

## **Daily Editorial Analysis 8 July 2025**

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### **Rising Seas, Shifting Lives and a Test of Democratic Values**

#### **Context**

- As climate change accelerates, India's coastal regions are witnessing not just environmental degradation but also profound socio-economic disruptions.
- Rising sea levels, saltwater intrusion, and unchecked development are displacing communities dependent on coastal ecosystems, forcing them into vulnerable urban labour markets.
- This article examines the legal, environmental, and human rights challenges posed by climate-induced displacement, and argues for a rights-based policy framework to protect and rehabilitate the affected populations as part of India's broader climate adaptation strategy.

#### **Climate Change and Coastal Displacement in India**

- **Reshaping the Coastline**
  - India's eastern and western seabords are undergoing dramatic transformation due to rising sea levels, saltwater intrusion, and unregulated development.
  - Agricultural and fishing communities, historically reliant on coastal ecosystems, are being uprooted and forced into migration.
- **Inadequate Resettlement**
  - Villages like Satabhaya in Odisha have vanished, with displaced residents moved to government colonies that fail to ensure sustainable livelihoods.
  - Displacement and environmental degradation are affecting regions such as Karnataka's Honnavar, Tamil Nadu's Nagapattinam, Gujarat's Kutch, and parts of Kerala.
  - Displaced populations are pushed into precarious urban labour markets, lacking legal safeguards and adequate state support.

#### **Projects and Environmental Degradation: A Vicious Cycle**

- **Coastal Development Fuelling Ecological Loss**
  - Industrial projects like ports, energy hubs, and aquaculture under schemes like Sagarmala have led to large-scale clearing of mangroves, sand dunes, and wetlands—natural buffers against climate impacts.
  - Environmental approvals often overlook cumulative climate vulnerabilities, promoting a development model that exacerbates ecological degradation and community displacement.
- **Displacement into Informal Urban Labour**

- Displaced coastal populations are being absorbed into informal jobs in cities like Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Mumbai, lacking job security and social safety nets.

- **Rise of Labour Exploitation**

- Migrants face systemic exploitation—through debt bondage, absence of legal protections under labour laws, and gendered abuse in domestic and low-wage work sectors.

## **Legal Gaps in Addressing Climate Displacement**

- **Absence of a Specific Legal Framework**

- While Article 21 of the Constitution guarantees the right to life and dignity, India lacks a dedicated law for those displaced by slow-onset climate disasters.
- Current laws—like the Disaster Management Act (2005), Environment (Protection) Act (1986), and Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notifications—focus on environmental protection or emergency relief, not long-term rehabilitation or livelihood integration.

- **Inadequate Coastal and Climate Policies**

- The CRZ Notification, 2019, intended to ensure sustainable coastal management, has been criticised for prioritising tourism and industrial development over the rights of traditional fishing communities.
- Diluted zoning has enabled unchecked commercial projects without informed consent, violating national and international environmental norms.

- **Policy Shortfalls in Climate Adaptation Plans**

- The National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) and State Action Plans acknowledge vulnerability but lack targeted strategies for rehabilitating displaced populations or integrating them into formal labour markets.

- **Labour Codes and Migrant Protections**

- India's recent Labour Codes fail to recognise or protect climate migrants, particularly in informal sectors like construction and domestic work, where such migrants are overrepresented.

- **Judicial Recognition Without Legislative Translation**

- Key Supreme Court judgments—M.C. Mehta v. Union of India (1987) and Indian Council for Environmental Action v. Union of India (1996)—established the link between environment and fundamental rights.
- However, these principles have not been translated into binding, community-centric legal safeguards for climate-induced displacement.

- **Managed Retreat Without Safeguards**

- As climate change is increasingly used to justify displacement under the guise of “managed retreat,” the absence of participatory planning and rights-based safeguards raises serious concerns for the displaced.

## **Building a Rights-Based Framework for Climate Migrants**

- **Integration into National Policies**

- Climate migrants must be formally recognised in India's migration and urban planning frameworks to ensure inclusive and equitable adaptation strategies.

- **Guaranteeing Core Rights and Services**

- A rights-based approach should ensure access to decent work, housing, education, and healthcare for displaced communities, particularly in urban informal sectors.

- **Reforming Labour Codes**

- Labour laws must be revised to extend explicit protections to climate migrants, especially in vulnerable sectors like construction and domestic work where exploitation is rampant.

- **Rethinking Coastal Zone Management**

- Coastal management policies must shift focus from commercial development to ecological sustainability and protection of community rights.

- **Aligning with Global Commitments**

- India's pursuit of **SDG Target 8.7**—ending forced labour and promoting decent work—depends on addressing vulnerabilities caused by climate displacement.

- **A Test of Democratic Values**

- Upholding the rights and dignity of climate-affected populations is not just about adaptation—it is a moral and constitutional imperative for India.
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## **BRICS Summit 2025 - Advancing Global South Cooperation for Inclusive and Sustainable Governance**

### **Why in News?**

- The **17th BRICS Summit** was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil under the **theme** “Strengthening Global South Cooperation for a More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance”.
- This Summit, which concluded with the ‘**Rio de Janeiro Declaration**’, marks **a strategic shift towards inclusivity, expansion, and stronger South-South cooperation.**

### **What's in Today's Article?**

- Key Highlights of the BRICS Summit 2025
- Strategic Focus Areas and Commitments
- India at BRICS Summit 2025
- US Opposition to BRICS
- Conclusion

### **Key Highlights of the BRICS Summit 2025:**

- **Reaffirmation of BRICS spirit and strategic vision:**

- Emphasized mutual respect, sovereign equality, democracy, and inclusiveness.
- Strengthened cooperation under **three pillars**:
  - Political and security
  - Economic and financial

- Cultural and people-to-people cooperation
- Reiterated commitment to peace, inclusive development, and **reform of global governance institutions.**
- **Expansion of BRICS membership and partnerships:**
  - **Indonesia** formally joins as a full BRICS member.
  - **11 new BRICS partner countries welcomed** – Belarus, Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Nigeria, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Uganda, Uzbekistan.
  - Expansion reflects an **evolving multipolar world** order and **Global South solidarity.**
- **Key declarations:**
  - **Initiatives launched:**
    - BRICS Leaders’ Framework Declaration on Climate Finance
    - Statement on Global Governance of Artificial Intelligence (AI)
    - Launch of BRICS Partnership for the Elimination of Socially Determined Diseases
  - These highlight **BRICS’ commitment to inclusive innovation, climate action, and equitable health systems.**

## Strategic Focus Areas and Commitments:

- **Strengthening multilateralism and reforming global governance:**
  - The **‘Rio de Janeiro Declaration’** called for equitable, effective, and accountable multilateralism.
  - Supported the UN Summit of the Future’s **“Pact for the Future”**, including:
    - Global Digital Compact
    - Declaration on Future Generations
  - Emphasis on consultation, shared responsibility, and equitable representation in international institutions.
- **Promoting peace, security, and stability:**
  - Expressed concern over global military spending surge and regional conflicts.
  - **Rejected linking climate change with security narratives.**
  - Advocated **development-centric multilateral solutions** for poverty, hunger, and environmental crises.
- **Economic, trade, and financial cooperation:**
  - Reviewed implementation of Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2025.
  - Welcomed upcoming **Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2030**, focusing on:
    - Digital economy, trade and investment,
    - Financial cooperation, and
    - Sustainable development.
  - Pledged to uphold a transparent and inclusive multilateral trading system.
- **Climate change and sustainability commitments:**
  - Strong support for Paris Agreement and UNFCCC principles, especially:
    - Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (**CBDR**)
    - National circumstances of developing countries
  - Full backing for **COP-30 in Brazil** (Belem) and India’s bid to host **COP-33** (2028).

- Called for scaled-up efforts and finance for climate adaptation and mitigation.
- **Social, human, and cultural development:**
  - **Emphasized inclusive development**, particularly: youth empowerment, women's rights, disability inclusion, urbanization, and migration management.
  - **Recognized demographic changes** as both a challenge and opportunity for development.

## India at BRICS Summit 2025:

- **India's leadership vision - BRICS in a "New Form":**
  - At the 17th BRICS Summit, the Indian PM announced **India's upcoming BRICS presidency for 2026**, outlining a transformative vision and proposing a new interpretation of BRICS –
    - Building
    - Resilience and
    - Innovation for
    - Cooperation and
    - Sustainability
  - Echoed India's G20 Presidency theme of "**People-centricity and Humanity First**", placing Global South concerns at the core.
- **India's strategic gains from BRICS 2025:**
  - At the 17th BRICS Summit, **India emerged as a leading voice in shaping the BRICS agenda**, advancing themes of de-dollarization, climate finance, digital governance, and global institutional reform.
  - **BRICS Pay** and national currency settlement frameworks were discussed, though a common BRICS currency was ruled out.
  - A **BRICS Multilateral Guarantee (BMG)** mechanism was launched by the New Development Bank (NDB) to mobilize private investment in infrastructure, climate, and sustainable development.
- **Improving India-China relations:**
  - A bilateral between PM Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping led to agreements on:
    - **De-escalation** along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), and
    - Resumption of border patrols.
  - This may **restore investor confidence**, particularly in electronics and manufacturing sectors.

## US Opposition to BRICS:

- **BRICS as a growing power bloc:** With the addition of new members, BRICS now represents 45% of the global population and contributes 35% to global GDP.
- **Concerns over BRICS currency alternatives:** Despite early speculation, BRICS clarified it does not intend to replace the dollar, but rather aims to offer viable **alternative** settlement systems **to improve market efficiency and ensure inclusive globalisation**.
- **Trump's tariff threat:**
  - President Trump **warned of a 10% tariff** on any country aligning with BRICS' "anti-American policies".

- He issued a stronger warning of a 100% tariff on BRICS nations if they move to reduce dollar usage in international trade.
- **India's calibrated stand and resistance to Yuan's dominance:**
  - **External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar:** "India does not target the dollar, but explores alternative trade settlements due to practical constraints."
  - **Yuan's role in BRICS:** Yuan became the most traded currency in Russia, accounting for 90% of bilateral trade settlements.
  - **India's resistance:** India refused to use the yuan for Russian oil imports, indicating reluctance to accept Chinese monetary hegemony.

## Conclusion:

- The BRICS Summit 2025 marks a defining moment in **Global South-led multilateralism** and highlights BRICS' growing relevance in shaping global discourse, **reinforcing BRICS as a credible alternative** to Western-dominated institutions.
  - India's proactive leadership at BRICS 2025 and forthcoming BRICS Presidency in 2026 **signals its growing influence in shaping a South-led multilateral order**, with tangible gains across finance, climate, tech, and trade sectors.
  - India's nuanced position on BRICS' financial initiatives reflects its pursuit of **strategic autonomy, economic de-risking, and multipolarity in global governance**
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## Fostering a Commitment to Stop Maternal Deaths

### Context

- **Maternal mortality remains a critical public health concern** in India, reflecting the broader socio-economic, infrastructural, and systemic challenges facing the country's healthcare system.
- While India's Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) has improved, **falling from 103 in 2017-19 to 93 in 2019-21**, this still translates to **93 women dying for every 1,00,000 live births**.
- Therefore, **it is important to analyse the various dimensions contributing to maternal mortality in India**, highlighting the disparities among different states and strategic solutions.

### The National Picture and Regional Disparities

- **Empowered Action Group (EAG) States**
  - States including Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Assam, **represent the most concerning figures**.
  - **Madhya Pradesh (175) and Assam (167) have alarmingly high MMRs**, highlighting acute systemic gaps.
- **Southern States**
  - Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Karnataka perform significantly better.

- **Kerala leads the nation with the lowest MMR of 20**, exemplifying what committed governance, effective training, and community health initiatives can achieve.
- **Other States**
  - This **list comprises Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana, and West Bengal and displays a mixed picture**, indicating the need for tailored policy interventions to address state-specific challenges.

## The Three Delays Model: Understanding Maternal Deaths

- **Delay in Decision-Making to Seek Care**
  - Often rooted in poor health literacy, financial insecurity, or gendered social norms, **this delay can be fatal.**
  - **Families underestimate complications**, assuming childbirth is a routine process.
  - However, **community engagement through ASHA workers**, self-help groups, and financial incentives under the National Rural Health Mission have **begun to shift attitudes, promoting institutional deliveries.**
- **Delay in Reaching Healthcare Facilities**
  - Geographic isolation, inadequate transportation, and **poor road connectivity are barriers in rural and tribal areas.**
  - The **108-ambulance service and emergency transport provisions under the National Health Mission** have mitigated this to some extent, but challenges persist.
- **Delay in Receiving Adequate Care at the Facility**
  - This is perhaps the most **inexcusable of all delays.**
  - Systemic issues like understaffed hospitals, lack of blood banks, absence of skilled obstetricians or anaesthetists, and **delayed emergency response contribute significantly to avoidable deaths.**
  - **A non-functional operation theatre or delayed availability of lab results** can mean the difference between life and death.

## Medical Causes of Maternal Mortality

- **Postpartum Haemorrhage**
  - The leading cause, often due to uterine atony, **which can lead to massive blood loss.**
  - In the absence of timely blood transfusion and uterine contraction management, death occurs swiftly.
- **Obstructed Labour**
  - Especially prevalent among malnourished, **stunted women with narrow pelvic structures.**
  - Without timely Caesarean sections, prolonged labour can cause uterine rupture and foetal death.
- **Hypertensive Disorders:** Conditions like **preeclampsia and eclampsia** are often undetected and untreated, resulting in seizures, coma, or death.
- **Sepsis:** Caused by unsafe home deliveries or **crude abortion practices**, particularly in areas with poor access to contraception and trained medical personnel.
- **Coexisting Illnesses:** Diseases like **tuberculosis, malaria, and urinary tract infections** compound maternal risk, especially in underdeveloped states.

## Models of Success: Learning from Kerala

- **Kerala's approach stands out** as a national and even global benchmark.
- The **state's implementation of the Confidential Review of Maternal Deaths**, pioneered by Dr. V.P. Paily, has helped identify and address avoidable causes.
- Strategies such as early **use of uterine artery clamps, management of amniotic fluid embolism, and proactive treatment of antenatal depression** exemplify a comprehensive model of care.
- This **goes beyond the physical to address the psychological and social aspects** of maternal health.
- This **proactive approach, backed by routine audits, robust training, and community engagement, should serve as a template for other states**, particularly in the south and parts of western India.

## Recommendations and the Way Forward

- **Enhance Antenatal Care:** Early registration, regular check-ups, and management of pre-existing conditions must be rigorously implemented.
- **Strengthen Institutional Deliveries:** Public awareness campaigns and incentives must continue, especially in high-risk zones.
- **Upgrade First Referral Units (FRUs):** Each district must have fully functional FRUs with emergency obstetric services, a 24×7 blood bank, and trained personnel.
- **Expand Human Resources:** Training and deploying more obstetricians, anaesthetists, and nurses in rural areas is essential. Task-sharing models and telemedicine can also help bridge gaps.
- **Robust Transport Mechanisms:** Ambulance systems need to be expanded and better integrated with community health networks.

## Conclusion

- **Maternal mortality is not merely a health issue;** it is a reflection of a society's commitment to the well-being of its women.
- While India has made commendable **progress in reducing MMR, the journey is far from over.**
- The **existence of high-performing models like Kerala** proves that with political will, systemic investment, and community involvement, preventable **maternal deaths can be a thing of the past.**
- The **tragedy of 93 women dying out of every one lakh live births should not be normalised** and it is both a challenge and a call to action, for policymakers, healthcare professionals, and society at large.

## Fostering a Commitment to Stop Maternal Deaths FAQs

**Q1.** What is India's Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) for 2019–21?

**Ans.** India's Maternal Mortality Ratio for the period 2019–21 is 93 maternal deaths per 1,00,000 live births.

**Q2.** Which state has the lowest MMR in India?

**Ans.** Kerala has the lowest Maternal Mortality Ratio in India, with only 20 deaths per 1,00,000 live births.



**Q3.** What is the leading medical cause of maternal death in India?

**Ans.** The leading medical cause of maternal death in India is postpartum hemorrhage, which is severe bleeding after childbirth.

**Q4.** What are the three delays in maternal healthcare?

**Ans.** The three delays refer to delays in deciding to seek care, delays in reaching a healthcare facility, and delays in receiving appropriate care once at the facility.

**Q5.** What program helped increase institutional deliveries in India?

**Ans.** The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) helped increase institutional deliveries in India through community health workers and financial incentives.

**Source:** **The Hindu**

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