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Daily Current Affairs Topics: September 24

1. **Supreme Court on Child Sexual Abuse Material: Reinterpreting Section 15 of POCSO**
2. **UN Summit of the Future: Adoption of the "Pact for the Future" & UNSC Reforms**
3. **Tribal Development: Rollout of Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan (PMJUGA)**
4. **Regional Maritime Security: 5th Goa Maritime Symposium (GMS-2024)**
5. **Constitutional Federalism & Anti-Corruption: Sanction to Prosecute a Sitting CM**
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1. Supreme Court on Child Sexual Abuse Material: Reinterpreting Section 15 of POCSO

- **Context & Core Issue:** In *Just Rights for Children Alliance v. S. Harish*, the Supreme Court set aside a Madras High Court judgment, ruling that downloading, possessing, or viewing Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)—even without intention to transmit or distribute—is a punishable offense under Section 15 of the POCSO Act and the Information Technology (IT) Act.

  Constitutional & Legal Architecture:
  - *Statutory Harmonization:* The Court clarified that possession under Section 15(1) of POCSO cannot be read down to require an active intent to share or monetize; retaining or viewing CSAM constitutes passive participation in institutionalized exploitation.

- *Constitutional Mandate:* Anchored in Article 15(3) (special provisions for children), Article 21 (right to dignity and bodily integrity), and India's obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

- **Real-World Administrative Application:**
  - *Law Enforcement Cyber Cells:* Cyber crime units and state police forces must treat passive digital footprints (browser caches, cloud backups) of CSAM as cognizable material evidence rather than closing FIRs for lack of commercial distribution.
  - *Intermediary Due Diligence:* Digital platforms and ISPs face mandatory reporting timelines to the National Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) and NCRB's Cyber Crime Reporting Portal.



- **Sources:** *The Indian Express*, *The Hindu*.

2. UN Summit of the Future: Adoption of the "Pact for the Future" & UNSC Reforms

- **Context & Core** UN General Assembly adopted by consensus the landmark *Pact for the Future*, which for the first time incorporated explicit language committing to text-based negotiations on United Nations Security Council (UNSC) reform, an outcome welcomed by India.



- **Multilateral Architecture:**
  - *Representation & Veto Restructuring:* The pact highlights the under-representation of developing regions (specifically Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America) in permanent and non-permanent seats, establishing benchmarks to make the Council more transparent and democratic.
  - *Global Digital Compact:* An annexed framework setting global guardrails for Artificial Intelligence (AI) governance, data sovereignty, and preventing technological fragmentation across the Global South.
- **Real-World Strategic Application:**
  - *G4 & L.69 Coalition Mobilization:* Indian diplomats at the UN can leverage the text-based mandate to press for intergovernmental negotiations (IGN), countering procedural filibustering by the Uniting for Consensus (Coffee Club) group.
  - *South-South Multilateralism:* Bolsters India's posture as the "Voice of the Global South," linking security council democratization directly to climate financing and debt relief restructuring.
- **Sources:** *The Hindu*, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

3. Tribal Development: Rollout of Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan (PMJUGA)

- **Context & Core Issue:** Details and implementation guidelines were officially released for the Union Cabinet–approved Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan (PMJUGA), targeting socio-economic saturation across tribal-majority villages.

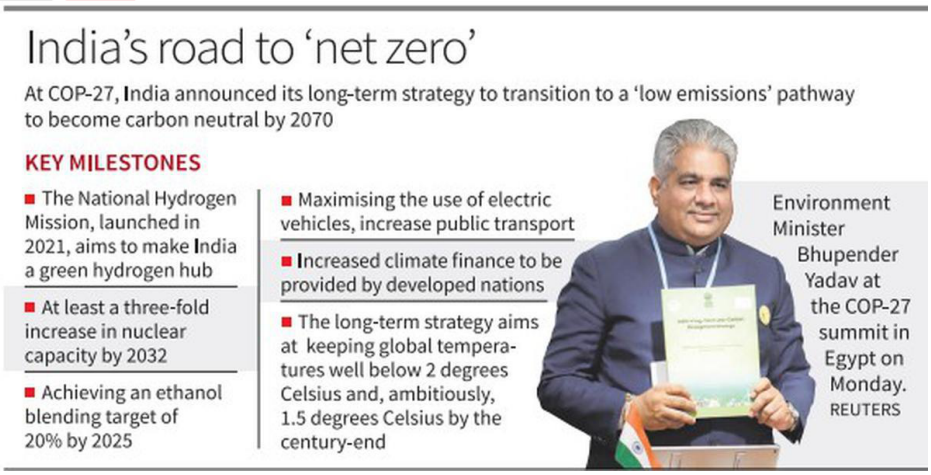


- **Structural Architecture:**
  - *Convergence Framework:* Integrates 25 specific interventions across 17 central ministries under the Development Action Plan for Scheduled Tribes (DAPST), covering roughly 63,000 tribal-majority villages across 549 districts over 5 years.
  - *PM Gati Shakti Geo-Mapping:* Uses geospatial village-level gap-mapping to track pucca housing (PMAY-G), tap water (JJM), mobile connectivity (BharatNet), and specialized healthcare infrastructure.

- **Real-World Administrative Application:**
  - *Tribal Homestays & Forest Rights:* District collectors can deploy dedicated corpus funds (under Swadesh Darshan) to set up community-managed tribal homestays and develop value-chain hubs for 22 lakh Forest Rights Act (FRA) titleholders.
  - *Targeted Health Interventions:* Sets up AIIMS-partnered "Centers of Competence" (CoC) to conduct prenatal and point-of-care screening for Sickle Cell Disease in high-prevalence pockets.
- **Sources:** PIB, Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

4. Regional Maritime Security: 5th Goa Maritime Symposium (GMS-2024)

- **Context & Core** Indian Navy hosted the 5th edition of the Goa Maritime Symposium at the Naval War College in Goa, engaging 12 Indian Ocean littoral nations under the theme *"Common Maritime Security Challenges in the Indian Ocean Region"*.
- **Strategic Architecture:**
  - *Collaborative Interoperability:* Focuses on countering Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, maritime narcotics corridors, and piracy in the western and central Indian Ocean.
  - *SAGAR Doctrine Realization:* Translates the Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) framework into actionable standard operating procedures among navies of Bangladesh, Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and Thailand.
- **Real-World Strategic Application:**
  - *Information Fusion Centre (IFC-IOR):* Participating countries integrate naval liaison officers with India's IFC-IOR at Gurugram to receive real-time Automatic
    Identification System (AIS) feeds tracking suspicious non-military vessels.
  - *Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA):* Helps establish joint coastal radar chains and coordinated aerial patrols without requiring formal bilateral security pacts.
- **Sources:** PIB, Ministry of Defence.



5. Constitutional Federalism & Anti-Corruption: Sanction to Prosecute a Sitting CM

- **Context & Core Issue:** The Karnataka High Court upheld the Governor's sanction to initiate an investigation against the sitting Chief Minister under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act (PC Act) in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) land allotment dispute.
- **Constitutional Principles:**
  - *Governor's Discretionary Powers:* Under Article 163, the Governor normally acts on the "aid and advice" of the Council of Ministers; however, the Court reiterated that when the Chief Minister is personally facing allegations, the Governor must act independently to avoid a conflict of interest.
  - *Section 17A (PC Act) Safeguard:* Clarified that preliminary inquiry approvals do not equate to a declaration of guilt, but serve as a threshold filter against frivolous complaints.
- **Real-World Administrative Application:**
  - *Anti-Corruption Bureaucracy:* Sets a legal precedent for Lokayuktas and Special Courts to process private corruption complaints against high-ranking constitutional functionaries without executive interference.
  - *Federal Checks and Balances:* Delineates the line between legitimate gubernatorial oversight and political overreach, defining parameters for judicial review of administrative sanctions.
- **Sources:** *The Hindu*, *The Indian Express*.

6. Energy Transition: Thermal Expansion as a Net-Zero Transition Bridge

- **Context & Core** Ministry of Power stated that India will continue adding thermal power capacity up to 2035 to meet industrial baseload demands before reversing and decommissioning fossil plants in line with its 2070 Net-Zero targets.

- **Economic & Technological Dynamics:**

  - *Intermittency Management:* Expanding non-fossil capacity (solar/wind) faces battery energy storage system (BESS) cost barriers; supercritical and ultra-supercritical coal units act as transitional spinning reserves to prevent grid collapse.
  - *Balancing Growth and Decarbonization:* Prioritizes meeting peak summer surges exceeding 250 GW while concurrently advancing green hydrogen, pumped storage, and nuclear generation.

- **Real-World Policy Application:**
  - *State Generation Utilities (GENCOs):* Central and state utilities must retrofit older coal plants for dynamic 40% technical minimum load ramping, allowing them to scale down when solar generation peaks during afternoon hours.
  - *National Electricity Plan (NEP) Calibration:* Directs capital expenditure allocations via Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and REC toward high-efficiency thermal assets and transmission corridors.
- **Sources:** *The Indian Express*, Ministry of Power.

7. Global Cultural Diplomacy: Restitution of 297 Antiquities from the United States

- **Context & Core Issue:** During bilateral diplomatic engagements, the United States returned 297 illicitly trafficked cultural antiquities and religious idols back to India.
- **Legal & Diplomatic Architecture:**
  - *1970 UNESCO Convention:* Implements the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property.
  - *Cultural Property Agreements (CPA):* Leverages bilateral law enforcement collaboration between the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and the US Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) to intercept international black-market antiquities rings.
- **Real-World Cultural Application:**
  - *National Heritage Repositories:* The ASI cross-verifies digital provenances, cataloging recovered artefacts (terracotta sculptures, stone carvings, bronzes) within the National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities (NMMA) registry.
  - *Deterring Idols Trafficking:* Strengthens the legal evidentiary chain in domestic courts to pursue organized theft syndicates under the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972.
- **Sources:** PIB, Ministry of Culture.

8. Critical Infrastructure Cyber Defense: Launch of CSIRT-Power

- **Context & Core Issue:** The Ministry of Power operationalized the Computer Security
  Incident Response Team (CSIRT-Power) at the Northern Regional Power Committee in

What Does CSIRT Stand For?

CSIRT which stands for Computer Security Incident Response Team is a tangible organizational entity (i.e., one or more employees) tasked with organizing and providing assistance for the response to a computer security event or incident.

The structure of a CSIRT is determined by the requirements of its parent organization. Consider, for instance, if 24-hour coverage is necessary, the availability of skilled personnel, whether full-time or part-time team members are needed, and operational expenses

WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF CSIRT?

- **Security Team**
- **Coordinating CSIRT**
- **Centralized CSIRT**
- **Hybrid CSIRT**
- **Distributed CSIRT**
- **CSIRT/SOC Hybrid**
- **Externalized CSIRT**

zenarmor



New Delhi to safeguard India's national electricity transmission network from cyber attacks.

- **Technological Architecture:**
  - *Sectoral Threat Hunting:* Serves as a dedicated cybersecurity command center under the statutory framework of Section 70A of the Information Technology Act, coordinating with CERT-In and NCIIPC.
  - *SCADA & OT Hardening:* Targets vulnerabilities in Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems, industrial internet-of-things (IIoT) sensors, and smart substation communication layers against state-sponsored advanced persistent threats (APTs).
- **Real-World Administrative Application:**
  - *Grid Outage Preemption:* Provides national load despatch centers (POSOCO/Grid-Controller) with real-time attack signatures, preventing malware-induced tripping of regional synchronous power grids.
  - *Mandatory Vulnerability Audits:* Mandates all power utilities (generation, transmission, distribution) to conduct periodic source-code audits and isolate operational technology (OT) networks from public internet gateways.
- **Sources:** PIB, Ministry of Power.

9. Indo-Pacific Strategic Architecture: 6th Quad Leaders' Summit & MAITRI Initiative

- **Context & Core Issue:** Following the 6th Quad Leaders' Summit in Wilmington, the Quad grouping rolled out the *Wilmington Declaration*, unveiling the "Maritime Initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific" (MAITRI) alongside the "Quad Cancer Moonshot".

- **Strategic & Security Architecture:**
  - *MAITRI Framework:* Complements the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) by providing technical training and surveillance toolkits to regional littoral partners to monitor Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and deter gray-zone coercion.
  - *Quad Indo-Pacific Logistics Network:* Pilot project designed to share civilian airlift capabilities, cross-docking access, and joint disaster-relief coordination across the Indo-Pacific theatre.
- **Real-World Strategic Application:**
  - *Capacity Building Host:* India hosts the inaugural MAITRI operational workshop in 2025, anchoring its leadership in regional capacity building without formalizing a collective defense treaty.
  - *Health Diplomacy Integration:* Leverages India's domestic pharmaceutical capacity (Serum Institute and private manufacturers) to supply HPV vaccines and digital oncology tools to South Pacific and Southeast Asian island nations.

- **Sources:** *The Hindu*, *The Indian Express*, MEA Releases.

10. Statutory Watchdogs & Judicial Overreach: Supreme Court Ruling on NCPCR Powers

- **Context & Core Issue:** The Supreme Court dismissed a petition filed by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) seeking an apex-court-monitored Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe into child care institutions in Jharkhand, warning statutory commissions against dragging the judiciary into political and institutional agendas.



- **Constitutional & Legal Architecture:**
  - *Powers Under CPCR Act, 2005:* The bench underscored that the NCPCR possesses ample independent statutory powers under Sections 13 and 14 of the CPCR Act (civil court inquiry powers, summoning witnesses, ordering magisterial inquiries) and cannot seek omnibus judicial writs to perform its baseline duties.
  - *Limits of Article 32 Writs:* Reaffirmed that constitutional remedies under Article 32 cannot be transformed into tools for statutory bodies to bypass institutional inquiry processes.
- **Real-World Administrative Application:**
  - *Statutory Autonomy & Accountability:* Directs child rights bodies to utilize their own legal inquiry wings, lodge FIRs with state police forces, and pursue

departmental action against non-compliant childcare institutions rather than pursuing vague public-interest litigation.

- *Inter-Institutional Comity:* Prevents friction between state governments and national statutory watchdogs by maintaining procedural lines between federal inquiries and state law enforcement domains.

- **Sources:** *The Hindu*, Supreme Court Judgments.

11. South Asian Geopolitics: Political Transition in Sri Lanka

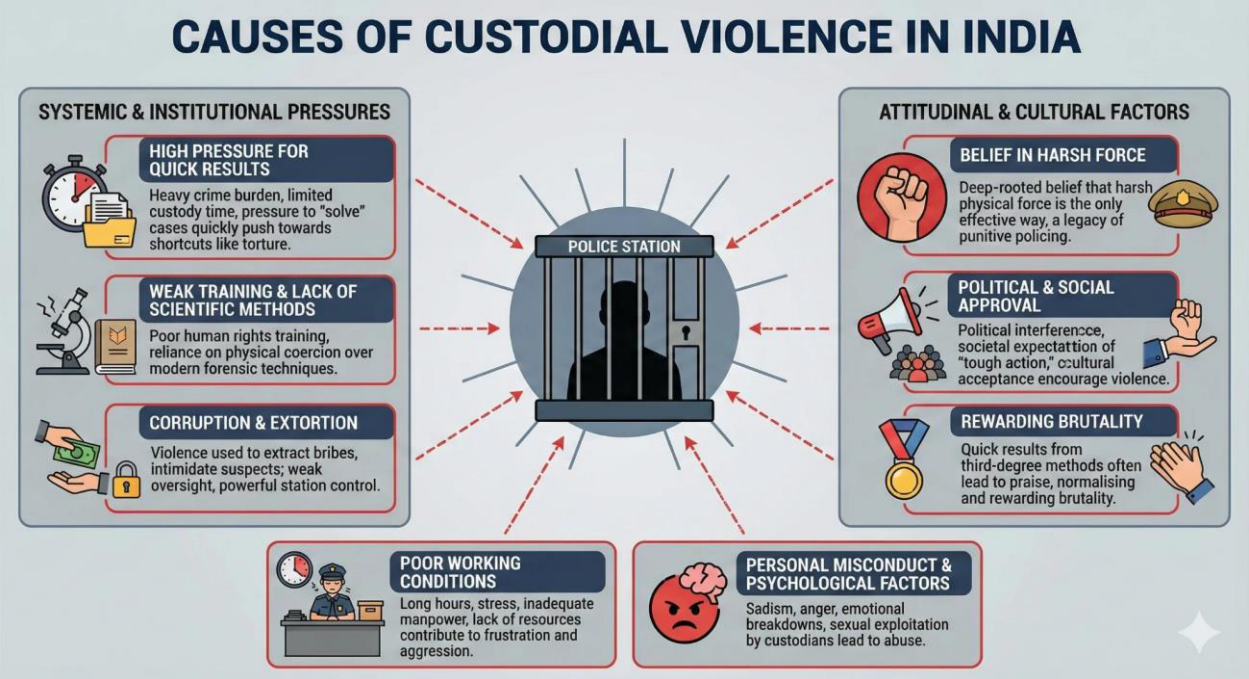
- **Context & Core Issue:** Following the victory of Anura Kumara Dissanayake in the presidential election, academic-politician Dr. Harini Amarasuriya was sworn in as Sri Lanka's 16th Prime Minister, heading an interim cabinet ahead of parliamentary elections.



- **Diplomatic & Strategic Dimensions:**
  - *Regime Reset & Left-Coalition Politics:* The transition of the National People's Power (NPP) coalition brings an ideological shift focused on renegotiating portions of the IMF Extended Fund Facility (EFF) while checking state-level corruption.
  - *India–Sri Lanka Strategic Equilibrium:* Balances India's security interests in the Palk Strait against Colombo's historic engagement with Chinese infrastructure financing and debt servicing commitments.
- **Real-World Policy Application:**
  - *High-Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP):* Indian diplomacy can accelerate grant-funded community initiatives (housing for Tamil plantation workers, digital identity architecture) to build institutional trust with the new administration.
  - *Maritime & Fisheries Protocols:* Offers an opening to reactivate the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Fisheries to prevent maritime arrests and disputes in the Palk Bay. ● **Sources:** *The Hindu*, *The Indian Express*.

12. Custodial Justice & Rule of Law: Extra-Judicial Police Shootouts & PUCL Guidelines

- **Context & Core Issue:** The police shootout resulting in the death of an accused in the Badlapur minor sexual assault case triggered major scrutiny from civil liberties organizations and judicial bodies regarding compliance with mandatory shootout guidelines.



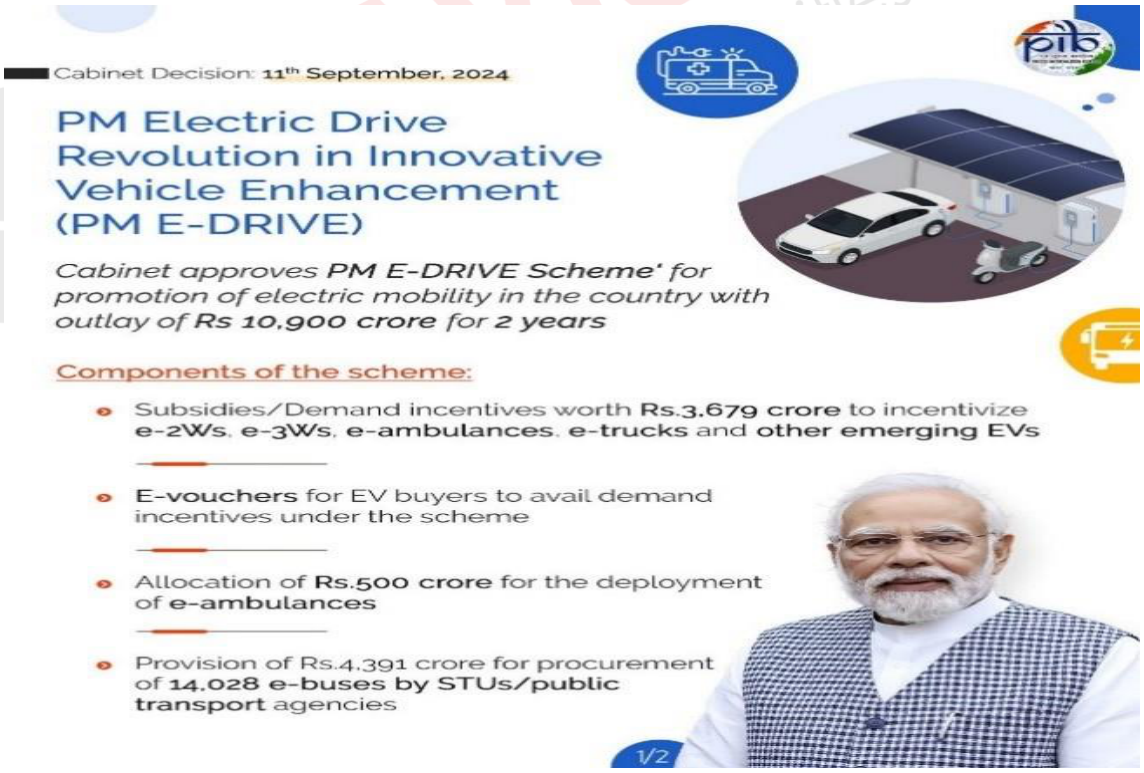
- **Legal & Constitutional Principles:**

- *PUCL v. State of Maharashtra (2014) Standards:* Supreme Court-mandated 16-point guidelines require mandatory independent CID/magisterial inquiries, immediate FIR registration against involved officers, seizure of weapons for ballistic analysis, and prompt reporting to the NHRC.
- *Presumption of Innocence & Article 21:* Reasserts that state force resulting in death during custody, even under claims of self-defense, directly infringes the constitutional right to a fair trial.

- **Real-World Administrative Application:**
  - *Independent Magisterial Verification:* Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs) must execute mandatory inquest proceedings under Section 196 of the BNSS (formerly Section 176 CrPC) to ascertain if use of firearm force was proportionate to the imminent danger.
  - *Standardized Forensic Documentation:* Mandates video-recorded post-mortem examinations and preservation of hands for gunshot residue (GSR) testing to avoid tampering with ballistic evidence.
- **Sources:** *The Hindu*, *The Indian Express*.

13. Clean Mobility & Public Transit: Implementation Matrix of the PM E-DRIVE Scheme

- **Context & Core Issue:** The Ministry of Heavy Industries rolled out detailed deployment guidelines for the ₹10,900-crore PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM E-DRIVE) scheme, which replaces the phased FAME framework.



- **Technological & Financial Framework:**
  - *Aadhaar-Authenticated e-Vouchers:* Introduces real-time, tamper-proof digital vouchers generated at the point of sale, bypassing traditional subsidy reimbursement delays for electric two-wheelers and three-wheelers.
  - *Public Fleet Decarbonization:* Prioritizes ₹4,391 crore for the procurement of 14,028 electric buses across tier-1 urban conglomerates, linked directly with formal vehicle scrapping certificates from Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facilities (RVSFs).
- **Real-World Policy Application:**
  - *Charging Infrastructure Upgrades:* Allocates dedicated capital subsidies to state DISCOMs and charge point operators (CPOs) to establish fast chargers along national freight highways.
  - *Specialized Segment Electrification:* Introduces a ₹500-crore pilot to deploy specialized electric ambulances and incentives for heavy commercial electric trucks, lowering inner-city diesel emissions. ● **Sources:** PIB, Ministry of Heavy Industries.

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