

Protesters Set Kenyan Parliament Ablaze

Why In News

- **Police fired on demonstrators** trying to storm Kenya's legislature on Tuesday and at least five protesters were shot dead, with sections of the parliament building set ablaze as lawmakers inside passed a bill to raise taxes.
- In chaotic scenes, **protesters overwhelmed police** and chased them away in an attempt to storm the parliament compound, with Citizen TV reporting protesters had managed to enter the Senate chamber.



All You Need To Know

- **Kenyans have been struggling to cope** with several economic shocks caused by the lingering impact of the **Covid-19 pandemic**, the war in Ukraine, two consecutive years of droughts and depreciation of the currency . The protesters oppose tax rises in a country already reeling from a cost-of-living crisis, and many are also calling for President William Ruto to step down.
- Kenya's parliament approved a contentious finance bill that aims to raise an additional **\$2.7 billion in taxes** as part of an effort to lighten the heavy debt load, with interest payments alone consuming **37% of annual revenue**. The parliament approved the measures before adjourning as protesters swarmed outside the building.



- As protesters clashed in the streets of the **capital Nairobi and other cities**, police used tear gas and water cannon and also fired over the heads of demonstrators to disperse crowds, while protesters hurled stones at security forces, witnesses said.



- The **protesters oppose tax rises** in a country already reeling from a cost-of-living crisis but many are also calling for President William Ruto to step down.
- Ruto won an election almost two years ago on a platform of championing **Kenya's working poor**, but has been caught between the competing demands of lenders such as the International Monetary Fund, which is urging the government to cut deficits to access more funding, and a hard-pressed population.

Indian Government

- **Around 20,000 Indians** are currently living in Kenya, according to an official estimate. The Indian high commission in Kenya on Tuesday advised Indian nationals to exercise "utmost caution" in view of prevailing "tense" situation arising out of violent protests in the African nation.



- In view of the **prevailing tense situation**, all Indians in Kenya are advised to exercise utmost caution, restrict non-essential movement and avoid the areas affected by the protests and violence till the situation clears up," the Indian high commission said in an advisory