19 countries and two regional bodies ([African Union](#) and European Union).
- **Troika (2024):** India (2023 presidency), Brazil (2024 presidency), and South Africa (2025 presidency).
- **2025 Host:** South Africa

Major Outcomes of the Rio G20 Summit Declaration:

- 1. Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty:**
 - **Aim:** Mobilize finance and knowledge-sharing for country-led programs to fight hunger and poverty.
 - **Features:** Focus on cash transfers, school feeding programs, and microfinance.
- 2. Task Force on a Global Mobilization Against Climate Change (TF-CLIMA):**
 - **Aim:** Address structural barriers and foster private capital for climate action.
 - **Features:** Mainstream climate change into financial agendas and explore transparent credit rating systems.
- 3. Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF):**
 - **Aim:** Conserve forests through innovative financing mechanisms.
 - **Features:** Mobilize funds to support developing countries in combating deforestation.
- 4. G20 Bioeconomy Initiative (GIB):**
 - **Aim:** Promote sustainable economic growth through bio-based innovations.
 - **Features:** Adoption of 10 voluntary principles for bioeconomy development.
- 5. Principles for Just and Inclusive Energy Transitions:**
 - **Aim:** Ensure equitable and inclusive energy transitions globally.
 - **Features:** Triple renewable energy capacity and improve energy efficiency by 2030.
- 6. Voluntary Contributions for Pandemic Preparedness:**
 - **Aim:** Strengthen global health systems and universal health coverage.
 - **Features:** Enhanced cooperation for vaccine access and local health innovation.

7. **Roadmap for Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs):**

- **Aim:** Reform MDBs for increased lending capacity and better resource mobilization.
- **Features:** Capital adequacy reforms and integration with private capital.

8. **Digital Economy and AI Governance:**

- **Aim:** Promote responsible AI use while addressing risks.
- **Features:** Establishment of guidelines for AI in workplaces and promoting digital inclusion.

Positives:

- **Focus on Inclusion:** Emphasis on reducing inequalities through sustainable and inclusive policies.
- **Climate Action Leadership:** Strong commitment to net-zero targets and biodiversity conservation.
- **Health and Education:** Strengthened investment in health systems and digital education.
- **Global Collaboration:** Improved coordination among G20 nations for global governance reforms.

Limitations:

- **Ambiguity in Funding:** Lack of concrete timelines or clear financial commitments for many initiatives.
- **Limited Consensus:** Divergences in national circumstances delay uniform climate action and financial reforms.
- **Exclusion of Certain Nations:** The framework still favors major economies, leaving smaller nations with limited representation.
- **Lack of Enforcement Mechanisms:** Most initiatives rely on voluntary participation without binding commitments.

Bail & Undertrials

India's judicial and prison systems face challenges, with undertrial prisoners forming a major portion of inmates. Amendments under the [Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita](#) (BNSS) aim to streamline bail and reduce prison overcrowding, reinforcing justice and rights.

Bail and Its Types:

- **Definition:** Bail refers to the temporary release of an accused person awaiting trial, often under specified conditions.
- **Types of Bail:**
- **Regular Bail:** Granted to those in police custody (Sections 437 & 439 of CrPC).
- **Interim Bail:** Temporary relief until a regular or anticipatory bail hearing.
- **Anticipatory Bail:** Pre-arrest bail under Section 438 of CrPC for individuals fearing arrest.

Modifications in BNSS Regarding Bail:

- **First-Time Offenders:** Entitled to bail after serving one-third of their maximum sentence (excluding cases with life imprisonment or death penalties).
- **Mandatory Bail:** Courts must consider bail upon charge sheet filing unless there are compelling reasons to deny it.
- **Special Provisions:** Focus on vulnerable groups like women, children, and sick individuals.
- **Timely Disposal:** Emphasis on reducing delays in bail application processes.

Recent Trends in Undertrial Prisoners in India:

- **Population Statistics:** As of 2022, undertrials constitute 75.8% of the prison population (4,34,302 out of 5,73,220 prisoners).
- **Gender Analysis:** 76.33% of incarcerated women are undertrials.
- **Duration:** 8.6% of undertrials have been imprisoned for over three years.

Source: NCRB Prison Statistics India, 2022

Key Supreme Court Judgments on Bail:

1. **Satender Kumar Antil vs. CBI (2023):** Established guidelines for timely disposal of bail applications and emphasized "bail, not jail."
2. **Hussainara Khatoon vs. State of Bihar (1979):** Ensured the right to free legal aid for fair trials.
3. **Charles Sobhraj vs. Superintendent, Central Jail, Tihar (1978):** Highlighted prisoner rights, including access to humane living conditions.
4. **Shaheen Welfare Association vs. Union of India (1996):** Allowed bail for undertrials with prolonged detention exceeding two years.

5. **Upendra Baxi vs. State of U.P. (1983)**: Stressed dignity and humane treatment for inmates

Challenges:

- **Implementation Gaps:** Delayed compliance with bail conditions despite legal provisions.
- **Economic Barriers:** Inability to afford bail amounts or arrange sureties.
- **Judicial Discretion:** Inconsistent application of bail principles across cases.
- **Administrative Delays:** Prolonged processing time for bail applications.
- **Documentation Issues:** Lack of identity proof and legal representation hampers undertrial release.
- **Social Barriers:** Marginalized individuals face systemic biases in accessing bail.

Measures:

- **Reform Legislation:** Develop comprehensive laws to streamline bail processes.
- **Focus on Rehabilitation:** Implement programs to support reintegration and reduce recidivism.
- **Open Prison Models:** Expand systems like Rajasthan's "open prisons" for eligible inmates.
- **Strengthen Legal Aid:** Enhance access to legal aid services for undertrials.
- **Streamline Processes:** Ensure jail superintendents promptly notify courts about eligible undertrials.
- **Political Will:** Prioritize reforms with sustained funding and commitment.

WEP and Urban Company Collaboration

NITI Aayog's [Women Entrepreneurship Platform](#) (WEP), in collaboration with Urban Company, launched a pilot program aimed at empowering women-led MSMEs in the beauty and wellness sector.

Key Points:

- **Program Focus:** Aims to train women entrepreneurs managing salons and parlors in six areas: skilling, legal compliance, access to finance, market and business development, mentorship, and networking.
- **Objective:** Enhance sustainability and scalability of women-led MSMEs in beauty and wellness, fostering a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- **Collaboration:** A significant partnership between NITI Aayog's WEP and Urban Company to drive women's economic empowerment.

[“Bhu-Neer” Portal](#)

The Hon’ble Minister of Jal Shakti launched the “Bhu-Neer” portal during the ceremonial conclusion of India Water Week 2024.

About the “Bhu-Neer” Portal:

- **Ministry:** Ministry of Jal Shakti, developed by [Central Ground Water Authority](#) (CGWA) in collaboration with NIC.
- **Aim:** To regulate, manage, and monitor groundwater resources transparently and efficiently, promoting sustainability.
- **Key Features:**
- **PAN-Based Single ID System:** Simplifies user registration for all stakeholders.
- **NOC with QR Code:** Ensures verifiable and trackable compliance documentation.
- **Streamlined Processes:** Simplifies permit application for groundwater withdrawal.
- **Centralized Database:** Offers access to legal frameworks, groundwater policies, and sustainable practices at state and national levels.
- **Ease of Doing Business:** Aligns with the Prime Minister’s vision by making groundwater regulation seamless and faceless.

“Waves” OTT Platform

India’s public broadcaster, launched its OTT platform “Waves” during the opening ceremony of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2024.

About Waves OTT Platform:

- **Developer:** Prasar Bharati, under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- **Launch Event:** Inaugurated at IFFI 2024.
- **Tagline:** “Waves – Family Entertainment Ki Nayi Lehar.”
- **Languages and Content:** Offers content in 12+ languages, including Hindi, English, Tamil, Konkani, and Assamese. Features infotainment, gaming, education, and shopping.
- **Live Channels:** Streams 65 live TV channels, including “Mann Ki Baat” and Ayodhya’s Prabhu Shriram Lalla Aarti.
- **Unique Features:**
 1. **Content Accessibility:** Leverages BharatNet for rural connectivity.
 2. **Diverse Content:** Includes films, student projects, music shows, animations, and crime thrillers.
 3. **Collaborations:** Partnerships with FTII, Annapurna, ONDC, and CDAC for cybersecurity awareness.
 4. **Support for Creators:** Open platform for young content creators and National Creator Awardees.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Data Bank

The Ministry of Science and Technology launched India's first Artificial Intelligence (AI) Data Bank at the 7th Edition of the [ASSOCHAM AI Leadership Meet 2024](#).

About India's First Artificial Intelligence (AI) Data Bank:

- **Launched By:** Minister of Science and Technology.
- **Event:** Unveiled during the ASSOCHAM AI Leadership Meet 2024.
- **Purpose:**
 - To provide high-quality, diverse datasets for researchers, startups, and developers.
 - To enable scalable and inclusive AI solutions.
 - To enhance national security through real-time analytics of satellite, drone, and IoT data.
- **Applications:**
 - **National Security:** Strengthens real-time surveillance and cyber defense.
 - **Disaster Management:** Facilitates predictive analytics for risk mitigation.
 - **Public Service Delivery:** Optimizes governance and citizen services.
 - **Sectoral Impact:** Governance, healthcare, business, education, and space exploration.
- **Ethical Use:** Frameworks to address algorithmic bias, data privacy, and equitable access.
- **Vision:** To ensure AI bridges societal divides, empowers citizens, and drives economic growth.

Central Value Added Tax (CENVAT) Credit

The Supreme Court, in a landmark judgment, has allowed telecom companies to claim Central Value Added Tax (CENVAT) credit for the installation of mobile towers and prefabricated buildings (PFBs).

About Central Value Added Tax (CENVAT):

- **What is CENVAT:**
A tax credit system allowing manufacturers or service providers to claim a set-off on excise duty or service tax paid on inputs or input services used for manufacturing or providing output services.
- **Rules Governing CENVAT:**
Implemented under the **CENVAT Credit Rules, 2004**, it replaced the Modified Value Added Tax (MODVAT). These rules define eligible goods, input services, and conditions for availing credit.
- **Criteria for CENVAT credit:**
- **Inputs:** Goods used directly or indirectly in the production of final products.
- **Capital goods:** Machinery or equipment integral to the manufacturing process.
- **Output services:** Taxable services for which input credits can offset the service tax liability.
- **Partial processing:** Credits are allowed for partially processed goods.
- **Significance of CENVAT:**
- **Avoids double taxation:** Prevents repeated taxation on the same value addition.
- **Simplifies taxation:** Reduces the tax burden on manufacturers and service providers.
- **Promotes competitiveness:** Encourages businesses to reinvest savings in production and innovation.
- **Consumer benefit:** Reduces the overall cost of goods and services by eliminating cascading taxes.

[The State of the World's Children 2024](#)

The State of the World's Children 2024 report by UNICEF highlights critical challenges and opportunities shaping the future of childhood globally.

About State of the World's Children Report 2024:

- **Published by:** UNICEF.
- **Theme:** Securing a future where children's rights are realized by addressing demographic transitions, climate crises, and technological advancements.
- **Key Insights:**
- **Demographic Shifts:** Global child population stabilizes at 2.3 billion by 2050, with Africa hosting the highest proportion.
- **Climate and Environment:** Over 1 billion children live in high-risk countries; exposure to hazards like floods, droughts, and heatwaves is expected to rise sharply.
- **Frontier Technologies:** Emerging technologies like AI and renewable energy offer transformative potential but must be governed responsibly to ensure equitable access and safety.
- **Education:** By 2050, 95.7% of children are projected to complete primary education, with significant improvements in gender equality in education globally.

About UNICEF:

- **Established:** 1946, post-World War II.
- **Mandate:** To protect the rights and futures of children worldwide, regardless of country.
- **Presence:** Active in 190+ countries and territories.
- **Funding:** Fully funded through voluntary contributions from individuals, governments, and private sector partners.
- **Awards:** Nobel Peace Prize (1965), Indira Gandhi Prize (1989), Princess of Asturias Award (2006).
- **Reports Published:** The State of the World's Children, among others.
- **Global Initiatives:**
- Children's Rights and Business Principles with Save the Children.
- Data Must Speak Initiative to improve access to education.
- **Headquarters:** New York City.