

Bihar Cabinet makes domicile must for women's job quota

The Hindu Bureau

PATNA

The Bihar Cabinet on Tuesday made domicile mandatory for accessing the 35% reservation for women in State government jobs.

Previously, women from outside Bihar could also benefit from the reservation policy, which was introduced by the State government in 2016.

The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. The State will go to the polls later this year.

“The Cabinet has cleared a proposal of the General Administration Department as per which only women belonging to the State can avail themselves of the benefit of 35% reservation in government jobs,” S. Siddharth, Additional Chief Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat Department, told presspersons at a briefing.



Nitish Kumar

Women from other States applying for Bihar government jobs will be treated as general category candidates, Mr. Siddharth said.

Youth commission

The Cabinet also approved the constitution of the “Bihar Youth Commission” to make the youth of the State self-reliant, skilled, and employment-oriented.

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Bihar makes domicile must for job quota

“I am happy to inform that the Cabinet in its meeting held today decided to approve the constitution of a ‘Bihar Youth Commission’. The commission has been constituted to make the youth of the State strong and capable, with a view to providing them with employment opportunities and training,” the Chief Minister said in a post on X. The commission would play a significant role in advising the government on all matters related to improving and uplifting the status of youth in the society, Mr. Kumar said, while adding that it would also coordinate with the government departments to ensure better education and employment to youth.

“It will also monitor that the youth of the State get priority in private sector employment within the State, besides protecting the interests of youth studying and working outside the State,” Mr. Kumar said. Preparing programmes for the prevention of alcohol and drug use and sending recommendations to the government in such cases will also be among its key responsibilities, he said. He said the objective was to make the youth self-reliant, skilled, and employment-oriented.

Copycat govt: Tejashwi

On June 26, during the *Chatra Yuva Samvad*, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav had promised the formation of a youth commission if the party is voted to power in the State.

Reacting to the Cabinet decision, Mr. Yadav said, “We are ahead, and behind us is the 20-year-old, boring and useless government. Whatever promise we make, this copycat NDA government immediately copies it because tired people do not have their own vision, road map and blueprint. Like many of our promises, the announcement of forming a “Youth Commission” was also stolen by this copycat government today.”

The Cabinet also approved the Social Welfare Department’s proposal of the “Mukhya Mantri Divyangjan Sashaktikaran Yojana (Sambal)”, as per which the State government would give ₹50,000 and ₹1 lakh as incentive to persons with disabilities for clearing the preliminary test of the BPSC and the UPSC, respectively, Mr. Siddharth said.

Persons with disabilities from Backward Classes and Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) will get the benefit of the ‘Sambal’ scheme, he said.

The Cabinet also sanctioned ₹100 crore as diesel subsidy for carrying out irrigation of crops such as paddy, maize, jute, pulses, oilseeds, seasonal vegetables, medicinal and aromatic plants, in view of the possibility of irregular monsoon, drought, and deficient rainfall in the financial year 2025-26.

The funds will be utilised in the current financial year.

Ban on fuel to 'ELVs' in Delhi put on hold till November 1

Direction to now come into effect in Delhi and 5 adjoining NCR districts simultaneously: CAQM; Sirsa hails 'big relief' to citizens; fuel retailers also laud decision by Centre's pollution watchdog

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) on Tuesday deferred the ban on refuelling of overage or 'end of life' vehicles (ELVs) in Delhi to November 1. The prohibition will now come into effect in the national capital on the day it is scheduled to be enforced in the five adjoining 'high-vehicle-density' (HVD) districts of Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar and Sonipat.

The pollution control body had on April 23 announced a ban on the refuelling of overage vehicles – petrol vehicles older than 15 years and diesel vehicles older than 10 years – in Delhi from July 1. It had directed authorities to impound the ELVs.

Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa lauded the "people-centric" decision. "This is a big relief for thousands of citizens who were unfairly



Delhi government's Transport Department personnel supervising the execution of the CAQM-directed ban at a fuel station. FILE PHOTO

impacted. I thank the CAQM for acting swiftly on our concerns," he said.

Although the Delhi government had initially supported the directive, after facing public backlash, Mr. Sirsa had on July 3 written to the Centre's air quality monitoring panel, requesting that it put the directive on hold, as enforcing the prohibition would be "premature and potentially counterproductive" due to "operational and infrastructural challenges".

In its order, the CAQM allowed more time for the Delhi government "to address the technological

gaps in implementation of ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) system and align enforcement across the NCT of Delhi with the enforcement in five HVD districts of NCR".

The development was also welcomed by fuel retailers. Nischal Singhania, the Delhi Petrol Dealers' Association chief, said the decision will give the 400 refuelling station retailers ample time to implement the anti-pollution measure.

Meanwhile, RWA representatives called for a relook at the definition of overage vehicles.

Govt. must bring a law on overage vehicles: LoP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Assembly Atishi said the Delhi government must introduce an ordinance or convene the Assembly within a week to bring in a law regarding the ban on refuelling of overage vehicles "to put the middle class and elderly car owners in the city at ease". The senior Aam Aadmi Party leader accused the government of evading the issue that has affected the city residents.

In a statement, the Opposition party said the "BJP's triple engine government failed" in tackling the issue.

AAP added that "the CAQM's order only postpones the ban. It does not cancel it."

U.S. trade deal: India still targeting July deadline

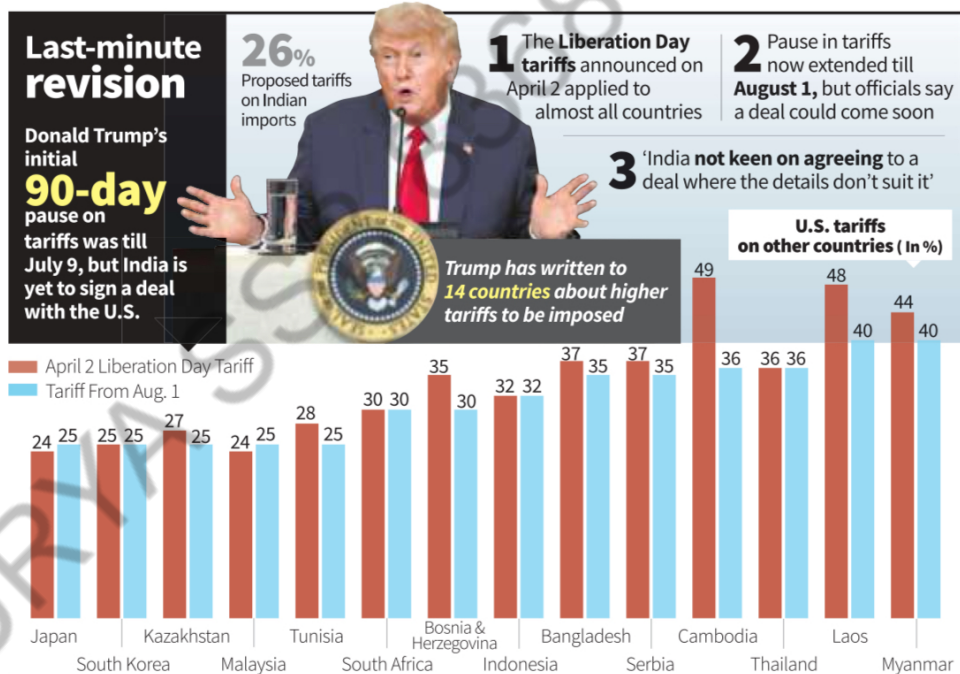
U.S. President Donald Trump has extended his tariff pause to August 1, and threatened new hikes for 14 countries; negotiations could extend to that date if deal specifics don't suit India, official says

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

India expects to announce a 'mini' trade deal with the United States "in a day or two", government officials said on Tuesday, though U.S. President Donald Trump has now extended his tariff pause until August 1. They cautioned, however, that India will not push ahead if the deal specifics do not suit its interests.

This came hours after U.S. President Donald Trump also said that the U.S. was "close to making a deal with India".

Mr. Trump has also sent letters to 14 countries, threatening higher tariffs from August 1, in a bid to address their trade deficits with the U.S. They are Japan, South Korea, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Tunisia, South Africa, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Serbia, Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar.



Source: U.S. Presidential Orders & Letters

South Africa, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Serbia, Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar.

The Liberation Day tariffs – announced on April 2 and originally paused till midnight on July 8 – applied to almost all coun-

tries, and included a 26% tariff on Indian imports.

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India still targeting July deadline for trade deal

“The August 1 deadline is for countries that have been sent the letters,” an official told *The Hindu*. “India has not been sent a letter, and we are still working to finalise the deal, so the July 8-9 deadline is still what we are operating under.”

New timeline

However, as per an executive order signed by Mr. Trump in Washington on Monday, “based on additional information and recommendations from various senior officials, including information on the status of discussions with trading partners”, the suspension of higher tariffs will now extend until 12:01 a.m. on August 1, by U.S. Eastern Daylight time.

Another official aware of the negotiations said a deal could materialise by the night of July 8, or “in a day or two”. However, this official added that India could use the expanded August 1 window “if the deal specifics do not suit us”.

‘No change’

Stating that levies would start being paid on August 1, Mr. Trump on Tuesday said that he would not extend the deadline again. “No extensions will be granted,” he posted on Truth Social. “There will be no change.”

On Monday, Mr. Trump said that the U.S. had “spoken to everybody”.

“We have made some [trade] deals, but for the most part we are going to send a letter,” he said.

“We’ve made a deal with the United Kingdom, we’ve made a deal with China, we are close to making a deal with India. Others we met with and we don’t think we are going to be able to make a deal, so we just sent them a letter,” Mr. Trump said. A team of Indian negotiators led by Special Secretary (Commerce and Industry) Rajesh Agrawal returned from their second trip to the U.S. last week.

A team from the U.S. has also visited India twice in the last few months.

✓ According to sources, India has placed its final proposals before the U.S. and now the U.S. has to decide whether to accept the deal or not. India, for its part, will not further amend its proposals.

As *The Hindu* has reported before, the main issues holding up a deal between India and the U.S. continue to be genetically-modified (GM) crops and dairy imports.

+ The U.S. is pushing India to allow the import of GM products such as soybean meal and distillers dried grains with solubles (DDGS) for animal feed. DDGS is a by-product of the ethanol production process. India has not been inclined towards GM crops even produced domestically, let alone imported.

India-Brazil partnership is relevant for the world: Modi

The two large democratic nations are unanimous that disputes should be resolved by diplomacy, Prime Minister says, highlighting their role in safeguarding the interests of the Global South

Kallol Bhattacharjee

NEW DELHI

India and Brazil were in agreement that all global problems should be resolved through dialogue, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in Brasilia on Tuesday.

Speaking after bilateral talks between the Indian and Brazilian teams, Mr. Modi described President Lula da Silva as the “chief architect” of the India-Brazil Strategic Partnership. He said India-Brazil cooperation was an “important pillar” for the world.

“India and Brazil have always worked in close coordination at the global level. As two large democratic countries, our cooperation is relevant not only for the Global South, but for the entire humanity,” Mr. Modi said, highlighting the role of the two countries in safeguarding the interests of the Global South.



President Lula da Silva presents Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the highest state honour, at the Alvorada Palace in Brasilia. REUTERS

Earlier, the Prime Minister was accorded a ceremonial welcome in Brasilia, where he arrived on Monday after attending the BRICS summit in Rio De Janeiro.

“Today, when the world is going through a period of tension and uncertainty, my friend [President Lula] explained in great detail. I am not repeating it. This India-Brazil partnership is

an important pillar of stability and balance. We are unanimous that all disputes should be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy,” said Mr. Modi, highlighting terrorism as one such area of cooperation which should have “zero tolerance and zero double standards”.

The Prime Minister expressed gratitude to Brazil after receiving the Grand

Collar of the National Order of the Southern Cross (the highest state honour) from President Lula.

Mr. Modi also thanked him for playing “an important role” in strengthening India-Brazil ties. “In today’s discussions, we talked about strengthening cooperation in every field. We have set a target to take bilateral trade to \$20 billion in the coming five years,” he said.

Six pacts signed

The two sides signed six agreements that included renewable energy, cooperation on combating terrorism, intellectual property, agriculture and protection of classified information.

“We will continue our efforts to connect our defence industries,” Mr. Modi said, announcing that the two sides were “working together on the adoption of UPI [Unified Payments Interface] in Brazil.”

Macron calls for the U.K. and Europe to de-risk ties with America and China

Sriram Lakshman

LONDON

French President Emmanuel Macron made a strong plea for the U.K. and other European countries to de-risk their relationships with and decrease their reliance on both the U.S. and China. Mr. Macron made these remarks in an address to both Houses of the British Parliament on Tuesday afternoon, the first day of his three-day state visit to the U.K.

While his remarks on China are not unusual, the repeated references to the risks of partnering with the U.S. indicate the extent of the structural changes the transatlantic relationship



Emmanuel Macron

has undergone, following Donald Trump's return to the White House.

"We will have, as well, to de-risk our two countries for the excessive dependencies on both the U.S. and China," Mr. Macron said, adding that he was not equating China and the U.S.

China could distort supply chains with its (excess) capacity and subsidies, Mr. Macron said, while also hitting out at the U.S. "The trade war is clearly an explicit decision not to be compliant anymore with the WTO [World Trade Organization]," he said.

He spoke about Anglo-French cooperation on climate and biodiversity in the face of challenges.

"Together we commit to the planet, in the face of the new league of international reactionaries who deny science and facts, we also defend with one voice, implementation of our climate ambitions towards carbon neutrality, phasing out fossil fuels and protect-

ing forests," Mr. Macron said.

On Gaza, Mr. Macron called for an immediate ceasefire without conditions, in strong terms.

"Today, a dehumanisation is occurring there that can never be justified," he said, also calling for the release of hostages captured by Hamas in October 2023.

The French President is due to have a bilateral meeting with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Wednesday. The operational part of the summit is scheduled for Thursday. Mr. Macron outlined the cooperation they would seek on migration, energy, space in addition to defence and security.

Trump, Netanyahu take lap of victory to mark Iran strikes

Israeli PM nominates U.S. leader for Nobel Peace Prize, saying 'he's forging peace one region after the other'; both leaders optimistic that their success in Iran would mark a new era in West Asia

Associated Press

WASHINGTON

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told President Donald Trump he was nominating the U.S. leader for a Nobel Peace Prize as the two took a victory lap on Monday to hail their recent joint strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities as an unmitigated success.

The two leaders sat down with their top aides for a dinner in the White House Blue Room to mark the Iran operation and discuss efforts to push forward with a 60-day cease-fire proposal to pause the 21-month conflict in Gaza.

"He's forging peace as



Hand in glove: Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu during their meeting at the White House on Monday. AP

we speak, one country and one region after the other," Mr. Netanyahu said as he presented the U.S. President with a nominating letter that he said he has sent

the Nobel committee.

"Coming from you in particular, this is very meaningful," Mr. Trump told Mr. Netanyahu as the Prime Minister handed

him the nomination letter.

Mr. Netanyahu's outwardly triumphant visit to the White House, his third this year, was dogged by Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza and questions over how hard Mr. Trump will push for an end to the conflict.

But in an exchange before reporters before the dinner got underway, both leaders expressed optimism that their success in Iran would mark a new era in West Asia.

"I think things are going to be really settled down a lot in the Middle East [West Asia]," Mr. Trump said. "And, they respect us and they respect Israel," he added.

King Charles hosts Macron in first European state visit since Brexit

REUTERS

LONDON, JULY 8

KING CHARLES welcomed French President Emmanuel Macron to Britain on Tuesday for the first state visit by a European leader since Brexit, their warm greeting symbolising the return of closer ties between the two countries.

Macron, treated to a British state visit for the first time, enjoys a strong personal relationship with the king, and there were smiles as the pair met alongside their wives Brigitte and Queen Camilla, watched over by soldiers on horseback, in ceremonial uniform of blue tunics and scarlet plumes.

Charles is expected to emphasise "the multitude of complex threats" both countries face when he speaks at the castle later, while Macron posted on X on his arrival that "there is so much we can build together".

Accompanied by heir to the throne Prince William, and his wife Princess Catherine, the group climbed into several horse-drawn carriages for a procession in Windsor which finished in the medieval castle's courtyard, west of London.

Since the election of Prime Minister Keir Starmer last year, Britain has been trying to re-

set ties with European allies, and Charles will want to play his part in setting the tone of the visit before the political talks get underway. "Our two nations share not only values, but also the tireless determination to act on them in the world," the 76-year-old monarch, who is still undergoing treatment for cancer, will say later.

While Macron's three-day trip is filled with meetings about economic issues and foreign affairs, the first day of the state visit, which comes 16 years after the late Queen Elizabeth hosted then French president Nicolas Sarkozy, is largely focused on pageantry, and heavy in symbolism.

Before heading to London on Tuesday afternoon to address parliament, Macron joined Charles to inspect the Guard of Honour. He was due to have lunch with the family and tour the Royal Collection, paintings and furniture amassed by the Windsors over the centuries.

The monarch's right eye was noticeably red when he met Macron. A Buckingham Palace source said he had suffered a burst blood vessel in one eye which was unrelated to any other health condition.

The day will end with a state dinner back at Windsor Castle, including speeches by Charles and Macron.

BRICS nations 'condemn and reject' Europe's carbon-based import duties

AMITABH SINHA

NEW DELHI, JULY 8

IN STRONGEST statement on the subject yet, the BRICS nations have "condemned and rejected" Europe's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanisms (CBAMs), and other similar restrictive trade measures taken under the pretext of climate concerns, saying these undermined their development and transition to cleaner economy.

CBAM is an import duty imposed by the European Union (EU) on goods produced by processes that lead to more carbon emissions than domestic European manufacturers are allowed to emit. The ostensible reason is to check 'carbon leakage', but this has the effect of making items like steel or cement, from a country like India for example, more expensive, and thus less competitive, in the European markets.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the 17th annual BRICS Summit in Brazil.

PMO via PTI

Developing countries including India and China have been strongly critical of CBAM, calling it a unilateral and unfair trade barrier. They maintain this violates international agreements on both trade and climate, and have raised this issue at multiple international forums, including the annual climate conferences. But EU has been unrelenting. The statement by the BRICS nations, a group of

nine large developing economies whose annual two-day summit concluded in Brazil on Monday, is another reiteration of the stand of the developing countries, though in a much stronger language.

"We condemn and reject unilateral, punitive and discriminatory, protectionist measures that are not in line with international law, under the pretext of environmental concerns, such as unilat-

eral and discriminatory carbon border adjustment mechanisms (CBAMs), due diligence requirements with detrimental impacts on global efforts to halt and reverse deforestation, taxes and other measures...", the BRICS nations said in a statement on climate finance that is a new addition to the outcomes from this annual meeting.

The Leaders' Framework Declaration on Climate Finance is the result of the discussions held by a new contact group of ministers on climate change and sustainable development that was formed last year under Russia's chairmanship of BRICS.

✓ The declaration said CBAMs, and other measures like restrictions on trade of forest goods, violated the provisions of the 1994 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and agreements reached at other climate meetings. **FULL REPORT ON**

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BRUSSELS

Bulgaria becomes 21st member to adopt euro after EU green light



AFP

EU Ministers gave the final green light for Bulgaria to adopt the euro on January 1, 2026, making it the single currency area's 21st member. Bulgaria's switch from the lev to the euro comes nearly 19 years after the country joined the European Union. EU finance ministers officially set the euro at 1.95583 Bulgarian lev. AFP

KATHMANDU

Eight dead, 31 missing in floods at border between China and Nepal



AP

Floods triggered by torrential rainfall tore down a Himalayan valley between China and Nepal on Tuesday, with at least eight killed and 31 missing. The wall of water also swept away the Friendship Bridge at Rasuwagadi, which is 120 km north of Kathmandu and one of the main bridges linking Nepal and China over the Bhotekoshi river. AFP

Reforming UNFCCC process

In recent years, climate negotiations have failed to achieve sufficient progress in tackling climate change and its impact. Several ideas have been proposed to reform these talks but it's unlikely that they will be implemented



AMITABH SINHA

THE INTERNATIONAL climate negotiations, held under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), have been facing a credibility crisis in recent years.

Their outcomes have been largely underwhelming as they have not delivered the kind of action required to curb global warming. Developed countries that fail to meet their targets, or deliver on their commitments, have not been held to account. Developing countries, particularly the small and most vulnerable of them, have repeatedly complained that their concerns are often ignored, and that the negotiations have failed to deliver climate justice.

Also, the withdrawal of the United States from these negotiations, following the return of Donald Trump to the White House this year, has threatened to make the entire process irrelevant.

As a result, there has been an effort to re-infuse trust and confidence in the system in the lead-up to the COP30 meeting in Brazil which will take place in November. As the host of the COP30, Brazil has been actively engaged with other countries to explore the possible steps that can be taken in this direction.

The annual mid-year climate meeting in Bonn, Germany, which wrapped up last month, discussed the ideas and suggestions submitted by countries, climate groups, and non-government organisations, to reform the system and make it more effective.

Suggestions for reforming climate negotiations

The Bonn meeting, held in the second half of June, acknowledged that the "growing scale and complexity" of the climate negotiations presented challenges. It also emphasised the need to "improve the efficiency of the UNFCCC process in a transparent and inclusive manner".

However, the proposals that were included in the discussions were not radical.



The closing plenary of the Bonn summit on June 26, UN Climate Change

Amongst the things proposed was streamlining agenda items to eliminate overlapping or redundant issues, and asking countries and observer groups to restrict the length of their statements to allow for more time for negotiations. Notably, it was also proposed that countries limit the size of their negotiating teams. The discussions remained inconclusive, and would continue in the COP30 meeting.

Civil society organisations and climate advocacy groups, which have been at the forefront of the demands to reform the UNFCCC process, have been asking for more fundamental changes. At Bonn, a letter signed by more than 200 such groups, suggested five major reforms. One of them was a demand to allow majority-based decision-making when attempts to find a consensus remain elusive.

The UNFCCC works through consensus, which means no decision is accepted till every country accepts it. In a way, every country has a veto. Getting all of the more than 190 parties to agree to every part of a decision has always been a big challenge. This is often blamed for the lack of ambition in the outcomes of climate negotiations.

The civil society groups suggested that countries that do not have a good track

record of climate action be not allowed to hold the COP meetings. In the last few years, the choice of Dubai and Baku for holding COP meetings has come under criticism as their economies are sustained largely by the fossil fuel industry.

These groups also called for reducing the participation and involvement of representatives of fossil fuel companies and other polluting industries in COP meetings. There have been allegations that these companies influence the outcomes of COP meetings in their favour.

Any decision to reform the UNFCCC process will have to be approved through consensus by all the parties, and it is unlikely that any of the more radical suggestions would go through.

Brazil's bid to rebuild trust in the system

As the host of the COP30, Brazil has to take leadership in ensuring its success. The outcome of this meeting will be measured largely by the faith and confidence that countries, mainly developing and vulnerable ones, are able to put back into the process.

In a recent letter to all the parties, Brazil acknowledged the need for reforms, and asked them to "consider" the future of the

UNFCCC process.

Brazil said long-standing issues such as excessively long agenda items, overlapping themes, scheduling constraints, and barriers that prevent meaningful participation of smaller delegations, needed to be addressed.

The country has also talked about mainstreaming climate conversations in other multilateral forums, including different UN agencies and financial institutions.

It has floated the idea of creating additional multilateral mechanisms that can complement the UNFCCC process, and push the implementation of the decisions taken at climate meetings.

Brazil has also drawn up a list of 30 items on which it would work with other countries to accelerate climate actions.

Developing nations' demand to increase climate finance

For developing countries, the single biggest issue currently is the lack of adequate money to finance their climate actions, and the failure of developed countries to deliver on their obligations to provide climate finance.

To comply with the provisions of the 2015 Paris Agreement, the Baku meeting had to decide on a new finance mobilisation target for developed countries, which, as of now, are under obligation to, collectively, raise at least \$100 billion a year to help developing countries.

While the needs of developing countries were assessed to be at least \$1.3 trillion a year, developed countries agreed to mobilise a sum of just \$300 billion a year, and that too from 2035 onwards.

Developing countries have continued to put pressure on the developed world to take additional steps to increase the availability of finance. They stalled the discussions in the Bonn meeting last month, and managed to force a special meeting on the issue. However, it remained inconclusive. The matter is likely to dominate the discussions at the COP30.

BRICS, a group of nine large and influential developing economies, also weighed in on the subject at its recently concluded meeting in Brazil.

In a separate declaration on climate finance, the BRICS countries asked developed countries to fully deliver on their finance commitments under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, while increasing their contribution to adaptation finance.