

'India recorded 3.23 cr displacements due to disasters in a decade'



Residents shifted to a safer ground from a flood-affected area in Imphal on Tuesday. (PTI)

NEW DELHI, June 4 (PTI)

INDIA recorded 32.3 million (3.23 crore) internal displacements due to disasters, such as floods and

Philippines and the US recorded the highest figures over the past decade," the report said.

China recorded 46.9 million internal displacements and the

3rd highest after China and Philippines

storms, between 2015 and 2024, the third highest in the world after China and the Philippines, according to a new report.

The report by the Geneva-based Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) said disasters triggered 264.8 million internal displacements or forced movements across 210 countries and territories during this period. East and South Asia were the most affected regions.

"At the country level, Bangladesh, China, India, the

Philippines 46.1 million.

The report said that nearly 90 per cent of global disaster displacements were the result of floods and storms.

"Storms triggered most of the world's disaster displacements between 2015 and 2024, accounting for 120.9 million movements," it said. Floods triggered 114.8 million displacements during the same period. Cyclones, including Amphan in 2020, accounted for about 92 per cent of all storm displacements globally.

Census to begin Apr 2026, caste to be part of survey

Popn Count Ref
Date: Midnight
March 1, 2027

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New Delhi: The Census exercise, put on hold over five years ago due to the Covid outbreak, may start on April 1, 2026, ending with the population count to be taken with the midnight of March 1, 2027 as the reference date. The caste of each re-

► **EDIT: Finally, sense of us**

sident of the country will be recorded, in a first since the decennial headcount of 1931, as part of the exercise, which potentially holds the key to two other decisions of far-reaching significance — delimitation and implementation of women's quota in legislatures.

Sources in the home ministry said the Census — the first one to capture data digitally — will follow a sche-

TO BE BASIS OF DELIMITATION?

► Respondents can self-enumerate or have enumerators capture data on their phones or tablets. Data could be released sooner than earlier counts that lagged by 5-6 years. **Caste data could be out in 3 years**

► May be basis for next delimitation, which is crucial for representation of states/UTs in LS and implementing 33% quota for women in Houses. **As per law, delimitation must**

be conducted based on first Census after 2026

► Notification likely on June 16, 2025 in accordance with Census Act, 1948

► ₹574 crore allotted in Budget, **Census and NPR updation to cost ₹13,000cr+**

► Bengal, TN, Assam, Kerala and Puducherry, due to go to polls in May-June 2026, can choose 45-day houselisting schedule between April 1 and Sept 30 to avoid clash

dule similar to Census 2011; it will be held in two phases — the houselisting phase to be conducted non-synchronously over a 45-day period across states and UTs anytime between April 1, 2026 and Sept 30, 2026; followed by the population enumeration phase, which will also record caste this time, between Feb 9 and 28, 2027. The population count will be recorded as on March 1, 2027, fol-

lowed by a revisional round from March 1 and 5, 2027.

The snow-bound areas of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and J&K, along with Ladakh, will undertake population enumeration six months before the rest of India, that is, sometime in Sept 2026, with the midnight of Oct 1, 2026, being their 'non-synchronous' reference date.

► **Continued on P 20**

India wants WTO's dispute settlement mechanism back

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Paris: India has identified the restoration of the dispute settlement mechanism as the first priority for WTO members and called for maintaining special treatment for poor and developing countries.

After a meeting of trade ministers here, commerce & industry minister Piyush Goyal also reiterated India's opposition to bringing plurilateral initiatives such as investment facilitation under the ambit of the multilateral body. India has argued that the China-backed proposal for investment facilitation will reduce policy space for govt and is meant to pursue Beijing's investment agenda.

"Ideally, issues that have been mandated by the WTO and are within the trade framework should get priority and should be the first issues to be resolved," the minister told reporters after the meeting.

New Delhi's Stand At Multilateral Body

- Wants continuation of special treatment for poor and developing countries
- Calls for removal of non-tariff barriers
- Opposes China-backed proposal for investment facilitation
- Seeks focus on issues such as agriculture

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Piyush Goyal
COMMERCE &
INDUSTRY MINISTER



At the mini-ministerial meet of trade ministers, Goyal urged other ministers to bring back the focus on issues such as agriculture, which have been agreed to by the membership in the past but a decision has been pending for more than a decade. He also called for removal of non-tariff barriers.

"We have all resolved to collectively work to strengthen the working of the WTO, to ensure the core

principles are respected and work towards global good and global growth in trade," he said, while dismissing concerns of WTO facing an "existential crisis".

Putting in place the dispute settlement mechanism is seen to be at the heart of reinvigorating WTO amid a series of blows by the US during successive presidential tenures, starting with Barack Obama. The US has blocked appointments to the appellate body for resolving disputes, rendering it useless.

India, Pak delegations trade barbs in US over Op Sindoor

Washington: An indirect war of words erupted between Indian and Pakistani delegations Wednesday as they arrived separately in the US capital to present their respective versions of Pahalgam massacre, Op Sindoor, Kashmir issue and the growing rift between the neighbours, reports **Chidanand Rajghatta**.

The spat was triggered by gratuitous remarks by Bilawal Bhutto, leader of the Pakistani delegation, who at a press conference at United Nations in New York likened PM Modi to a "Temu version of (Benjamin) Netanyahu...a poor copy" as he sought to draw parallels between India's punitive response to Pahalgam and Israeli actions in Gaza. Temu is a Chinese ecommerce website/app that sells discounted merchandise.

The Indian delegation wasted no time smacking back. "Pakistan is a country that is surviving with inferior products borrowed from China, including military hardware. It must be hurting to see authentic, high-calibre military hardware and also strong democratic leadership on the other side of the border," clapped back Tejasvi Surya, a member of the Indian team. "A country that is busy creating fake heroes, by promoting

failed Generals, will never know what true leaders look like."

Shashi Tharoor, leader of the Indian delegation, appeared to have anticipated the clash, almost with a sense of relish, noting as the team arrived in Washington DC that the Pakistanis would also be there at the same time "so there's going to be perhaps an increase in interest because there are two duelling delegations in the same city".

But Bhutto was down for the count even before he got to Washington when he was ambushed at the UN as he tried to enlist sympathetic journalists with planted questions aimed at amplifying Pakistan's narrative about India's treatment of Muslims. Embarrassingly for him, a reporter called him out saying he had watched the briefings on both sides and "as far as I recall, there were Muslim Indian military officers who were conducting the briefings on the Indian side".

Bhutto also claimed that Pakistan radars had locked into 20 Indian jets on the night of May 7 and "if we wanted, we could've taken down all 20", but Pakistan showed restraint and "only 6 were shot down — the ones that launched strikes".

Trump, Musk rift widens



WASHINGTON, June 4 (AP)

ELON Musk blasted President Donald Trump's "big, beautiful bill" of tax breaks and spending cuts as a "disgusting abomination" on Tuesday, testing the limits of his political influence as he targeted the centerpiece of Republicans' legislative agenda.

The broadside, which Musk issued on his social media platform X, came just days after the President gave him a celebratory Oval Office farewell that marked the end of his work for the administration, where he spearheaded the Department of Government Efficiency.

"I'm sorry, but I just can't stand it anymore," Musk posted on X. "This massive, out-

rageous, pork-filled Congressional spending bill is a disgusting abomination. Shame on those who voted for it: you know you did wrong. You know it." The legislation, which has passed the House and is currently under debate in the Senate, would curtail subsidies that benefit Tesla, Musk's electric automaker.

South Korea's new President vows to talk with North



South Korea's newly-elected President Lee Jae-myung, and his wife Kim Hea Kyung leave their house in Incheon, South Korea, on Wednesday. (AP/PTI)

SEOUL, June 4 (AP)

SOUTH Korea's new President Lee Jae-myung vowed on Wednesday to restart dormant talks with North Korea and bolster a trilateral partnership with the US and Japan, as he laid out key policy goals for his single, five-year term. Lee, who rose from childhood poverty to become South Korea's leading liberal politician vowing to fight inequality and corruption, formally began his term earlier on Wednesday, hours after winning a snap election that was triggered in April by the removal of then-President Yoon Suk Yeol over his ill-fated imposition of martial law late last year.

In his inaugural address at the National Assembly, Lee said that his Government will deal with North Korean nuclear threats and its potential military aggressions with "strong deterrence" based on the South Korea-US military alliance. But he said he would "open a communication channel with North Korea and establish peace on the Korean

Peninsula through talks and cooperation." He said he will pursue pragmatic diplomacy with neighbouring countries and boost trilateral Seoul-Washington-Tokyo cooperation.

"Through pragmatic diplomacy based on national interests, we will turn the crisis posed by the major shift in global economic and security landscapes into an opportunity to maximise our national interests," Lee said.

SECURITY AND ECONOMIC CHALLENGES AHEAD: It was unclear whether Lee's election would cause any major, immediate shift in South Korea's foreign policy. Lee, previously accused by critics of tilting towards China and North Korea and away from the US and Japan, has recently repeatedly stressed South Korea's alliance with the US as the foundation of its foreign policy and avoided any contentious remarks that would raise questions on his views on the US and Japan. "We'll have to now see if the pressures of office will cause Lee Jae-myung to govern from the centre," said Ankit Panda,