

1. Delhi's Fuel Ban on Old Vehicles: What You Need to Know**What Is the Fuel Ban?**

Starting July 1, 2025, Delhi has stopped supplying fuel to:

- Diesel vehicles older than 10 years
- Petrol vehicles older than 15 years

This is part of a plan to remove end-of-life vehicles (ELVs) — major contributors to air pollution — from the roads.

**How Is It Being Enforced?**

- Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras installed at 498 fuel stations and 3 ISBTs scan number plates and check them against the VAHAN database.
- If an ELV is detected, an alert is triggered, and the vehicle is denied fuel.
- Joint teams from the Transport Department, Traffic Police, and civic bodies are tasked with enforcement.

Is Enforcement Effective?

- On Day 1, 80 vehicles were impounded.
- By Day 3, no vehicles were seized, pointing to weak enforcement.

Why Is the Delhi Government Hesitant?

Delhi's Environment Minister has asked for a pause, citing:

- Technical glitches in cameras and sensors
- Inability to detect vehicles with faulty or missing High-Security Registration Plates (HSRPs)
- Lack of data integration with NCR states, allowing vehicles to refuel nearby
- Rising public frustration due to inconsistent implementation

How Many Vehicles Are Affected?

According to VAHAN:

- Delhi: 62 lakh ELVs (41 lakh 2-wheelers, 18 lakh 4-wheelers, others commercial)
- Haryana NCR districts: 27.5 lakh
- Uttar Pradesh NCR: 12.4 lakh
- Rajasthan NCR: 6.1 lakh

Why Target Old Vehicles?

- Older vehicles, especially pre-BS-VI models, emit significantly more pollutants.
- For example, BS-IV vehicles emit 4.5 to 5.5 times more particulate matter than BS-VI vehicles.

- Transport sector contributes:
 - 28% of PM2.5
 - 41% of SO2
 - 78% of NOx emissions in the NCR

What Are the Legal Grounds?

- NGT (2015): Banned 10+ year old diesel and 15+ year old petrol vehicles in NCR
- Supreme Court (2018): Upheld the NGT ban; allowed impounding of violators
- 2025 Rules: Scrapping must happen within 180 days of registration expiry

Can This Solve Delhi's Air Pollution?

Experts say:

- No single measure is enough.
- Need a multi-pronged approach:
 - Better emission and fuel standards
 - Stronger pollution checks
 - Major public transport improvements
- Age limits alone may not address all pollution sources; even newer vehicles can pollute due to poor maintenance.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Environment

Source: Indian Express

2. Shubhanshu Shukla Talked to Students from Space Using Ham Radio

What Is Happening?

On July 4, 2025, Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla interacted with Indian students using ham radio from the International Space Station (ISS).

What Is Ham Radio?

- Also called amateur radio, it is a licensed service that uses radio waves for communication.
- Used for:
 - Education
 - Emergency/SOS communication
 - Connecting across local, global, and even space networks
- Requires:
 - A transceiver, antenna, and license
- In India, anyone above 12 years can apply for a license from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

Ham Radio in Space: A Brief History

- First used from a space shuttle in 1983 to talk to Earth.



**INDIAN ASTRONAUT
CONNECTS WITH
ISRO AND STUDENTS
FROM SPACE**

- The ISS has its own system: ARISS (Amateur Radio on the International Space Station).
- ARISS is often used to connect astronauts with students, aiming to inspire young minds.
- Supported by space agencies from the US, Russia, Canada, Japan, and Europe.
- During space operations like docking, the ham system is temporarily shut off to prevent interference.

How Will Shukla Use Ham Radio on the ISS?

- As part of the Axiom-4 mission, astronauts from India, Poland, and Hungary will use ham radio to talk to people back home.
- Communication attempts are made when the ISS passes over the region — the window lasts 5 to 8 minutes.

Why Use Ham Radio in the Digital Age?

- Despite modern tech, radio is stable, simple, and dependable.
- Often works when mobile networks and internet fail.
- Successfully used in emergencies like:
 - 2001 Bhuj earthquake
 - 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami
 - 2013 Uttarakhand floods

Relevance: GS Prelims; Science & Technology

Source: Indian Express

3. Why India Will Host Pakistani Athletes Despite Visa Ban

Background: Visa Ban After Pahalgam Attacks

On April 24, 2025, India suspended visa services for Pakistani nationals following terror attacks in Pahalgam. This raised concerns about whether Pakistani athletes could participate in tournaments hosted in India.

India Makes an Exception for Sports

A sports ministry official clarified that while India won't hold bilateral matches with Pakistan, it will allow Pakistani athletes to compete in multi-nation tournaments hosted in India.

"This does not apply to bilateral engagements but only to international, multi-team events," the official said.



India is set to host over a dozen international sports events in 2025, in disciplines such as Hockey, Badminton, Weightlifting, Swimming and Athletics (Not including cricket).

Pakistani Cricketers Not Included

- India and Pakistan have agreed to play cricket at neutral venues till 2027.
- Arshad Nadeem, Pakistan's Olympic gold medalist in javelin, won't compete in the Neeraj Chopra Classic because it's an invitational event.

What Happened in 2019?

After the Pulwama attacks, India denied visas to a Pakistani shooting team for a World Cup in Delhi.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC):

- Accused India of violating the Olympic Charter
- Suspended talks with India for future sports events
- Recommended that no global sports event be hosted in India without guarantees of visa access to all countries

In response, the Indian government in June 2019 assured the IOC that:

All qualified athletes would be allowed entry, regardless of political issues with their country.

IOC's Rule 44: No Discrimination

According to IOC Rule 44, National Olympic Committees must ensure:

"No athlete is excluded for racial, religious, political or other discriminatory reasons."

The IOC has strictly enforced this rule:

- Kuwait (2015): Faced sanctions for denying an Israeli visa
- Malaysia: Lost rights to host a championship for similar reasons
- Indonesia: Stripped of U-20 FIFA World Cup over Israel ban
- Even the USA, despite travel bans, allows athletes from those countries for the 2026 FIFA World Cup and 2028 Olympics

India's Olympic Ambitions at Risk

India is bidding to host the 2036 Olympics and 2030 Commonwealth Games.

Any violation of the Olympic Charter could:

- Hurt India's chances
- Lead to loss of hosting rights

IOC member Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic warned that:

Countries politicizing sport will face consequences during host selection processes.

India, aware of the risks, recently sent a high-level team to IOC headquarters in Lausanne to push its 2036 bid.

Bottom Line

While India's borders and diplomacy with Pakistan remain tense, the country will honour its international sports commitments to avoid violating the Olympic Charter and to protect its global sporting ambitions.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Issues

Source: Indian Express

4. India Ranked 4th Most Equal Country by World Bank

Inequality in India Has Declined



A new World Bank report says that inequality in India has significantly reduced between 2011-12 and 2022-23, making India the 4th most equal country globally.

India's Gini Index: A Key Indicator

- India's Gini Index now stands at 25.5
- This places India just behind:

- Slovak Republic
- Slovenia
- Belarus

What is the Gini Index?

- It measures how equally income, wealth, or consumption is distributed.
- Score range:
 - 0 = perfect equality
 - 100 = complete inequality
- The lower the score, the more equal the country.

Comparison with Other Countries

- India: 25.5 (Moderately low inequality)
- China: 35.7
- United States: 41.8

India is very close to entering the "low inequality" category, which includes countries with Gini scores below 25.

Drop in Extreme Poverty

- Extreme poverty in India fell from 16.2% in 2011-12 to 2.3% in 2022-23
- This drop is linked to various government welfare schemes implemented over the past decade.

Conclusion

India's economic landscape has improved in terms of both reduced inequality and poverty, placing it among the top four most equal nations globally as per the latest World Bank data covering 167 countries.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Economics

Source: The Hindu

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