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A collection of historical artifacts is arranged on a surface covered with an old, detailed map. On the left, a large, dark brown leather telescope stands vertically. In the center, a rolled-up scroll with a reddish-brown cover and a leather strap lies horizontally. In the foreground, a silver ring with a dark stone and a small key are scattered on the map. The background is a textured, brown fabric with a faint, repeating pattern. The overall scene is lit with warm, golden light, creating a sense of history and discovery.

HISTORY- ARTS AND CULTURE



**SUCHETA KRIPALANI: INDIA'S PIONEER
WOMAN CHIEF MINISTER**

**KERALA ASSEMBLY'S PUSH TO RENAME
STATE TO KERALAM**

**KASHMIR: THE CRADLE OF YOGA AND
KASHMIR SHAIVISM**

**THE SATNAMIS: A DALIT RELIGIOUS
COMMUNITY AND THEIR HISTORY OF
PROTESTS**

**BIRSA MUNDA'S 124TH DEATH
ANNIVERSARY: LEGACY OF A TRIBAL
LEADER**

**GANDHI'S FIRST SATYAGRAHA: A
RECALL OF EVENTS 131 YEARS AGO**



SUCHETA KRIPALANI: INDIA'S PIONEER WOMAN CHIEF MINISTER

CONTEXT: Sucheta Kripalani, a prominent figure in India's political history, achieved the distinction of becoming the country's first woman Chief Minister. Born on June 25, 1908, she was a dedicated Gandhian and played a pivotal role in the freedom movement. Her tenure as Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh from October 2, 1963, to March 13, 1967, marked a significant milestone in Indian politics.



Early Life and Political Journey

Sucheta Kripalani, born to S N Majumdar, began her journey in activism and education. She joined the freedom movement early on and was actively involved in relief efforts during various crises, including the 1934 Bihar earthquake and the 1946 riots in Noakhali.

Path to Chief Ministership

Her ascent to the position of Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh was unexpected yet historic. Following a suggestion by Chandra Bhanu Gupta and the endorsement by Prime Minister Nehru, Sucheta emerged as the leader of the Congress Legislative Party (CLP) in Uttar Pradesh. She was elected to this role through a decisive vote, thereby becoming the first woman to hold the Chief Minister's office in any Indian state.

Contributions as Chief Minister

During her tenure, Sucheta Kripalani initiated several reforms and projects aimed at societal progress and equality. Notable initiatives included the establishment of educational institutions like Meerut University and Kanpur University, and efforts to address social inequalities through increased job reservations.

Legacy and Beyond

Beyond her political achievements, Sucheta Kripalani was a champion of women's rights and founded the All India Mahila Congress. Her legacy extends to her principled stance against corruption and her efforts to promote regional languages and cultural identities within the administrative framework.

Sucheta Kripalani's life and political career remain a testament to her dedication to public service and her pioneering role in advancing the status of women in Indian politics. Her contributions continue to inspire generations of leaders and activists striving for social justice and equality in India.

KERALA ASSEMBLY'S PUSH TO RENAME STATE TO KERALAM

CONTEXT: The Kerala Assembly recently passed a resolution advocating for the renaming of the state to "Keralam" in the Constitution, marking the second instance of such a resolution within a year.



The Resolution Details

On June 24, the Kerala Assembly unanimously approved a resolution urging the Central Government to officially change the state's name to "Keralam." This resolution, initiated by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, emphasizes that "Keralam" is the Malayalam name for the state, contrasting with its current designation as "Kerala" in the First Schedule of the

Constitution.

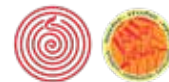
Historical and Etymological Context

The name "Keralam" finds its roots in ancient history, with references dating back to Emperor Ashoka's Rock Edict II from 257 BCE, mentioning "Keralaputra," meaning "son of Kerala." Linguistic studies by scholars like Dr. Herman Gundert suggest that the term "Keralam" or its variants have ancient linguistic origins in Southern India.

Statehood and Linguistic Identity

The demand for a unified Malayalam-speaking state gained momentum in the 1920s, culminating in the formation of the state of Kerala on November 1, 1956, following the recommendations of the State Reorganisation Commission. This commission, led by Syed Fazl Ali, advocated for the integration of Malayalam-speaking regions to create a cohesive state unit.

CONCLUSION The push to rename Kerala to "Keralam" reflects a broader effort to assert the state's linguistic identity and historical roots through constitutional recognition. This move underscores Kerala's cultural heritage and its significance within the framework of Indian federalism and linguistic diversity.



KASHMIR: THE CRADLE OF YOGA AND KASHMIR SHVAIVISM

CONTEXT: Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his address on International Yoga Day in Srinagar, referred to Kashmir as the “land of yoga and meditation.” This statement highlights the deep historical and spiritual connections between Kashmir and the practice of yoga. Here’s an exploration into the rich heritage of yoga in Kashmir, particularly through the lens of Kashmir Shaivism:

Trika Shaivism and Yoga

Around 850 CE, Kashmir became a significant center for Shaivite philosophy, particularly Trika Shaivism, propagated by the polymath Abhinavagupta. Trika Shaivism, also known as Kashmir Shaivism, integrated yoga practices deeply into its spiritual framework. These practices included Hath-yoga traditions like those of the Nath school of Gorakshanath and the Dashanami Sampradaya of sannyasis.

Abhinavagupta’s Role

Abhinavagupta, born around 950 CE, played a pivotal role in popularizing Trika Shaivism and its yogic aspects across India. His magnum opus, the *Tantraloka*, is a comprehensive treatise covering various dimensions of tantra philosophy,

emphasizing not only physical postures but also mental and spiritual disciplines essential for spiritual growth.

Historical Context: Lalitaditya Muktapida

The historical figure of Lalitaditya Muktapida, a legendary king of Kashmir (724-760 CE), is credited with patronizing arts, culture, and the philosophy of tantric yoga. His reign saw the proliferation of yogic practices beyond traditional sages to a broader audience in Kashmiri society. He is also renowned for constructing the Martand Sun Temple, further cementing his legacy in promoting cultural and spiritual heritage.

CONCLUSION Kashmir’s association with yoga dates back centuries, intertwined with its philosophical and cultural evolution under figures like Abhinavagupta and Lalitaditya Muktapida. Modi’s characterization of Kashmir as the “land of yoga and meditation” reflects this profound historical continuity and spiritual significance. This legacy continues to inspire practitioners and scholars alike, underscoring Kashmir’s enduring role as a cradle of spiritual wisdom and yogic traditions.

THE SATNAMIS: A DALIT RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY AND THEIR HISTORY OF PROTESTS

CONTEXT: In central Chhattisgarh, members of the Satnami sect have taken to protesting against the government’s alleged inaction regarding the desecration of Jaitkham, a sacred site at Amar Cave in Baloda Bazar district. Here’s an overview of the Satnamis, their religious background, and their socio-political influence:

Historical Roots and Founding

The Satnamis predominantly belong to the Scheduled Caste community and are centered in Chhattisgarh and adjacent areas of Madhya Pradesh. Their religious lineage traces back to Guru Ghasidas, an 18th-century saint born in Baloda Bazar district. The sect’s name, “Satnam Panth,” reflects their commitment to the worship of a formless Absolute, influenced by the teachings of Bhakti poet Kabir and founded by mendicant Birbhan in Narnaul during the 17th century.

Upholding Values and Revolts

The Satnamis historically opposed ritualism and caste distinctions, emphasizing equality and social justice. They gained attention during Aurangzeb’s reign for their rebellion against oppressive taxation and societal inequities, marking a significant chapter in their struggle for autonomy and recognition.

Guru Ghasidas’ Influence and Modern Developments

Guru Ghasidas revived the Satnami community in the 18th century, advocating monotheism and ethical living. His teachings encouraged adherence to a moral code that included abstaining from meat, alcohol, and tobacco, and adopting symbolic practices akin to Vaishnavism and Kabirpanth.

Contemporary Challenges and Political Influence

Today, the Satnamis continue to assert their cultural and political identity in Chhattisgarh. They have become a significant electoral force, influencing state politics despite internal divisions and shifting political affiliations among their leaders since 2013.

CONCLUSION The Satnamis’ ongoing protests in Chhattisgarh underscore their commitment to preserving their religious heritage and demanding justice for perceived injustices against their sacred sites. Their journey from historical rebellions to contemporary political activism highlights their enduring struggle for recognition and social equality within the Indian socio-religious landscape.



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BIRSA MUNDA'S 124TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY: LEGACY OF A TRIBAL LEADER

CONTEXT: On the occasion of Birsa Munda's 124th death anniversary, his contributions to tribal resistance against British rule and cultural resurgence remain deeply significant.



Early Life and Context

Birsa Munda was born on November 15, 1875, during a period of profound change for his Munda community in the Chotanagpur region of Jharkhand under British colonial rule. His upbringing amidst these transformations shaped his later role as a pivotal figure in tribal history.

Leadership and Spiritual Influence

Birsa Munda's leadership was characterized by his spiritual teachings and organizational prowess. Known as 'Bhagwan' (God) and 'Dharti ka Abba' (Father of the Earth) among his followers, he founded the Birsait sect, advocating monotheism and social reform while challenging the influence of Christian missionaries and British colonial policies.

The Ulgulan Movement

In 1899, Birsa initiated the Ulgulan movement, employing guerrilla warfare to resist colonial encroachment and demand tribal rights. The movement mobilized tribal communities against exploitative practices such as forced labor and land alienation, marking a significant phase of indigenous resistance in colonial India.

Impact and Enduring Legacy

Despite his arrest in 1900 and subsequent death in Ranchi Jail at the age of 25, Birsa Munda's legacy endured. His activism contributed to the abolition of the begar system and influenced legislative changes like the Tenancy Acts of 1903 and 1908, which safeguarded tribal land rights.

CONCLUSION Birsa Munda's life and struggle symbolize the resilience and resistance of tribal communities against colonial oppression. His efforts continue to inspire generations, highlighting the ongoing quest for justice and recognition of indigenous rights in India's socio-political landscape.

GANDHI'S FIRST SATYAGRAHA: A RECALL OF EVENTS 131 YEARS AGO

CONTEXT: On June 7, 1893, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, a young lawyer, encountered a pivotal moment that shaped his philosophy of nonviolent resistance during his 21-year stay in South Africa.



The Incident at Pietermaritzburg

During a journey from Durban to Pretoria, Gandhi, holding a valid first-class ticket, was forcibly evicted from the train's whites-only compartment at Pietermaritzburg railway station.

This discriminatory act sparked Gandhi's inaugural act of civil disobedience, known as satyagraha, or 'truth force'.

Path of Nonviolent Resistance

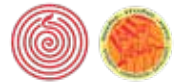
This event marked a significant turning point in Gandhi's life, as documented in his autobiography, where he recognized the pervasive nature of racial prejudice and felt compelled to combat it.

Impact of South African Years

Gandhi's experiences in South Africa profoundly influenced his personal and philosophical development. His interactions with Christians challenged his own beliefs, leading him towards a more inclusive spirituality. He also championed the legal rights of Indian traders and penned influential works advocating for justice and equality.

Legacy of Nonviolent Protest

Gandhi's methodologies of satyagraha—ranging from writing petitions to mass mobilizations and willingly facing imprisonment—became central to India's struggle for independence. These principles later inspired global movements for justice, including Martin Luther King Jr.'s Civil Rights Movement in the United States and Nelson Mandela's fight against apartheid in South Africa.



CONCLUSION Gandhi's principled stance against injustice in South Africa laid the foundation for his enduring legacy of nonviolent resistance, which continues to resonate globally in ongoing struggles for democracy and human dignity. This first act of satyagraha not only defined Gandhi's trajectory but also shaped the course of 20th-century history by inspiring movements for justice and equality worldwide.



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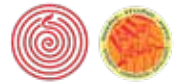
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A vintage map with a compass and a magnifying glass. The map is a historical world map with a grid of latitude and longitude lines. It features various geographical labels in Latin, such as 'MARE DEL NORT', 'OCEANVS', 'ETHIOPIA', 'MARE PACIFICVM', and 'MARE INDICVM'. A magnifying glass with a gold frame is positioned on the right side of the map, focusing on a specific area. A compass is partially visible in the bottom right corner. The overall scene is set against a dark, textured background.

GEOGRAPHY



STROMATOLITES

MOUNT KANLAON

**ABU MUSA, GREATER TUNB, AND
LESSER TUNB ISLANDS**

COLD LAVA

LIPULEKH PASS

CRETE ISLAND (GREECE)

DEAD ZONE

MERCURY ISLAND

NAMAQUALAND (AFRICA)



STROMATOLITES

CONTEXT: Researchers have discovered living stromatolites on Sheybarah Island in the Red Sea, Saudi Arabia.

What are Stromatolites?

Stromatolites are layered rock formations created by microbial communities, representing some of the earliest evidence of life on Earth. These structures are formed as layers of sediment accumulated over time, trapping and binding microorganisms

like cyanobacteria.

As these microorganisms grow and photosynthesize, they produce layers of carbonate minerals, gradually building up the stromatolite structure. Despite their simple appearance, stromatolites played a crucial role in shaping Earth's early environment and are considered significant in the study of early life and evolutionary history.



MOUNT KANLAON

CONTEXT: Mount Kanlaon, located in the central Philippines, erupted recently (through a Phreatic eruption), prompting hundreds of people to seek shelter in evacuation centres.

About Mount Kanlaon/ Canlaon:

It stands as the highest peak on Negros Island and is one of the active volcanoes within the Philippines' Pacific Ring of Fire. The volcano comprises various pyroclastic cones and

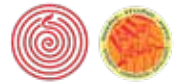
craters, with its summit boasting a broad caldera and a crater lake.

Phreatic eruptions, characterized by steam-driven explosions resulting from heated groundwater, are typical occurrences, often preceding or following traditional volcanic eruptions.



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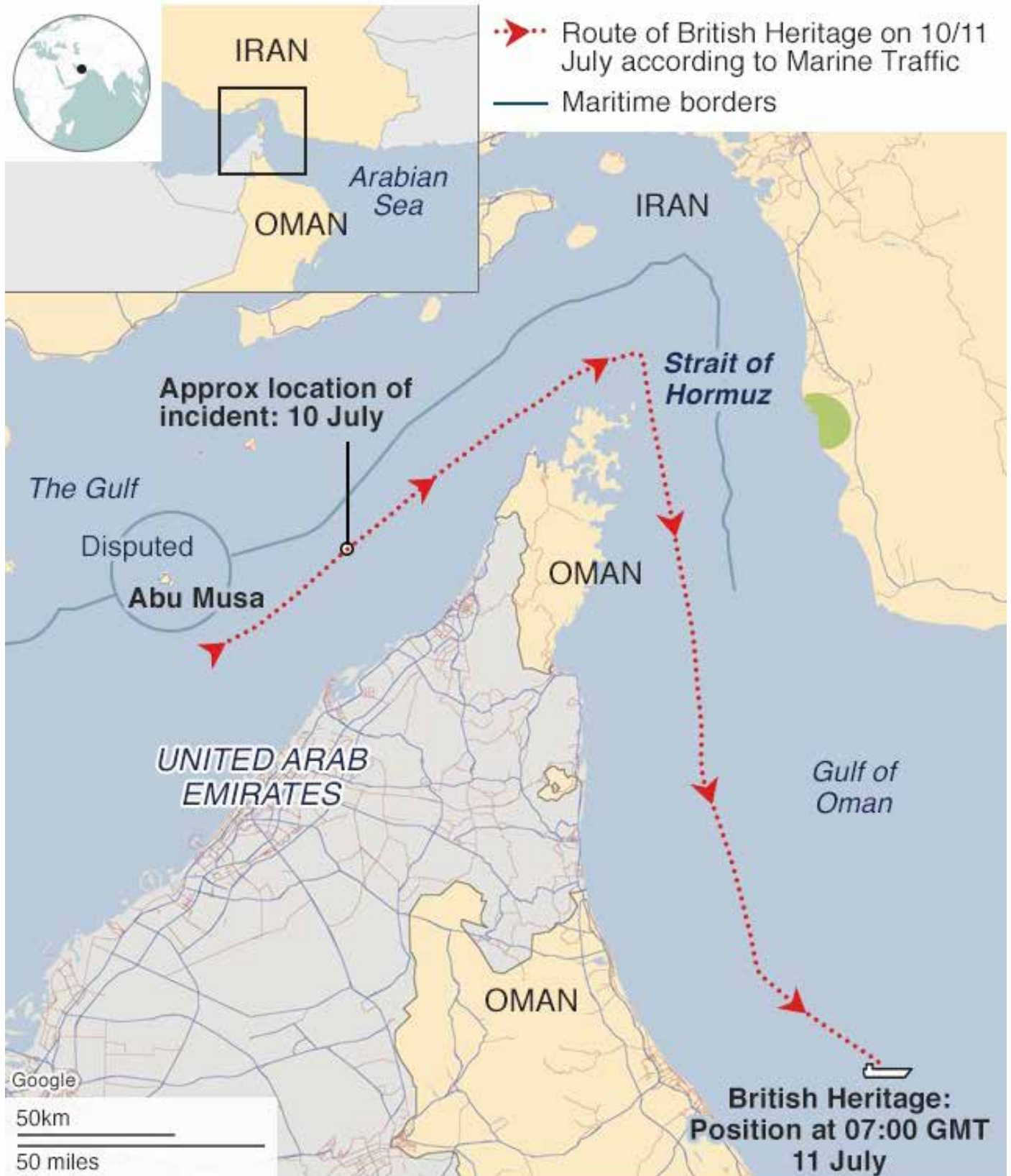
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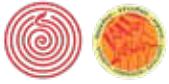


ABU MUSA, GREATER TUNB, AND LESSER TUNB ISLANDS

CONTEXT: Iran summoned China's ambassador to protest a China-UAE statement on the sovereignty of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb islands, which are also claimed by the UAE but have been held by Iran since 1971.

On 30 November 1971, the Imperial Iranian Navy seized Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs after British forces withdrew. Iran claimed these islands, while the Emirate of Ras al-Khaimah and the Emirate of Sharjah claimed the Tunbs and Abu Musa, respectively. After joining the UAE, these emirates passed the dispute to the UAE. Despite international attempts by the UAE, Iran has maintained control over the islands since 1971. The dispute remains unresolved as of 2022.





COLD LAVA

CONTEXT: A volcanic eruption at Mount Kanlaon in the Philippines led to rivers of cold lava, or lahar.

About Cold Lava:

Cold lava, or “lahar,” is a hazardous flow of volcanic material, debris, and water that descends rapidly from volcanoes, resembling a fast-moving landslide rather than molten lava.

This dense mixture forms when water interacts with

volcanic ash and debris on a volcano’s slopes, creating a river-like flow that can be more destructive than molten lava due to its speed and force.

The term “cold lava” is misleading, as it remains hot internally but appears and behaves like wet concrete. Driven by gravity and the volume of displaced material, lahars can travel far from the volcano’s summit, picking up additional debris and increasing in volume and destructive power.



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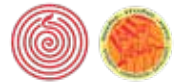


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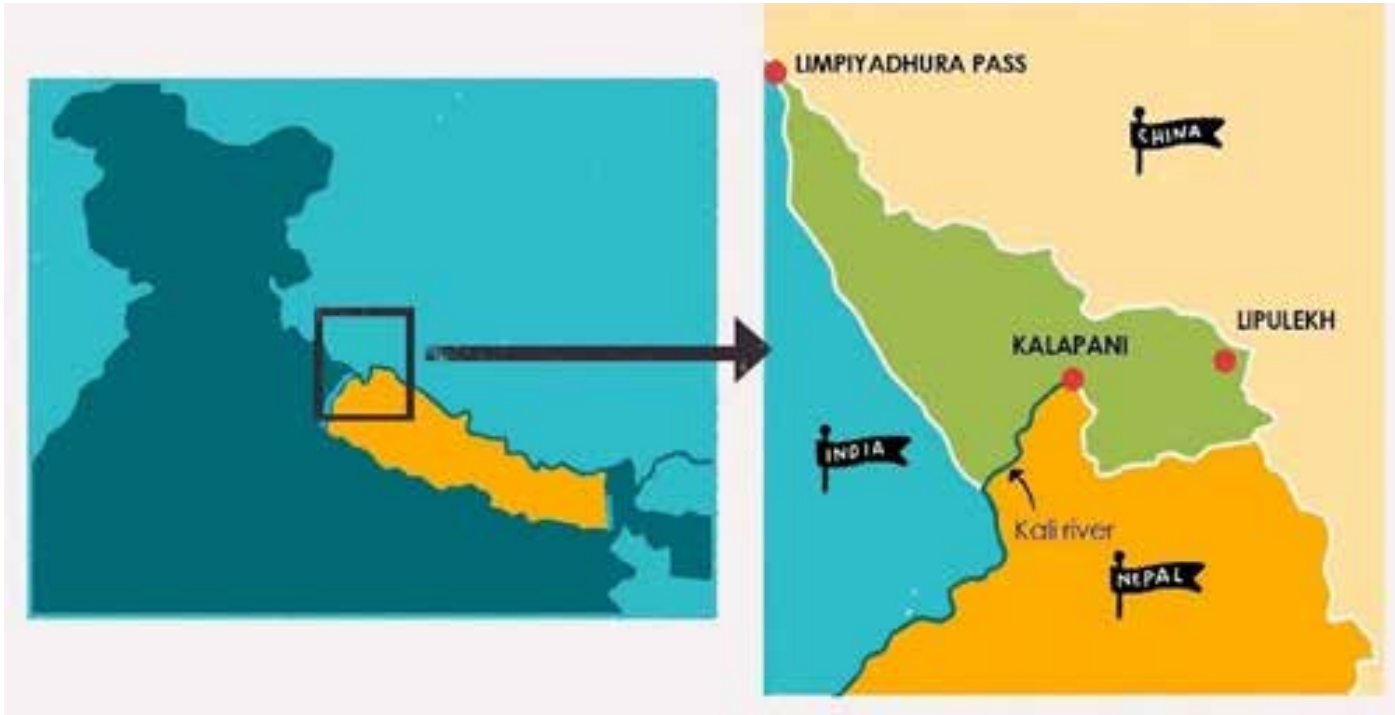
LIPULEKH PASS

CONTEXT: Indian traders, engaged in border trade through the Lipulekh pass since 1992, urge the government to resume trade with China. The route was closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2019, leaving goods worth Rs 15 lakh stranded in Tibet.

About Lipulekh Pass:

It is located near the India-China (Tibet)-Nepal tri-

junction in Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh district, is a crucial pass in the Kumaun region's Kali Valley. Historically, it has served as a vital trade route for traders, pilgrims, and travellers, facilitating cultural exchange for centuries. Importantly, it offers a shorter travel route for the Kailash Mansarovar Pilgrimage, saving considerable travel time.



CRETE ISLAND (GREECE)

CONTEXT: A 4,000-year-old stone structure from the Minoan civilization discovered on a Cretan hilltop is puzzling archaeologists and threatening the construction of a new airport near Kastelli, Crete Island (Greece)

Described by Greece's Culture Ministry as a "unique and extremely interesting find," this labyrinthine, 1,800-square-meter building resembles a huge car wheel from above and features eight-stepped stone walls.

ABOUT CRETE ISLAND

Crete is the largest island in Greece and the fifth largest in the Mediterranean Sea, situated in the southern part of the Aegean Sea. It is bordered by the Sea of Crete to the

north, the Libyan Sea to the south, the Myrtoan Sea to the west, and the Carpathian Sea to the east. The island features rugged mountains, with Mt. Ida (Psiloritis) being the highest point.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Crete has been inhabited since the Paleolithic Age, with the Minoan Civilization emerging around 2700-1420 BCE. After a major earthquake, the Mycenaeans took over, followed by various rulers including the Romans, Byzantines, Andalusians, Venetians, and Ottomans. Crete joined Greece after gaining independence from Ottoman rule.



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DEAD ZONE

CONTEXT: NOAA forecasts an above-average summer “dead zone” in the Gulf of Mexico.

A “dead zone” is an area in a body of water where the oxygen levels are so low that most marine life cannot survive. These zones are also known as hypoxic areas.

CAUSES:

Dead zones typically form as a result of nutrient pollution from human activities, such as:
Agricultural Runoff

Urban Runoff
Atmospheric Deposition

IMPACT:

MARINE LIFE: Fish, shrimp, and other marine organisms either die or leave the area due to lack of oxygen.

ECOSYSTEMS: The depletion of marine life can disrupt food chains and ecosystems.

ECONOMY: Fisheries and tourism can suffer due to the decline in marine populations and overall water quality.

MERCURY ISLAND

CONTEXT: The documentary “My Mercury” premiered at the 18th Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) for Documentary, Short Fiction, and Animation Films.

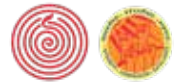
The film explores the life of her brother, Yves Chesselet, a conservationist on Mercury Island off the coast of Namibia. The 104-minute documentary portrays Yves’ efforts to reclaim the island for endangered seabirds and seals, emphasizing the psychological challenges and deep

bond between man and nature.

ABOUT MERCURY ISLAND:

Mercury Island is a small rocky island off The Diamond Coast, Namibia. Despite its small size, it is recognised by BirdLife International and other global conservation groups as an Important Bird Area (IBA) for its significant coastal seabird breeding.





NAMAQUALAND (AFRICA)

CONTEXT: Scientists recently discovered that termite mounds along the Buffels River in Namaqualand are the world's oldest inhabited, dating back 34,000 years.

WHAT IS NAMAQUALAND?

Namaqualand is a desert region in southwestern Africa, extending from the Karas region in Namibia to the Northern Cape province in South Africa. It stretches from

the Namib Desert in the west to the Kalahari Desert in the east. The northern part, known as Great Namaqualand, is in Namibia, while the southern part, called Little Namaqualand, is in South Africa. This arid area is known for its succulents and spectacular spring wildflower blooms following winter rains. Historically, the Nama people lived there, mining copper and, later, diamonds were discovered in the early 1900s.



“Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence.” - Robert Frost

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE





**CONTROLLER GENERAL OF ACCOUNTS
(CGA)**

**ARVIND KEJRIWAL INTERIM BAIL:
SUPREME COURT REJECTS 7-DAY
EXTENSION PLEA**

**SC QUASHES YSRCP'S PLEA AGAINST
RELAXATION OF POSTAL BALLOT
NORMS**

**NOW, ONTO EXIT POLLS: A LOOK BACK
AT HOW CLOSE THEY WERE IN 2009,
2014, 2019**

**WHAT IS THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON
SECURITY (CCS)?**

**"TO DO COMPLETE JUSTICE": SUPREME
COURT SAYS THAT ITS 'ARTICLE 142'
POWER IS AN EXCEPTION TO DOCTRINE
OF MERGER & RULE OF STARE DECISIS**

**NTA CHIEF MOVED OUT, GOVT SETS UP
PANEL UNDER ISRO EX-CHIEF TO PLAN
EXAM REFORMS**

**MATERNITY LEAVE FOR PARENTS OF
CHILD BORN THROUGH SURROGACY**

**DIVERGENT VIEWS EMERGE WITHIN
IAMAI ON PROPOSED DIGITAL
COMPETITION BILL**

**WILL THE AGNIPATH SCHEME BE
REVAMPED?**

**OPPOSITION'S LARGER DEMOGRAPHY,
LOP'S BIG RESPONSIBILITY**

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT





CONTROLLER GENERAL OF ACCOUNTS (CGA)

CONTEXT: The government's fiscal deficit for 2023-24 stood at 5.63 per cent of the GDP, marginally better than the 5.8 per cent estimated in the Union Budget, according to data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) recently.



BACKGROUND:

INDIA'S FY24 FISCAL DEFICIT: BETTER THAN EXPECTED

- India's fiscal deficit for 2023-24 came in at 5.63% of GDP, lower than the government's target of 5.8%.
- This is due to higher tax revenue (₹23.26 lakh crore) exceeding expectations and government spending (₹44.42 lakh crore) being slightly lower than planned.
- The government achieved 101.2% of its revised revenue target.
- This translates to a lower fiscal deficit of ₹16.53 lakh crore compared to the projected ₹17.34 lakh crore.

CONTROLLER GENERAL OF ACCOUNTS (CGA): KEY POINTS

- **Role:** Principal accounting advisor to the Government of India's Ministry of Finance (established in 1975).

Responsibilities:

- Manages a sound accounting system for the Union Government.
- Prepares and submits government financial statements.
- Controls government spending (exchequer control).
- Conducts internal audits.

Activities:

- Analyzes government finance (expenditure, revenue, borrowing etc.).
- Defines accounting principles for central and state governments.
- Oversees financial processes in central government ministries.
- Manages government banking and cash reconciliation with the central bank.
- Monitors corrective actions on recommendations from audit reports (PAC & CAG).

- **Additional Function:** Handles pension administration for central government employees.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (PAC) OF INDIA:

- **Function:** Audits government revenue and expenditure.
- **Purpose:** Ensures Parliament controls government spending (representing the people's will).
- **Composition:** Up to 22 members:
 - 15 elected from Lok Sabha (lower house)
 - Up to 7 elected from Rajya Sabha (upper house)

CONCLUSION: The Controller General of Accounts (CGA) plays a critical role in ensuring transparency and accountability in the Indian government's finances. By providing accurate data on fiscal deficits, the CGA empowers the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) to effectively audit government spending. This collaboration between the CGA and PAC safeguards public funds and strengthens Parliament's control over the executive branch, ultimately benefiting the citizens of India.

ARVIND KEJRIWAL INTERIM BAIL: SUPREME COURT REJECTS 7-DAY EXTENSION PLEA

CONTEXT: Recently the Chief Minister of Delhi appealed for bail extension on medical grounds as the interim period ends on 1st of June. Supreme Court rejects 7-day extension plea

INTERIM BAIL IN INDIA

What is Interim Bail?

- Temporary relief granted to an accused person before a regular or anticipatory bail hearing.
- Short-term release, typically for a specific period.
- Can be extended, but requires fulfilling court conditions.

Grounds for Granting Interim Bail

- **Established Case Law (Parminder Singh and Ors. v. The State of Punjab, Nov 2, 2001):**
 - Low flight risk (accused unlikely to flee).
 - Low risk of evidence tampering.
 - Custodial interrogation not necessary.
 - Delay in hearing for regular or anticipatory bail.
- **Common Grounds:**
 - Serious medical condition requiring specialized treatment.
 - Pressing humanitarian reasons (family responsibilities, elderly/ill dependents).

- Unreasonable investigation delays despite cooperation.
- **Related Case Laws**
 - Lal Kamendra Pratap Singh vs. State of U.P. & Ors (March 2009)
 - Sukhwant Singh vs. State of Punjab (May 2009)

ANTICIPATORY BAIL IN INDIA: PRE-ARREST PROTECTION

Anticipatory bail, a legal provision in India, allows individuals fearing arrest for a non-bailable offense to seek bail before being arrested. This pre-arrest protection is granted by the High Court or Sessions Court considering factors like:

- **Severity of accusation:** Nature and seriousness of the alleged crime.
- **Flight risk:** Likelihood of the accused fleeing justice.
- **Criminal history:** Past criminal record of the accused.
- **Evidence tampering:** Potential for influencing or destroying evidence.

If granted, anticipatory bail allows the person to be released on bail if arrested but imposes conditions like surrendering their passport or regular check-ins with the police. Remember, it's a discretionary power of the court, not a guaranteed right.



CONCLUSION: While the Supreme Court rejected the Chief Minister's request for a short extension, interim bail remains a valuable tool for individuals facing legal proceedings. Understanding the grounds for granting interim bail, like medical emergencies or unreasonable delays, empowers people to seek temporary release while their regular or anticipatory bail

applications are pending. Additionally, anticipatory bail offers pre-arrest protection for those fearing arrest for non-bailable offenses. However, it's crucial to remember that both interim and anticipatory bail are granted at the court's discretion, requiring a strong case and adherence to set conditions.

SC QUASHES YSRCP'S PLEA AGAINST RELAXATION OF POSTAL BALLOT NORMS

CONTEXT: The Supreme Court dismissed a YSR Congress Party petition against an Election Commission circular easing postal ballot norms in Andhra Pradesh. The YSRCP sought the Supreme Court's intervention after the State High Court rejected the plea, suggesting the party pursue an election petition as an alternative remedy.

POSTAL VOTING IN INDIA

Postal voting allows eligible voters to cast their votes via mail rather than in person at polling stations. This system ensures that certain groups of voters, who might otherwise be unable to visit polling stations, can still participate in elections.



Relevant Provisions of Election Law

- **S 20 RPA, 1950** – Definition of Service Voter and Special Voter
- **S 60 RPA, 1951** – Special procedure for voting by certain classes of persons
- **R 17, 18(a), 19, 20 & 21 of COER, 1961** – Persons entitled to vote by post.

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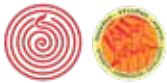
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COMPARISON OF POSTAL VOTING VS EVM

Feature	Postal Ballot	Electronic Voting Machine (EVM)
Definition	A method of voting where voters send their ballots via mail.	An electronic device used for recording and counting votes in polling stations.
Usage	Typically used by voters who are unable to vote in person, such as military personnel, overseas voters, and voters with disabilities..	Used by the general public in polling stations during elections.
Voting Process	Voters mark their choices on a paper ballot and mail it back to the election authority.	Voters press a button corresponding to their chosen candidate on the EVM.
Secrecy	Ensures voter secrecy through sealed envelopes and secure handling procedures.	Ensures voter secrecy through an electronic process where individual votes are not traceable.
Accessibility	Accessible to those who cannot physically attend the polling station.	Requires physical presence at the polling station.
Speed of Voting	Slower process due to mailing and handling times.	Quick and efficient, allowing many voters to cast their ballots in a short time.
Counting Process	Involves manual counting of paper ballots, which can be time-consuming and prone to human error.	Electronic counting, which is fast, accurate, and minimizes human error..
Security Concerns	Risk of tampering or loss of ballots during transit.	Secure against tampering due to robust design and checks; concerns exist about potential electronic hacking, though it is heavily safeguarded.
Cost	Costs associated with printing, mailing, and manual counting.	Higher initial cost for procurement of machines, but lower per-vote cost in the long run due to reuse.
Implementation	Requires logistical coordination for distribution and collection of ballots.	Requires setup and maintenance of electronic devices at polling stations.
Environmental Impact	use of paper and postal services has a higher environmental footprint.	Lower environmental impact as it reduces paper use.
Reliability	Highly reliable when proper procedures are followed, though prone to delays.	Generally reliable, with a low failure rate, machines.
Voter Verification	Verification through signatures and identification documents sent with the ballot.	Verification is done through voter ID and/or biometric systems at polling stations.

ELIGIBILITY FOR POSTAL VOTING IN INDIA

Eligible groups for postal voting in India include:

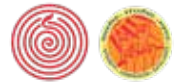
- 1. Service Voters:** Members of the armed forces, armed police force serving outside their home state, and government employees on election duty.
- 2. Persons with Disabilities (PwD):** Voters with disabilities who are unable to visit polling stations.
- 3. Senior Citizens:** Voters aged 85 years and above.
- 4. Electors under Preventive Detention:** Individuals under preventive detention.
- 5. Special Voters:** Such as employees of the government of India posted outside India and their spouses.



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Applications for postal ballots must be made within the prescribed time frame, and the ballots must be returned before the counting of votes begins.

PROCEDURE FOR ABSENTEE VOTING

- 1. Application:** Eligible voters must apply for absentee ballots within the prescribed time frame.
- 2. Verification:** The Election Commission verifies the applications and sends the absentee ballots to the approved voters.
- 3. Casting the Vote:** Voters mark their ballots and send them back to the designated election office before the counting of votes begins.

Absentee voting ensures that individuals who are unable to be physically present at their polling stations can still exercise their right to vote.

ELIGIBILITY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

During the Covid-19 pandemic, postal voting was extended to those infected or suspected of being infected with the coronavirus, beginning with the Bihar Assembly elections in 2020. Prior to these elections, the Election Commission had

recommended extending postal ballot eligibility to individuals above 65 years of age. Consequently, the Law Ministry amended the relevant regulations in June 2020. However, the Election Commission decided against extending this facility to those above 65, citing impracticality due to the significant number of additional polling parties required.

In August 2023, the Law Ministry amended the rule again, restoring the eligibility age for postal ballots to 80 years.

Later, in March 2024, the government raised the minimum age for senior citizens eligible for postal voting from 80 to 85 years.

CONCLUSION

The evolution of postal and absentee voting in India reflects ongoing efforts to enhance electoral accessibility, especially during unprecedented times like the Covid-19 pandemic. By continually adjusting eligibility criteria, the Election Commission and the government aim to balance inclusivity with practical implementation, ensuring that more citizens can exercise their right to vote.

NOW, ONTO EXIT POLLS: A LOOK BACK AT HOW CLOSE THEY WERE IN 2009, 2014, 2019

CONTEXT: Recently, Congress party refrained from participating in Lok Sabha Elections-related debates in exit polls 2024.



BACK GROUND:

WHAT IS EXIT POLLS

DEFINITION

- Exit Poll:** A post-election survey that shows how many seats a political party will likely win. It is not the same as the official election results.

RELEASE TIMING

- When Released:** They can be released by media houses only after the voting ends for an election.

METHODS OF CONDUCTING

- Conducting Method:** Taken immediately after voters

have cast their ballots.

LEGAL REGULATIONS

- Regulation:** Regulated by Section 126A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
- Stipulation:** No person shall conduct or publish exit polls via print or electronic media, or disseminate the results in any manner, during a period specified by the Election Commission of India.
- Penalty:** Any person who contravenes the provisions of Section 126A shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with a fine, or with both.

CONCLUSION

Exit polls play a significant role in providing an early indication of the likely outcome of an election, giving the public and political analysts an initial understanding of the electoral landscape. However, these polls are strictly regulated by the Representation of the People Act, 1951, to ensure the integrity of the electoral process and to prevent undue influence on voters. The Congress party's recent decision to refrain from participating in Lok Sabha Elections-related debates in exit polls highlights the ongoing debate about the impact and reliability of such polls in the political arena. This decision underscores the complexity and sensitivity surrounding the dissemination of exit poll data, emphasizing the need for careful adherence to legal guidelines to maintain the sanctity of democratic processes.





WHAT IS THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON SECURITY (CCS)?

CONTEXT: Prime Minister Modi was sworn in today, accompanied by 71 ministers in the new coalition government. Among them, 30 have been appointed as Cabinet Ministers, 5 hold independent charge, and 36 serve as Ministers of State.



THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON SECURITY (CCS): INDIA'S HIGHEST BODY FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) is the nerve center of India's national security apparatus. Chaired by the Prime Minister, this elite group acts as the final decision-making authority on critical issues that safeguard the nation.

CORE RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Strategic Leadership:** The CCS oversees all matters pertaining to India's security, encompassing both internal and external threats. This includes issues related to defense, border disputes, terrorism, and cyberwarfare.
- **Decision Making Powerhouse:** From formulating defense policies and allocating resources for the armed forces to approving crucial appointments in national security agencies, the CCS wields immense power. Their decisions have a direct impact on India's preparedness and ability to respond to security challenges.
- **National Security Think Tank:** The CCS serves as a forum for in-depth discussions and debates on matters of national security. Here, the Prime Minister and key cabinet ministers – Defense, Home Affairs, Finance, and External Affairs – brainstorm solutions and strategize to ensure India's well-being.
- **Foreign Affairs with Security Lens:** The committee doesn't operate in a silo. It closely examines foreign policy issues that could have security ramifications, including international agreements and collaborations. This ensures a holistic approach to safeguarding India's interests on the global stage.

BEYOND THE BASICS:

- **Secrecy and Swift Action:** The deliberations of the CCS are shrouded in secrecy, allowing for candid discussions and ensuring sensitive information remains confidential. This secrecy also enables swift and decisive action in times of crisis.
- **Adaptation and Evolution:** The security landscape constantly evolves. The CCS recognizes this and adapts its strategies accordingly, staying ahead of emerging threats.

- **National Security Advisor (NSA):** The National Security Advisor (NSA) plays a crucial role in assisting the CCS. The NSA provides strategic advice, coordinates between different security agencies, and ensures the implementation of decisions taken by the committee.

WHAT ARE CABINET COMMITTEES?

- Cabinet Committees are extra-constitutional, meaning, they are not mentioned in the Indian Constitution.
- They are partly designed to reduce the burden on the Union Cabinet by allowing smaller groups of ministers to make decisions on specific policy areas.
- They are constituted or reconstituted when a new government takes over or the Cabinet undergoes a reshuffle.

- There are a total of 8 cabinet committees:

- Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs.
- Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs.
- Cabinet Committee on Investment and Growth.
- Cabinet Committee on Security.
- Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs.
- Cabinet Committee on Employment and Skill Development.
- Cabinet Committee on Accommodation.
- Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.

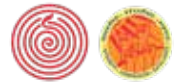
WHY DO CABINET COMMITTEES EXIST?

Cabinet committees exist in India for several reasons:

- **Division of Labor:** The Indian cabinet can be quite large, with numerous ministers overseeing diverse portfolios. Cabinet committees streamline decision-making by bringing together ministers with relevant expertise for specific issues. This allows for a deeper dive into complex topics and faster action compared to involving the entire cabinet.
- **Efficiency and Expertise:** Committees allow for focused discussions with ministers who have the most knowledge and experience in a particular area. This leads to more informed and efficient decision-making on critical matters.
- **Coordination:** Cabinet committees foster better coordination between different ministries. Issues often involve overlapping jurisdictions, and committees ensure all relevant perspectives are considered before a decision is made.
- **Reduced Workload:** By delegating specific tasks and decision-making to committees, the overall workload on the full cabinet is lessened. This allows them to focus on broader policy matters and ensure smooth government functioning.
- **Political Considerations:** In a coalition government, cabinet committees can be a way to accommodate coalition partners and ensure their representation in key decision-making processes.

ADDITIONAL POINTS

- **Not Mandatory:** The existence and composition of cabinet committees are not mandated by the Indian Constitution. The Prime Minister has the authority to establish, restructure, or dissolve committees as needed.
- **Flexibility:** This flexibility allows the government to



adapt its decision-making structure to address current challenges and priorities.

- **Criticism:** Some critics argue that cabinet committees can become bureaucratic and slow down decision-making. Additionally, secrecy surrounding committee deliberations can raise concerns about transparency and accountability.

Cabinet committees play a crucial role in India's governance by facilitating efficient and informed decision-making on

critical national issues.

CONCLUSION: With Prime Minister Modi forming a new government, the CCS takes center stage. This elite group will be instrumental in ensuring a smooth security transition and tackling the ever-evolving challenges India faces. The CCS's ability to bring together key ministerial expertise, foster strategic discussions, and make swift decisions is vital for safeguarding the nation's security interests.

“TO DO COMPLETE JUSTICE”: SUPREME COURT SAYS THAT ITS ‘ARTICLE 142’ POWER IS AN EXCEPTION TO DOCTRINE OF MERGER & RULE OF STARE DECISIS

CONTEXT: The Supreme Court recently observed that the extraordinary powers under Article 142 of the Constitution of India is an exception to the doctrine of merger and the rule of stare decisis to do complete justice between the parties.



CONTEXT: The Court, relying on the above principle, applied the test laid down in the landmark judgment of the Constitution Bench of 5 Judges in *Indore Development Authority v. Manoharlal and others* (2020 SC) to the batches of appeals filed by the landowners and gave directions to eight groups of appeals/petitions/applications according to their facts and circumstances, to do complete justice between the parties and public at large.

The verdict was given by the Supreme Court Bench Consisting of Justice Surya Kant, Dipankar Datta and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan.

DOCTRINE OF MERGER:

- **Maintains order in courts:** Ensures proper functioning of

courts and tribunals by avoiding conflicting rulings.

- **One prevailing order:** Only one final order can exist for a specific issue at a time.
- **Appeals supersede lower courts:** Order from a higher court absorbs the lower court's order.
- **Clarifies enforcement:** Makes it clear which order is to be enforced in cases with multiple rulings.
- **Judicial practice, not law:** Not a formal law, but a principle for judges to follow.

DOCTRINE OF STARE DECISIS:

- **Follows past decisions:** Courts consider previous rulings on similar legal issues.
- **Precedent as guidance:** Past decisions act as a reference point for new cases.
- **Creating legal principles:** Court decisions establish legal rules for future cases.
- **Precedents as authority:** Past decisions set an example for judges in similar situations.
- **Obligation to consider:** Judges must consider relevant precedents when making decisions.

WHAT IS ARTICLE 142 OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION?

It deals with the Supreme Court's power to exercise its jurisdiction and pass an order for doing complete justice in any cause or matter pending before it. It provides the apex court with a special and extraordinary power and is meant to provide justice to litigants who have suffered traversed illegality or injustice in the course of legal proceedings.

CONCLUSION: Supreme Court ruled its power under Article 142 can override Doctrine of Merger and Stare Decisis to deliver complete justice. This extraordinary power allows the Court to consider past cases but not be bound by them, ensuring a fair outcome for all parties involved.



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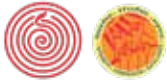
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NTA CHIEF MOVED OUT, GOVT SETS UP PANEL UNDER ISRO EX-CHIEF TO PLAN EXAM REFORMS

CONTEXT: NTA chief removed & NEET-UG probed by CBI after irregularities, impacting NEET PG & prompting a review committee.



WHY IN NEWS?

- » Following irregularities in the NEET-UG exam, the National Testing Agency (NTA) chief, Subodh Kumar Singh, has been removed from his position.
- » This comes amidst the announcement of an expert committee to review the NTA and suggest changes to exam procedures.
- » The NEET PG exam, originally scheduled for June 23rd, has also been postponed due to the ongoing investigation. This impacts nearly 200,000 medical students.
- » The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) will now probe the alleged irregularities in NEET-UG, expanding their investigation which already covers the UGC-NET paper leak.

WHAT IS NEET EXAM?

The NEET exam (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test) in India has a background marked by attempts to establish a single, standardized entrance exam for all medical colleges across the country. Here's a quick breakdown:

- Previously, there were separate entrance exams conducted by various medical colleges and universities. This led to inconsistencies and disparities in the selection process.
- To streamline the process and ensure fairness, the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) was introduced in 2013.
- NEET is a single entrance exam for admission to undergraduate medical programs (MBBS) and dental programs (BDS) in all government and private medical colleges in India (except for a few state reservations).
- Since its introduction, NEET has faced controversies and challenges, including allegations of question paper leaks, concerns about accessibility for students from rural areas, and the stress it places on students due to high stakes.

Despite the controversies, NEET remains the primary entrance exam for medical programs in India, aiming to bring more uniformity and transparency to the selection process.

WHAT IS NATIONAL TESTING AGENCY?



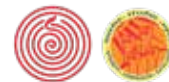
- The NTA is an autonomous organization in India responsible for conducting entrance examinations for higher educational institutions.
- The NTA was established in November 2017 by the Ministry of Education to standardize and streamline the conduct of entrance exams across the country.
- **Objective:** To improve the quality and transparency of entrance examinations, ensuring fairness and efficiency in the assessment process.
- **Functions:**
 - **Conducting Exams:** The NTA conducts various national-level entrance examinations for admission to undergraduate and postgraduate programs.
 - **Developing Question Papers:** The NTA is responsible for developing high-quality question papers.
 - **Result Processing:** The NTA processes examination results efficiently, ensuring timely release of scores and ranks.
- **Headquarters: New Delhi**
- Overall, the National Testing Agency plays a crucial role in India's education system by providing a reliable, transparent, and efficient framework for conducting entrance examinations.

THE NEET-UG RESULTS CONTROVERSY

- On June 4, the National Testing Agency (NTA) released the results for the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test, Undergraduate (NEET UG) 2024 examination.
- Approximately 2.4 million candidates participated in the NEET UG test held on May 5 across 571 cities, including 14 centers outside India.
- The exam sought to fill the 1,08,940 available MBBS seats distributed among more than 700 medical institutions nationwide.

ALLEGATIONS:

- Post evaluation, there have been complaints about the unusually high number of students (67) who hit the perfect score of 720/720.
- Also, there are complaints about students who scored "statistically impossible" marks, while some cases of cheating by proxy were also reported.
- Other cases pertaining to the question paper leak are still to be heard by the Supreme Court.
- These charges led to nationwide protests from students and political parties.
- Both groups are demanding a fair investigation and a fresh NEET exam, citing concerns about a question paper leak



that may have given some students an unfair advantage.

- Experts and students argue that the integrity of NEET, designed to regulate medical admissions and ensure quality, was compromised by these reported violations.
- The Supreme Court, subsequently, declared the NEET-UG examination as void and asked the Government to form a committee.

NEWS IN BRIEF

In a swift series of actions, the Indian government has taken decisive steps to address concerns about irregularities in national entrance exams.



- **Leadership Change at Testing Agency:** Following the announcement of an expert committee to review the National Testing Agency (NTA), the government removed Subodh Kumar Singh from his position as NTA chief. He has been placed on a mandatory leave of absence while the Department of Personnel and Training conducts further inquiries.
- **NEET PG Exam Postponed:** To ensure a fair selection process, the Ministry of Health has postponed the NEET PG exam, impacting nearly 200,000 medical students seeking admission to postgraduate programs.
- **CBI Investigation Expands:** The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), already probing the UGC-NET paper leak, will now also investigate alleged irregularities in the

recently conducted NEET-UG exam.

- **CSIR-UGC NET Exam Also Delayed:** Citing similar concerns about exam integrity, the Ministry of Education has postponed the CSIR-UGC NET exam as well.

These actions demonstrate the government's commitment to upholding the integrity of entrance exams and ensuring a fair and transparent selection process for students pursuing higher education in India.

EXPERT COMMITTEE TO RECOMMEND CHANGES IN NTA'S FUNCTIONING

- An expert committee, chaired by former ISRO chairman K Radhakrishnan, has been formed to recommend exam reforms and data security protocols, and to review NTA's structure and functioning.
- The committee aims to improve the examination process, prevent malpractice, and strengthen NTA's protocols and structure.
- The committee, including prominent academics and experts, has two months to submit its recommendations.

TWO IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

1. **UGC NET Exam:** It explains the purpose of the UGC NET (University Grants Commission National Eligibility Test) exam. This test determines eligibility for Indian nationals to become Assistant Professors or qualify for Junior Research Fellowships and Assistant Professorships at Indian universities and colleges.
2. **Establishment of UGC:** The passage also mentions the establishment date of the University Grants Commission (UGC). Established on December 28th, 1953, the UGC became a statutory government body in 1956. Its role is to ensure quality standards in teaching, examinations, and research within Indian universities.

CONCLUSION: This controversy highlights concerns about irregularities in Indian entrance exams. The government's response includes leadership changes, investigations, and a committee to propose reforms for a fairer and more secure testing system.

MATERNITY LEAVE FOR PARENTS OF CHILD BORN THROUGH SURROGACY

CONTEXT: In a move that recognizes changing family structures, India's government recently updated its leave policies for civil servants. The Central Civil Services (Leave) Rules(1972) now include maternity and paternity leave for parents welcoming children through surrogacy, ensuring equal benefits for all families.

SURROGACY LEAVE FOR INDIAN CIVIL SERVANTS

Expanded Parental Leave: The Central Civil Services (Leave) Rules have been amended to provide government employees with leave options for children born through surrogacy.

- **Maternity Leave:** Female government employees can now take 180 days of maternity leave after welcoming a child via surrogacy, provided they have less than two surviving children.
- **Paternity Leave:** Male government employees are eligible for 15 days of paternity leave upon the birth of a child through surrogacy. This leave must be taken within six months of delivery and applies to fathers with less than two surviving children.

- **Child Care Leave:** Commissioning mothers (women intending to raise the child) with less than two surviving children remain eligible for existing child care leave policies. These existing rules allow government employees to accumulate up to 730 days of child care leave throughout their service.

Key Terms:

- **Surrogate Mother:** The woman who carries and delivers the child for the intending parents.
- **Commissioning Father:** The biological or adoptive father who intends to raise the child born through surrogacy.

CHALLENGES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SURROGACY LEAVE FOR INDIAN CIVIL SERVANTS

- ◆ **Unequal Treatment Addressed:** The previous lack of surrogacy leave policies created an unfair gap for women government employees. Commissioning mothers were left without crucial maternity leave support, hindering the crucial bonding period with their new child.

- ◆ **Implementation Hurdles:** Ensuring smooth



implementation of the new regulations across all government departments could be a challenge. Administrative hurdles may arise, and awareness campaigns or training might be necessary for a seamless transition.

- ◇ **Embracing Diverse Families:** This amendment signifies a progressive step toward acknowledging and supporting non-traditional family structures, including those formed through surrogacy. It ensures that children born through surrogacy receive equal care and bonding time with their parents, fostering a nurturing environment.
- ◇ **Promoting Shared Responsibility:** The inclusion of paternity leave for commissioning fathers breaks down traditional gender roles by encouraging shared parental responsibility. This move highlights that childcare is not solely a mother's duty, but a collaborative effort where fathers are actively involved in their child's upbringing.

- ◇ **Aligning with Progress:** These amendments represent a significant step forward in aligning labor laws with evolving societal norms. The policy reflects a broader acceptance of assisted reproductive technologies and the rights of individuals who choose these methods to build their families.

CONCLUSION: This update to India's civil service leave policies represents a landmark shift towards inclusivity and support for modern families. By offering equal leave benefits for surrogacy and promoting shared parental responsibility, the government acknowledges the changing landscape of parenthood and fosters a more equitable work environment for its employees. While implementation challenges may exist, this progressive step paves the way for a future where all families, regardless of their composition, are supported and valued.

DIVERGENT VIEWS EMERGE WITHIN IAMAI ON PROPOSED DIGITAL COMPETITION BILL

CONTEXT: Dissenting from the majority view, four members of the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) urged the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) to expedite the implementation of regulations aimed at curbing anti-competitive practices within the digital marketplace.



BACKGROUND:

- ◇ In May 2024, the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) voiced concerns about the draft Digital Competition Bill 2024. In their submission, they argued against the necessity for ex-ante regulations in digital markets.
- ◇ IAMAI, a key industry body representing numerous digital entities, including major tech firms, highlighted potential issues with pre-emptive regulatory measures.

DIGITAL COMPETITION BILL, 2024

About the Bill

- ◇ The Digital Competition Bill, proposed in March 2024, aims to regulate large digital enterprises, including news aggregators, to ensure fair competition and a level playing field in the digital space.
- ◇ The bill seeks to prevent big tech companies, such as Google, Facebook, and Amazon, from favouring their own services or leveraging data from one business to benefit another.
- ◇ It includes provisions to establish presumptive norms to curb anti-competitive practices before they occur and

promises to impose substantial penalties, potentially amounting to billions of dollars, for violations.

Nodal Ministry The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) is responsible for handling the draft of the bill.

Need for the Bill

- ◇ Currently, India follows an ex post antitrust framework under the Competition Act, 2002.
- ◇ This approach, which regulates market abuse after it occurs, has been criticized for delays that allow market dynamics to shift, making it difficult for smaller competitors to thrive.
- ◇ Given the complexities of digital markets, regulating abuse after it occurs is not optimal.
- ◇ A forward-looking, preventive, and presumptive law (an ex-ante framework) is necessary to foresee potential antitrust issues and establish pre-determined no-go areas.

Big Tech Companies' History of Anti-Competitive Practices

Big tech companies have a history of engaging in anti-competitive practices.

For instance, in 2023, Google was fined Rs 1.337 crore by the Competition Commission of India (CCI) for anti-competitive conduct in the Android ecosystem.

High Market Barriers for New Entrants

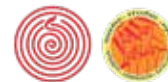
Many analysts believe that innovation is largely confined to a few major tech companies, mostly from the US, due to high market barriers for new entrants in the online market.

Once a company secures a significant market share, its product often becomes the default way to access a particular service, making it increasingly difficult for rivals to challenge their dominance.

KEY PROPOSALS OF THE DRAFT DIGITAL COMPETITION BILL 2024

1. List of Core Digital Services (CDS)

- Online search engines
- Online social networking services
- Video-sharing platform services
- Interpersonal communications services
- Operating systems



- o Web browsers
- o Cloud services
- o Advertising services
- o Online intermediation services (e.g., web-hosting, service providers, payment sites, auction sites, app stores, e-commerce marketplaces, and aggregators)

2. Significant Entities

- o Designation of **Systemically Significant Digital Enterprises (SSDEs)**
 - SSDEs are enterprises providing core digital services in India with significant presence and financial strength.

3. Parameters for SSDE Designation

- o Engagement in a CDS
- o Financial Strength Test:
 - Turnover in India \geq Rs 4,000 crore in the last 3 financial years, or
 - Global turnover \geq \$30 billion
- o Spread Test (User Base Test):
 - Gross merchandise value in India \geq Rs 16,000 crore, or
 - ◊ Global market capitalization \geq \$75 billion
 - ◊ Core digital service should have:
 - ◊ \geq 1 crore end users, or
 - ◊ \geq 10,000 business users
- o Discretionary SSDE Designation:
 - Enterprises can still be designated as SSDEs if the CCI deems they have significant presence in any core digital service.

4. Obligations Imposed on SSDEs

- o Prohibition on:
 - ◊ Self-preferencing
 - ◊ Anti-steering

- ◊ Restricting third-party applications
- o Violations can result in fines up to 10% of global turnover.

5. Associate Digital Enterprises (ADEs)

- o Designation of ADEs to understand the data-sharing roles within major technology groups.
- o ADEs have similar obligations as SSDEs, depending on their involvement with core digital services.
- o Examples:
 - ◊ Google Maps as an associate entity due to its integration with Google Search.
 - ◊ YouTube's status depending on data shared with Google Search impacting video recommendations.

EX-ANTE REGULATIONS

Ex-ante regulations are proactive rules designed to prevent anti-competitive practices before they occur. These regulations set predetermined guidelines and restrictions for companies to ensure fair competition in the market, rather than addressing issues after they have already happened.

INTERNET AND MOBILE ASSOCIATION OF INDIA (IAMAI)

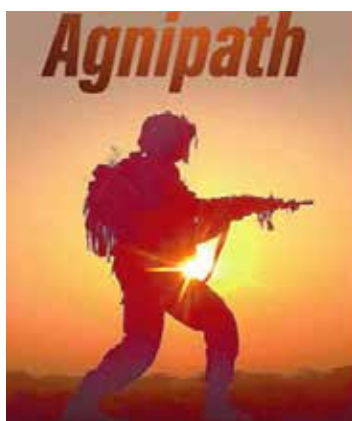
The Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) is a not-for-profit industry body that represents the digital services and mobile content sectors in India. Established in 2004, IAMAI works to expand and enhance the online and mobile value-added services sectors.

CONCLUSION

The draft Digital Competition Bill, 2024 aims to regulate large digital enterprises to ensure fair competition and prevent anti-competitive practices. While the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) has expressed concerns about ex-ante regulations, dissenting voices within IAMAI advocate for their swift implementation. This legislative effort underscores the necessity for a proactive regulatory framework to address the complexities of digital markets and promote a level playing field.

WILL THE AGNIPATH SCHEME BE REVAMPED?

CONTEXT: The Agnipath scheme, introduced in June 2022 for recruiting soldiers, sailors, and airmen on a temporary basis with potential for permanent selection, faces scrutiny amid concerns over personnel shortages and operational effectiveness, prompting discussions among NDA allies and stakeholders on potential revisions and enhancements.



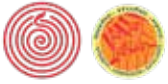
THE GIST

- The Agnipath scheme for recruitment of soldiers, sailors and airmen into the three services was announced on June 14, 2022 doing away with the earlier process of permanent recruitment.

- One of the biggest concerns for the armed forces, especially the Army, is the shortage of personnel in the 'below the officer's rank' cadres.
- As reported by The Hindu earlier, as the Agnipath scheme completes two years of implementation, the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) in the Defence Ministry headed by the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) has sought feedback from the forces on the scheme.

OVERVIEW OF AGNIPATH SCHEME AND CURRENT ISSUES

- **Introduction of Agnipath Scheme (June 14, 2022)**
 - o Replaces permanent recruitment with a temporary model.
 - o Agniveers recruited for four years, with up to 25% potentially selected for permanent roles.
 - o Intake capped at 1.75 lakh until 2026; Army recruits 40,000/year, Navy and Air Force 3,000 each.
 - o Benefits include educational and skill certifications; no pension post-service.
 - o Defence Minister hails it as transformative for reducing armed forces' average age.



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AGNIPATH

Scheme

Key Features

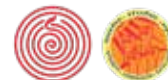
- Opportunity to serve the Nation for four years as Agniveers
- Enrolment of all soldiers/ sailors/ airmen in the Armed Forces through Agnipath scheme
- Pan India merit based recruitment
- Attractive monthly emoluments and handsome "Seva Nidhi" package
- 100% opportunity to apply for enrolment in permanent cadre
- Based on merit and organisational requirement, 25% Agniveers to be selected through a central, transparent, rigorous system after four years

Eligibility

- Age limit for applicants from 17.5 to 21 years

Recruitment

- Candidates will be enrolled for a duration of four years including training period
- No change in recruitment process



Concerns Raised by Stakeholders

- **Personnel Shortage**
- o Significant deficit in 'below officer's rank' cadres exacerbated by COVID-19 hiatus.
- o Annual shortfall persists despite recruitment efforts; conversion rate concerns.
- **Political and Public Reaction**
- o Scheme becomes contentious in election campaigns, sparking protests and demands for revision or scrapping.
- o JD(U) and LJP voice dissent, pushing for comprehensive review amid ongoing NDA discussions.

Current Status and Proposed Revisions

- **Feedback and Review Process**
- o Department of Military Affairs (DMA) solicits armed forces' feedback after two years of implementation.

- o Recommendations include increasing permanent recruitment to 50% and raising technical entry age limit to 23 years.
- o Navy and Air Force feedback compiled; Army compilation ongoing, delaying DMA's final recommendation to Defence Ministry.

ANALYSIS

The Agnipath scheme, designed to address personnel shortages and lower the armed forces' age profile, faces substantial scrutiny and criticism, particularly regarding its operational impact and conversion rates. Political and stakeholder pressures are influencing ongoing discussions within the NDA, potentially leading to revisions aimed at enhancing effectiveness and addressing recruitment challenges.

OPPOSITION'S LARGER DEMOGRAPHY, LOP'S BIG RESPONSIBILITY

CONTEXT: The 2024 general election marked a historic shift with the largest Opposition in Lok Sabha history, prompting renewed debate on the Leader of the Opposition's role amidst statutory changes and the potential for heightened parliamentary scrutiny and debate dynamics.



THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE 18TH LOK SABHA

Challenges and Opportunities

- **Landmark Election:** The 2024 general election resulted in the largest Opposition ever in the Lok Sabha, with over 234 seats.
- **Leader of the Opposition (LoP):** This position is crucial and comes with recognition under the Salary and Allowances of Leaders of Opposition in Parliament Act, 1977.

Requirements for LoP

- **Party Recognition:** The leading Opposition party must have at least 10% of the seats in the Lok Sabha (as per Speaker's direction).
- **Numerical Strength:** The party should be the largest one in opposition to the government.

10th Schedule Impact

- This Schedule recognizes all political parties in the Houses, regardless of member count, making the Speaker's categorization (party/group) irrelevant.
- The Leaders of Opposition Act should be updated to reflect this change and allow the LoP position for the largest Opposition party irrespective of the 10% threshold.

Westminster System Influence

- The LoP is seen as the Prime Minister-in-waiting, forming a "shadow cabinet" to scrutinize government policies and

propose alternatives.

- While India has adopted aspects of the Westminster system, the practice of a shadow cabinet doesn't exist here.

DEBATE OVER NUMERICAL STRENGTH

Former Lok Sabha Secretary General PDT Achary's Perspective:

- The law mandates the Speaker to recognize the leader of the numerically largest opposition party as the Leader of the Opposition.
- No rule requires a party to have at least 10% of the House's members to recognize someone as the Leader of the Opposition.

Historical Context:

- In 1984, despite having 415 members, the Congress denied the TDP (with 30 MPs) the post of Leader of the Opposition based on this unwritten rule.
- Similar instances occurred with the BJP in 2014 and 2019.

Salary and Sumpuary Allowances:

- The Leader of the Opposition is entitled to receive a salary and allowances as specified in the Salary, Allowances, and Pension of Members of Parliament Act, 1954.

Challenges of a Multi-Party Opposition

- The fragmented nature of the Opposition with diverse ideologies makes the LoP's role difficult.
- The lack of power compared to the ruling party further complicates matters.

A Sea Change in 2024

- The strong presence of the Opposition (over 234 members) creates a more balanced Lok Sabha.
- This can influence various aspects of the House's functioning, including debates, questions, and committee referrals.

The LoP's Responsibilities

- Unifying the Opposition and presenting their views effectively.
- Informing the nation about government failures truthfully and responsibly.
- Leading debates and interventions in the House.
- Demanding the Prime Minister's presence for crucial issues.



Powers of the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the House

Order of Precedence:

- The LoP in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha rank at No. 7.
- Shares precedence with:
 - o Union Cabinet Ministers
 - o National Security Advisor
 - o Principal Secretary to the PM
 - o Vice-Chairperson of NITI Aayog
 - o Former PMs
 - o Chief Ministers

Sitting Position in the House:

- Sits in the front row to the left of the Chair.
- Enjoys privileges on ceremonial occasions, such as escorting the Speaker-elect to the rostrum.
- Entitled to a front-row seat during the President's Address to both Houses of Parliament.

Main Duty of the LoP:

- Serves as the voice of the opposition in the House.
- Considered a shadow Prime Minister with a shadow Cabinet (British System), ready to take over if the Government resigns or is defeated.
- Operates on the principle of "mutual forbearance," allowing for disagreement while enabling the PM to govern.
- Plays a proactive role in facilitating the smooth functioning of House business, akin to the Government's role.

Practical Role and Responsibilities:

- Represents the opposition in high-powered committees headed by the PM for appointments to key posts, such as:
 - o Director of CBI
 - o Central Vigilance Commissioner and Chief Information Commissioner
 - o Chairperson and Members of the National Human Rights Commission
 - o Lokpal
- Member of crucial committees, including:
 - o Public Accounts Committee
 - o Committee on Public Undertakings
 - o Committee on Estimates
 - o Various Joint Parliamentary Committees

Learning from the Past

- Leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru set healthy traditions of open communication and presence during debates.
- The new generation of parliamentarians can learn from these past practices.
- Normalizing parliamentary functioning and fostering tolerance for dissent are key.

CONCLUSION

The 2024 election presents a unique opportunity for the LoP to strengthen democracy through responsible opposition and communication with the ruling party. By learning from past traditions and adapting to the current scenario, the LoP can play a vital role in a more balanced and effective Lok Sabha.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT

CONTEXT: President Droupadi Murmu addressed the joint session of Parliament, discussing the test paper leak cases, higher voter turnout in Kashmir, EVM concerns, India's agriculture, and the forthcoming budget after the 18th Lok Sabha's constitution.



PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT

Special Occasions for Address

- **Article 87** provides two special occasions for the President to address a joint sitting:
 - o Opening session of a new legislature after a general election.
 - o First sitting of Parliament each year.

Purpose of the Address

- **Inform Parliament:** The President informs Parliament of the causes of its summons.
- **Highlight Government Priorities:** The speech outlines the government's policy priorities and plans for the upcoming year.
- **Framework of Agenda:** Provides a broad framework of

the government's agenda and direction.

Additional Presidential Rights

- **Right to Address:** The President can address any one or both Houses together.
- **Sending Messages:** The President may send messages to either House regarding a Bill or otherwise.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS - VISION FOR A DEVELOPED INDIA

Upcoming Union Budget: Historic Steps

- The President announced that the upcoming Union Budget will introduce many historic steps.
- Significant economic and social decisions will be made to accelerate the country's development.

Accelerated Reforms

- The government is committed to accelerating reforms to meet the aspirations of the Indian people for rapid development.

Reference to Emergency and Constitutional Resilience

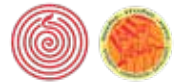
- The President recalled the Emergency imposed in June 1975 as a major direct attack on the Constitution.
- She praised the resilience of the Indian Constitution in withstanding numerous challenges over the decades.

Article 370 and Jammu & Kashmir

- The Constitution has fully come into force in Jammu and Kashmir following the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019.

High Voter Turnout in Jammu & Kashmir

- Unprecedented voter turnout in Jammu and Kashmir during the Lok Sabha elections was highlighted.
- This turnout is seen as a significant response to internal and external propaganda about the region.



Election Mandate: Trust in Governance

- The 2024 election is viewed as a mandate of trust in the government's policy, intention, dedication, and decisions.
- Key areas of trust include strong governance, good governance, stability, continuity, honesty, hard work, security, prosperity, and the resolve to become a "Viksit Bharat" (developed India).

Defence of EVMs and Electoral Integrity

- The use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) was defended amidst Opposition criticism.
- The Election Commission was praised for the successful conduct of the elections.
- The importance of preserving trust in democratic institutions and the electoral process was underscored.

Commitment to Fair Examinations

- Addressing the issue of exam paper leaks, the President assured fair investigations and strict punishment for culprits.
- The government's dedication to providing transparent and probity-driven opportunities for the youth was emphasized.

Call to Action Against Misinformation

- The President warned against disruptive forces aiming to weaken democracy through misinformation and rumor-mongering.
- She called for collective efforts to counter these threats.

Appeal for Parliamentary Cooperation

- Parliamentary disruptions were disapproved of by the President.
- She stressed the need for smooth parliamentary functioning to maintain public confidence in the government and the system.
- Emphasized the importance of prioritizing public interest through healthy deliberations and far-reaching decisions.



WHY DO INDIAN PRESIDENTS ADDRESS THE JOINT SITTING OF PARLIAMENT AFTER A GENERAL ELECTION

Indian Presidents address the joint sitting of Parliament after a general election for several key reasons:

1. **Constitutional Requirement:** Article 87 of the Indian Constitution mandates that the President address a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament at the beginning of the first session after each general election and at the

first session of each year.

2. **Government's Policy and Legislative Agenda:** The President's address outlines the government's policy priorities and legislative agenda for the upcoming year. This provides Parliament with a broad framework of the government's plans and direction.
3. **Summons of Parliament:** The President's speech informs members of Parliament about the reasons for its summons, which traditionally includes the government's achievements, goals, and major policy initiatives.
4. **Setting the Legislative Tone:** The address sets the tone for the legislative business of the session, offering guidance on the government's focus areas and the issues that Parliament will likely prioritize.
5. **Promoting Transparency and Accountability:** By publicly outlining the government's agenda, the President's address promotes transparency and accountability, allowing the public and opposition to understand and scrutinize the government's plans.

Similar conventions exist in other parliamentary democracies where the head of state addresses the parliament after general elections or at the opening of a new parliamentary session. Here are a few examples:

1. **United Kingdom:** The Queen's Speech is delivered by the reigning monarch at the State Opening of Parliament, which typically occurs once a year. This speech outlines the government's agenda for the upcoming parliamentary session, including proposed policies and legislation.
2. **Canada:** The Governor General, as the representative of the monarch, delivers the Speech from the Throne at the opening of each new session of Parliament. This speech outlines the government's goals and priorities.
3. **Australia:** The Governor-General delivers the Speech from the Throne at the opening of each new session of Parliament, detailing the government's proposed policies and legislative agenda.
4. **New Zealand:** The Governor-General delivers the Speech from the Throne at the State Opening of Parliament, which sets out the government's intentions and planned legislation.
5. **Japan:** The Emperor of Japan delivers the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the Diet's sessions, outlining the government's legislative agenda.

These addresses serve to inform legislators and the public about the government's priorities and proposed actions for the upcoming term or session, similar to the President's address in India.

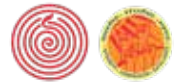
CONCLUSION: The tradition of the Indian President addressing Parliament after a general election serves to set the legislative agenda, promote transparency, and foster parliamentary cooperation. Similar practices in other parliamentary democracies underscore the importance of aligning government priorities with legislative actions at the outset of each new term or session.



INDIA'S LARGEST ONLINE IAS COACHING ACADEMY

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS





NAVY WARSHIP SHIVALIK LEAVES SINGAPORE FOR MARITIME EXERCISES WITH JAPAN, US

INDIA ASSUMES CHAIR OF COLOMBO PROCESS FOR 2024-26

INDIA TO HOST IATA'S ANNUAL GLOBAL AIRLINES SUMMIT AFTER 42 YEARS

BANGLADESH PRIME MINISTERS VISIT TO INDIA

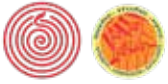
INDIA, PHILIPPINES REDISCOVERING EACH OTHER, BRAHMOS A GAME CHANGER: ENVOY

IT'S TIME FOR INDIA TO RECLAIM ITS VOICE ON TIBET

COST OF FUTURE WARS IS ENORMOUS, RESOURCES SHOULD BE OPTIMISED: CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF

SETTLING TRADE DISPUTES THROUGH 'LITIGOTIATION'

ASSANGE TO BE 'FREE' AFTER U.S. PLEA DEAL



NAVY WARSHIP SHIVALIK LEAVES SINGAPORE FOR MARITIME EXERCISES WITH JAPAN, US

CONTEXT: The Indian Navy's INS Shivalik set sail for Japan this weekend. The multi-role frigate will participate in two major exercises: the Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JIMEX) and the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) multinational military exercise. These exercises will help strengthen India's naval cooperation with Japan, the US, and other participating countries.



THE INS SHIVALIK: INDIA'S LEADING STEALTH FRIGATE

The INS Shivalik is the first of its kind for the Indian Navy. This multi-role frigate boasts several impressive features:

- **Pioneering Stealth Design:** Shivalik is India's first domestically built stealth warship. This design makes it difficult to detect by radar, offering a tactical advantage in various situations.
- **First-of-its-Kind Propulsion:** The Shivalik is the Indian Navy's first vessel to utilize a CODOG (Combined Diesel Or Gas) propulsion system. This system allows for efficient cruising with diesel engines and high-speed bursts with gas turbines.
- **Impressive Size and Speed:** This formidable frigate stretches 142.5 meters long and can reach speeds of up to 32 knots (nearly 59 kilometers per hour).
- **Enhanced Firepower:** The Shivalik carries a diverse

arsenal of weaponry, including a 3-inch naval gun, supersonic anti-ship missiles (both Klub and BrahMos), anti-aircraft missiles (Shtil-1), anti-submarine rocket launchers (RBU-6000), and torpedo launchers (DTA-53-956).

Built by Mazagon Dock Limited in Mumbai and commissioned in 2010, the INS Shivalik represents a significant milestone in Indian naval technology and showcases the country's growing self-reliance in defense shipbuilding.

CONCLUSION

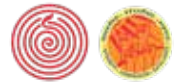
With its advanced capabilities and participation in major exercises like JIMEX and RIMPAC, the INS Shivalik embodies India's growing prowess as a maritime power. This deployment strengthens India's strategic partnerships and promotes regional stability in the Indo-Pacific.



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INDIA ASSUMES CHAIR OF COLOMBO PROCESS FOR 2024-26

CONTEXT: India has become chair of the Colombo Process for the first time since its inception in 2003.



BACKGROUND:

- The Colombo Process is a regional forum for Asian countries that send migrant workers abroad.
- Established in 2003, it offers a platform for these countries to discuss and improve how they manage overseas employment and contractual labour for their citizens.
- The Colombo Process also provides a space for member countries to share best practices on overseas employment.
- **There are currently 12 member states** in the Colombo Process, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam.

COLOMBO PROCESS OBJECTIVES:

- **Share knowledge:** Facilitate the exchange of experiences, lessons learned, and best practices in managing labour migration.
- **Address migrant well-being:** Consult on issues faced by migrants, sending countries, and receiving countries, aiming to develop practical solutions that improve the well-being of overseas workers.
- **Maximize development benefits:** Optimize the positive development impacts of organized overseas employment and strengthen dialogue with destination countries.
- **Monitor progress:** Review and monitor the implementation of agreed-upon recommendations, identifying further steps for action.
- **Consensus-based approach:** Decisions are made by consensus, with the process remaining non-binding.

- **UN coordination:** The Colombo Process is coordinated through the Permanent Missions of Member States at the United Nations in Geneva.
- **Ministerial leadership:** Ministerial Consultations, where recommendations and action plans are discussed and adopted, govern the process.
- **IOM support:** The International Organization for Migration (IOM) provides technical support and serves as the Secretariat for the Colombo Process.
- There are **five Thematic Area Working Groups (TAWGs):**
 - Skills and Qualification Recognition (chaired by Sri Lanka);
 - Fostering Ethical Recruitment (chaired by Bangladesh);
 - Pre-Departure Orientation and Empowerment (chaired by Philippines);
 - Remittances (chaired by Pakistan);
 - Labour Market Analysis (chaired by Thailand)

WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)

- ◆ **Leading migration organization:** Established in 1951, IOM is the primary international body dealing with migration issues.
- ◆ **Focus areas:** IOM offers support in four key areas:
 - Migration and development
 - Facilitating migration
 - Regulating migration
 - Addressing forced migration
- ◆ **Clients:** IOM works with migrants, internally displaced persons, refugees, and others uprooted from their homes.
- ◆ **UN partnership:** Since 2016, IOM has been a related organization of the United Nations and coordinates the UN network on migration.
- ◆ **Global reach:** IOM has 172 member states and 8 observer states, including India.

SUMMARY: In a first, India takes the helm of the Colombo Process, a regional forum for Asian nations sending migrant workers abroad. Established in 2003, the Colombo Process aims to improve migrant well-being and maximize development benefits through knowledge sharing and collaboration on best practices in overseas employment management. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) provides technical support.



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INDIA TO HOST IATA'S ANNUAL GLOBAL AIRLINES SUMMIT AFTER 42 YEARS

CONTEXT: India will host the prestigious International Air Transport Association (IATA) annual general meeting (AGM) next year, marking a 42-year return.



BACKGROUND TO IATA:

The International Air Transport Association (IATA), founded in Havana, Cuba in 1945, is the central organization for the world's airlines. Established by 57 founding members, IATA has grown to represent a staggering 330 airlines, encompassing over 80% of global air traffic. This translates to IATA members carrying the vast majority of passengers and cargo that fly across the globe.

Headquarters: Montreal, Canada.

Championing the Industry:

IATA acts as a powerful advocate for the airline industry on a global scale. It works tirelessly to ensure the interests of its members are heard and addressed at the international level. This includes issues like regulations, safety standards, and economic policies that impact air travel.

Beyond Advocacy: Setting the Standards

Beyond just advocacy, IATA plays a critical role in shaping the future of air travel. The organization develops and implements industry-wide standards that:

- **Simplify processes:** Streamlining procedures for airlines translates to a smoother and more efficient travel experience for passengers.
- **Enhance passenger convenience:** IATA's standards aim to make air travel more comfortable and user-friendly for everyone.
- **Increase safety:** Safety is paramount in aviation. IATA's standards ensure airlines prioritize the well-being of passengers and crew.
- **Reduce costs:** By promoting efficiency, IATA helps airlines keep costs down, which can ultimately lead to more affordable airfare for passengers.
- **Improve efficiency:** Streamlined operations contribute to a smoother travel experience and reduced environmental impact.

- **Promote sustainability:** Recognizing the environmental impact of air travel, IATA is actively involved in developing solutions to achieve sustainability goals for the industry.

A Leader in Global Air Transportation

- By championing the interests of airlines, setting industry standards, and promoting progress, IATA remains a driving force in shaping the future of global air travel.

WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANISATION (ICAO)

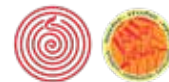
The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) is a critical player in ensuring safe and efficient international air travel.



Establishment: Founded in 1947 under the Chicago Convention (1944), ICAO is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN).

Mission:

- Promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation.
- Ensure fair and equal opportunity for every country to operate international airlines.



- **Core Activities:**
 - **Standards and Regulations:** ICAO sets international standards and recommended practices (SARPs) for various aspects of aviation, including:
 - **Safety:** Developing protocols for aircraft operation, maintenance, and air traffic control to minimize accidents and ensure passenger well-being.
 - **Security:** Establishing security measures to prevent unlawful interference with civil aviation, such as hijackings and sabotage.
 - **Facilitation:** Streamlining border-crossing procedures for passengers, cargo, and crew to improve travel efficiency.
 - **Air Navigation:** Setting standards for air traffic management, communications, and navigation systems to ensure safe and efficient airspace utilization.
 - **Environment:** Developing strategies to reduce the environmental impact of aviation, such as noise pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.
 - **Economic Development:** ICAO promotes fair competition and facilitates the orderly growth of international air transport.
 - **Cooperation and Collaboration:** The organization fosters cooperation between member states to address global aviation challenges.
 - **Capacity Building:** ICAO provides technical assistance and training programs to help countries improve their

aviation infrastructure and expertise.

By setting these standards and fostering international cooperation, ICAO plays a vital role in ensuring the smooth, safe, and sustainable operation of global air travel.

KEEPING SKIES SAFE AND EFFICIENT: HOW IATA AND ICAO WORK TOGETHER IN AVIATION

Key Players: IATA (airlines) and ICAO (UN agency) are both crucial for global aviation.

Distinct Roles:

- IATA champions airlines' interests and creates industry standards for smoother operations and cost reduction.
- ICAO sets global regulations for safety, security, environment, and fair competition.

Collaboration:

- Develop practical industry standards together.
- Train aviation personnel on best practices and regulations.
- Work on improving safety and security measures.
- Promote sustainable practices to reduce environmental impact.

Shared Goal: This teamwork ensures a more efficient, safe, and sustainable global air transport system.

CONCLUSION: With India set to host IATA's annual summit, the focus on a collaborative future for aviation is stronger than ever. By leveraging IATA's industry expertise and ICAO's global regulations, stakeholders can ensure a thriving air transport sector that prioritizes safety, efficiency, and sustainability for all.

BANGLADESH PRIME MINISTERS VISIT TO INDIA

CONTEXT: Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina visited India for two days, holding bilateral talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi.

BACKGROUND:

Both Narendra Modi and Sheik Hasina faced elections this year and had emerged victorious. During her state visit to India on June 21-22, 2024, at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and PM Modi discussed bolstering India-Bangladesh relations. Their partnership, deeply intertwined with historical, linguistic, cultural, and economic ties, has flourished over the past decade, driven by their shared history and renewed aspirations for the 21st century.



INDIA-BANGLADESH SUMMIT: A PROMISE FOR DEEPER TIES

Shared Vision for a Prosperous Future

- **Future-Oriented Partnership:** Both nations aim to elevate their relationship towards a long-term partnership, aligning with their respective national aspirations - "Viksit Bharat 2047" (Developed India) and "Smart Bangladesh Vision 2041".

Transforming Connectivity into Economic Opportunity

- **Multimodal Transport & Trade:** Leveraging geographical proximity, India and Bangladesh will invest in multi-modal transport networks, facilitating cross-border trade in goods and services. This includes operationalizing the BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement and extending transit facilities for Bangladeshi goods to Nepal and Bhutan.
- **Energy Collaboration:** The countries will establish a robust intra-regional electricity grid to enable clean energy trade from India, Nepal, and Bhutan.

Digital and Green Technologies for Sustainable Growth

- **Digital & Green Partnership:** India and Bangladesh pledge to collaborate on digital and green technologies. This includes joint development of a small satellite for Bangladesh, fostering economic growth and sustainable development across the region.

Boosting Trade and Investment

- **CEPA Negotiations:** Both parties agreed to initiate negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) to strengthen trade and investment ties. Operationalization of Special Economic Zones in Bangladesh is another key focus area.



Cooperation on Water Resources

- **Data Sharing & Water Management:** India and Bangladesh prioritize data exchange and establishing interim water-sharing frameworks, including the Teesta River and renewing the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty.

Strengthening Defence and Development Partnership

- **Defence Cooperation:** The nations will enhance defence ties through industrial collaboration and multifaceted military engagements to modernize the Bangladesh Armed Forces.
- **Development Cooperation:** Expanding development cooperation will focus on capacity building for civil services, judiciary, police, and other specialized sectors in Bangladesh.

Deepening Cultural and Historical Bonds

- **Cultural & Historical Ties:** Promoting exchanges among scholars, artists, students, and tourists is a priority. New programs for medical and educational support will be established for the Muktijoddhas (Bangladesh Liberation War veterans) and their families.

Facilitating Cross-Border Movement

- **E-Medical Visas & Consular Services:** India will extend e-Medical Visa facilities to Bangladeshi citizens and open a new Assistant High Commission in Rangpur to improve access to consular services.

Addressing Essential Needs

- **Essential Commodities:** Based on availability, India will support Bangladesh with the supply of essential

commodities.

Investing in the Next Generation

- **Youth Development:** India and Bangladesh acknowledge the importance of youth and commit to accelerating collaboration in education, skill development, technology, sports, and creative industries.

Indo-Pacific and Global Cooperation

- **Indo-Pacific Vision:** Both nations share a commitment to a free, open, inclusive, and secure Indo-Pacific region. They will co-lead the 'Disaster Risk Reduction and Management' pillar of the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI).
- **Regional & Global Partnership:** India and Bangladesh envision their relationship as a cornerstone for regional integration under BIMSTEC, SAARC, and IORA. They will work together on global platforms to advocate for the interests of the Global South.

CONCLUSION: The India-Bangladesh Summit of June 2024 underscores a commitment to deepening bilateral ties through collaborative efforts across various sectors. By aligning their national aspirations and leveraging geographical and cultural proximities, both nations aim to foster economic growth, sustainable development, and regional stability. This comprehensive partnership, with a focus on connectivity, digital and green technologies, trade, defense, and cultural exchanges, promises to create a prosperous and harmonious future for both countries while enhancing their roles on the global stage.

INDIA, PHILIPPINES REDISCOVERING EACH OTHER, BRAHMOS A GAME CHANGER: ENVOY

CONTEXT: India and the Philippines are seeing a resurgence in their relationship, fueled by defense cooperation. The Philippines' purchase of BrahMos missiles, a "game changer" according to their envoy, showcases India's growing strength in domestic arms production and its expanding global influence.



BACKGROUND: In a sign of growing defense ties, the Philippines inked a \$375 million deal with India for BrahMos missiles in January 2022. The first batch of these anti-ship missiles was delivered just over a year later, in April 2023.

INDIA EMERGES AS KEY PARTNER IN PHILIPPINE MILITARY MODERNIZATION

- **Philippines' Military Modernization**
 - The Philippines' armed forces are undergoing a critical upgrade program called Horizon-3.
 - India has become a crucial player in supplying equipment and expertise for this modernization.
- **Stronger Defense Cooperation**
 - Defense collaboration is a key pillar of the improving relationship between India and the Philippines.

- This partnership is built on a foundation set by a 2006 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on defense cooperation.
- The partnership was further solidified in 2017 with an additional MoU focused on industry and logistics cooperation.
- This recent MoU simplifies the process of acquiring and transferring military equipment.
- **Landmark BrahMos Deal**
 - The acquisition of BrahMos missiles by the Philippines is a significant development for both nations.
 - The Philippines gains a powerful deterrent and strengthens its military significantly with these supersonic cruise missiles.
 - For India, this deal represents the first-ever export of the BrahMos missile.
 - This success story highlights India's growing defense industry capabilities and validates its domestic production prowess.

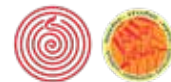
SIGNIFICANCE

Strengthening Bilateral Ties

- **Renaissance in Relations:** The defence deal symbolizes a renaissance in India-Philippines relations, fostering greater mutual understanding and cooperation.
- **Strategic Partnership:** Strengthens the strategic partnership, positioning India as a key partner in the Philippines' military modernization efforts.

Boost to Indigenous Defence Industry

- **First Export:** The BrahMos deal is a milestone for India's



indigenous defence industry, marking its first major export.

- **International Recognition:** Enhances India's reputation as a reliable supplier of advanced defence technology.

CONCLUSION: The Philippines' acquisition of BrahMos missiles, as highlighted by the Philippine envoy, is truly a "game changer" for both nations. It signifies not only a powerful

deterrent for the Philippines but also a turning point in India's emergence as a major player in the global arms market. This deal strengthens bilateral ties, paves the way for a strategic partnership, and underscores the growing prowess of India's indigenous defense industry. The future of India-Philippines relations appears bright, fuelled by mutual cooperation and a newfound strategic alignment.

IT'S TIME FOR INDIA TO RECLAIM ITS VOICE ON TIBET

CONTEXT: India should assert its leadership on Tibet issues, rather than letting U.S. lawmakers dominate the narrative and highlight the importance of a proactive and independent foreign policy amidst increasing U.S.-China tensions.



INDIA'S NEED TO RECLAIM ITS VOICE ON TIBET

- **Importance of Reclaiming the Narrative**
 - India must assert its leadership in regional foreign policy, especially on Tibet issues.
 - The recent visit by a U.S. delegation to Dharamshala, following the passage of the 'Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Dispute Act' in the U.S. Congress, highlights this need.



U.S. Delegation Visit to Dharamshala

- **Timing and Purpose**
 - The U.S. delegation arrived shortly after the Act passed in Congress, awaiting President Biden's signature.
 - The Central Tibetan Administration hosted the delegation, which included both Democrat and Republican co-authors of the Bill.
- **Speeches and Statements**
 - U.S. lawmakers criticized China's repression of Tibetans and called for renewed talks between the Dalai Lama's representatives and Beijing.

- Former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi emphasized the U.S. stance on Tibetan freedom and criticized Chinese President Xi Jinping.



Interpretation of the Visit

- **Perceived Strength vs. Actual Weakness**
 - Hosting U.S. lawmakers in Dharamshala is seen by some as New Delhi's strong message to Beijing amid ongoing tensions.
 - However, allowing U.S. politicians to dominate the narrative could indicate a weakness in India's foreign policy stance.

India's Historical and Current Stance on Tibet

- **Actions Speak Louder Than Words**
 - Since 1959, India has provided refuge to the Dalai Lama and Tibetan refugees, demonstrating its support more effectively than public statements.
 - New Delhi's actions include accommodating Tibetan refugees and offering the Dalai Lama sanctuary.
- **Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity**
 - India has recognized Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) as part of China since 1954.
 - India ceased articulating a 'One China' policy in 2010 due to China's actions undermining India's territorial integrity.

Current Policy and Sensitivities

- **Non-Recognition of Tibetan Government in Exile**
 - India does not officially recognize the Tibetan Government in Exile or Parliament in Exile.
 - Despite inviting the Tibetan Sikyong to the 2014 swearing-in ceremony, similar invitations were not extended in subsequent years.



Policy Reminders and Sensitivities

- In 2018, a government circular reminded officials of India's stance, advising against attending events commemorating the Dalai Lama's flight to India.

Risks of Outsourcing the Narrative

Impact of Allowing U.S. Delegation to Lead

- If India intends to adopt a stronger stance on Tibet, Indian leaders should make those statements themselves rather than allowing U.S. lawmakers to do so.
- The Dalai Lama's medical trip to the U.S. shortly after the delegation's visit underscores the unnecessary nature of the U.S. presence in Dharamshala.

India's Diminished Role in Regional Affairs

- Allowing U.S. leaders to send messages to Beijing from Indian soil risks marginalizing India's influence.
- This scenario mirrors India's challenges in other South Asian regions where U.S.-China contestations are prevalent.

ANALYSIS OF INDIA'S STANCE

Geopolitical Dynamics: Impact on Tibet and India

Chinese Actions on Tibet: China maintains strict control over Tibetan cultural and political autonomy, suppressing dissent through stringent measures at monasteries and cultural sites. Its territorial assertions, including renaming places and issuing controversial visas, challenge India's sovereignty. Internationally, China's critique of the Dalai Lama and efforts against Tibetan identity provoke global human rights responses, exemplified by recent U.S. legislative actions.

American Influence: The U.S. supports Tibetan autonomy, evidenced by legislative measures and high-profile visits condemning Chinese repression. These actions bolster Tibet's

global visibility and may sway international policies.

India's Strategic Balancing: India historically supports Tibetan refugees but refrains from endorsing China's 'One China' policy, balancing humanitarian concerns with strategic interests amid regional complexities and U.S.-China rivalry



Future Considerations for India's Tibet Policy

Reasserting India's Voice

- India must take decisive steps to reclaim its narrative on Tibet.
- Addressing the Dalai Lama's succession and related issues should be a priority for New Delhi.
- India must avoid being overshadowed by external powers and ensure its policies are clearly articulated and led by Indian officials.

CONCLUSION: In transversing the complex dynamics surrounding Tibet, India faces the challenge of asserting its historical support while managing contemporary geopolitical pressures. Reclaiming its narrative on Tibet is crucial for India to uphold its sovereignty, balance regional dynamics, and secure its strategic interests amidst global scrutiny and rivalries.

COST OF FUTURE WARS IS ENORMOUS, RESOURCES SHOULD BE OPTIMISED: CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF

CONTEXT: General Anil Chauhan, Chief of Defence Staff, emphasized the imperative of optimizing resources and integrating military services to manage the enormous costs of future wars, highlighting the need for strategic planning and efficiency in defense operations amidst evolving geopolitical challenges and technological advancements.



CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF'S PERSPECTIVE ON FUTURE WAR COSTS AND RESOURCE OPTIMIZATION

- Enormous Costs of Future Wars:** General Anil Chauhan highlights the significant financial implications of future wars, stressing the need for optimizing resources and manpower to afford advanced weapons and systems.
- Integration within the Armed Forces:** Emphasizing

service integration as a priority, General Chauhan outlines over 170 initiatives where the Army, Navy, and Air Force can collaborate to streamline time, resources, processes, infrastructure, and manpower.

Strategic Education and Integration Initiatives

- Warfare & Aerospace Strategy Program (WASP):**
 - Introduced in 2022, WASP aims to deepen participants' understanding of geopolitics, grand strategy, and national power, fostering a more integrated approach among military professionals.
- Expansion of Integration Efforts:**
 - Beyond intra-service integration, General Chauhan advocates extending integrated approaches to other services like the Navy and Coast Guard, as well as involving Central Armed Police Forces in logistics and infrastructure.

Strategic Imperatives for India's National Security

- Challenges and Strategic Risks:**
 - India faces multifaceted challenges from climate change to geopolitical tensions with China, necessitating a proactive and coordinated national security strategy.
- Importance of a National Security Strategy (NSS):**
 - Lack of an NSS hampers India's ability to systematically assess threats, plan long-term defense capabilities, and signal strategic intentions to allies and adversaries alike.



Benefits of Implementing a National Security Strategy

- **Comprehensive Strategic Assessment:**
 - o An NSS would compel periodic reviews of threats and opportunities, ensuring that emerging challenges like China's naval expansion are addressed proactively.
- **Framework for Long-term Planning:**
 - o Provides a structured approach to prioritize defense investments, avoiding ad-hoc decisions and ensuring alignment with India's strategic objectives.
- **Instrument for Strategic Signaling:**
 - o Clarifies India's role as a security provider in the region, enhances transparency in defense policies, and manages expectations of international partners.
- **Enhanced Inter-Agency Coordination:**
 - o Facilitates synchronized efforts across defense

and security agencies, promoting cohesive national security planning and operational efficiency.

- **Accountability and Transparency:**

- o Introduces accountability mechanisms to ensure governmental alignment with strategic goals, enhancing transparency and public confidence in national security decision-making.

Call for a Holistic Approach to National Security

- **Need for a Holistic Approach:**

- o Advocates for a systematic and comprehensive approach to national security planning, moving beyond reactive responses to strategic foresight and preparedness.

- **Role of National Security Strategy:**

- o Proposes the formulation of a robust NSS as a foundational document to guide India's trajectory as a global power, aligning defense investments with long-term strategic imperatives.

CONCLUSION: General Anil Chauhan's call to optimize resources and integrate military services reflects a crucial step towards enhancing India's defense capabilities amid escalating global challenges. Emphasizing the need for a National Security Strategy underscores the imperative for strategic foresight, efficiency, and transparency in safeguarding national interests and advancing India's global security posture.

SETTLING TRADE DISPUTES THROUGH 'LITIGOTIATION'

CONTEXT: The Government of India and the United States Government have notified the World Trade Organization (WTO) of their successful conclusion to negotiations regarding the longstanding dispute concerning poultry imports from the United States. This agreement represents the final resolution of all seven outstanding disputes between the two nations at the WTO.

Key Provisions of the SPS Agreement: Ensuring Safe Trade in Food and Plants

The Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement) is a cornerstone for safe international trade in food, plants, and animal products. Here's a breakdown of its key provisions:

Science-Based Standards: SPS measures must be grounded in scientific evidence and risk assessments. This ensures countries aren't imposing unnecessary trade barriers based on unfounded concerns. Exceptions exist for temporary measures taken in emergencies.

International Harmonization: The agreement encourages countries to align their SPS measures with international standards set by organizations like the Codex Alimentarius (food safety), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). This promotes consistency and facilitates trade.

Equivalence: Countries can accept alternative SPS measures from other countries if they achieve the same level of protection. This allows flexibility while maintaining safety standards.

Risk Management: Conducting thorough risk assessments is crucial. Countries must evaluate the potential threats posed by pests, diseases, or contaminants and tailor their SPS measures accordingly. This ensures a proportionate response to risks.

Regionalization: The agreement recognizes the concept of pest- or disease-free zones. Countries can implement less stringent measures for imports from regions proven to be low-risk, promoting trade without compromising safety.

Transparency and Notification: Countries are obligated to be transparent about their SPS measures. They must notify

WTO Members
Have the right to protect human, animal or plant life and health, basing their measures on science and only applying them to the extent necessary, without unjustifiable discrimination. It also encourages the use of international standards developed by Codex Alimentarius, IPPC and OIE.

WHAT IS SPS AGREEMENT?

Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement)

- Treaty of the World Trade Organization (WTO)
- Enforced since January 1, 1995
- Establishes rules for food safety and animal/plant health standards



the WTO of any changes and provide relevant information through the WTO's SPS notification system. This fosters predictability and allows for consultations to address potential trade concerns.

Dispute Settlement: IF CONSULTATIONS FAIL TO RESOLVE DISAGREEMENTS OVER SPS MEASURES, COUNTRIES CAN RESORT TO THE WTO'S DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY (DSB) FOR A FORMAL RULING. THIS ENSURES A FAIR AND IMPARTIAL PROCESS FOR RESOLVING TRADE DISPUTES.

BY PROMOTING THESE PRINCIPLES, THE SPS AGREEMENT fosters a global trade environment that prioritizes food safety, animal health, and plant protection while facilitating a smooth flow of agricultural goods.

DISPUTE SETTLEMENT UNDERSTANDING (DSU)

- **Main Agreement:** The DSU is the primary WTO agreement for settling disputes.

Dispute Settlement Body (DSB)

- **General Council Role:** The General Council of WTO convenes as the DSB to manage disputes between WTO members.
- **Authority:** The DSB can:
 - Establish dispute settlement panels.
 - Refer matters to arbitration.
 - Adopt panel, Appellate Body, and arbitration reports.
 - Maintain surveillance over the implementation of recommendations and rulings.
 - Authorize suspension of concessions in case of non-compliance.

Dispute Resolution Process

- **Negotiations:** Ideally, disputes are resolved through negotiations.

CONTEXT: Julian Assange, founder of WikiLeaks, is set to plead guilty to a single count of conspiracy to obtain and disseminate national defense information under a plea deal, marking the end of his prolonged legal battle and enabling his return to Australia after years of confinement and extradition efforts by the United States.



What is a Plea Deal?

A plea deal refers to an agreement between a defendant and prosecutors where the defendant agrees to plead guilty to certain charges in exchange for concessions, such as reduced charges or sentencing. It aims to resolve a legal case without a full trial, often benefiting both parties by saving time and resources.

- **Panel Establishment:** If negotiations fail, WTO Members can request the establishment of a panel to settle the dispute.
- **Panel Report:** The panel issues a report which can be appealed before the WTO's Appellate Body on questions of law.

The appellate body

- **Composition:** The Appellate Body is a permanent seven-member entity set up by the DSB, representing a broad range of WTO membership.
- **Function:** It hears appeals from reports issued by panels in disputes brought by WTO members.
- **Authority:** The Appellate Body can uphold, modify, or reverse the legal findings and conclusions of a panel.

Non-Compliance Measures

- **Trade Compensation or Sanctions:** If a WTO member does not comply with recommendations, trade compensation or sanctions, such as increased customs duties, may follow.

CONCLUSION

The resolution of the poultry import dispute between India and the United States through the WTO highlights the efficacy of the Dispute Settlement Understanding (DSU) and the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement in managing trade conflicts. By adhering to science-based standards, promoting international harmonization, and ensuring transparent dispute resolution, these mechanisms facilitate smooth international trade, safeguard food safety, and uphold fair trade practices, reinforcing global economic stability and cooperation.

ASSANGE TO BE 'FREE' AFTER U.S. PLEA DEAL

2. The Plea Deal and Its Terms

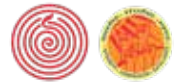
Terms of the Plea Deal

Assange recently agreed to a plea deal involving pleading guilty to a single count of conspiracy to obtain and disseminate national defense information. He is expected to receive a sentence of five years and two months, which includes credit for time served in UK custody.

Implications of the Plea

The plea deal allows Assange to be released and return to his native Australia. It marks an end to his legal saga in the US, concluding years of international legal controversy over his activities with WikiLeaks.





3. Reactions and Public Opinion Support and Criticism



Supporters view Assange as a whistleblower and advocate for press freedom, citing his role in exposing government misconduct. Critics argue that his actions jeopardized national security and violated laws protecting classified information.

Political and Legal Fallout

The case has raised debates about the balance

between national security and press freedom. It also highlights challenges in extraditing individuals for cyber-related crimes across international borders.

4. Legacy of WikiLeaks and Future Impact Impact on Journalism and Free Speech

WikiLeaks revolutionized investigative journalism by providing a platform for anonymous whistleblowers. The legal actions against Assange set a precedent for how governments handle leaks of classified information in the digital age.

Lessons Learned and Future Scenarios

Assange's case prompts discussions on the limits of journalistic freedom, government transparency, and international legal cooperation in cyber-related crimes. It underscores the complexities of balancing national security with public interest disclosures.

CONCLUSION

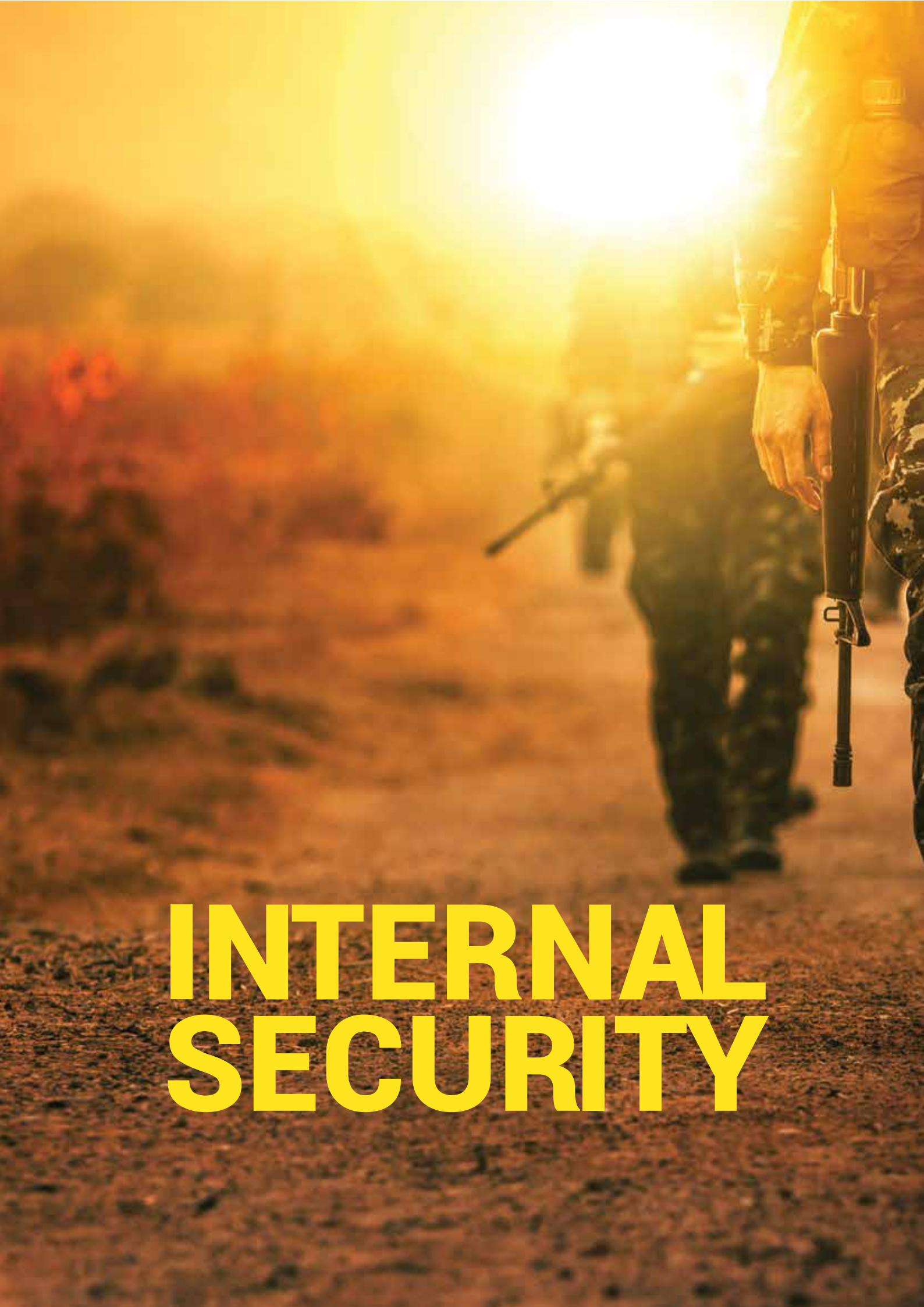
Julian Assange's plea deal marks a significant chapter in the global debate on press freedom and government accountability. While his release ends a prolonged legal battle, the implications of his actions and the legal precedents set will continue to shape discussions on journalism, whistleblowing, and democratic governance worldwide.

Latest Trends in Artificial Intelligence & Data Science

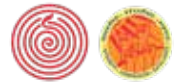
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- Digital Forensics**
DIGITAL FORENSICS



INTERNAL SECURITY



DRDO'S 'ABHYAS' COMPLETES SUCCESSFUL TRIALS

PAKISTAN LAUNCHES MILITARY OPERATION AZM-E-ISTEHKAM

LT GEN NS RAJA SUBRAMANI APPOINTED NEW VICE CHIEF OF ARMY

ENEMY AGENTS ORDINANCE LAW

HAL GRANTED 50,000 CR TENDER FOR COMBAT HELICOPTERS

IAF RAFALE JETS JOIN MULTI-NATION DRILL IN ALASKA

INDIAN FORCES JOIN US-HOSTED MULTINATIONAL WAR GAMES

NAGASTRA-1 DRONES TO IMPACT INDIAN ARMY OPERATIONS

INDIAN ARMY LAUNCHES 'VIDYUT RAKSHAK' MONITORING SYSTEM



DRDO's 'ABHYAS' COMPLETES SUCCESSFUL TRIALS



ABHYAS is a High-Speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) that was made by the Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) in Bengaluru, India, for the Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO). Its main job is to make fake enemy planes so that defence systems can practice. DRDO recently tested ABHYAS six times at the Integrated Test Range in Chandipur, Odisha, and all of them went well. These tests looked at a better booster setup that made the system work better and be more reliable.

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

The ABHYAS design lets it fly itself with the help of an autopilot device created at ADE. It comes with high-tech add-ons like Radar Cross Section (RCS), Visual, and Infrared, which are necessary for practicing real weapon systems. Its guidance system was made by the Research Center Imarat, while its booster system was made by the Advanced Systems Laboratory.

TRIAL ACHIEVEMENTS

ABHYAS showed important skills during its tests, including safe booster release, rocket clearance, and strong

endurance performance. Two launches were carried out in a row, one after the other, within 30 minutes of each other. This showed how well the system worked with little planning.

OPERATIONAL FEATURES

ABHYAS has a laptop-based Ground Control System that makes it easier to connect the aircraft, do pre-flight checks, and give the pilots control during the flight. The device can also record data during flights so that it can be analysed later.

PRODUCTION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

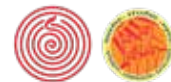
The successful testing shows that ABHYAS is no longer just an idea and is now ready to be built. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and Larsen & Toubro have been chosen as the companies that will make it. This step is a big step forward for Indian defence technology and shows that India is serious about improving its military power. ABHYAS is an important step forward in India's defence training because it creates a very real threat situation for practicing and testing the country's weapons systems.



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PAKISTAN LAUNCHES MILITARY OPERATION AZM-E-ISTEHKAM



Pakistan's leaders have started Operation Azm-e-Istehkam, also known as "Resolve for Stability," to fight the rising violence and terrorism that are mostly caused by the country's battles with Afghanistan. This operation comes after a close look at the country's anti-terrorism plans by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, focusing on what was learned from the National Action Plan, which was made in response to the terrible 2014 attack on the Peshawar Army Public School.

OBJECTIVES OF OPERATION

Operation Azm-e-Istehkam's main goal is to improve security in the country by fighting threats from within and stopping armed rebels from Afghanistan. According to Sharif's office, the operation will "intensify" attacks against terrorists. It will use socioeconomic tactics to make people happier and stop extremist ideas from spreading. The plan also aims to

give law enforcement agencies legal protections that will make prosecutions and managing terror-related cases more efficient.

INCREASED VIOLENCE AND AFGHANISTAN'S ROLE

In the last 18 months, there has been a big rise in violence, which is often blamed on the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Since the TTP broke a truce in November 2022, things have become more tense. Pakistan accuses the Kabul government of hiding TTP militants, but the Taliban-led government denies this. This disagreement makes people worry that an armed conflict could spread into Afghan territory.

ADDRESSING CHINESE CONCERNS

China is also worried about the safety of its citizens and interests in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Operation Azm-e-Istehkam is a response to these worries. Pakistan's security situation is very important for keeping Chinese investors' trust, which is needed for current and future partnerships.

CHALLENGES TO THE OPERATION'S SUCCESS

Even though a lot of work has gone into planning Operation Azm-e-Istehkam, its success is still unclear. This is mostly because militant operations are often quick and there may not be much public support in the affected areas. Cross-border military actions could also make things worse with Afghanistan, which would make the security situation in the area more difficult.

LT GEN NS RAJA SUBRAMANI APPOINTED NEW VICE CHIEF OF ARMY



The Government of India has officially approved Lt Gen NS Raja Subramani as the next Vice Chief of Army Staff (VCOAS). He will start his new job on June 20. This choice was made as Lt. Gen. Upendra Dwivedi, who is currently Vice Chief, gets ready to become Chief of Army Staff (COAS) when Gen. Manoj Pande retires on June 30.

CAREER OF Lt GEN NS RAJA SUBRAMANI

Lt Gen Subramani is currently the commander of

the Army's Central Command. His military education includes training at the National Defence Academy, Indian Military Academy, Joint Services Command Staff College in Bracknell, UK, and the National Defence College in New Delhi. He also holds a Master of Arts from King's College, London, and an MPhil in Defence Studies from Madras University. His distinguished military career spans over 37 years, during which he has held command at various levels. Notably, he commanded a battalion during Operation Rhino in Assam, an infantry brigade along the International Boundary with Pakistan, and a Black Cat division in Northeast India. His senior leadership roles include commanding the Uttar Bharat Area and the prestigious Kharga Corps at Ambala.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Vice Chief of Army Staff is the second-highest-ranking officer in the Indian Army. This statutory position involves acting as the deputy professional head of the Army and serving as a senior adviser to the Minister of Defence. The VCOAS typically ascends from officers who have displayed exceptional military and administrative skills throughout their service.



"Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence." - Robert Frost



ENEMY AGENTS ORDINANCE LAW

Recent comments from R R Swain, who is the Director General of Police in Jammu and Kashmir, show how complicated security measures are in the area. Swain suggested that people caught helping militants should be charged under the strict Enemy Agents Ordinance of 2005, which has harsh punishments like life in jail or the death penalty.

UNDERSTANDING THE ENEMY AGENTS' ORDINANCE

The Enemy Agents Ordinance was originally issued in 1917 by the Dogra Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir during their princely rule. It was made so that enemies couldn't work together during battle. After the partition in 1947, the law became part of the old state's legal system and was later changed to better fit the new geopolitical conditions. After Article 370 was taken away in August 2019, Jammu and Kashmir's laws were changed in a big way. Some state laws, like the Enemy Agents Ordinance, were kept in place by the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act. However, many others were thrown out or changed to match national laws.

LEGAL PROVISIONS OF THE ENEMY AGENTS' ORDINANCE

People who are accused of working as an enemy agent or helping enemy groups against the national interest can be given harsh punishments under this law. A special judge was chosen with input from the High Court to try the people who are charged. Interestingly, the ordinance limits the right to a lawyer, allowing it only with court permission, and it blocks any appeals against the decision of the special judge. In addition, the Ordinance says that no information about the procedures can be shared without permission. People who do this will be punished with jail time or fines.

PROMINENT CASES AND PROCEEDINGS

Over the decades, numerous individuals in Jammu and Kashmir have been tried under the Enemy Agents Ordinance. Notable cases include Maqbool Bhat of the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front, who was executed in 1988 under this law. Such cases show the continued relevance and application of this ordinance in the region's complex security and legal landscape.

HAL GRANTED 50,000 CR TENDER FOR COMBAT HELICOPTERS



Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), a well-known Indian state-owned aerospace and defence company, was recently given a unique contract worth about Rs 50,000 crore by the UK Ministry of Defence. This is the biggest single order for helicopters that has ever been given to an Indian company. The money will be used to buy Light Combat Helicopters (LCH), also known as "Prachand."

PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTUAL DETAILS

This tender, which was handled through the Single Vendor Contract (SVC) method, is only going to HAL. The company is now going to make a techno-commercial bid, which will be talked over with the Defence Minister until it is agreed upon.

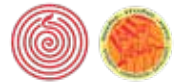
SPECIFICATIONS OF THE LCH

During test flights in Ladakh, the Prachand helicopters, which were designed to work well in the Indian

terrain, showed how well they could handle high levels. The fact that these choppers can fly at high altitudes and have advanced weapons for battle means they will be useful in many situations. Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR), Destruction of Enemy Air Defense (DEAD), and Counter Insurgency (CI) are some of these. It will also take action against slow-moving planes and Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPAs), helping out in all kinds of weather and terrain.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE AND FUTURE IMPACT

The LCH is meant to be India's main combat helicopter for the next thirty to forty years. It increases the Indian military's tactical capabilities while lowering its reliance on combat helicopters from other countries. With an initial local content value of over 55 percent and room for growth, the helicopter could also be exported in the future.



PREVIOUS DEVELOPMENTS AND ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Before this big deal, in 2022, the government gave HAL an order for 15 LCH units worth Rs 3,887 Crore, which included money for building up infrastructure. This action shows that India is becoming more determined to improve its defence infrastructure and aerospace powers.

IAF RAFALE JETS JOIN MULTI-NATION DRILL IN ALASKA



The Indian Air Force (IAF) took part in the Red Flag drill in Alaska, USA, in June 2023. The Indian Air Force's Rafale jets took part in the multinational air drill for the first time. The goal of the drill was to make the air forces more ready for battle and better able to work together.

PARTICIPATING FORCES

The Republic of Singapore Air Force, the UK's Royal Air Force, the Royal Netherlands Air Force, the German Luftwaffe, and the US Air Force were among the air forces from around the world that took part in the Red Flag drill. During the drills, Indian Rafale jets worked closely with F-16 and F-15 planes from other countries.

MISSION AND ACTIVITIES

The Rafale jets of the Indian Air Force (IAF) were sent on difficult missions that focused on Beyond Visual Range (BVR) fighting as part of large-scale offensive and defensive operations. The point of these battles was to make them feel

like real battles. The Rafale jets' international flight was helped by IL-78 air-to-air refuellers. It was also easier to move people and things with the help of the C-17 Globemaster.

ADDITIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

After the drill, the IAF group did more exercises with the air forces of Egypt and Greece. This not only made operations more flexible, but it also improved diplomatic bonds by getting the military to train together and work together. After learning a lot from Red Flag and Ex-Tarang Shakti-2024, the Indian Air Force is getting ready to host a big international air exercise later this year. The goal of this engagement is to improve military cooperation between countries and show off the skills of the IAF's updated fleet. This strategic participation is a big step forward for the IAF in its efforts to improve operational skills and understanding in a diverse and multinational setting. It also shows that the IAF has bigger goals for military diplomacy and readiness.

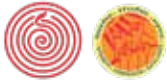


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INDIAN FORCES JOIN US-HOSTED MULTINATIONAL WAR GAMES



The Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Indian Navy are both taking part in military drills with other countries that are being held by the US. In Alaska, the Indian Air Force is taking part in the aerial combat training exercise Red Flag. In Hawaii, the Indian Navy will be taking part in the naval drill RIMPAC.

IAF INVOLVEMENT IN EXERCISE RED FLAG

The Red Flag drill was held in Alaska starting on May 30 and included IAF members. Included are advanced air combat scenarios meant to improve how allied countries work together and their strategies. Eight Rafale jets, three C-17 transport planes, and two IL-78 mid-air refuelling planes from the IAF's force have been assigned to specific missions. The drill is being carried out by about 3,100 service members from four countries, using more than 100 aircraft.

INDIAN NAVY'S ROLE IN EXERCISE RIMPAC

INS Shivalik, an Indian Navy stealth ship, was sent to take part in Exercise RIMPAC, which started on June 25. When this happened, INS Shivalik was part of the Japan-India maritime drill (JIMEX) and talked with other partner navies. People from 29 different countries are taking part in RIMPAC 2024, which is thought to be the biggest international maritime exercise. The involved navies are working together to improve their ability to work together and collaborate on strategic operations.

OBJECTIVES AND BENEFITS

The goal of both drills is to improve military readiness and cooperation among the countries that take part. They act out real-life situations to give all the forces involved rigorous

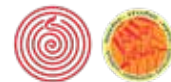
training and development chances. The Indian Armed Forces not only improve their tactical strategies by interacting with other countries on a global level, but they also strengthen diplomatic ties with other countries, which helps keep the world safe and stable.

ABOUT RIMPAC (RIM OF THE PACIFIC) EXERCISE

- **LARGEST INTERNATIONAL MARITIME WARFARE EXERCISE:** RIMPAC (Rim of the Pacific Exercise) is the world's largest international maritime warfare exercise, initiated in 1971.
- **BIENNIAL EVENT:** Hosted biennially by the U.S. Navy in the Pacific Ocean, promoting regular engagement and cooperation among participating nations.
- **BUILDING COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIPS:** The goal is to make sure safety and security on the world's oceans and seas by getting international marine forces to work together more.
- **BROAD PARTICIPATION:** Involves over 50 ships, 200 aircraft, and 25,000 personnel from 26 nations, showcasing extensive international involvement.
- **CHINA'S DISINVITATION:** China was disinited from RIMPAC in 2018 due to concerns over its militarization of the South China Sea.
- **RIMPAC 2020 ADJUSTMENTS:** The 2020 exercise was scaled down due to the COVID-19 pandemic, concentrating on maritime and air operations to minimize health risks.

The More You Learn, The More You Earn





NAGASTRA-1 DRONES TO IMPACT INDIAN ARMY OPERATIONS

The Indian Army just got its first batch of Nagastra-1, an advanced type of suicide drone that can be carried by a person and can carry out precise hits. Soldiers are less likely to get hurt because these drones can accurately target enemy camps.

DEVELOPMENT AND FEATURES

The Solar Industries in Nagpur worked on Nagastra-1 through their company, Economics Explosives Ltd (EEL). Out of an order for 480 drones, only 120 have been released so far, after going through strict checks before they were sent. Nagastra-1 is carefully designed to neutralize threats successfully. Its kamikaze mode, which ensures GPS-guided accuracy with an accuracy margin of up to 2 meters, makes it stand out. It has a 1 kg high-explosive charge, enough to hit threats with soft skin without needing a big payload.

INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN

One amazing thing about Nagastra-1 is that it can end missions early if needed, which makes it more flexible in

times of war. The drone can also do monitoring during the day and at night, making it even more useful in various operational situations. Even better, its electric motor system is made to make little noise, so it can stay hidden at great heights without being seen.

COST EFFICIENCY AND LOCAL PRODUCTION

With more than 75% indigenous parts, Nagastra-1 lowers India's reliance on foreign military technology, which is in line with the country's larger efforts to make its defence industry more indigenous. This method of local development not only helps local businesses, but it also saves a lot of money compared to buying things from other countries. Drones with similar features have been used in ongoing foreign conflicts, like the war between Russia and Ukraine. The Nagastra-1 is different from other drones around the world because it can abort missions and reuse potential through its parachute recovery system. This gives it tactical and logistical benefits.

INDIAN ARMY LAUNCHES 'VIDYUT RAKSHAK' MONITORING SYSTEM



The Vice Chief of the Indian Army, Lt. Gen. Upendra Dwivedi, officially launched Vidyut Rakshak, a new Internet of Things (IoT)-enabled integrated generator tracking, protection, and control system. This was developed by Maj Rajprasad R S and was recently displayed during "Exercise Bharat Shakti," which is a big step forward in the Indian Army's "Year of Tech Absorption." At the opening event, the first production units of Vidyut Rakshak were put into service.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS AND FEATURES

Vidyut Rakshak wants to improve the performance of engines used by the Indian Army by adding cutting-edge

IoT technology to them. This method works with all army generators, no matter what kind, make, model, or age they are. Some of the most important features are watching generator parameters in real-time, finding faults before they happen, and automating control operations so that less work has to be done by hand.

STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

The Indian Army wants to use more technology-based solutions in its operations, and the creation and introduction of Vidyut Rakshak are part of that plan. This project not only makes operations more efficient, but it also backs up predictive repair methods that can make important equipment last longer. Army Chief General Manoj Pande said that this method is a great example of how technology can change things in the military.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

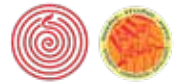
There was a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed at Aero India 2023 that made it easier to make this new method. This relationship shows that the army is serious about working with academic and research institutions to encourage new ideas.

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ECONOMICS





PERU ADOPTS INDIA'S UPI SYSTEM FOR INSTANT DIGITAL PAYMENTS

HOW WILL PAKISTAN RESOLVE TAX POLICY DISAGREEMENTS?

INDIA EXIM BANK OPENS NAIROBI OFFICE TO BOOST EAST AFRICA TRADE

SEBI WINS 'BEST BUSINESS REGULATOR' AWARD IN ASIA PACIFIC

INDIA'S FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES HIT RECORD \$651.5 BILLION

INDIAN POST OFFICE ACT, 1898

ADB APPROVES \$170 MILLION FOR INDIA'S HEALTH SYSTEM PREPAREDNESS

RBI AWARDED "RISK MANAGER OF THE YEAR 2024"

WB SUPPORTS CHENNAI'S SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT GOALS

INDIA TOPS GLOBAL REMITTANCE WITH \$125 BILLION IN 2023

WORLD BANK GRANTS \$1.5 BILLION FOR INDIA'S GREEN ENERGY PUSH

RBI REVISES SAARC CURRENCY SWAP FRAMEWORK FOR 2024-2027

WORLD INVESTMENT REPORT 2024 – INDIA'S FDI FALLS 43% IN 2023



PERU ADOPTS INDIA'S UPI SYSTEM FOR INSTANT DIGITAL PAYMENTS

NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) has struck a significant deal with the Central Reserve Bank of Peru (BCRP) to implement a digital payment system akin to India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in Peru. This partnership marks a pioneering move as Peru would become the first country in South America to adopt NPCI's technology. The initiative is part of NPCI's broader strategy to introduce UPI-based systems globally, aiming to enhance digital payment infrastructure worldwide.

REASON BEHIND THE PERU INITIATIVE

- **INITIAL AGREEMENT:** The deal with BCRP is the second in a series of foreign partnerships that NIPL has started. The first was with the Bank of Namibia. The main goal of these deals is to help other countries improve their digital payment systems by copying India's successful UPI system.
- **OBJECTIVES OF THE COLLABORATION:** The collaboration's main goals are to strengthen Peru's financial system, boost economic growth, help more people get access to financial services, and make deals more open and less expensive. The project also works on making sure that the payment systems can change with the times and meet the needs of the market.
- **HOW IT WORKS:** The agreement says that the BCRP will make it easier for people and companies in Peru to send money instantly. This is meant to make purchases easier and get more people in Peru who don't have bank accounts to use digital payments. This will improve their access to financial services and their ability to participate in the economy.
- **SUPPORT AND INFLUENCE:** The Reserve Bank of India

(RBI) has been very helpful with this foreign project. RBI's support shows how important this partnership is, not just for Peru but for the acceptance and use of UPI-like systems around the world.

GLOBAL IMPACT AND FUTURE PLANS

Along with the NPCI, the RBI wants to introduce the UPI system in 20 countries by 2028–29. This is on top of the implementations that have already happened in France, Sri Lanka, and the UAE. The plan to grow comes at a time when UPI is handling more and more transactions in India. In May 2022, a record 14.04 billion transactions were made through UPI. It is hoped that this global effort will bring all payment systems up to date, make them safer, and add new digital payment options.

UNIFIED PAYMENTS INTERFACE (UPI)

The Unified Payments Interface (UPI), developed by India's National Payments Corporation in 2016, revolutionizes mobile banking by enabling instant money transfers between banks via mobile devices. Unlike other global payment systems, UPI uniquely allows multiple bank accounts to be linked to a single mobile app. It offers robust banking services including simplified two-factor authentication. Remarkably, UPI operates efficiently with minimal data usage and in areas with slow internet speeds, enhancing accessibility. In July 2023 alone, UPI facilitated an astounding 6.57 billion transactions. Its versatility extends beyond India, being adopted in countries like the UAE and Bhutan, expanding its financial inclusivity. UPI's user-friendly design and effectiveness have democratized banking access, benefitting individuals from diverse backgrounds across India.

HOW WILL PAKISTAN RESOLVE TAX POLICY DISAGREEMENTS?

Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been unable to agree on any changes to suggested tax policies during recent talks. The main points of disagreement are combining the income tax rates for paid and non-salaried people and putting a single 18% sales tax on food and medical supplies.

KEY ISSUES IN NEGOTIATIONS

- **INCOME TAX FOR SALARIED AND NON-SALARIED INDIVIDUALS:** The IMF wants to raise the maximum income tax rate from 35% to 45% for people with monthly incomes over Pakistani Rs 467,000. This would affect both salaried and non-salaried individuals. This suggestion goes against Pakistan's plan to keep the top rate at 35% for salaried workers while potentially agreeing to the higher rate for non-salaried people.
- **TAXATION OF EXPORTERS:** Everyone agrees that exporters should pay more taxes because they have been charged less than other groups in the past.
- **SALES TAX ON ESSENTIALS:** The government doesn't like the idea of putting a standard 18% sales tax on essentials like fertilizers, pesticides, seeds, and healthcare goods because it could cause inflation and public backlash.

IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS AND SECTORS

- **FOR GROUPS WITH MIDDLE AND LOW INCOMES:** People with lower incomes might have to pay higher taxes under the new tax slabs, which would hurt people in the

middle of the income range the most.

- **HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE SECTORS:** Putting an 18% sales tax on important farming supplies and medical items could make them more expensive to make and use.
- **SALARIED INDIVIDUALS:** If the income tax rates are changed, salaried people may have to pay a lot more in taxes, which means they will need a big raise in pay to cover the extra cost.

NEGOTIATION OUTLOOK AND ECONOMIC PRESSURES

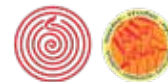
The IMF has asked Pakistan to come up with other ideas that might lower the taxes that people have to pay. Pakistan is under a lot of pressure to get a new loan from the IMF so that it doesn't fail. They are hoping to finish the talks before the end of the fiscal year.

India among top five global destinations for Real Estate Investment

India has become one of the best places to invest in real estate across borders. By March quarter, it was ranked among the top five places in the world to buy land and build on it. According to a study by Colliers, about 55% of these inflows came from foreign investors. Most of these purchases (73%) are in assets that are ready to use, with a clear preference for properties that are already making money.

INVESTMENT FOCUS AND TRENDS

Foreign investments in Indian real estate reached \$3.6 billion in 2023, making up 67% of all the money that came in. Most of it went into office spaces that are either ready to be



used or almost finished, which is great for investors because they can start making money right away. The strong investment trend toward high-quality, long-lasting office assets in 2024 kept this trend going. There are also more and more different kinds of real estate investments, such as logistics, alternative assets, residential, and real estate loans.

INSTITUTIONAL INVESTOR PREFERENCES

Institutional investors usually choose finished and rented homes that give them steady returns. These kinds of investments are liked because they have lower risk and are more likely to follow the rules. They are also easier to get out of. However, now that Grade A projects are fully funded, there is a move toward working together with local developers on new projects in a range of areas, such as office, residential, and industrial places.

ECONOMIC DRIVERS AND MARKET OPTIMISM

Global capital investors continue to be drawn to India by its steady economic growth, strong demand, and generally good business climate compared to other countries. The fact that investments are made at different stages, such as platform formation, land purchase, and construction, shows that a lot of people are optimistic about India's economic future.

RISE OF INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENTS

Investors like PAG Credit and Markets, Invanhoe

Cambridge, Logos, Alta Capital, and CPPIB have been very active in the Indian market. They have put money into residential, warehouse, and other types of assets. Also, investments in land for residential projects have gone up over the last two years, and major investments in residential real estate will go up by 20% just in 2023.

INVESTMENT INFLOWS

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows into poor countries often outpace flows into developed countries, which shows that the economy is changing. China got more FDI than the U.S. in 2020, beating out the U.S. Global FDI dropped by 42% in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This was the lowest amount since the 1990s. Foreign direct investment (FDI) is going into services more and more, not established industries like mining. FDI flows into small island emerging states are much lower than they should be.

"Greenfield investments" make up a big part of FDI, which helps new businesses start up. Digitization and the tech industry are becoming the main areas that benefit from FDI. India's "Make in India" program greatly increased FDI, making it one of the best places for FDI to go. When Brazil made it easier for foreigners to invest in insurance services, more money came into that area. The move toward "de-globalization" could cause FDI patterns to change or go down in the future.

INDIA EXIM BANK OPENS NAIROBI OFFICE TO BOOST EAST AFRICA TRADE

The Export-Import Bank of India (India Exim Bank) recently opened its East Africa Representative Office in Nairobi, Kenya. This is part of a plan to grow its business around the world. The goal of this project is to improve India's trade and business ties with East Africa, which is known for having a lot of resources and young people.

GROWTH IN TRADE BETWEEN INDIA AND EAST AFRICA

India and East Africa have done a lot more business with each other over the past ten years. From USD 9.7 billion in 2013 to USD 12.9 billion in 2022, trade in goods grew quickly. India's exports to East Africa went from USD 8.6 billion in 2013 to USD 9.4 billion in 2022, which shows that trade ties are still getting better.

ROLE AND STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES OF INDIA EXIM BANK

The India Exim Bank is the country's main bank. Its job is to finance, facilitate, and promote India's foreign trade and investments. As part of India's economic diplomacy, one important part of its job is to help make policy and provide money for projects that will be exported. The Bank has offices in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, and Johannesburg, South Africa. These strategic locations in important African cities show that the Bank is committed to building economic ties with the region.

FACILITATING SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROWTH IN AFRICA

Over 200 Lines of Credit worth more than USD 12 billion have been given by India Exim Bank on behalf of the Indian Government to 42 African countries. These credits have made big differences in these countries' social and economic progress by making infrastructure, jobs, farming,

industry, and promoting long-term growth better. In addition, these programs create big chances for businesses and small and medium-sized businesses in both Africa and India, helping to create and keep jobs in many areas.

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF INDIA

- **ESTABLISHMENT AND ROLE:** The Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) was established in 1982 under the Export-Import Bank of India Act. It was created to promote Indian exports by providing financial assistance. Exim Bank is headquartered in Mumbai and serves as the principal financial institution for coordinating the financing of exports and imports.
- **FINANCIAL SERVICES AND PRODUCTS:** Exim Bank provides loans to Indian exporters and foreign governments for infrastructure projects and facilitates buyer's credit. It extends lines of credit to enable foreign governments to finance imports from India, thereby supporting international trade. Important financial products include Buyer's Credit under the National Export Insurance Account (NEIA), Overseas Investment Finance, and Export Credit.
- **IMPACT AND OBJECTIVES:** Exim Bank plays a crucial role in promoting cross-border trade and investments. By financing infrastructure projects abroad, it helps Indian companies expand their international presence. Through its various financial instruments, Exim Bank strengthens India's international trade relations and economic cooperation with other countries.





SEBI Wins 'Best Business Regulator' Award in Asia Pacific

According to The Asian Banker, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) was recently given the "Best Conduct of Business Regulator" award for the Asia-Pacific area. This award, which was given in an event in Hong Kong, shows how important SEBI has been in improving the rules that govern Indian stock markets. Kamlesh Chandra Varshney, a Permanent Member of SEBI, accepted the award on behalf of the organization.

ENHANCEMENT OF REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

SEBI has taken several important steps that have made the Indian stock market much more efficient and trustworthy. The introduction of the T+1 settlement method is one of the important projects. This method, which began to be put in place gradually in 2021 and was fully operational by January 2023, has greatly cut the time it takes for investors to get to their money after trading, which has increased market liquidity and efficiency.

IMPACT OF SEBI'S INNOVATIONS

The Asian Banker pointed out that SEBI has not only made the market more efficient through strict enforcement and new regulatory practices, but it has also made sure that customers are treated fairly and kept the market's integrity strong. These efforts have raised the bar for doing business in India's financial markets, making them more in line with best practices around the world.

WHAT IS T+1 SETTLEMENT?

The T+1 settlement cycle is the process by which trades in assets are settled one business day after they happen. The goal of this method is to make markets work better and lower the risks that come with trade settlements.

India's Foreign Exchange Reserves hit record \$651.5 Billion

With \$ 651.5 billion in foreign exchange reserves by May 31, 2024, India had the highest amount of foreign exchange reserves ever. Positive changes in trade, remittances, and foreign investments have helped India's external industry reach a strong point.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO STRONG FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES

Several things have helped India's foreign exchange reserves grow:

- **EXPORTS OF SOFTWARE AND OTHER SERVICES:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) says that service exports, especially software, business services, and travel, have grown a lot. After growing by 4.2% in the fourth quarter of 2023–24, net service exports went up by 9.3% over the same quarter.
- **GLOBAL CAPABILITY CENTERS (GCCS):** The RBI Governor talked about how important GCCs are and how they have helped software and business services exports a lot. GCC countries have increased the amount of foreign currency coming into India. It is expected to rise from 1,580 in 2022–23 to about 1,900 by 2024–25.
- **REMITTANCES:** India will receive 15.2% of all remittances in 2024, making it the biggest receiver of remittances in

Key global markets, including the U.S., came up with T+1, which will require a lot less capital to clear trades. The U.S. plans to fully adopt it in 2024. In addition, it could affect liquidity by making banking processes go faster. In the past, the change from T+2 to T+1 has been made possible by improvements in digital technology and changes to the rules to allow for faster payments. The change is part of a larger effort to improve the infrastructure of financial markets in reaction to more trading and the need for more resilience.

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE BOARD OF INDIA (SEBI)

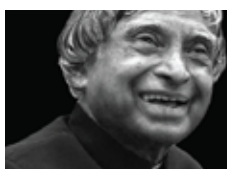
- **ESTABLISHMENT AND STATUTORY POWERS:** SEBI was established in 1988 as a non-statutory body without any statutory powers. On January 30, 1992, SEBI was given statutory power through the SEBI Act. It is headquartered in Mumbai, SEBI has Northern, Eastern, Southern, and Western Regional Offices.
- **FUNCTIONS AND OBJECTIVES:** SEBI was created to protect investors and ensure fair practices in the securities market. It develops regulations for the securities market to maintain market integrity and transparency. In 1992, SEBI introduced the concept of registered Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) to attract foreign funds into the Indian markets.
- **SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS:** In 2010, SEBI banned 14 life insurance companies from issuing unit-linked insurance plans (ULIPs), categorizing them as mutual fund products. SEBI continuously works towards improving market infrastructure, implementing best practices, and growth in the securities market.

the world. Remittances came in more than \$100 billion in the first nine months of FY 2023–24.

- **TRADE AND CURRENT ACCOUNT DEFICIT:** The trade deficit is lower because of strong growth in services and strong remittance transfers. This makes the current account deficit less severe. It is expected that the current account deficit will stay within manageable levels for the whole fiscal year 2024–25.

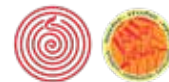
INVESTMENT FLOWS AND EXTERNAL FINANCING

- **FOREIGN PORTFOLIO INVESTMENT (FPI):** India received a net of \$41.6 billion in FPI in 2023–24. But things have changed in the first few months of 2024–25. On 05 June, 2024, net losses were \$5 billion.
- **FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI):** Gross FDI entries stayed strong through 2023–24, even though net FDI slowed down. India also stayed on top as the best place in the Asia-Pacific region for new foreign direct investment (FDI).
- **EXTERNAL COMMERCIAL BORROWINGS (ECBS) AND NON-RESIDENT SAVINGS:** Both ECBs and non-resident savings came in more than they did the year before. Between 2023 and 2024, the number of ECB deals grew by a large amount.



You have to dream before your dreams can come true..

- A. P. J. ABDUL KALAM



Indian Post Office Act, 1898

The Indian Post Office Act of 1898 was thrown out on June 18, when the Post Office Act was signed into law. This major change to the law is meant to bring India's postal services up to date and fit the country's current social and security situation. It goes beyond just delivering mail and includes several services that help citizens.

KEY PROVISIONS OF THE NEW ACT

The new law makes several important changes:

- **INTERCEPTION POWERS:** Section 9 of the Act gives the Center the power to stop, open, or hold mail under certain circumstances, such as when there is a threat to state security, public order, or a violation of the law. This aligns with the rules that were in place before the 1898 Act, but it has been expanded to fit modern needs.
- **EXEMPTION FROM LIABILITY:** Like the old law, Section 10 of the new law protects the Post Office and its employees from liability for losses, misdelivery, or damage, as long as certain conditions are met.
- **REGULATION OF PRIVATE COURIER SERVICES:** This differs from previous policies, the Act officially regulates

private courier services, moving away from the state's former position as the only authority on mail delivery.

REMOVAL OF OUTDATED PENALTIES AND EXCLUSIVITIES

The new law gets rid of some of the fines and special rights that were in the old law:

- **LOSS OF THE CENTER'S EXCLUSIVE RIGHT:** The Act officially ends the government's sole right to deliver letters, recognizing that private delivery services have become more popular.
- **GETTING RID OF SOME CRIMES:** In the 1898 Act, there were crimes linked to dishonesty and fraud by Post Office employees. These crimes are no longer there at all.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

There is no doubt that India's new Post Office Act is a step toward better regulating mail and courier services. However, there is still a lot of disagreement about what this means for privacy rights and the balance of power in the government. As these rules go into force, it will be clear how the Act changes the way India Post works and how it affects the postal system as a whole.

ADB approves \$170 million for India's Health System preparedness

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) recently gave India a big loan of USD 170 million, which is about Rs 1,418 Cr. The loan is meant to improve India's healthcare system. People in the country are getting this cash help to make them better prepared and faster to respond to future pandemics.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ADB LOAN

The recently approved funding is in line with India's National Health Policy 2017, which aims to make sure that all people can get good healthcare. The loan is labelled as policy-based, which means it will fix problems with policy frameworks, laws, and governmental governance, which will help move the goal of universal healthcare coverage forward.

STRENGTHENING HEALTH SURVEILLANCE AND RESPONSE

One important way the loan will be used is to improve disease monitoring systems across the country. The program will set up a network of labs that will work together to keep an eye on infectious diseases. This network will connect cities, states, and unions, making it much easier for the country to keep an eye on and quickly act to public health threats.

IMPROVING DATA SYSTEMS AND HEALTH CARE GOVERNANCE

The money will help build strong data systems that are needed to keep an eye on and coordinate national health programs, especially those that help poor people, women, and other vulnerable groups. There will also be improvements to how India's "One Health" system is run and coordinated. This plan involves many areas and is meant to fully deal with the fear of new infectious diseases.

SUPPORT FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND REGULATORY REFORMS

Some of the ADB's money will be used to help change policies that will make sure there are enough skilled and qualified people working in healthcare. Laws will be put in place as part of these changes to keep education, services, and professional behaviour of healthcare workers like nurses, midwives, and doctors up to high standards. As part of the

initiative, health management teams will be sent to different states to improve public health duties and service delivery.

Nvidia becomes the World's most valuable Company
Nvidia is a well-known technology company that makes graphics processing units (GPUs). They recently did something very impressive by becoming the most valuable company in the world. This new development is a big deal in the tech business; Nvidia has now surpassed tech giants like Microsoft and Apple.

RECENT CONTEXT AND MARKET SURGE

Nvidia's market value reached an all-time high of \$3.326 trillion on June 18, when its stock price went up by 3.2% and reached \$135.21 per share. This big rise in value happened after Nvidia passed Apple and became the second most valuable company a few days before. Nvidia's shares have gone up a huge 173% over the year, doing much better than other tech companies like Microsoft. This sudden rise is mostly because of the high demand for Nvidia's high-end chips, which are currently hard to find.

IMPACT OF AI AND COMPETITION AMONG TECH GIANTS

Nvidia's great market performance is due in large part to its leading position in the artificial intelligence (AI) field. Nvidia's GPUs are very important for AI technologies, which puts the company in the middle of a race between the biggest tech companies. Big companies like Microsoft, Meta Platforms, and Alphabet (Google's parent company) are all working to improve their AI computer skills so they can lead this new field.

STOCK MARKET DYNAMICS AND INVESTOR APPEAL

On June 18, over \$103 billion was added to the market value of Nvidia's stock, making it the most valuable stock in history. A ten-for-one stock split by Nvidia on June 7 made the company even more appealing to individual buyers. This strategic move made the shares more appealing and cheaper for small investors, making it easier for more people to invest in this high-value stock. Analysts like Sam North from eToro say that these kinds of splits are very good for small buyers



because they make buying shares easier.

RAPID MARKET VALUE INCREASE

The market value of Nvidia has gone up quickly and significantly. In just nine months, the market value of the company went from \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion. It reached this point in February. The price then went through the roof and reached \$3 trillion in just over three months, showing that the value was rising at a faster rate and that investors were confident in Nvidia's products.

RBI awarded "Risk Manager of the Year 2024"

In the year 2024, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was presented with the "Risk Manager of the Year Award" by Central Banking, a distinguished organization that is headquartered in London, United Kingdom. This honour emphasizes the efforts that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has made to strengthen its risk management policies and its essential role in ensuring the stability of India's financial ecosystem.

RECOGNITION AT THE CENTRAL BANKING AWARDS

At a ceremony held in London, the award was handed to Mr. Manoranjan Mishra, who serves as the Executive Director of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). He accepted the honour on behalf of the organization. Central Banking praised the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for the tremendous gains it has made in risk culture and awareness, which has established a standard for other central banks throughout the world.

ADVANCEMENTS IN RISK MANAGEMENT

There have been significant advancements made in the way that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approaches risk management, particularly through the incorporation of cutting-edge technology such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML). The analytical capabilities and decision-making procedures inside the bank have been improved as a result of the utilization of these technologies in a variety of sectors, such as supervision, risk management, and infrastructure.

CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

While the adoption of AI and ML has provided numerous benefits, the RBI has also acknowledged potential

risks associated with over-dependence on such technologies. These include the challenge of widespread implementation and the latent risks that may manifest in unforeseen ways, similar to the delayed economic impacts triggered by extreme weather or other climate-related events.

ABOUT RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

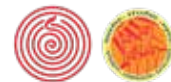
- **ESTABLISHMENT AND NATIONALIZATION:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was established on April 1, 1935, under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. Originally privately owned, it was nationalized on January 1, 1949, to serve the nation's economic interests more effectively.
- **INCEPTION AND HEADQUARTERS:** RBI was conceptualized based on the recommendations of the Hilton Young Commission. Its first office was inaugurated in Kolkata, but the headquarters were later moved to Mumbai in 1937.
- **LOGO AND CURRENCY ISSUANCE:** RBI's logo, inspired by the East India Company Double Mohur, features a lion and palm tree. The bank holds the responsibility of issuing banknotes and controlling the issuance and supply of the Indian rupee.
- **REGULATORY AND DEVELOPMENT ROLES:** RBI regulates the country's financial system, manages foreign exchange, and serves as a banker to the government and other banks. It initiated the Lead Bank Scheme in 1969 to expand banking services in rural areas, and economic development across India.

Top Indian firms gain 85,582 Cr. in Market Valuation

The prices of some of the biggest companies on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) changed a lot last week. The market showed a strong upward trend, which led to a rise in market value of 85,582.21 crore for five of the ten most valuable companies. The BSE Sensex went up by 299.41 points, or 0.39 percent, over the week, reaching an all-time high of 77,145.46 on June 13th. Positive changes in several heavyweight stocks helped this rise happen.

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TOP GAINERS AND DECLINERS

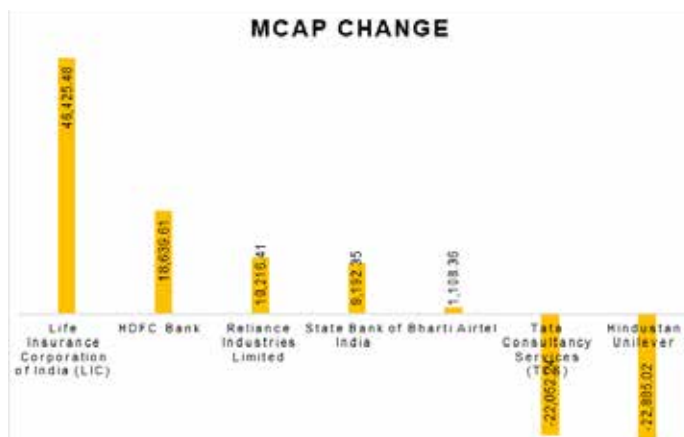


FIGURE: Bar chart representation of the change on market cap of major companies.

The **Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)** observed the most substantial increase in market valuation, rising by 46,425.48 Cr. to reach a total of 6,74,877.25 Cr. HDFC Bank's market capitalization grew by 18,639.61 Cr., achieving

a new valuation of 12,14,965.13 Cr. Reliance Industries saw an addition of 10,216.41 Cr. to its market value, elevating its worth to 19,98,957.88 Cr. The State Bank of India enhanced its market cap by 9,192.35 Cr., while Bharti Airtel's market capitalization increased by 1,108.36 Cr.

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) experienced a significant drop in market valuation, decreasing by 22,052.24 Cr. Hindustan Unilever saw a notable decline in its market valuation, falling by 22,885.02 Cr. Both Infosys and ICICI Bank faced significant reductions in their market valuations, contributing to the overall downtrend among major firms. The combined decrease in market valuation for these five companies – TCS, Hindustan Unilever, Infosys, and ICICI Bank – total 84,704.81 Cr.

MARKET CAPITALISATION RANKINGS

Even though prices changed, Reliance Industries stayed the most valuable business. It was closely followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, and other companies in a list of the ten largest companies in the world by market value. This sudden change in the values of companies shows how active and always changing the Indian stock markets are, which are a reflection of larger economic trends and investor opinion.

WB Supports Chennai's Sustainable Waste Management Goals

The Greater **Chennai** Corporation (GCC), with help from the World Bank, wants to improve the way it handles trash so that it can set up a system that will last until 2026 or 2027. These attempts are mostly about stopping people from throwing trash at Kodungaiyur, which is a big dump in the city.

STRATEGIC MEETINGS AND GOALS

A recent meeting between the **World Bank**, the GCC, and state officials ended with a detailed talk of how to make solid waste management more strategic. Setting Zero Waste as the main goal and finally stopping the use of another major dumpsite, Perungudi, after the success at Kodungaiyur is the main goal.

WORLD BANK'S ROLE AND STUDY

It is planned that the World Bank will improve the city's solid waste management methods over the next 20 years, not just in **Chennai** but all over the state. A big part of this project is a full study that will look at how garbage is currently handled and come up with ideas for how the city's waste management

policies could be improved.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECYCLING AND WASTE REDUCTION STRATEGIES

After the study is over, the GCC will put in place a number of new rules that will aim to boost recycling and cut down on waste sent to landfills. Some of these are changes to the law that the **Chennai** Corporation Council should pass soon. The main goal of these changes is to create a circular economy that has less of an effect on the world and uses fewer resources. The project also looks at administrative problems, like hiring levels, that get in the way of good city management in all 15 zones of **Chennai**. GCC wants to improve general civic response and efficiency by tackling these basic problems. This will help make waste management even better. Overall, these joint efforts by the World Bank and Greater Chennai Corporation show that they are serious about turning Chennai into a model of environmentally friendly trash management.

India tops global remittance with \$125 Billion in 2023

In 2023, India achieved the highest record of remittance inflows globally, amassing USD 125 billion. Strategic economic deals and strong job markets in other countries, especially in the US, UK, and Singapore, were the main things that caused this rise. One important mutual agreement with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) stood out. It made it easier for the two countries to use their currencies in trade.

WHAT IS REMITTANCE TRENDS?

According to the Migration and Development Brief from the World Bank, more money is being sent back to India. This is helping to increase the share of money coming into South Asia, from 63% in 2022 to 66% in 2023. Even though the rate of growth was supposed to drop from the previous year's high of 24.4% to 12.4%, this rise showed big growth. One reason for this growth is that inflation is going down and there are lots of job chances in high-income countries, where a lot of highly skilled Indian professionals live.

IMPACT OF ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS ON REMITTANCES

India and the UAE signed a deal in February 2023 to encourage trade in the Indian Rupee and the Emirati Dirham. This was a very important step. This agreement makes trade and money transfers easier and less dependent on third-party currencies, which could lead to more and faster money transfers. It turned out that the UAE was India's second-largest source of remittances, which shows how important this economic relationship is.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON REMITTANCE FLOWS

Many businesses, especially those in low- and middle-income areas, depend on remittances coming in. They are very important for keeping current accounts and budget deficits in check. It is expected that global remittances grew by 3.8% in 2023, which was less than the big growth seen in the two previous years. This slowdown is a sign of bigger problems in the economy, like rising prices around the world



and weak growth chances, that could affect migrants' real incomes in 2024. This summary of the World Bank report shows how India's strong role in global remittances is driven by smart economic partnerships and strong global labor markets that play a big role in its socioeconomic framework.

INDIA-UAE BILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENT

TRADE EXPANSION GOALS: The India-UAE **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)**, which was signed in February 2022, wants to double trade between the two countries to \$100 billion in five years. Starting in May 2022, the deal aims to lower tariffs on 80% of goods, and over time, it will cover 90% of trade goods.

World Bank Grants \$1.5 Billion for India's Green Energy Push

The World Bank has agreed to lend India \$1.5 billion to help it move toward a low-carbon energy future. This strategic funding will help create green hydrogen and electrolyzers and make it easier for the country to use renewable energy.

OBJECTIVE AND IMPLEMENTATION

The main goal of this money is to improve India's energy policies and rules so that more investments can be made in the energy transition industry. One important part of this is encouraging new ideas in green hydrogen and sustainable energy. The World Bank's plan is set up to do more than just fund direct projects. It also aims to support policymaking and provide professional assistance for creating important interventions.

MOBILISING FURTHER FINANCING

One important part of this initiative is that it focuses on getting more private sector money into the energy industry. This move fits with the bigger goal of boosting green energy options like floating solar power systems and offshore wind

- **SECTORAL FOCUS AND INVESTMENT:** Key industries like petrochemicals, gems, jewellery, and fabrics are part of CEPA, which means that big investments will be made in infrastructure. This important agreement should strengthen business ties and encourage growth in many areas.
- **INNOVATION AND DUTY-FREE ACCESS:** The deal also makes it possible for businesses to work together in new areas like AI, blockchain technology, and fintech. Notably, CEPA wants to let 90% of India's goods go to the UAE duty-free, which will make trade between the two countries easier.

farms.

ENHANCING ENERGY EFFICIENCY

In addition to giving money, the World Bank's program aims to make different areas more energy efficient, such as by encouraging the construction of green buildings. Also, attempts will be made to change grid codes so that renewable energy sources can be used more. This will make the energy systems stronger and last longer.

INTEGRATING RENEWABLE ENERGY INTO THE GRID

Renewable energy being added to the national grid is a key part of the program's plan. As part of the scheme, existing grid codes will be changed to make room for more renewable energy. Aside from that, it wants to encourage options like battery energy storage that make it easier to provide clean power all day. The World Bank's all-around method shows a complete plan to help India switch to a low-carbon economy, which will allow it to keep up with its fast economic growth while also taking environmental impacts into account.

RBI Revises SAARC Currency Swap Framework for 2024-2027

A new system for currency swaps between SAARC countries has been set up, covering the years 2024–2027. This is a big update from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). This project is meant to help the member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) stay financially stable. The Reserve Bank of India's decision is part of ongoing attempts to improve financial cooperation in the SAARC region. Exchange rates and currency swaps are financial tools that help countries handle foreign exchange and liquidity problems well, keeping the world's economies stable.

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE FRAMEWORK

One important change in the new system is the addition of a separate Indian Rupee (INR) Swap Window. This new window has a total sum of ₹250 billion and is meant to make swaps in Indian Rupee easier. India wants to make it easier for people in the area to use the Indian Rupee (INR).

DOLLAR AND EURO SWAP PROVISIONS

Along with the INR Swap Window, the RBI still has a separate swap option for US Dollars and Euros, with a total of \$2 billion in assets. Offering a range of currencies makes

it easier to help more people with different needs and gives SAARC countries access to major currencies.

OPERATIONAL MECHANISM

With this plan in place, RBI will make straight swap deals with the central banks of the SAARC countries. The swap lines can't work without these deals, which spell out the rules for exchanging currencies and getting financial help.

SAARC CURRENCY SWAP FACILITY ORIGINS AND GOALS

When it opened in November 2012, the SAARC currency swap facility was meant to be a safety net for countries facing short-term problems with their foreign exchange and balance of payments until more permanent answers can be found. This building shows how SAARC countries can work together to keep their economies stable and cooperative.

ELIGIBILITY AND ACCESS

To use the currency swap facility, SAARC member countries must make bilateral swap deals with the RBI. This makes sure that all the countries that are taking part have decided on the terms of support, which are in line with their own and the group's economic goals.



**INDIA'S LARGEST ONLINE IAS
COACHING ACADEMY**



World Investment Report 2024 – India’s FDI Falls 43% in 2023

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) around the world went down by 2% in 2023 compared to 2022. The drop varies from country to country, with big drops seen in India, China, France, Australia, and the USA. The 2024 World Investment Report from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) goes into great depth about this trend.

DECLINE IN FDI TO INDIA

India saw a big drop in FDI. Inflows dropped from \$49 billion the previous year to \$28 billion in 2023, a 43% drop. India’s place in the world for FDI receipts dropped from eighth in 2022 to fifteenth in 2023 because of this change. Indian projects are still the most popular places for foreign project financing and new construction, even though the country’s economy is weakening.

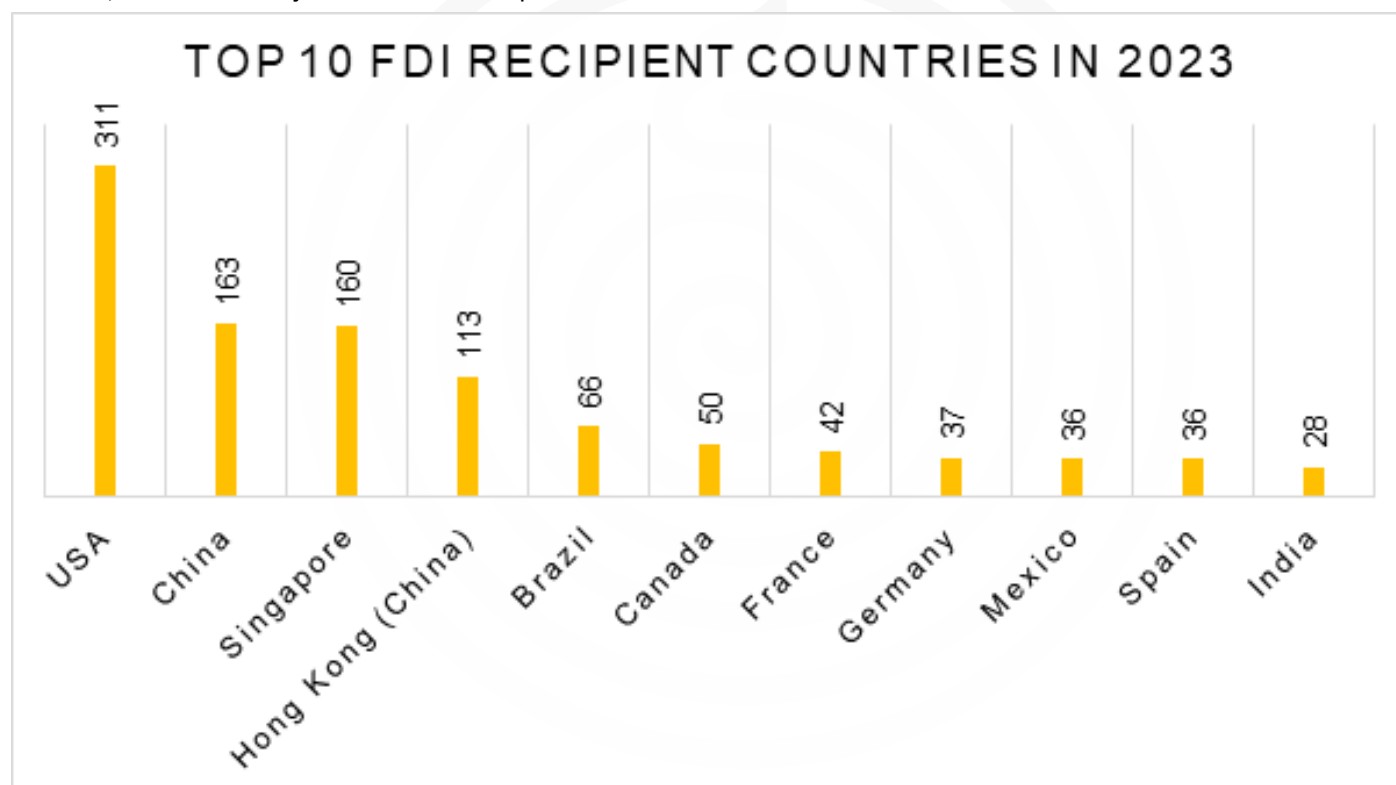
WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF FDI DECLINE?

The general drop in FDI in 2023, according to UNCTAD, was caused by multinational companies (MNCs)

being more careful. Uncertain global growth prospects, geopolitical tensions, economic fragmentation, strict industrial policies, and the ongoing diversification of supply lines are some of the main things that are causing this. These things have made people less likely to invest and made it harder for money to flow freely between countries.

SECTOR-SPECIFIC IMPACTS

The drop in FDI has had different effects on different industries. There was a 23% drop in international project finance, which is important for infrastructure, and a 46% drop in cross-border mergers and acquisitions. This last trend is especially important because mergers and acquisitions are key for FDI in emerging countries like India. FDI to poor countries has dropped by 7% to \$867 billion, but the effects have been different in different areas. For more specifics, FDI to developing Asia dropped by 8%, reaching \$4 billion. An unusual drop in FDI in China stands out, as do related trends in West and Central Asia.



ABOUT UNCTAD

The United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was founded in 1964 and given a new name in 2004. It is an official UN body. UNCTAD is an organization based in Geneva, Switzerland, whose goal is to promote trade, investment, and growth in developing countries. Its annual reports give lawmakers and investors around the world important information about trade and investment trends in different regions and around the world.

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SYMPATRIC SPECIATION

**NEW ANT SPECIES FOUND IN
ARUNACHAL PRADESH**

KAZA SUMMIT 2024

**STATE OF THE OCEAN REPORT
2024**

**BIHAR'S TWO BIRD SANCTUARIES
NOW RAMSAR-LISTED**

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY 2024

**AIR OF THE ANTHROPOCENE
PROJECT**

**SUHELWA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY
(SWS)**

NITROUS OXIDE EMISSIONS

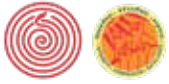
**PANAMA EVACUATES ISLAND DUE
TO CLIMATE**

**ARTIFICIAL ISLANDS PLANNED
NEAR PUDUKOTTAI, INDIA**

HIGH SEAS BIODIVERSITY TREATY

**VEERANGANA DURGAVATI TIGER
RESERVE**

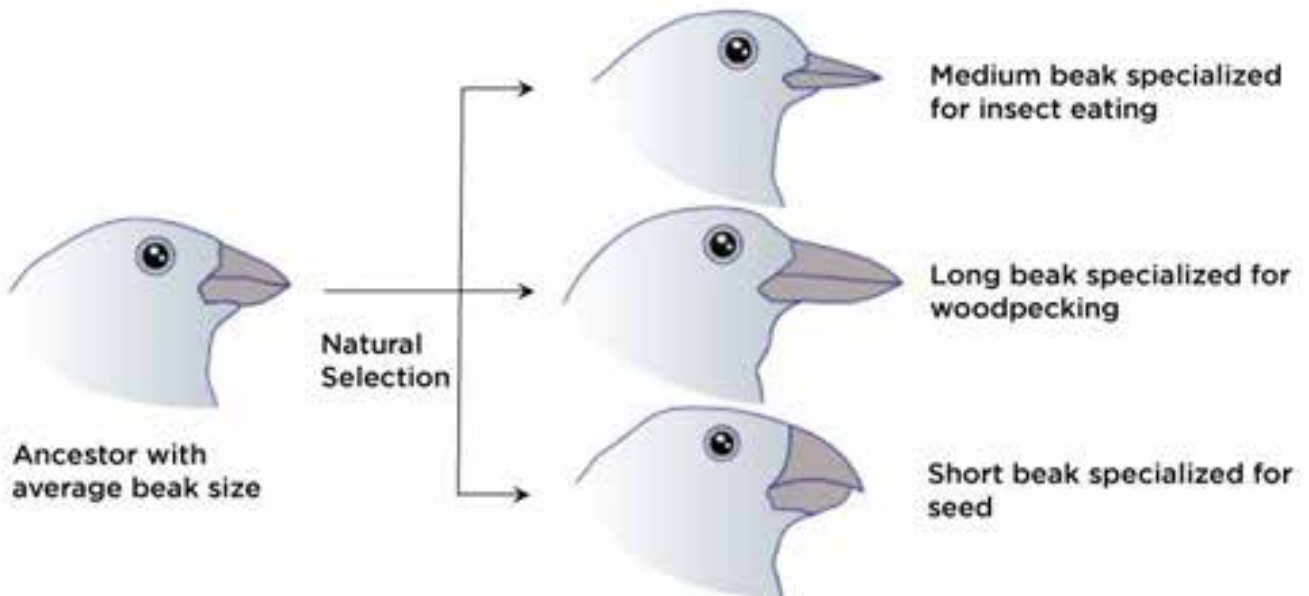
NEW SPECIES OF SNAKE EEL



SYMPATRIC SPECIATION

CONTEXT: Sympatric speciation challenges the traditional view that new species evolve only through geographic isolation, instead suggesting species can diverge without physical barriers.

BACKGROUND: A recent study from IIT-Bombay challenges the traditional view of allopatric speciation, which posits that new species evolve only with geographic isolation. The study highlights mechanisms of sympatric speciation, showing that new species can emerge without such barriers.



Sympatric vs. Allopatric Speciation: Key Points

- Sympatric Speciation: New species evolve from a single ancestral species while living in the same geographic area.
- Definition: Speciation involves a group separating from its species and developing unique characteristics.
- Allopatric Speciation: Occurs when species separate into isolated groups due to a geographical barrier.

- Example of Allopatric Speciation: The Grand Canyon's formation separated squirrel populations, leading to different species on each rim.
- Crossing Barriers: Some species, like birds, can cross barriers and continue interbreeding, avoiding speciation.

The findings highlight how new species can also emerge within the same geographical area, altering our understanding of evolutionary mechanisms.

NEW ANT SPECIES FOUND IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH

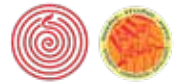
CONTEXT: Researchers have discovered a new blue ant species, *Paraparatrechina neela*, from the rare genus *Paraparatrechina*, in the Eastern Himalayas.

BACKGROUND: Entomologists Priyadarsanan Dharma Rajan and Sahanashree R. from ATREE in Bengaluru, along with Aswaj Punnath from the University of Florida, have discovered a new ant species. Their findings have been published in the peer-reviewed journal *ZooKeys*.



Discovering *Paraparatrechina neela* and Siang Valley's Biodiversity

- *Paraparatrechina neela*: Described as a small ant under 2mm, predominantly metallic blue with subtriangular head and five-toothed mandible.
- Rare Blue Colouration: Blue colouration is common in some insects but rare in ants; only a few out of 16,724 species exhibit it.
- Historic Expedition: Over a century after the Abhor expedition documented Siang Valley's natural history, new surveys are underway.
- ATREE's Research: The ATREE team, funded by the National Geographic Society, is documenting the region's biodiversity.
- Significant Discoveries: ATREE entomologists have discovered a new subfamily, six new genera, and over 40 new insect species.



KAZA SUMMIT 2024

CONTEXT: At the KAZA-TFCA meeting in Livingstone, Zambia, member states reiterated their calls to withdraw from the CITES convention on endangered species trade.

BACKGROUND: At the 2024 Heads of State Summit for the Kavango-Zambezi Trans-Frontier Conservation Area in Livingstone, Zambia, member states renewed calls to withdraw from CITES. This demand stems from repeated denials of permission to sell their abundant ivory and other wildlife products.

Challenges and Debates at the Livingstone Summit

- Economic Pitfalls: Delegates discussed the drawbacks of current CITES restrictions, advocating for wildlife product sales rights.
- Conservation Funding Impact: **Bans on ivory and wildlife**

trade hinder conservation funding, crucial for wildlife management and protection.

- Decision-Making Concerns: Criticism arose over decisions influenced by populism and politics rather than scientific evidence.
- Calls to Exit CITES: There were renewed appeals to leave CITES, suggesting it could prompt reform or empower KAZA states in wildlife management.
- Shift to Eastern Markets: In response to restrictive trophy hunting imports, Zimbabwe and KAZA states are exploring markets in Eastern countries.

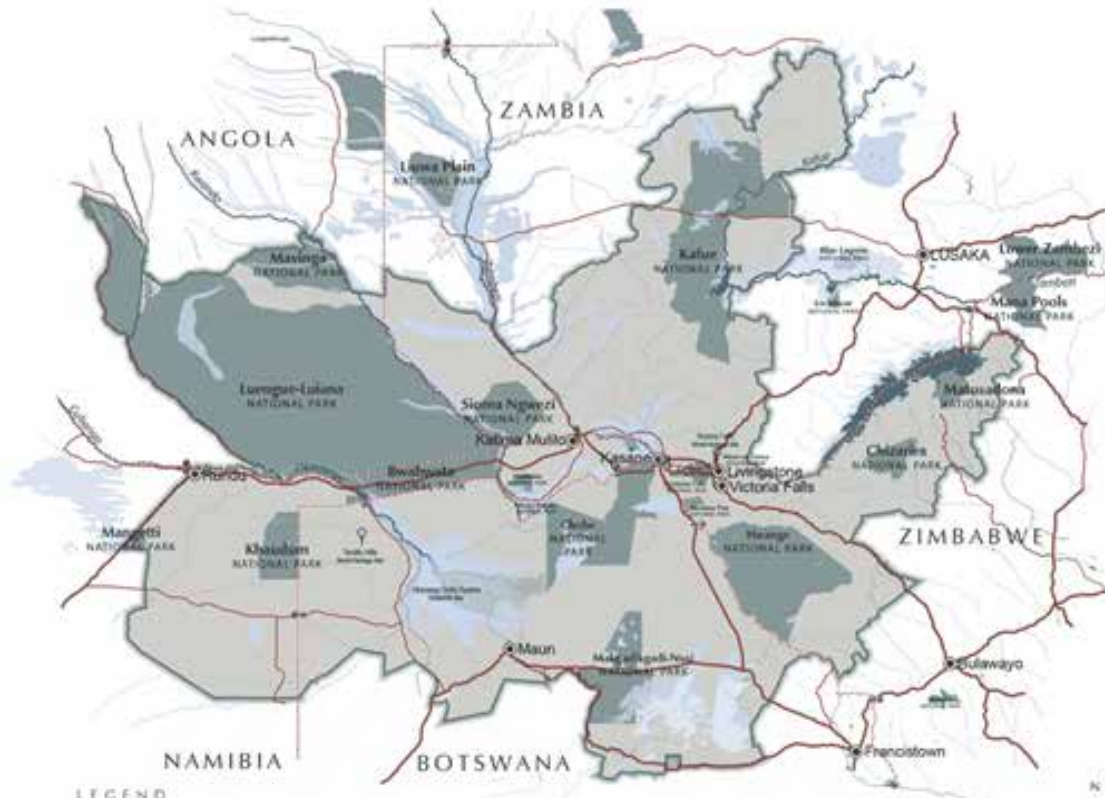
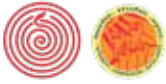
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ഇന്ത്യയിലും
പിന്ദേശത്തും
നടക്കുന്നത് എന്തെങ്കിലും
നിങ്ങൾ അറിയുന്നുണ്ടോ?

**Vedhik Daily
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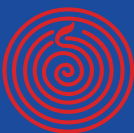
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The KAZA TFCA Initiative: A Vision for Transfrontier Conservation

- Goal: The goal is to sustainably manage the Kavango Zambezi ecosystem for socio-economic wellbeing through conservation and tourism.
- Vision: To establish a world-class transfrontier conservation and tourism destination in the Okavango and Zambezi regions.
- Evolution: Stemming from OUZIT and the “Four Corners” initiatives, KAZA TFCA is government-led with a focus on conservation.
- Foundational Moment: The initiative began formally on December 7, 2006, with an MoU signed by Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.
- Regional Integration: Recognized as a SADC project, KAZA TFCA aligns with SADC’s objectives for natural resource management and environmental protection.

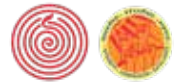


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Understanding CITES: International Wildlife Conservation Agreement

- **CITES Definition:** CITES is an international agreement voluntarily adhered to by States and regional economic organizations.
- **Origins:** Drafted after a 1963 IUCN resolution, which uniquely combines government and civil society memberships.
- **Objective:** Ensures international trade in wild animals and plants doesn't threaten their survival; entered into force in July 1975.
- **Administration:** The CITES Secretariat, under UNEP in Geneva, coordinates and advises on Convention operations.
- **Decision-Making Body:** The Conference of the Parties to CITES, comprising 184 Parties, makes supreme decisions.

Understanding CITES Appendices

Appendix I: Includes the most endangered species, with 1082 listed, prohibiting international trade except for non-commercial purposes with permits.

Appendix II: Lists species not currently threatened but needing controlled trade; 37,420 species listed, requiring export permits to ensure sustainability.

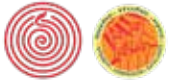
Appendix III: Features species needing international cooperation for regulation; currently 211 listed, allowing trade with appropriate permits.

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STATE OF THE OCEAN REPORT 2024

CONTEXT: The UNESCO State of Ocean Report 2024 underscores the urgency for improved oceanographic research and data to tackle increasing crises like warming and acidification.

BACKGROUND: The State of the Ocean Report (StOR) aims to update policy-makers on ocean health, aligning with SDG 14 and global frameworks like UNFCCC and CBD. Structured around the UN Decade of Ocean Science outcomes, it highlights achievements and guides future research and policy for sustainable ocean management.

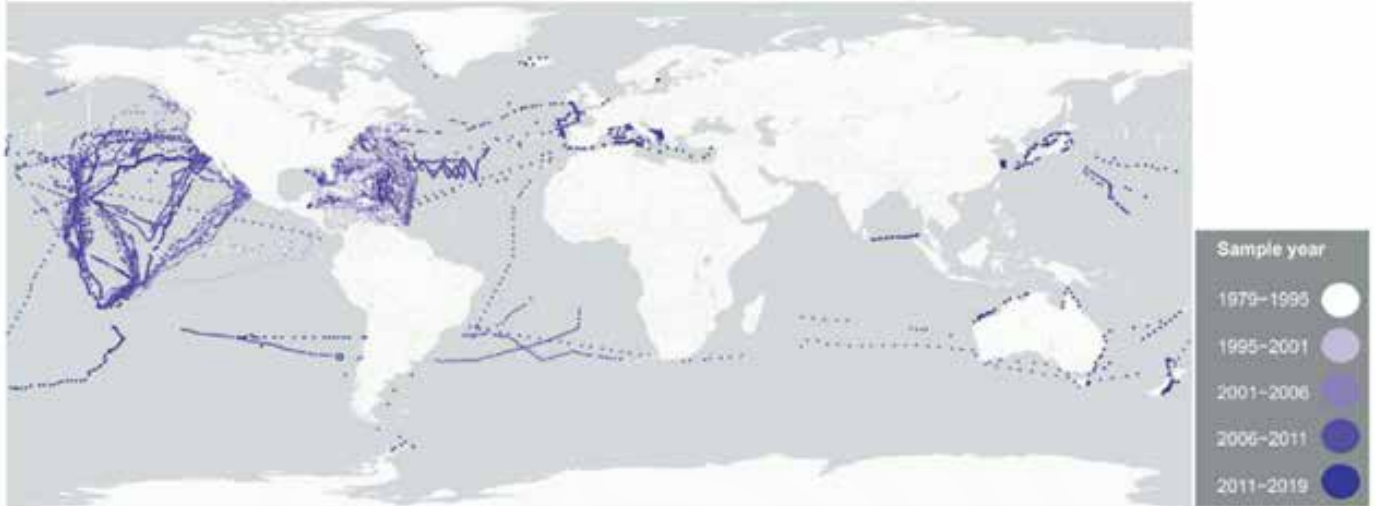


Figure: The distribution of sampling stations, 1979–2019, used to estimate the total quantity of floating plastic particles in the ocean. Source: Eriksen et al. (2023).

2023 OHC (0–2,000 m) anomaly relative to 1981–2010 baseline (IAP/CAS)

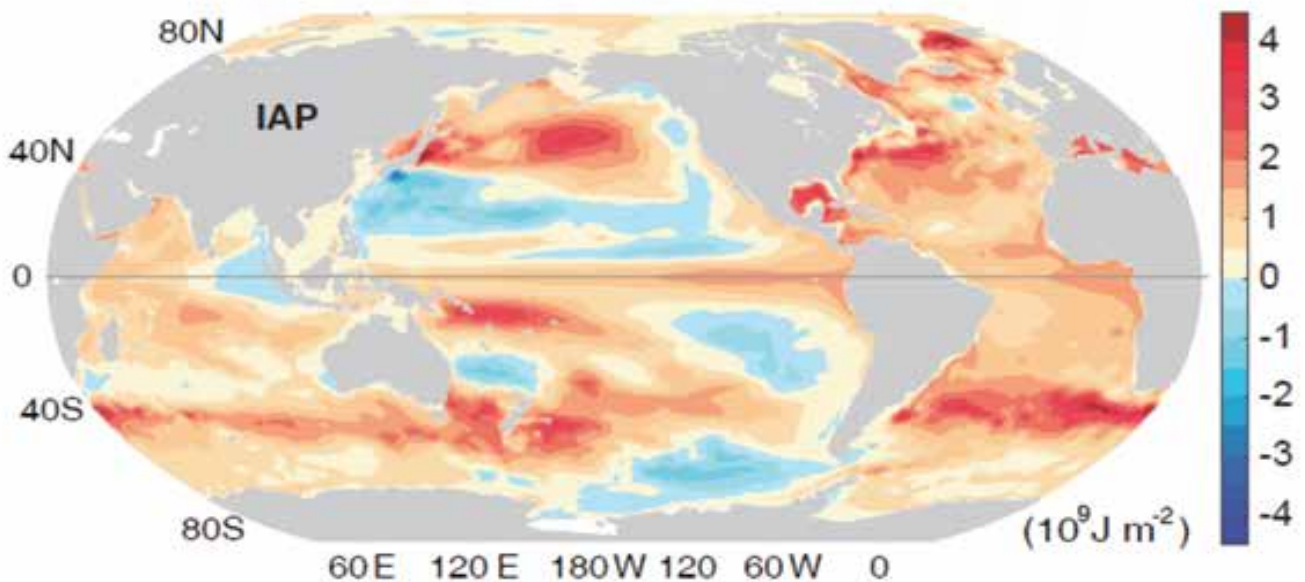
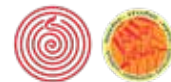


Figure: The annual OHC anomaly in 2023 relative to a 1981–2010 baseline for IAP/CAS data; units: 10^9 J m^{-2} . Source: Chenget al. (2024b).



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State of the Ocean: Challenges and Strategies for Sustainability

- Eutrophication: Persistent increase in excess nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus requires better quantification and reduction strategies.
- Plastic Pollution: Escalating presence of plastics threatens ocean health beyond safe thresholds, necessitating urgent global tracking and mitigation efforts.
- Ocean Acidification: Continual absorption of carbon makes the ocean a significant carbon sink, but predictions indicate over 100% increase in acidification by 2100.
- Ocean Warming: Unprecedented pace of warming affects marine ecosystems, causing sea level rise and altering ocean currents.
- Oxygen Depletion: Decreasing ocean oxygen levels exacerbate hypoxia and expand low oxygen zones, impacting marine life.
- Marine Protected Areas: Crucial for sheltering endangered species, supporting biodiversity, and ensuring food security amidst ocean stressors.
- Coastal Blue Carbon Ecosystems: Vital for carbon storage, facing losses and requiring protection amid climate change.
- Marine Spatial Planning: Essential policy tool to sustainably manage ocean activities, with increasing global adoption.
- Fisheries and Aquaculture: Growing to meet food demands, highlighting the need for sustainable management and conservation.
- Ocean Prediction Systems: Advancements in global and regional systems provide accurate forecasts, though disparities between hemispheres persist.

BIHAR'S TWO BIRD SANCTUARIES NOW RAMSAR-LISTED

CONTEXT: Two wetlands in Bihar have been designated as Ramsar Sites, bringing India's total highly recognized waterlogged ecosystems under the Ramsar Convention to 82.

BACKGROUND: Nagi and Nakti bird sanctuaries in Bihar's Jamui district have been designated as Ramsar sites. These man-made reservoirs, situated in the Jhajha forest range, feature dry deciduous forests and hills in their catchment areas. This recognition on World Environment Day underscores their importance as international wetlands.

Nagi-Nakti Bird Sanctuary

- Location: Nagi Bird Sanctuary, a 200-hectare wetland

in Bihar's Jamui district, formed after the Nagi dam construction.

- Bird Diversity: Designated an Important Bird Area (IBA) by Birdlife International, it hosts migratory birds like Bar-headed Goose and resident species.
- Accessibility: Connected by road to major cities and just 10 km from Jhajha Railway Station, making it easily accessible.
- Landscape: Resembles the Deccan Plateau despite being in the Gangetic Plains, offering a unique ecological setting.

RAMSAR CONVENTION: SAFEGUARDING WETLAND BIODIVERSITY

- Origin: The Ramsar Convention, initiated in 1971 in Ramsar, Iran, is the first treaty for conserving natural resources.
- Definition of Ramsar Wetlands: Encompasses diverse habitats like swamps, marshes, and coral reefs, crucial for biodiversity conservation.
- Conservation Goals: Aims to halt global wetland loss and promote sustainable management through international cooperation and policy-making.
- Ramsar Sites: Designates wetlands of international importance based on ecological, biological, or hydrological significance for conservation frameworks.
- Management Framework: Countries commit to maintaining the ecological character of Ramsar sites through wise use and oversight.

THE MONTREUX RECORD

- Purpose: Registry within the Ramsar List highlighting wetlands undergoing ecological changes due to human activities.
- Establishment: Formed at COP4 in Montreux, Switzerland in 1990 to focus on wetlands needing conservation efforts.
- Current Status: Includes two Indian wetlands: Keoladeo National Park and Loktak Lake; Chilika Lake was delisted later.

INDIA'S RAMSAR SITES: COMMITMENT TO WETLAND CONSERVATION

- Contracting Party: India signed the Ramsar Convention in 1971 and ratified it on February 1, 1982.
- World Wetlands Day: Celebrated globally on February 2 to mark the adoption of the Ramsar Convention.
- Ramsar Sites Milestone: India increased its Ramsar sites to 80, achieving significant growth with 38 added in the last three years.
- Government Initiative: Policy efforts have driven the increase from 26 to 80 Ramsar sites in the past decade.
- Conservation Impact: Expansion of Ramsar sites enhances India's commitment to wetland conservation and biodiversity protection.



WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY 2024

CONTEXT: World Environment Day, celebrated annually on June 5th, focuses on raising awareness about environmental issues and promoting sustainable practices globally.

BACKGROUND: Established by UNEP in 1972, World Environment Day (WED) addresses critical environmental issues. This year, Saudi Arabia will host the 2024 celebration, focusing on land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience. WED promotes sustainable practices and highlights challenges like climate change, air pollution, plastic pollution, and illegal wildlife trade.

World Environment Day 2024: Focus on Land Restoration and Sustainable Development

- World Environment Day: Celebrated annually on June 5, 2024, observed on Wednesday, with the theme “Our Land, Our Future, We Are Generation Restoration.”
- Host Country: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will host World Environment Day 2024, emphasizing land restoration,

desertification, and drought resilience.

- Theme Importance: This year’s theme underscores the critical role of land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience in achieving sustainable development.
- UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration: Land restoration is a key part of the UN initiative (2021-2030) to protect and revive ecosystems globally.
- Sustainable Development Goals: Effective land restoration is essential for meeting the Sustainable Development Goals, addressing ecological and socio-economic challenges.

World Environment Day underscores the urgent need for global environmental action. It raises awareness about critical issues such as pollution, climate change, and biodiversity loss, encouraging individuals, communities, and governments to adopt sustainable practices. Collective efforts on this day can significantly contribute to a healthier, more sustainable planet.

AIR OF THE ANTHROPOCENE PROJECT

CONTEXT: Researchers and artists collaborated on a “painting with light” project in India to visualize invisible air pollution, highlighting its health risks to the population.

BACKGROUND: A scientific team used digital light painting and low-cost air pollution sensors to create photographic evidence of pollution levels in India, Ethiopia, and the U.K. Their study, published in ‘Nature Communications Earth & Environment’, highlights how the ‘Air of the Anthropocene’ initiative sparked local discussions on air pollution’s impact.

Visualizing Air Pollution: A Comparative Study and Awareness Initiative

- Playground Comparison: Two playgrounds in Delhi and rural Palampur were studied, with Palampur showing

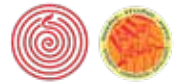
PM2.5 levels 12.5-times lower than Delhi.

- Global Risk: Air pollution is the leading global environmental risk factor, significantly affecting both the environment and human health.
- Art and Science Collaboration: Environmental scientist Francis Pope and artist Robin Price created light paintings to visually compare air pollution in different settings.
- Awareness Campaign: The project, supported by the UN IOM, the U.K.’s FCDO, and UN-Habitat, displayed pollution light paintings in Kampala, Uganda to raise awareness.
- Health Threat: Air pollution is a primary global threat and a leading cause of death, necessitating widespread awareness and action.

Government Initiatives for Air Quality Improvement in India

- National Clean Air Programme (NCAP): Launched in 2019 by MoEFCC, aiming to improve air quality in 131 cities by reducing PM10 levels by 20-40% by 2025-26.
- City Action Plans: Specific plans targeting major air pollution sources; financial support and resources mobilized through various government schemes and local bodies.
- Vehicular Emission Control: Implementation of BS-VI fuel standards, RFID systems, subsidies on e-vehicles, and initiatives like SATAT for bio-gas production.
- Industrial Emission Control: Stricter standards for SO₂ and NO_x, ban on pet coke and furnace oil, and mandates for cleaner fuels and advanced technologies in industries.
- Stubble Burning Mitigation: Subsidies for crop residue machinery, financial support for palletisation plants, and daily monitoring to prevent open burning of paddy straw.





SUHELWA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY (SWS)

CONTEXT: A new tiger reserve will be established in Uttar Pradesh after evidence of a tiger population was found in Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary.

Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary: A Biodiverse Haven

- **Location and History:** Situated in Uttar Pradesh's Shravasti, Balrampur, and Gonda districts, SWS was part of Balrampur Estate before 1952.
- **Establishment:** Declared a Wildlife Sanctuary in 1988, it covers 452 sq km, stretching 120 km east-west and 6-8 km wide.
- **Geographical Significance:** Located on the Indo-Nepal border, SWS is a key area in the Bhabar-Terai Ecosystem, rich in biodiversity.
- **Indigenous Population:** The Tharu tribe, with Mongoloid features, has long resided in this area.
- **Vegetation:** The sanctuary's deciduous and semi-evergreen woodlands include trees like Bahera, Sal, Teak, Jamun, and Shisham.
- **Fauna:** SWS hosts diverse wildlife, including tigers, leopards, bears, and various birds like peacocks, kingfishers, and eagles.



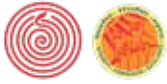
1. Rajaji	26. Mudumalai
2. Corbett	27. Anamalai
3. Dudhwa	28. Srivilliputhur
4. Pilibhit	29. KMTR
5. Valmiki	30. Periyar
6. Panna	31. Parambikulam
7. Sajay Dubri	32. Sathyamangalam
8. Buxa	33. Nagarahole
9. Manas	34. Bhadra
10. Pakke	35. Dandell-Anshi
11. Kamlang	36. NSTR
12. Namdapha	37. Sahyadri
13. Namer	38. Kawal
14. Kaziranga	39. Bor
15. Dampa	40. Todoba-Andhari
16. Orang	41. Pench
17. Sundarban	42. Melghat
18. Achankmen	43. Pench
19. Simlipal	44. Satpura
20. Kanha	45. Bandhavgarh
21. Satkosia	46. Mukundara
22. Nawegaon-Nagzira	47. Ranthambhore
23. Udanti-Sitanadi	48. Sariska
24. Indravati	
25. Bandipur	

TIGER RESERVES IN INDIA



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NITROUS OXIDE EMISSIONS

CONTEXT: According to a new report from the Global Carbon Project, emissions of nitrous oxide, the third most significant human-made greenhouse gas, increased by 40% from 1980 to 2020.

BACKGROUND: Published in Earth System Science Data, a new study reveals that nitrous oxide levels in Earth's atmosphere are increasing at an unprecedented rate, potentially unmatched in the last 800,000 years. Emissions of this significant human-made greenhouse gas surged by 40% from 1980 to 2020, as reported by the Global Carbon Project.

Nitrous Oxide: A Potent and Accelerating Greenhouse Gas

- Introduction: Nitrous oxide (N₂O) is a potent, long-lived greenhouse gas increasing since the pre-industrial era.
- Sources of Emissions: Human-made N₂O emissions mainly arise from nitrogen fertilizers and animal waste used in agriculture.
- Greenhouse Potential: Despite its lower atmospheric abundance, N₂O has a global warming potential 300 times greater than CO₂ over a century.
- Ozone Impact: Besides its role as a greenhouse gas, N₂O is also significant as an ozone-depleting substance.
- Recent Trends: Recent data from NOAA shows an alarming acceleration in atmospheric N₂O levels from 2020-2022.

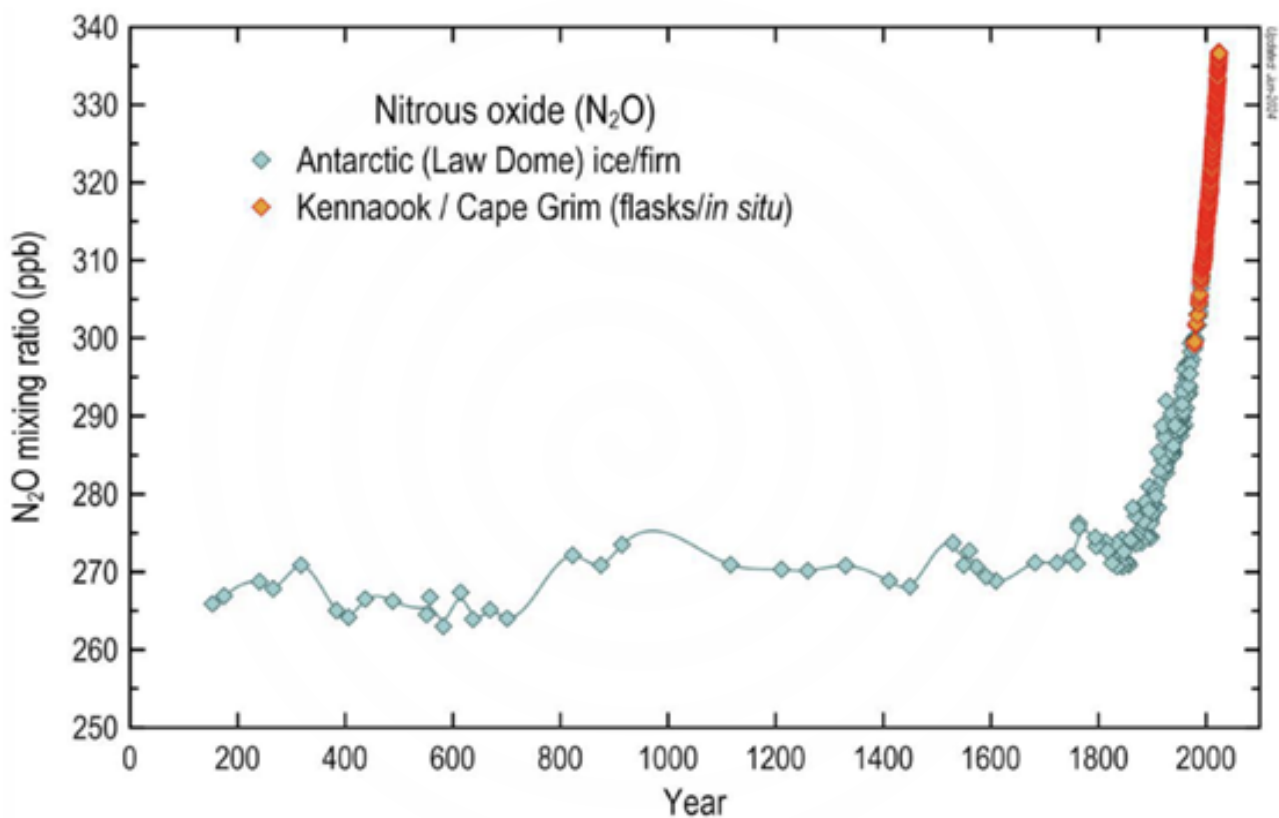


Figure: This graph shows the dramatic increase in atmospheric nitrous oxide concentrations over the past 2,000 years. Nitrous oxide concentrations were relatively stable at around 270 parts per billion until 1750. Credit: Global Carbon Project

PANAMA EVACUATES ISLAND DUE TO CLIMATE

CONTEXT: In Panama, on Gardi Sugdub island in the Caribbean, about 300 Guna families are grappling with whether to leave their ancestral home due to rising sea levels.

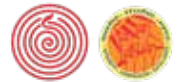
BACKGROUND: In Panama's Caribbean, the island of Gardi Sugdub faces a stark climate change reality. Approximately 300 Guna families must decide whether to abandon their ancestral home or face inundation by rising seas. This marks a historic event as Panama prepares to evacuate its first island community due to climate change.

The Evacuation of Gardi Sugdub: A Cultural and Environmental Crisis

- Introduction: Gardi Sugdub, an inhabited island in Guna Yala, faces relocation due to rising sea levels and environmental degradation.
- Geographical Details: The island spans approximately

400 yards in length and 150 yards in width within the Guna Yala archipelago.

- Environmental Challenges: Saltwater intrusion and frequent floods threaten freshwater sources and erode the island's foundations.
- Extent of Impact: Around 63 coastal communities across Panama are predicted to face similar threats from rising sea levels.
- Cultural Displacement: The evacuation signifies more than physical relocation; it disrupts the cultural ties of the indigenous Guna people to their ancestral land.
- Broader Implications: The situation highlights the broader crisis of climate-induced displacements impacting coastal communities worldwide.



Panama's evacuation of its island due to climate impacts illustrates the stark reality of rising sea levels and climate-induced displacement. This urgent action underscores the need for robust adaptation strategies and international cooperation to mitigate future risks and protect vulnerable communities worldwide from the escalating effects of climate change.

ARTIFICIAL ISLANDS PLANNED NEAR PUDUKOTTAI, INDIA

CONTEXT: Artificial islands are planned near Pudukottai's Kavinadu Kanmoi, led by the district administration with the Kadamadai Area Integrated Farmers Association, set for completion in 43 days.

Formation of Artificial Islands in Kavinadu Kanmoi Irrigation Tank, Pudukottai District

- **Initiative Launch:** Removal of the invasive species seemai karuvelam marked the beginning of forming artificial islands in Kavinadu Kanmoi, Pudukottai district.
- **Project Scope:** 10 artificial islands will be created by removing silt from the irrigation tank, supported by local farmers and stakeholders.
- **Implementation Phases:** The project, managed by KAIFA and Pudukottai district administration, will span three phases over approximately 43 days.
- **Environmental Impact:** The islands will host fruit-bearing trees and local species to attract birds, enhancing biodiversity in the area.
- **Government Support:** Technical guidance is provided by Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company, aligning with state initiatives like Tamil Nadu Climate Change Mission and Wetland Mission.

HIGH SEAS BIODIVERSITY TREATY

CONTEXT: On World Oceans Day 2024, the director general of IUCN called for global efforts to establish an effective High Seas Biodiversity Treaty.

BACKGROUND: Aguilar, speaking on World Ocean Day 2024, emphasized support for nations in ratifying a treaty to regulate nearly half of the Earth's surface under international law. She urged increased ratification of a global agreement on unsustainable fisheries and called for advocating a moratorium on deep-sea mining based on scientific, legal, and ethical grounds.

The High Seas Treaty: Protecting Global Ocean Biodiversity

- **Definition and Significance:** The high seas are vast ocean areas beyond national jurisdictions, crucial for global biodiversity, yet poorly protected by current laws.
- **UN BBNJ Agreement:** Adopted in June, the High Seas Treaty aims to establish regulations for biodiversity conservation beyond national boundaries.
- **Signing Process:** Opened for signatures on September 20, 2023, signaling countries' intent to ratify and comply with the new international law.
- **Current Ratification Status:** Despite 90 signatories, only seven countries have ratified the treaty, including Belize, Chile, and Palau.
- **Ratification Requirement:** The treaty requires ratification by at least 60 countries to become international law, which has not yet been achieved.
- **India's Position:** India, along with many others, has neither signed nor ratified the treaty, impacting its global conservation implications.

The High Seas Treaty represents a crucial step towards safeguarding global ocean biodiversity. By establishing regulations for marine protected areas and sustainable resource management beyond national jurisdictions, it aims to mitigate threats like overfishing and habitat destruction. International collaboration under this treaty is pivotal for preserving marine ecosystems and their invaluable biodiversity.



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VEERANGANA DURGAVATI TIGER RESERVE

CONTEXT: For the first time, a rare four-horned antelope was spotted in the Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve.

FOUR-HORNED ANTELOPE

Name: Known as the Chousingha, the four-horned antelope is a small bovid species.

Size: It is Asia's smallest antelope species.

Scientific Name:
Tetracerus quadricornis.

Distribution: Endemic to India and Nepal, found from the Himalayan foothills to the Deccan Plateau.

Habitat: Prefers open, dry, deciduous forests in hilly areas near water sources.

Features: Yellowish-brown to reddish coat, slender build, four horns (unique among bovids), males only possess horns.

Conservation Status: Vulnerable (IUCN Red List), Appendix III (CITES), Schedule I (Wildlife Protection Act, India).

Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve: A Wildlife Haven in Madhya Pradesh

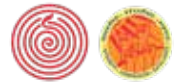
- **Location:** Situated across Sagar, Damoh, and Narsinghpur districts, Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve covers 2,339 square kilometres in central Madhya Pradesh.
- **Designation:** It is the seventh tiger reserve in Madhya Pradesh, integrating Nauradehi and Durgavati Wildlife Sanctuaries.
- **Connectivity Initiative:** Plans include establishing a green corridor linking Panna Tiger Reserve to facilitate natural tiger movement.
- **Geographical Features:** The reserve spans parts of the Narmada and Yamuna River basins, enhancing its ecological diversity.
- **Cultural Heritage:** Historic sites like the Singorgarh Fort are nestled within the reserve, adding cultural significance to its natural wealth.
- **Biodiversity:** Rich in dry deciduous vegetation, the reserve harbors diverse flora such as Teak, Saja, and Ber, along with a variety of fauna including tigers, leopards, and various deer species.

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NEW SPECIES OF SNAKE EEL

CONTEXT: Scientists at the Zoological Survey of India's Gopalpur regional centre have identified a new species of snake eel, named 'Ophichthus Suryai', in Odisha.



Ophichthus Suryai

- **New Species:** Ophichthus Suryai is a recently discovered snake eel species found in Odisha, India.
- **Distinct Features:** It differs from closely related species by its dorsal fin origin just above or slightly before the gill opening.
- **Unique Characteristics:** The species is distinguished by its specific vertebral count and multiple rows of teeth on both the maxilla and mandible.
- **Taxonomic Differentiation:** It can be differentiated from other members of the Ophichthus genus based on these unique anatomical features.

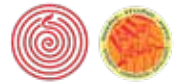
OVERVIEW OF SNAKE EELS

- **Marine Fish Family:** Snake eels belong to the family Ophichthidae within the order Anguilliformes, found widely in marine environments.
- **Resemblance to Sea Snakes:** Often mistaken for sea snakes due to their elongated bodies, snake eels inhabit warm, tropical waters around the world.
- **Habitat and Behavior:** Typically, snake eels reside in the substrate of rivers or sea bottoms, preferring depths up to 2,000 feet but commonly found in shallower waters.
- **Size and Physical Characteristics:** They vary greatly in size, with some species reaching lengths of up to 10 feet (about 3 meters), featuring a scaleless body, small eyes, and a pointed snout.
- **Dietary Habits:** Snake eels primarily feed on small fish and are also known to consume crustaceans as part of their diet.





SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



NASA AND ESA DEVELOPING LUNAR TIME SYSTEM

CHINA'S CHANG'E-6 RETRIEVES FAR SIDE SAMPLES

KERALA LAB CREATES NON-INFECTIOUS NIPAH PARTICLES

JWST FINDS OLDEST GALAXIES, CHALLENGES THEORIES

RUSSIAN COSMONAUT SPENDS 1,000 DAYS IN SPACE

TRISHNA

NEW CARNIVOROUS DINOSAUR DISCOVERED IN ARGENTINA

CRISPR-Cas9

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF QUANTUM SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

GAVI EXPANDS RABIES VACCINE ACCESS GLOBALLY

CHLORELLA GROWTH FACTOR

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INDIAN MEDICAL HERITAGE

MEATY RICE

ISRO'S REUSABLE LAUNCH VEHICLE, PUSHPAK, PASSES TEST

INDIA'S FIRST FAST BREEDER REACTOR STARTS CORE LOADING



NASA AND ESA DEVELOPING LUNAR TIME SYSTEM

CONTEXT: NASA and ESA are collaborating to establish a standardized lunar time system as part of the Artemis program to coordinate international and private lunar missions.

BACKGROUND: NASA and the European Space Agency (ESA) are collaborating to establish a standardized time system for the moon as part of the Artemis program. This initiative aims to coordinate lunar missions from different countries and private entities, addressing logistical challenges by potentially using UTC or a new lunar-specific time scale.



Challenges in Establishing a Lunar Timekeeping System

- **Extended Lunar Cycle:** The moon's day-night cycle lasts about 29.5 Earth days, necessitating a unique approach to consistent timekeeping compared to Earth's 24-hour day.
- **No Natural Time Zones:** Unlike Earth, the moon lacks a natural reference point for time zones, requiring the creation of an entirely new timekeeping system.
- **International Coordination:** Achieving a standardized time zone for various international and private missions is challenging due to differing requirements and preferences.
- **Technical Synchronization:** Implementing accurate navigation and communication systems is complex, needing compatibility across different lunar missions for precise timekeeping.
- **Communication Delays:** The 1.28-second communication delay between Earth and the moon must be considered to ensure accurate coordination and operation of lunar missions.

NASA and ESA's collaboration on developing a lunar time system marks a significant advancement for future moon missions. By creating a standardized timekeeping framework for the Moon, this initiative aims to enhance coordination, navigation, and scientific research, paving the way for more efficient and successful lunar exploration.

CHINA'S CHANG'E-6 RETRIEVES FAR SIDE SAMPLES

CONTEXT: China's Chang'e-6 became the first spacecraft to return samples from the Moon's far side, which is never visible from Earth.

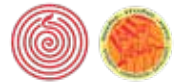
BACKGROUND: Long Xiao, a planetary geologist at China University of Geosciences, stated that Chang'e-6 is the first mission to return samples from the moon's far side. He told The New York Times that this historic achievement is significant for scientists globally and a cause for celebration for all humanity.



Chang'e-6 Lunar Mission

- **Mission Duration:** Chang'e-6 was a 53-day mission, involving an orbiter circling the Moon and a lander descending into the South Pole-Aitken basin.
- **Basin Significance:** The South Pole-Aitken basin, 2,500 km wide, is among the largest impacts in the solar system, potentially revealing material from the lunar mantle.
- **Sample Collection:** The lander collected samples via scooping and drilling, then an ascent vehicle transferred these samples to the orbiter's service module.
- **Return to Earth:** The orbiter's service module returned the collected samples to Earth, providing material for scientific analysis.
- **China's Achievement:** China is the only country to achieve a soft-landing on the Moon's far side, starting with the Chang'e-4 mission in 2019 that explored the Von Karman crater.

The Chang'e-6 lunar mission exemplifies China's growing capabilities in space exploration. Aimed at collecting



and returning samples from the Moon's far side, this mission will provide valuable scientific insights and demonstrate China's commitment to advancing lunar research and

exploration, contributing to the global understanding of our natural satellite.

Moon Mission in the History



1959 - Luna 1
Soviet Union: Luna 1 was the first spacecraft to reach the vicinity of the Moon and the first to be placed in heliocentric orbit.

1966 - Luna 9
Soviet Union: Luna 9 was the first spacecraft to achieve a soft landing on the Moon and transmit photographic data back to Earth.

1970 - Luna 16
Soviet Union: Luna 16 was the first robotic mission to land on the Moon and return a sample of lunar soil to Earth.

2007 - Chang'e 1
China: Chang'e 1 was China's first lunar probe and mapped the entire lunar surface in unprecedented detail.

2003 - SMART-1
European Space Agency (ESA): SMART-1 was Europe's first mission to the Moon and aimed to test ion propulsion and other new technologies.

1972 - Apollo 17
USA: Apollo 17 was the final mission of NASA's Apollo program and the last manned mission to the Moon to date. It included the longest lunar surface stay time (75 hours).



2011 - GRAIL
USA: GRAIL (Gravity Recovery and Interior Laboratory) was a NASA mission consisting of twin spacecraft that mapped the Moon's gravitational field to study its interior structure.

2013 - Chang'e 3
China: Chang'e 3 was China's first lunar lander and rover mission, successfully deploying the Yutu rover on the Moon's surface.

2019 - Chandrayaan-2
India: Chandrayaan-2 was India's second lunar exploration mission and aimed to study the Moon's surface and search for water ice.

2024 - Chang'e-6
China: Chang'e-6 is China's planned mission to retrieve samples from the Moon's far side and return them to Earth for analysis.

2023 - Chandrayaan-3
India: Chandrayaan-3 is India's third lunar exploration mission, focusing on achieving a soft landing on the Moon and deploying a rover to conduct scientific experiments.





KERALA LAB CREATES NON-INFECTIOUS NIPAH PARTICLES

CONTEXT: In a breakthrough for India, Kerala's Institute of Advanced Virology has developed non-infectious Nipah virus-like particles, aiding vaccine production and testing monoclonal antibodies.

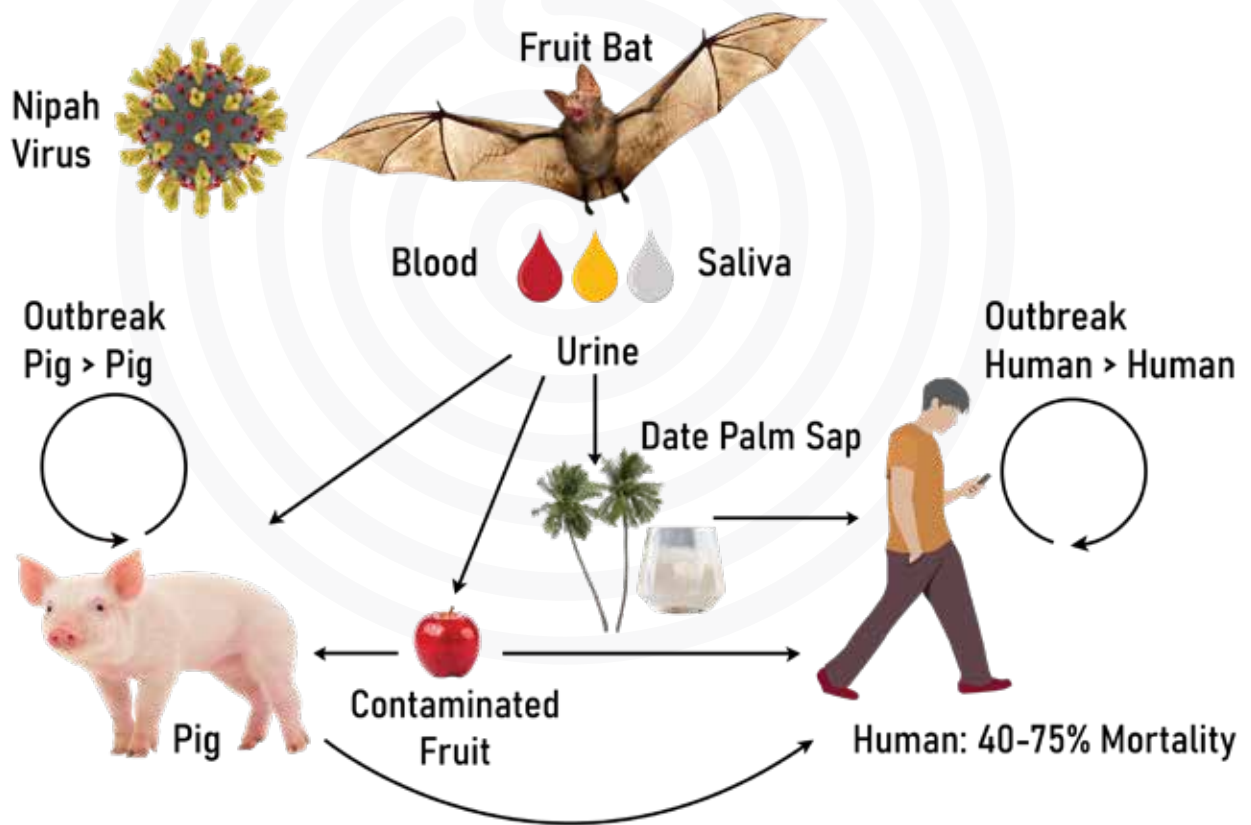
BACKGROUND: During the 2018 outbreak, a non-patented drug by Christopher C Broder from the University of Queensland was imported for compassionate use against Nipah virus. The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is now in discussions with the Serum Institute of India (SII) to locally manufacture monoclonal antibodies (MABs), despite limited initial demand.

Recurrent Nipah Outbreaks in Kerala: Key Concerns and Measures

- Nipah Outbreaks in Kerala: Repeated Nipah virus outbreaks in Kozhikode (2018, 2021, 2023) and Ernakulam

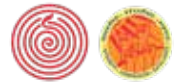
- (2019) raise significant health concerns.
- Special Action Calendar: The Kerala government has implemented a special action calendar for vaccine production, diagnosis, and studying Nipah virus entry.
- Antibody Stability: Longest stability data for the antibody is 63 weeks; 20 doses imported in 2018 went to waste.
- Monoclonal Antibody: Australian monoclonal antibody used globally in limited cases, found safe in a small phase 1 trial but lacks large-scale clinical trials.
- Notable Outbreaks: Major outbreaks include 17 deaths in Kozhikode (2018), one case in Ernakulam (2019), one death in Kozhikode (2021), and six cases with two deaths in 2023.

Nipah Virus Transmission and Mortality



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Nipah Virus: Overview, Transmission, and Symptoms

- Zoonotic Illness: Nipah virus is a zoonotic infection, transmitted from animals to humans, caused by an RNA virus of the Henipavirus genus.
- Initial Outbreaks: First broke out in Malaysia and Singapore in 1998-1999, initially appearing in domestic pigs and spreading to other animals like dogs and cats.
- Natural Reservoir Hosts: Fruit bats, or 'flying foxes' of the genus Pteropus, are the natural reservoir hosts, with the virus present in their urine, faeces, saliva, and birthing fluids.
- Symptoms: Human infection usually presents as an encephalitic syndrome with symptoms including fever, headache, disorientation, and potentially leading to coma and death.
- Lack of Treatment: There is no definitive treatment available for Nipah virus, emphasizing the need for prevention and control measures.

A Kerala lab's creation of non-infectious Nipah particles represents a significant advancement in virus research and vaccine development. This breakthrough enables safer study of the virus, accelerating efforts to

understand and combat Nipah infections, and highlights the region's contribution to global health and infectious disease prevention.

JWST FINDS OLDEST GALAXIES, CHALLENGES THEORIES

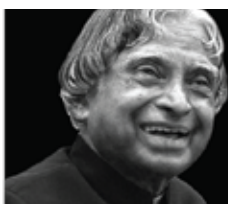
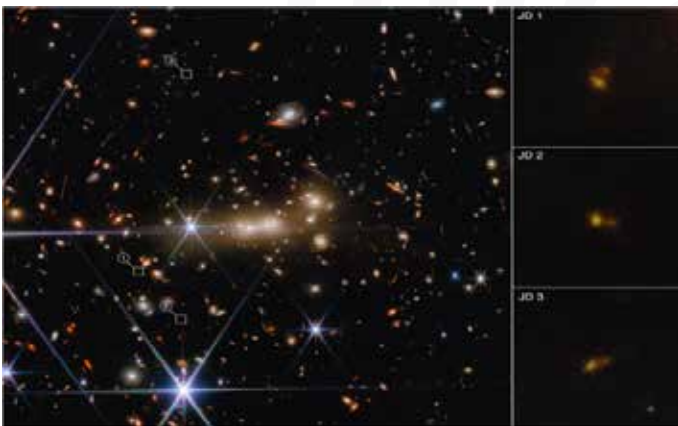
CONTEXT: The James Webb Space Telescope discovered two ancient galaxies, JADES-GS-z14-0 and JADES-GS-z14-1, from 300 million years post-Big Bang, challenging current galaxy formation theories.

BACKGROUND: Astronomers using the James Webb Space Telescope have discovered the two earliest and most distant galaxies ever observed, dating back to 300 million years after the Big Bang. Detailed in a recent arXiv paper, this discovery advances our understanding of the cosmic dawn and galaxy formation.

Unusually Large and Ancient Galaxies Discovered

- Exceptionally Old: Newly discovered galaxies JADES-GS-z14-0 and JADES-GS-z14-1 are among the oldest known, challenging existing theories on cosmic evolution.
- Unusual Size: JADES-GS-z14-0 measures about 1,600 light-years across, larger than expected for galaxies at such an early cosmic epoch.
- Star-Forming Powerhouses: These galaxies are exceptionally bright due to vigorous star formation rather than a supermassive black hole, evidenced by their light signatures.
- Signs of Youth: Detected hydrogen and potentially oxygen atoms indicate active star formation, a common trait in young galaxies, observed at unprecedented distances.
- Future Discoveries: The James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) may uncover even older galaxies, potentially dating back to the first 200 million years of cosmic history.

The James Webb Space Telescope's discovery of the oldest galaxies challenges existing theories of cosmic evolution. These findings prompt a re-evaluation of our understanding of galaxy formation and the early universe, underscoring JWST's pivotal role in advancing astronomical research and deepening our knowledge of the cosmos.



You have to dream before your dreams can come true..

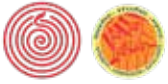
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RUSSIAN COSMONAUT SPENDS 1,000 DAYS IN SPACE

CONTEXT: Russian cosmonaut Oleg Kononenko became the first person to spend 1,000 days in space, Roscosmos announced. His current ISS mission began on September 15, 2023.

BACKGROUND: Oleg Kononenko achieved a milestone with his fifth journey to the International Space Station since 2008. His current mission began on September 15, 2023, when he launched alongside NASA astronaut Loral O'Hara and fellow Russian Nikolai Chub.



Figure: Oleg Kononenko

Kononenko Sets New Space Time Record

- **Record-Breaking Stay:** Oleg Kononenko broke the cumulative space time record in February 2024, surpassing Gennady Padalka's 878 days, 11 hours, 29 minutes, 48 seconds.
- **Extended Mission:** By the end of his mission on September 23, 2024, Kononenko will have spent a total of 1,110 days in orbit.
- **Pride in Achievement:** Kononenko expressed pride in his achievement, stating it gives confidence and pride in overcoming milestones and touching the unknown.
- **International Congratulation:** American colleagues on the ISS were among the first to congratulate Kononenko on his record-breaking achievement.
- **Continued Cooperation:** Despite geopolitical tensions, NASA and Roscosmos extended their cross-flight program to transport astronauts to the ISS until 2025.

A Russian cosmonaut's achievement of spending 1,000 days in space sets a new record and provides invaluable data on long-term human spaceflight. This milestone enhances our understanding of the effects of extended space missions on the human body, crucial for future interplanetary exploration endeavours.

TRISHNA

CONTEXT: ISRO's joint mission with France, Trishna, aims to provide unprecedented climate data.

BACKGROUND: In a significant boost to global climate change monitoring and mitigation efforts, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is partnering with the French Space Agency CNES on an ambitious new satellite mission named Trishna.

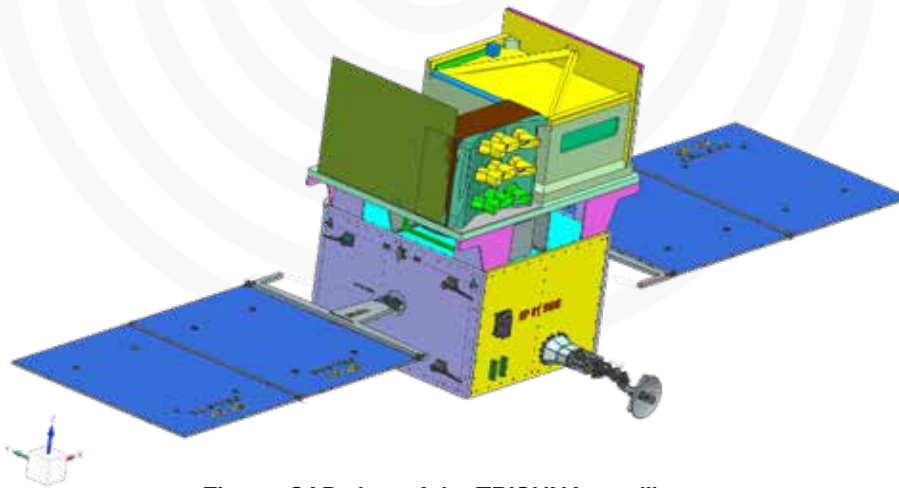


Figure: CAD view of the TRISHNA satellite

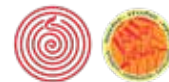
Trishna: Advanced Earth Monitoring Satellite

- **Trishna's Capabilities:** Trishna, short for Thermal infraRed Imaging Satellite for High-resolution Natural resource Assessment, delivers high spatial and temporal resolution Earth surface observations.
- **Unique Features:** It offers high spatial resolution (57m for land/coastal, 1km for ocean/polar) and a frequent revisit time of 2-3 days.
- **Climate Monitoring:** Enables unprecedented monitoring of climate variables like surface temperatures, soil moisture, evapotranspiration rates, and vegetation health indicators.
- **Satellite Specifications:** The 770 kg satellite will operate from a sun-synchronous orbit at 761 km altitude, enhancing

observation capabilities.

- **Advanced Payloads:** Equipped with CNES's Thermal Infrared instrument for thermal mapping and ISRO's Visible-Shortwave Infrared sensor for vegetation monitoring.

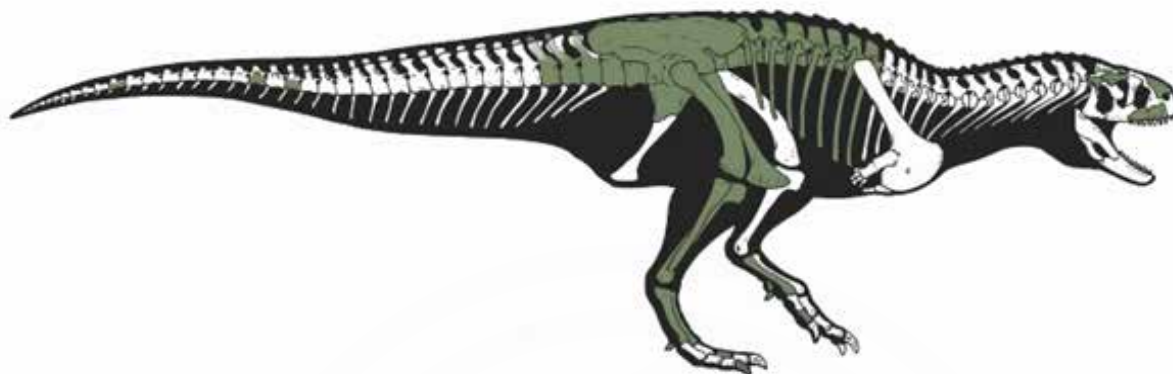
ISRO's joint mission with France, Trishna, promises to deliver unprecedented climate data through advanced thermal imaging. This collaboration aims to enhance our understanding of Earth's climate dynamics, aiding in better resource management and climate change mitigation efforts, and exemplifying the power of international partnerships in addressing global environmental challenges.



NEW CARNIVOROUS DINOSAUR DISCOVERED IN ARGENTINA

CONTEXT: National Geographic Explorer Diego Pol and an international team have discovered a new carnivorous dinosaur species, *Koleken inakayali*, in Patagonia's La Colonia Formation.

BACKGROUND: Supported by the National Geographic Society, Pol's work aims to enhance our understanding of dinosaurs and vertebrates in Patagonia during the last 15 million years of the Cretaceous Period. Additionally, he will develop a database to identify extinction patterns in South America compared to other regions.



Discovery of *Koleken inakayali*: A New Abelisaurid Dinosaur

- **New Species Identified:** *Koleken inakayali*, a new abelisaurid dinosaur species, was discovered in Central Patagonia, named after Tehuelche language and leader Inakayal.
- **Historical Context:** *Koleken* is the second known abelisaurid from the La Colonia Formation, coexisting with *Titanomachya gimenezi* in the Late Cretaceous, around 70 million years ago.
- **Comparison to Carnotaurus:** Unlike the larger *Carnotaurus sastrei*, *Koleken* is smaller with distinct skull features and lacks the massive frontal horns.

- **Research Findings:** The research published in *Cladistics* includes a partial skeleton with skull bones, backbones, hip, tail bones, and legs.
- **Scientific Contribution:** This discovery adds to our understanding of abelisaurids' diversity and evolutionary adaptations in the Late Cretaceous period.

National Geographic Explorer Diego Pol and an international team's discovery of the new carnivorous dinosaur species, *Koleken inakayali*, in Patagonia's La Colonia Formation, enriches our knowledge of prehistoric life. This finding highlights Patagonia's significance in paleontology and offers new insights into dinosaur evolution and biodiversity.

CRISPR-CAS9

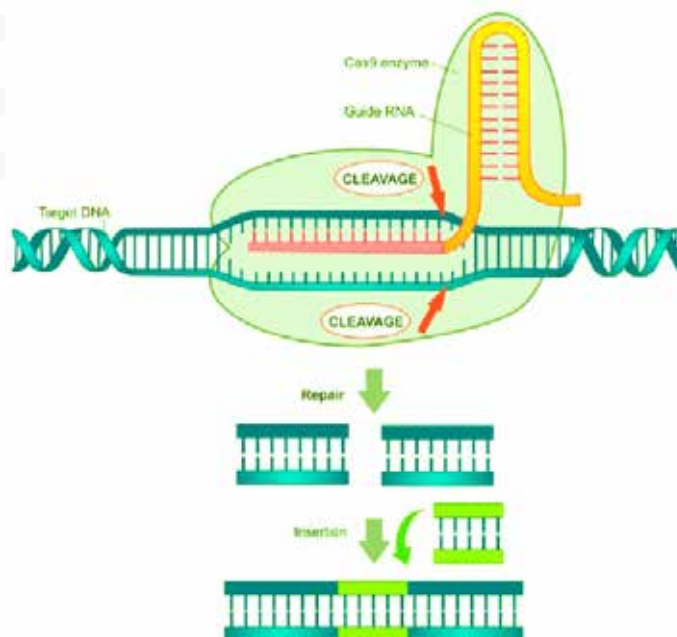
CONTEXT: Researchers have used CRISPR-Cas9 to modify photosynthesis for the first time.

BACKGROUND: A team from UC Berkeley's Innovative Genomics Institute has achieved increased gene expression in a food crop by modifying its upstream regulatory DNA. Unlike previous CRISPR-Cas9 studies that decreased gene expression, this research marks the first unbiased gene editing approach to enhance gene expression and photosynthetic activity.

Enhancing Photosynthesis in Crops with CRISPR-Cas9: Insights from the RIPE Project

- **RIPE Project Goal:** The Niyogi Lab at IGI, as part of the RIPE project, aims to increase global food production by improving photosynthetic efficiency in crops.
- **CRISPR-Cas9 Utilization:** Researchers used CRISPR-Cas9 to modify DNA upstream of target genes, examining its impact on downstream gene activity.
- **Unexpected Gene Expression:** The modifications led to significantly higher gene expression increases than expected, surpassing results from similar studies.
- **Regulatory DNA Inversions:** Inversions of regulatory DNA ("flipping") notably increased the gene expression of *PsbS*.
- **RNA Sequencing Results:** Comparing modified and unmodified rice genomes showed minimal differential

gene expression, indicating essential processes remained unaffected by their approach.





CRISPR-Cas9: Revolutionary Genetic Editing Technology

- CRISPR-Cas9 Technology: CRISPR-Cas9 allows geneticists to edit genomes by removing, adding, or altering DNA sections, making it the most versatile and precise genetic manipulation method.
- Cas9 Enzyme: Cas9 acts as molecular scissors, cutting DNA strands at specific genome locations to facilitate DNA modification.
- Guide RNA (gRNA): gRNA, with a pre-designed RNA sequence, guides Cas9 to the correct DNA spot, ensuring precise cuts in the genome.
- Target Sequence Binding: gRNA binds to the target DNA sequence through complementary RNA bases, theoretically ensuring no binding to other genome regions.
- DNA Repair Mechanism: After Cas9 cuts DNA, the cell's repair machinery attempts to fix it, allowing scientists to introduce genetic changes in the cell's genome.

Researchers' successful use of CRISPR-Cas9 to modify photosynthesis marks a ground-breaking advancement in genetic engineering. This innovation could significantly boost crop yields and improve agricultural sustainability,

offering a promising solution to global food security challenges and highlighting the transformative potential of CRISPR technology in plant science.

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF QUANTUM SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

CONTEXT: The UN has declared 2025 as the 'International Year of Quantum Science and Technology' to raise awareness about its significance and applications.

BACKGROUND: Initiated by Mexico in May 2023, a resolution gathered support from nearly 60 countries by November, adopted by the UNESCO General Conference. In May of the following year, Ghana, backed by over 70 nations, submitted a draft to the U.N. General Assembly, leading to an official proclamation on June 7.

India's National Quantum Mission and Global Recognition

- Global Endorsements: The UN proclamation on quantum science received endorsements from key international bodies like physics, chemistry, crystallography, and history of science unions.
- Rising Interest in Quantum Technologies: Quantum technologies, including quantum computers, are increasingly discussed globally despite fully operational models not yet existing.
- India's Initiative: India launched the 'National Quantum

Mission' in April 2023, allocating Rs 6,000 crore for 2023-2031, focusing on quantum computing, communication, sensing, and materials.

- Mission Objectives: Led by the Department of Science & Technology, the mission aims to advance quantum computing, communication, sensing, and quantum materials and devices.
- Future Prospects: The mission underscores India's commitment to advancing quantum technologies, anticipating significant global advancements in the near future.

The declaration of 2025 as the 'International Year of Quantum Science and Technology' underscores global recognition of quantum's transformative potential. This initiative aims to foster understanding and collaboration in quantum research, accelerating innovations in computing, communications, and beyond. It highlights quantum's pivotal role in shaping the future of technology and science.



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GAVI EXPANDS RABIES VACCINE ACCESS GLOBALLY

CONTEXT: GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, and its partners are promoting human rabies vaccines for post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) as a routine immunization measure.

BACKGROUND: GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, and its partners are launching support for human rabies vaccines as part of routine immunization, focusing on post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). Eligible countries will receive guidance on accessing these vaccines through GAVI's cofinancing policy, with applications open until mid-July 2024.

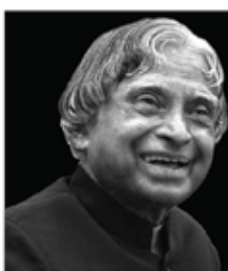
Global Efforts to Eliminate Rabies by 2030

- **Zero by 30 Campaign:** Led by WHO, FAO, and WOAH, aims to eliminate dog-mediated human rabies by 2030 through coordinated global efforts.
- **GAVI's Commitment:** GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, pledges crucial support to ensure availability of human rabies vaccines, aiming to reduce fatalities caused by rabies.
- **Public Health Impact:** In over 150 countries, human rabies vaccines are scarce in public health systems, posing

financial burdens in communities where available through private facilities.

- **Rabies Prevention:** Rabies, transmitted mainly by rabid dogs, is preventable with prompt Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), which includes vaccines and immunoglobulin if necessary.
- **Program Details:** GAVI's initiative supports vaccine procurement for PEP in eligible countries, emphasizing equitable access and the need for national rabies control plans in subsequent funding rounds.

GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, and its partners advocating for human rabies vaccines as routine post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) represent a critical step in global health. This initiative aims to reduce rabies deaths, particularly in regions with high incidence, highlighting the importance of accessible vaccines in preventing this deadly yet preventable disease worldwide.



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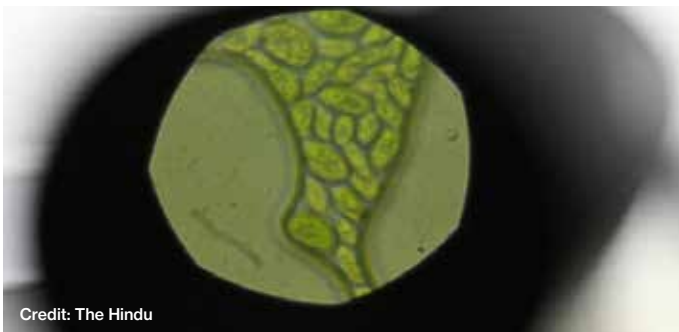
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CHLORELLA GROWTH FACTOR

CONTEXT: CSIR-IICT scientists highlight the potential of Chlorella Growth Factor, a protein-rich extract from Chlorella sorokiniana, as a versatile ingredient for food and feed applications.

BACKGROUND: CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT) scientists highlight Chlorella Growth Factor (CGF), a protein-rich extract from microalgae Chlorella sorokiniana, as a promising ingredient for food and feed applications. CGF, which doesn't compete with traditional crops for space, offers nutritional benefits, promotes health, and supports sustainable food production.



Credit: The Hindu

Benefits of Chlorella Growth Factor (CGF) in Animal Nutrition

- Rich in Essential Amino Acids: CGF contains vital amino acids not synthesized by humans and vertebrates.
- Superior to Soy Meal: CGF surpasses soy meal in Protein Efficiency Ratio (PER), Essential Amino Acid Index (EAAI), and Biological Value (BV).
- Enhances Poultry Diet: CGF improves egg quality, showcasing its potential as a top protein supplement.
- Sustainable Protein Source: Microalgae cultivation methods maximize protein-rich CGF yield, meeting global protein demands sustainably.
- Published Research: Findings are detailed in "Amino Acids Rich Biomass Cultivation" in Algal Research journal.

CSIR-IICT scientists' research on Chlorella Growth Factor from Chlorella sorokiniana underscores its potential as a versatile, protein-rich ingredient for food and feed. This breakthrough could enhance nutritional profiles, promote sustainable agriculture, and address global food security, demonstrating the significant impact of algae-based innovations in various industries.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INDIAN MEDICAL HERITAGE

CONTEXT: The WHO has designated CCRAS-NIIMH in Hyderabad as a Collaborating Centre for Traditional Medicine Research.

BACKGROUND: The WHO has designated the National Institute of Indian Medical Heritage (NIIMH) in Hyderabad as a Collaborating Centre for "Fundamental and Literary Research in Traditional Medicine" (CC IND-177). This prestigious recognition, granted for four years, begins on June 3, 2024.

NIIMH: A WHO Collaborating Centre for Traditional Medicine

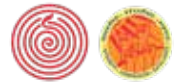
- Unique Institution: Established in 1956, NIIMH focuses on medico-historical research in traditional medicine.
- Digital Initiatives: Key projects include the AMAR Portal with 16,000 Ayush manuscripts and the SAHI Portal with 793 artefacts.

- WHO Designation: NIIMH is the first WHO Collaborating Centre for "Fundamental and Literary Research in Traditional Medicine."
- Collaborative Role: Assists WHO in standardizing terminologies and updating the ICD-11 Traditional Medicine Module-II.
- Rich Collection: Houses 500+ manuscripts, rare books, and publishes the Journal of Indian Medical Heritage.

The WHO's designation of CCRAS-NIIMH in Hyderabad as a Collaborating Centre for Traditional Medicine Research highlights India's pivotal role in advancing traditional medicine. This recognition will enhance global research collaboration, promote the integration of traditional practices with modern healthcare, and contribute to the development of holistic health solutions.

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MEATY RICE

CONTEXT: In Seoul, South Korean scientists are injecting cultured beef cells into rice grains, aiming to revolutionize global eating habits.

BACKGROUND: In a Seoul lab, South Korean scientists are injecting cultured beef cells into rice grains, aiming to revolutionize global food consumption. Led by Professor Hong Jin-kee, the “meaty rice” could provide an eco-friendly, ethical protein source, potentially preventing famines and feeding astronauts in space.

Hybrid Rice Protein: A Sustainable Alternative to Traditional Livestock

- Carbon Footprint Reduction: Hong’s hybrid rice method lowers protein’s carbon emissions significantly, releasing 6.27 kg CO₂ per 100 grams.
- Comparison to Beef: It emits eight times less carbon dioxide compared to traditional beef production.
- Cultural Acceptance: Cultured meat is seen as a climate-friendly alternative but faces scalability and cost challenges.
- Challenges Ahead: Scaling production requires low energy needs and environmentally friendly inputs.

- Future Prospects: Innovations like hybrid rice aim to offer sustainable protein sources for broader adoption.

This pioneering approach could redefine food sustainability by offering a protein-rich alternative that reduces environmental impact. It represents a promising step towards addressing global food security challenges through innovative biotechnological solutions.



ISRO’S REUSABLE LAUNCH VEHICLE, PUSHPAK, PASSES TEST

CONTEXT: ISRO successfully completed its third Reusable Launch Vehicle Landing Experiment (LEX) on June 23 at the Aeronautical Test Range in Chitradurga, Karnataka.

BACKGROUND: In the third and final LEX (03) test, ISRO’s winged vehicle, Pushpak, was released from an Indian Air Force Chinook helicopter at 4.5 km altitude. Pushpak autonomously executed cross-range corrections and achieved a precise horizontal landing on the runway centerline after being released 4.5 km away.

ISRO’s Third Reusable Launch Vehicle Landing Experiment (LEX-03)

- High Landing Velocity: Pushpak’s low lift-to-drag ratio resulted in a landing speed of 320 kmph, higher than commercial and fighter aircraft.
- Autonomous Precision: After release from 4.5 km altitude, Pushpak performed precise horizontal landing using advanced guidance and steering systems.
- Successful Deceleration: Post-touchdown, brake parachute and landing gear brakes reduced speed from 320 kmph to 100 kmph, ensuring controlled runway stop.
- Advanced Technology Validation: The mission validated ISRO’s advanced guidance algorithms for future orbital re-entry missions, using multiple sensors for accurate navigation.

- Reusability Demonstrated: Pushpak reused winged body and flight systems from LEX-02 without modifications, showcasing ISRO’s design robustness for reusable launch vehicles.

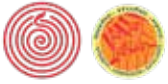
ISRO’s successful completion of its third Reusable Launch Vehicle Landing Experiment (LEX) on June 23 in Chitradurga, Karnataka, marks a significant milestone in advancing reusable space technology. This achievement brings India closer to cost-effective and sustainable space missions, reinforcing ISRO’s commitment to innovation in space exploration.



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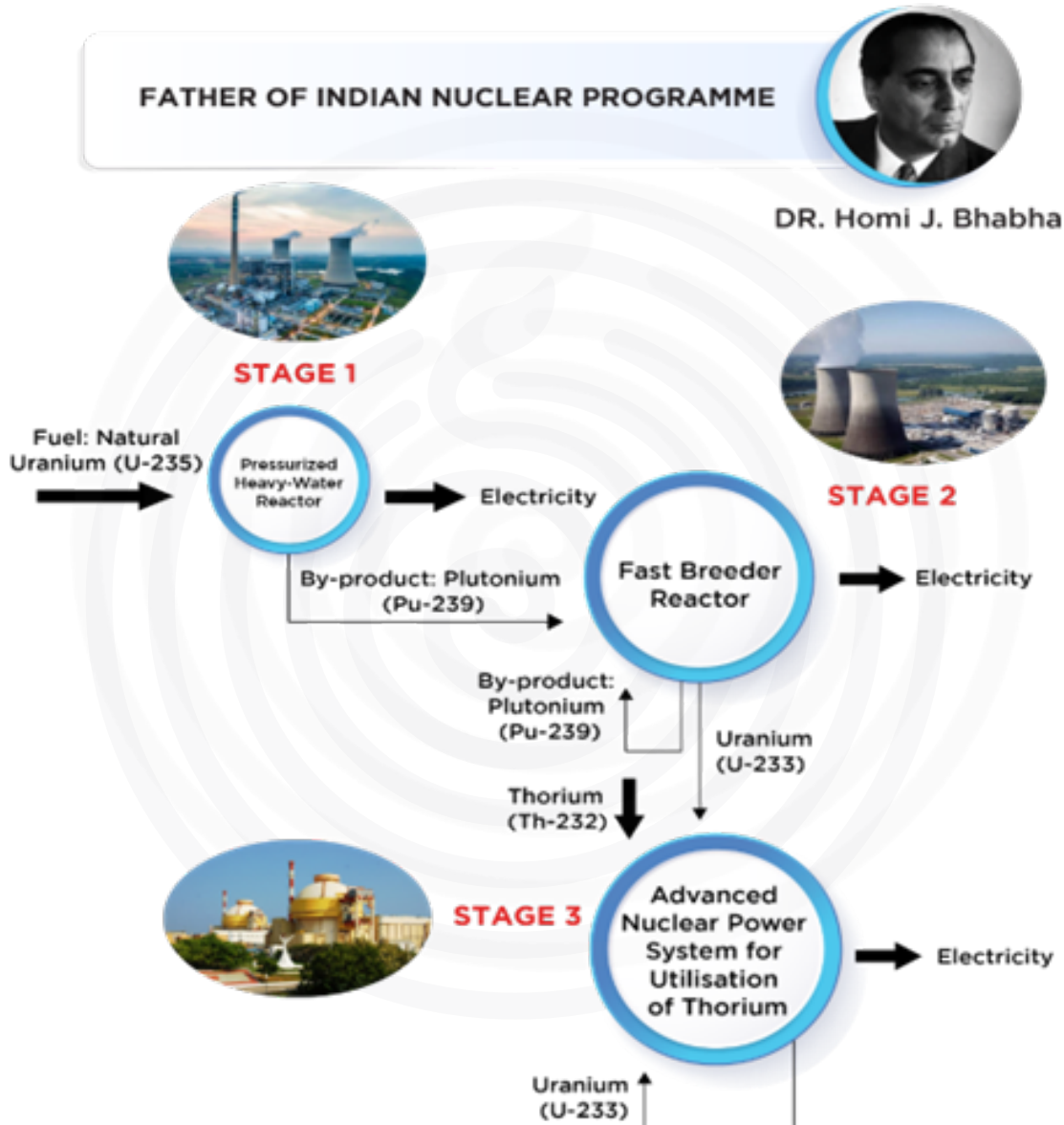


INDIA'S FIRST FAST BREEDER REACTOR STARTS CORE LOADING

CONTEXT: India's three-stage nuclear program advanced as core loading began at the first indigenous Fast Breeder Reactor in Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu, earlier this month.

BACKGROUND: Prime Minister Narendra Modi witnessed the initiation of core loading, the process of placing nuclear fuel assemblies inside a reactor, on March 4. Completion of this process will lead to the reactor's first approach to 'criticality,' initiating a self-sustaining nuclear fission reaction for generating 500 megawatts of power.

THREE STAGE NUCLEAR PROGRAMME - INDIA



India's Three-Stage Nuclear Power Programme

- Thorium Reserves Utilization: DAE's programme aims to harness India's vast thorium reserves found in coastal and riverine sands for electricity generation.
- Three-Stage Visionaries: Dr. Homi J Bhabha and Dr. Vikram Sarabhai envisioned the three-stage nuclear power programme to ensure India's energy security.
- Fertile to Fissile Conversion: The programme involves converting fertile materials like U238 and Th232 into fissile materials Pu239 and U233 to achieve reactor criticality.
- Closed Fuel Cycle: India's closed fuel cycle approach reprocesses spent fuel to separate and reuse fissile

- isotopes, enhancing fuel efficiency and sustainability.
- Fast Breeder Reactors: Developing Fast Breeder Reactors (FBRs) is crucial as they generate more nuclear fuel than they consume, vital for the third stage using thorium.

India's advancement in its three-stage nuclear program is highlighted by the recent core loading at the first indigenous Fast Breeder Reactor in Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu. This milestone represents a significant leap towards enhancing nuclear energy capabilities, ensuring long-term sustainability, and reinforcing India's position in advanced nuclear technology.

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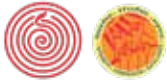
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A close-up photograph of a person wearing a blue, textured sweater or jacket. Their hands are clasped together in front of them, with the fingers interlaced. The background is a solid, medium-blue color. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the fabric and the skin on the hands.

CSAT



READING COMPREHENSION



READING COMPREHENSION

INTRODUCTION

In reading comprehension, it is one's capacity to understand and reasoning ability that is being assessed. The skills to hone are one's ability to grasp the main ideas from a passage, linking the various ideas in a given passage and being able to infer and draw conclusions. For this one requires an extensive vocabulary and advanced reading skills. Since there is no syllabus to fall back on, aspirants have to rely on their skills to be able to tackle passages they have never seen.

There needs to be a focus on grammar, at least in the initial stages of preparation as it is the first step to understanding any language. A strong grammatical basis provides a foundation to build advanced skills on. Once the candidates have a strong hold on their grammar, the focus should shift to reading comprehension. For this the more one reads, the more their confidence will increase.

One thing aspirant must remember even before reading a passage is recognising the difference between an author's opinion and their own thoughts about a subject. Unless the passage asks for it, it is the author's opinion the aspirants must stick to. What is being assessed here is the ability to comprehend and assimilate information presented in front of the reader. This might take some practice as students are often hardwired to stick to their preconceived thoughts. Since too much time cannot be spent on a single passage to differentiate between author's opinion and student's thoughts, the passages should be approached in a blank manner, only taking in what the passage is giving.

STEPS TO APPROACH A PASSAGE:

1. Read the questions carefully: In the questions, the aspirant will get instructions regarding what to look for in the passage.
2. Read the passage with the questions in mind: reading the passage after having read the questions streamlines the process. The passage should be approached according to the demand in the question.
3. Consider the Options: the aspirant should look at the options next and correspond them with their answer to find the closest match.

TERMINOLOGY TO REMEMBER

1. Assume: to accept something as true without proof
2. Assumption a thing that is accepted as true without proof
3. Conclude: to arrive at an end
4. Conclusion: the final outcome or result
5. Crux: the most important point of an issue
6. Imply: indicating/ pointing towards something that is not explicitly stated
7. Implication: to draw a conclusion from something although it is not explicitly stated
8. Inference: to draw a conclusion based on evidence.

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

1. ASSUMPTIONS OF THE AUTHOR

The questions are based on the author's opinions and thoughts while writing the passage. The answer in this case is

not directly in the passage and requires critical thinking on the part of the student. It is important to note that it is the author's opinion that is being asked and aspirants need to remove their thoughts and opinions and focus solely on the author. It is important to note the writing style while trying to solve these questions; how the author is describing things, whether he is making a statement or posing questions. The key words to look out for in these types of questions are "assumed", "assumptions made", "According to the passage/author".

EXAMPLE PASSAGE:

A central message of modern development economics is the importance of income growth, which means growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In theory, rising GDP creates unemployment and investment opportunities. As incomes grow in a country where the level of GDP was once low, households, communities, and governments are increasingly able to set aside some funds for the production of things that make for a good life. Today GDP has assumed such a significant place in the development lexicon, that if someone mentions "economic growth", we know they mean growth in GDP.

With reference to the above passage, the following assumptions have been made:

1. Rising GDP is essential for a country to be developed country
2. Rising GDP guarantees a reasonable distribution of income to all households.

Which of the above assumptions is/are valid?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer and Explanation:

The passage is discussing the perceived importance of GDP in today's world. Since the question has asked for assumptions made, you need to focus on the opinions of the author instead of your own thoughts. Of the two assumptions given as part of the question, the first seems to be reflected in the passage. The second option has the word 'guarantees' meaning an assurance or a promise. However, the passage has the phrase "in theory" which is used in describing something that is supposed to happen but may or may not happen. The connotation or implication is usually towards the negative. So option no. 2 is not an assumption. Option no. 1 is the only assumption that has been made by the author. The answer thus is (a).

Note: Make sure to read the question carefully. It could ask what assumptions have been made and also what assumptions can be made. The first indicates assumptions of the author; the second refers to assumptions that can be made after reading the passage (by you). The answer may differ based on this technicality.

2. EXPLICIT INFORMATION

These are direct questions and perhaps the easiest to solve because of their direct nature. The answers are fact



based and are found within the passage itself. For these questions the details need to be focused on. It is also important to read the question properly as many times they are negative. The question may ask what the passage is NOT saying. Either way, for these questions the second reading of the passage needs to be detail oriented. The questions are direct or may ask which of the given options are true.

EXAMPLE PASSAGE

The sugar maple is a hard maple tree. It can grow as tall as 100 feet and as wide as 4 feet. The sugar maple is commercially valued for its sap, which is used in making maple syrup. Two north-eastern states, Vermont and New York, rank as major producers of maple syrup. In Canada, Quebec's annual syrup production surpasses 2.5 million gallons. To make pure maple syrup, holes are made in the trunk of the tree at the end of winter or in early spring. The water-like sap seeps through the holes and runs through a plastic spout that is put into the hole. Afterwards, the collected sap is transferred into tubes that are hooked up to a tank kept in the sugar house. Then, the sap goes through the boiling process. Boiling enhances flavour and adds colour to the sap. Once the sugar content of the sap is about 65%–66%, the sap is ready to be strained and marketed. Maple syrup found in supermarkets, however, is usually not pure and has other additives. The colour of pure maple may range from golden honey to light brown. Between 35 to 50 gallons of sap is needed to produce 1 gallon of maple syrup. Also, popular for the strength and finish of its wood, the sugar maple tree has been put to use in furniture, interior woodwork, flooring, and crates.

According to the passage, which of the following periods is ideal for sapping?

- End of winter or in early spring
- Beginning of winter or in early spring
- End of winter or late spring
- Throughout the year

Answer and Explanation

This is a question where the answer is explicitly given in the passage. So after reading the passage a cursory reading, re-read the passage carefully looking for the answer. These questions are a sure way to score some marks. Based on the information in the passage, sapping takes place at the end of winter and in early spring. Hence, the correct answer is (a).

3. IMPLICIT INFORMATION

This is the direct opposite of explicit information in that the answers to these types of questions are not given directly within the passage. They need to be deduced from the passage after a close reading. They test the aspirant's reasoning ability along with their comprehension skills. The implied idea will not be found by merely evaluating the options. The key words to look out for are "implied" or "implications". While reading the passage, the aspirant should think about the consequences of the passage, what the passage is saying and also what the passage is not saying.

EXAMPLE PASSAGE:

In the immediate future, we will see the increasing commodification of many new technologies— artificial intelligence and robotics, 3D manufacturing, custom made biological and pharmaceutical products, lethal autonomous weapons and driverless cars. The moral question of how a driverless car will decide between hitting a jaywalker and swerving and damaging the car has often been debated, the answer is both simple- save the human life - and complex. At which angle should the car swerve- just enough to save the jaywalker or more than enough? If the driverless car is in Dublin, who would take the decision? The Irish Government, or the car's original code writer in California, or a software programmer in Hyderabad to whom maintenance is outsourced? If different national jurisdictions have different fine print on prioritising a human life, how will it affect insurance and investment decisions, including transactional ones?

Which of the following statements best reflect the rational, plausible and practical implications that can be derived from the passage given above?

- Too much globalisation is not in the best interest of any country.
- Modern technologies are increasingly blurring the economic borders.
- Innovation and capital have impinged on the domain of the State.
- Public policy of every country should focus on developing its own supply chains.
- Geopolitics will have to reconcile to many ambiguities and uncertainties.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- 1, 4 and 5 only
- 1, 2, 3 and 5 only
- 2, 3 and 5 only
- 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Answer and Explanation

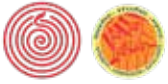
This passage is about the moral conundrum of new technologies. It is full of examples and you need to focus on the main idea. It is important to note that the passage is not criticising new technologies, nor is it offering any solutions. It is merely stating that new technologies have caused new problems. Option 1 is a direct critique of globalisation. Since the passage is not a critique of globalisation, Option 1 gets immediately negated. All the options except (c) have option 1 in them. So the third option is the correct answer.

4. INFERENCE/CONCLUSION BASED QUESTIONS

These questions ask the aspirant to infer from the information given in the passage or draw a conclusion. The conclusion could be directly given in the passage or it could be that the aspirant needs to draw the inferences themselves. Inferences can usually be drawn from anywhere within the passage while conclusions will focus on the last few lines. The words to look out for are "concluding remarks", "infer", "inference".

EXAMPLE PASSAGE:

Our cities are extremely vulnerable to climate change because of large concentrations of populations and poor



infrastructure. Moreover, population densities are increasing in them but we have not yet developed the systems to address climate change impacts. Our cities contribute to 65 percent of the GDP, but there are not enough facilities to address the issues of air quality, transport, etc., that are vital to identifying sustainable solutions. We need to involve citizens in city planning and create an ecosystem that meets the needs of the people.

Which of the following is the most logical and rational inference that can be made from the passage given above?

- Our cities need to have well-defined administrative set-up with sufficient autonomy.
- Ever increasing population densities is a hindrance in our efforts to achieve sustainable development.
- To maintain and develop our cities we need to adopt sustainability related interventions.
- Public-private Partnership mode of development is the viable long-term solution for the infrastructure and sustainability problems in India.

Answer and Explanation

This passage is about cities that are being affected due to climate change. Since inference-based questions require critical thinking by you, you need to read the passage very carefully to determine the most logical inference. After reading the passage, think about what the passage is indicating since the answer is not directly there in the passage. Here while options a), b) and d) are all true statements, option c) is the most appropriate option.

Vocabulary

By now it should be clear to you how important having a strong vocabulary is.

To have even a basic understanding of comprehension passages it is important to first understand the words. However, building up one's vocabulary requires rigorous practice.

- Read, Rinse and Repeat:** Reading is an essential, unavoidable step of the process. In order to get familiar with important words that might come up in comprehension passages, making a habit of reading newspapers is helpful. Some good examples include Indian Express, The Times of India and The Hindu. Every time you come across a new word, it is a good idea to underline or highlight it and relate it to your own life. Make a note of each new word you come across to refer to later.
- A Separate Notebook:** It is a good idea to have a separate space to write down all the new words that you come across. As you come across more words, it is likely that some might escape your memory. Having them all written down in one place for reference later can be particularly helpful for active recall.
- Construct Sentences:** Memorising a list of new words will only get you so far. Writing sentences with unfamiliar words you come across makes you actively engage with each word, which each in turn helps retain it in your memory for much longer. It is also extra grammar practice that will help you write better essays in future.
- Flashcards:** Flashcards help in active recall which has been proven to improve one's memory.
- Word games:** Playing word games could be a way to build your vocabulary while relaxing. However, be careful to not use this as an excuse to use your phone to procrastinate.



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“Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence.” - Robert Frost

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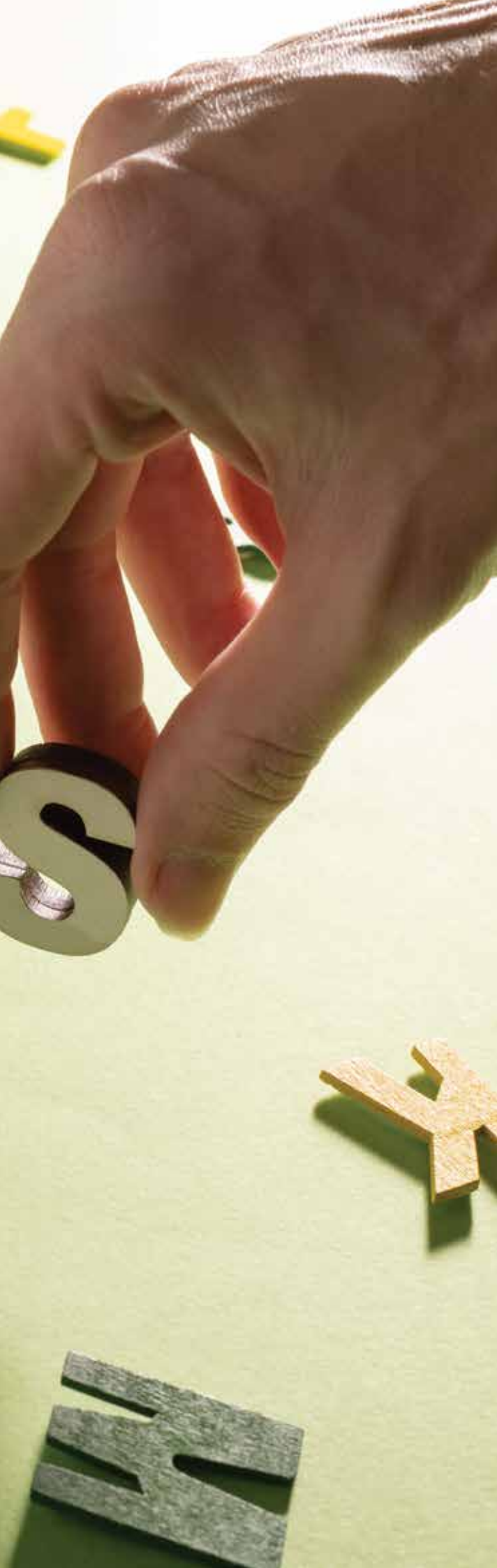
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ETHIC

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ETHICS HAS NO
FOUNDATION



ETHICS HAS NO FOUNDATION

Ethical values can be both objective and knowable – torture really is wrong – yet not need any foundation outside themselves

Many academic fields can be said to ‘study morality’. Of these, the philosophical sub-discipline of normative ethics studies morality in what is arguably the least alienated way. Rather than focusing on how people and societies think and talk about morality, normative ethicists try to figure out which things are, simply, morally good or bad, and why. The philosophical sub-field of meta-ethics adopts, naturally, a ‘meta-’ perspective on the kinds of enquiry that normative ethicists engage in. It asks whether there are objectively correct answers to these questions about good or bad, or whether ethics is, rather, a realm of illusion or mere opinion.

Most of my work in the past decade has been in meta-ethics. I believe that there are truths about what’s morally right and wrong. I believe that some of these truths are objective or, as they say in the literature, ‘stance-independent’. That is to say, it’s not my or our disapproval that makes torture morally wrong; torture is wrong because, to put it simply, it hurts people a lot. I believe that these objective moral truths are knowable, and that some people are better than others are at coming to know them. You can even call them ‘moral experts’ if you wish. Of course, not everyone agrees with all of that. Some are simply confused; they conflate ‘objective’ with ‘culturally universal’ or ‘innate’ or ‘subsumable under a few exceptionless principles’ or some such. But many people’s misgivings about moral objectivity are more clear headed and deeper. In particular, I find that some demur because they think that, for there to be moral truths, let alone objective, knowable ones, morality would have to have a kind of ‘foundation’ that, in their view, is nowhere to be found. Others, anxious to help, try to show that there’s a firm foundation or ultimate ground for morality after all.

It’s my view that both sides of this conflict are off on the wrong foot. Morality is objective, but it neither requires nor admits of a foundation. It just kind of floats there, along with the evaluative realm more generally, unsupported by anything else. Parts of it can be explained by other parts, but the entirety of the web or network of good and evil is brute. Maybe you think that’s weird and even worthy of outright dismissal. I once thought the same thing. The purpose of this essay, which is based on my book *Pragmatist Quietism: A Meta-Ethical System* (2022), is to encourage you to start seeing this aspect of the world as I now see it.

The first question we should ask is: what exactly is a ‘foundation’? We can get clearer on what a foundation is by querying whether a moral theory like utilitarianism might count as one. Utilitarianism says that actions are right to the extent, and only to the extent, that they promote overall wellbeing. So, is utilitarianism in the running for being a foundation for morality? Well, it certainly purports to explain a lot when it comes to right and wrong. Why give to the poor? Promotes wellbeing. Why not punch your neighbour in the face? Doesn’t promote wellbeing. Should the Bank of Canada raise interest rates this quarter? Not clear, because it’s not clear whether it promotes wellbeing. And so on, and so on.

Nonetheless, utilitarianism is not what I have in mind by a ‘foundation’. This is not because utilitarianism is incorrect;

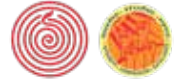
it is because utilitarianism is a moral theory. But a foundation is not a moral theory. It’s the kind of thing that’s supposed to ground, or support, or justify, moral theories, and moral claims generally, without itself being a claim within the domain of morality.

Here’s another way to think about it. Suppose that a moral sceptic were to declare, along with David Hume: ‘You cannot rationally infer an “ought” from an “is”!’ Now imagine that I replied: ‘Oh yes you can! Utilitarianism is true, and so, from the fact that an action promotes overall wellbeing, you can infer that it’s what you ought to do.’ I suspect that our sceptic would regard this response as unsatisfactory. ‘You can’t show that Hume was wrong about “ought” and “is” by just wheeling in some further “ought”’, she might respond. ‘To show that the move from “is” to “ought” can be rational, you would need to step outside of “ought”-discourse entirely, and provide a...a...’ ‘And provide,’ I would finish the sceptic’s sentence, ‘what I’m calling a “foundation”.’

THE RIGHT AND THE GOOD HAVE THE FEEL OF BEING SUPERNATURAL, LIKE GHOSTS AND AURAS

So a moral theory doesn’t count as a foundation. What would count? Here’s a possible candidate. One thing that philosophers of language try to do is to explain why terms and concepts refer to the things in the world that they do. Many of these theories of reference invoke the relation of causal regulation – regulation of our ‘tokening’ of the concept ‘cat’ or our use of the word ‘cat’, for instance, by the comings and goings of the long-tailed housepets that like to stretch out on the windowsill. Some philosophers have applied this theory of reference to moral terms and concepts, yielding a view on which a concept like ‘good’ refers to whichever property or cluster of properties causally regulates our employment of it. Anything that then had that property(-cluster) would therefore be good. Note that our starting point here is not a claim or theory that is, intuitively speaking, within the subject-matter of ethics. Rather we began with a theory of reference – something belonging to the philosophy of language – that purports to explain how terms and concepts across the board are anchored in the world. One might say that, in doing so, we gave ethics a foundation.

Here is another theoretical move that might count as an attempt at offering a foundation for ethics. Many philosophers these days are leery about accepting the existence of objects, processes or properties that are outside the ‘natural’ order. This may seem to present a problem for ethics, because the right and the good have the feel of being supernatural, like ghosts and auras, rather than natural, like clams and carbon. But a few philosophers have suggested that this is too quick. There may be, in Philippa Foot’s words, ‘natural goodness’. Doctors speak of a well-functioning kidney, farmers of an underdeveloped calf, and nobody takes them to be dipping into the realm of, as they say, ‘woo’. And while some philosophers have expressed suspicion about so-called ‘teleological’ features like functions and ‘final ends’, others have argued that a closer look at scientific practice reveals their explanatory value. But if there is nothing problematic about goodness in the way of a heart, there should be nothing



problematic about goodness in the way of a human being. On this, as it's sometimes called, 'neo-Aristotelian' picture, then, ethical features are part of the natural world.

What makes a semantic account like the causal theory of reference or a metaphysical view like neo-Aristotelian naturalism a candidate for being a foundation, while a theory like utilitarianism is not? They are capable of serving as foundations for ethics because, basically, they're not ethics; they're semantics – they're about what words and concepts mean – or they're metaphysics, cataloguing what sorts of things exist in the world. Utilitarianism, by contrast, is ethics, and ethics is no more capable of hoisting itself up by its own bootstraps than is anything else. I think we can go a little further, though. While a theory like utilitarianism offers a direct explanation – maybe a good one, maybe a bad one – of what is right or good or whatnot, our causal theory of reference does not. It offers a theory of what concepts and terms refer to, which has implications for which ethical claims are true, which in turn has implications for what's right or good. But ultimately, it tells you about what things mean, while a theory like utilitarianism tells you what's right. One indicator of the difference between the respective theories' explanatory roles is the difference between them in terms of what we may call 'domain generality'. Theories like 'terms refer to the features that causally regulate their usage' or 'only things posited by the successful natural sciences exist' have implications beyond ethics – into what 'cat' means, or about whether René Descartes's postulated *res cogitans* exists – while utilitarianism is solely a theory of right and wrong, and that's it.

Now, if you were to go on the website formerly known as Twitter and search for 'foundation morality' or something similar, you'd turn up many threads about God or religion. So it's worth asking: is God the kind of thing that people like me have in mind when we talk about a 'foundation'? There's much to be said on this matter, but on the face of it, no. If someone were to claim that an action is morally wrong if and only if God forbids it, I'd take this as an ordinary moral theory on a par with the claim that an action is morally wrong if and only if it fails to promote wellbeing. If utilitarianism isn't the sort of thing that's even eligible to be a foundation, then neither is this simple version of divine command theory. Now, to be sure, there are ways of beefing up divine command theory so that it might properly be regarded as a stab at a foundation – bringing in the metaphysics of 'God's nature', for example. (It should be said: there are parallel ways of beefing up other normative ethical theories, too.) The only point I wish to make now is that 'God commands X' no more takes us 'outside of ethics' than 'X maximises overall wellbeing'. The moral relevance of each one is up for dispute, and that dispute would take place in the arena of regular old first-order moral thinking, with the rest of the normative-ethical gladiators.

So why is it so often thought that morality requires a foundation? It may seem difficult to explain a way of thinking that strikes one as so obviously correct. I, however, do not think it is correct, let alone obviously correct, and so let me try my hand. Basically, I suspect that many people think morality needs a foundation because they in some way or other assimilate the enquiry that gets called 'normative ethics' to ordinary factual enquiry, in which there do indeed seem to be foundations/explanations for the most argued-over

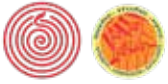
claims. Whether or not you accept highfalutin philosophical positions like the principle of sufficient reason, my guess is that that you would look askance at someone who said that it's going to snow tomorrow but then claimed that there was no explanation for that – that it's just a brute fact. But if that claim strains credulity, then the view in which ethics as a whole 'just floats there', as I put it, untethered from anything that might serve to explain it, is apt to strike you as downright absurd.

Correlatively, the fundamental reason why I don't think that morality requires a foundation is that I deny that the relevant sorts of ethical disputes are akin to ordinary factual disputes. They have features that make it easy to be fooled into thinking otherwise, but in fact they're crucially different. More specifically, disputes that get called 'normative ethics' are most like disputes that many people have labelled 'merely verbal' or 'non-substantive'. A classic example comes from William James's book *Pragmatism* (1907). A man is chasing a squirrel around a tree. Is the man thereby going around the squirrel? One disputant says 'no', because the man is always behind the squirrel. Another says 'yes', because the man is first north of the squirrel, then west, then south, then east of it. The people in this dispute have different beliefs, to be sure; their conflict is not a conflict of desires or emotions. Still, there's a clear sense in which they're not really representing the world in different ways. The side you take in this dispute does not determine, either directly or indirectly by way of inference, the way you think any aspect of the world looks, smells, sounds, etc; nor would taking one side or the other of this dispute guide you to act in a way that achieves your aims, whatever these aims may be and whatever your powers may be. The belief, in other words, doesn't function in the way a representation like a map does.

I think the debates that tend to get called 'normative ethical' are a lot like this. The way that the world will look, smell, sound, etc if utilitarianism is true is just the way it will look, smell, sound, etc if utilitarianism is false. Taking sides for or against utilitarianism does not help us to further our ultimate goals, whatever they may happen to be, in the way that a map does. Rather, it simply changes what our ultimate goals are.

CONNECTIONS WITH MOTIVATION AND EMOTION FOOL US INTO ASSIMILATING DISPUTES ABOUT UTILITARIANISM TO ORDINARY FACTUAL DISPUTES

With that said, there are also some important differences between the 'utilitarianism' and 'squirrel' debates. I said that we sometimes call disputes like that about the squirrel 'merely verbal' or 'non-substantive'. We also sometimes say of them something like: 'You could say this, or you could say that. What's the point?' This is because not only is there no representational accuracy up for grabs in these debates – nothing of value seems to be afforded by them. They seem to be, again, pointless. Not so the majority of our debates about morality and politics. This is because such debates bear on our own and others' motivations, as well as on praise, blame, esteem and so forth in a way that debates like 'squirrel' seem not to. We might say that they are significant, but not substantive. Unlike 'squirrel', they matter. But then unlike ordinary factual disputes, the way that they matter is not by affording accurate representation of the world.



It's these connections with motivation and emotion that fool us into assimilating disputes about utilitarianism, or the 'trolley problem', or distributive justice, to ordinary factual disputes. Because they bear on what we do and how we feel, we do not reckon that we can simply 'go either way' on them in a willy-nilly fashion. We do not regard them as arbitrary, in other words, in the way that we regard 'squirrel'. Nor do we think it's acceptable to settle them by conceptual fiat, as we would settle disputes like 'squirrel'.

Here is what I mean by that. Were I to find myself embroiled in a discussion about whether the man is going around the squirrel, I would probably try to put a stop to it by saying: 'Look, all I mean by "going around" is this...'. By contrast, suppose we were embroiled in a dispute about whether the media would be right to mothball a story in an attempt to ensure that a disfavoured candidate is not elected. Here I would not try to settle the dispute by saying, eg, 'Look, by "right", all I mean is "maximises overall wellbeing"...'. I'd see such a dispute as to be settled by argument, not by stipulation. And again, I think we can chalk up this difference to the fact that normative-ethical disputes, despite failing to afford representational significance just like 'squirrel', are significant in practical and affective ways that 'squirrel' is not.

This all puts 'normative-ethical' disputes in a strange category, and makes it difficult to know what to say about them in terms of philosophical theory. I actually consider this an advantage, for it is manifestly not obvious what to say about truth and objectivity and knowledge when it comes to ethics! This is witnessed by the fact that some super-smart philosophers think that there are objective truths about ethics, some think ethics is bullshit along the lines of alchemy, some think ethical disputes are really conflicts of desire-like attitudes in disguise, and so on. Anyone who thought ethical disputes work in such a way that one theoretical interpretation is just utterly obvious and natural and easy to state would then owe us an explanation of how so many smart people could be getting it so terribly wrong at this late stage in intellectual history.

And so, acknowledging that it is by no means obvious, here is my own theoretical interpretation. The reason why ethics neither requires nor admits of a foundation outside of itself is that, like 'squirrel' but unlike any ordinary factual disputes, the relevant kinds of ethical dispute are non-representational or, as I prefer to put it, fail to afford 'representational value'. That is to say, one does not represent or mirror or copy the world in any robust sense that is worth caring about by coming to any conclusion rather than another pursuant to such a dispute. But the sorts of extra-ethical considerations drawn from metaphysics, semantics and so on that people typically call upon to serve as 'foundations' could be relevant to ethics only by bearing on which moral beliefs, if any, were good or bad in representational respects. They're not ethically important in the ways that happiness, freedom, equality, dignity and other such things are. But since representational value and disvalue aren't on the cards when it comes to normative-ethical disputes, these considerations regarding the metaphysics of moral properties, the sense and reference of moral terms and so on, are irrelevant to fundamental ethics.

And so it would be a mistake to think, with so-called 'error theorists' or 'nihilists' about morality, that there are no such things as moral properties in the world, and so all

attributions of rightness or wrongness are false. The world doesn't have to have these little moral doodads for things to be right or wrong; there just has to be happiness and unhappiness, freedom and tyranny, and so forth. It would be a mistake to think, with Elizabeth Anscombe in her influential paper 'Modern Moral Philosophy' (1958), that the moral 'ought' lacks sense, as it were, and so there is nothing that we morally ought to do.

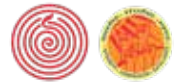
IF THESE ARE PROBLEMS, THEY'RE PROBLEMS FOR ANYONE WHO THINKS THINGS

Whether something 'lacks sense' is a semantic matter, and semantics does not bear on normative ethics. It would bear on ethics only if it went towards determining the representational values of beliefs about ethics, but there are no such values at stake. As I said at the outset, my quarrel is not only with the sceptics. Someone who attempted to wring some positive moral conclusions out of claims in semantics (eg, about the sense or reference of moral terms) or metaphysics (eg, about what would best accomplish the reduction of morality to some cluster of suitably 'natural' properties) is making the same sort of basic error. They are treating normative-ethical enquiry as representational, even though it is not.

But if neither side of a normative-ethical dispute is representing or 'mirroring' the world any more successfully than the other is, then why can't we 'go either way', as it seems we can in 'squirrel'? How can there be a truth of the matter, if there's no possibility of accurate or inaccurate representation in any robust sense?

My basic answer is that what gives these normative-ethical debates the appearance of mattering – their conclusions' influence on motivation and affect – also makes it the case that they actually matter. There's value and significance up for grabs in these ethical disputes, then, but it's not value that inheres in representing the world in a robust sense. It's what I call 'specifically ethical value' – the value of doing the right thing for the right reason. And it's from this sort of value that I try to wring a kind of truth or correctness that's proprietary to ethics. Imagine a kind of advisor who's ideal in all non-moral respects – true beliefs about non-evaluative matters, perfect inferential abilities, etc. If we plug a particular moral belief into such a person, and she advises you to do all and only right actions, then that belief counts as true in this proprietarily ethical sense, even though the belief does not 'picture' or 'mirror' the world.

Note that my brief for ethical truth bottoms out in claims about 'specifically ethical' value, and that my argument for the irrelevance of metaphysics, semantics, etc to ethics bottoms out in claims about what I called 'representational' value. This might strike you as begging the question against the sceptic about evaluative truth and knowledge – in other words, as assuming at the outset just what I intend to demonstrate to such a sceptic. My rejoinder: yes, I do beg the question, but this, in itself, does not put me in bad company. Everyone who ventures a positive claim about some subject matter – the external world, induction, mathematical knowledge, what-have-you – rather than withholding judgment entirely, must at some point confront the so-called 'Agrippan trilemma': either posit certain facts as unexplained, or beg the question, or



accept an infinite regress. If these are problems, they're not problems for me specifically; they're problems for anyone who thinks things.

So I say that the true sin lies not in question-begging, but in failing to subsume aspects of the world within a more general vindicatory framework. For example, a theory of a priori knowledge that explains how knowledge of that very theory is possible might beg the question, but so long as it accounts for a priori knowledge in general – eg, of mathematics, logic and morality – and not just a priori knowledge of itself, it needn't be problematic. A theory of accurate mental representation of the world that explains how our beliefs in that very theory accurately represent the world also begs the question, but this should not worry us insofar as it explains accurate mental representation across the board. These theories earn their keep by making sense of what would otherwise remain mysterious, and so it should not trouble us if they end up vindicating themselves in the process.

I propose to attain a similar sort of explanatory

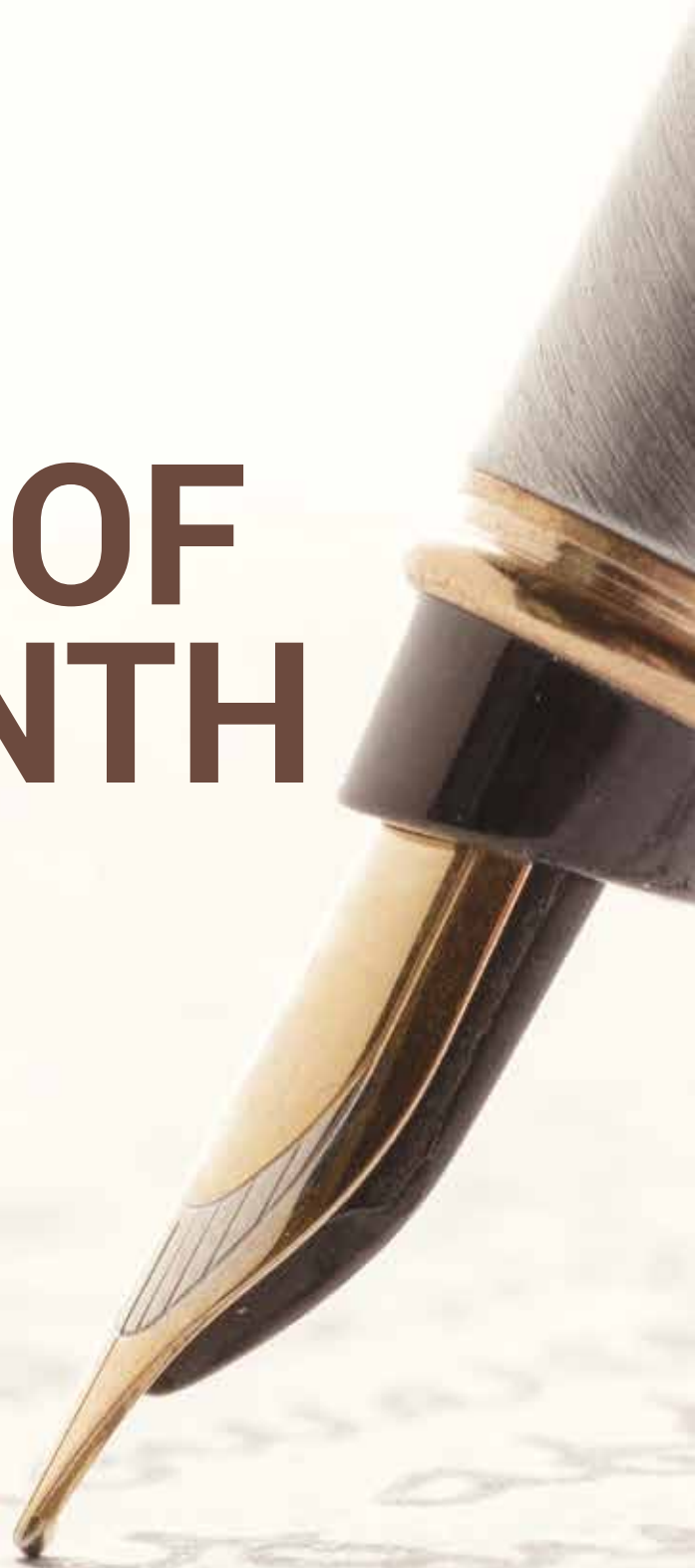
unity by vindicating all claims and domains that are worthy of it – not just ethics, but everything from biochemistry to sports prognostication – fundamentally in terms of values, be these representational, specifically ethical, or other sorts of values. It is this values-first re-imagining of enquiry for which I reserve the label 'pragmatism'. Pragmatism offers a way of making sense of ethical truth, objectivity and knowledge by ensconcing these within a more comprehensive world picture, but not in such a way that would count as providing a foundation for ethics in some allegedly more fundamental area of enquiry. What emerges is a free-floating evaluative sphere, coupled with an account of why this is not so odd or mysterious after all.

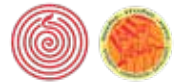
Andrew Sepielli

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TOPICS OF THE MONTH





**A SAINT HAS A PAST AND THE SINNER HAS A
FUTURE**

- DR. Alexander Jacob IPS

**THERE ARE BETTER PRACTICES TO BEST
PRACTICES**

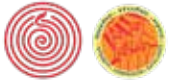
-DR. Babu Sebastian

**EDUCATION IS WHAT REMAINS AFTER ONE
HAS FORGOTTEN
WHAT ONE HAS LEARNED IN SCHOOL**

-DR. G. Prasanna Kumar IAS

**GLOBALIZATION VS. NATIONALISM: A
COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS**

- DR. Muhammed Basheer



A SAINT HAS A PAST AND THE SINNER HAS A FUTURE

The phrase “A saint has a past and the sinner has a future” encapsulates the dynamic and transformative nature of human existence. It implies that even the most virtuous individuals have experienced flaws and failures, while those currently deemed sinners possess the potential for redemption and growth. This perspective fosters a compassionate and hopeful view of humanity, acknowledging the complexity of personal histories and the possibility of profound change. This essay explores the multifaceted dimensions of this theme, highlighting historical examples, psychological insights, and societal implications, ultimately affirming the potential for redemption and transformation in every individual.

Historical and Literary Examples of Saints with Pasts

Historical and literary records are replete with examples of individuals who attained sainthood or heroism despite turbulent pasts. St. Augustine, a revered Christian theologian, led a life of indulgence and moral ambiguity before his conversion. Similarly, in literature, characters like Jean Valjean from Victor Hugo’s “Les Misérables” depict profound transformation from criminality to virtue. These narratives illustrate that the journey towards sainthood often involves overcoming significant personal flaws, highlighting the universal potential for growth and redemption.

The Concept of Redemption in Various Religions and Philosophies

Redemption is a central theme in many religions and philosophical traditions. Christianity emphasizes repentance and forgiveness, with countless saints being former sinners who found redemption through faith. Buddhism teaches the possibility of achieving enlightenment through overcoming karmic obstacles. In existential philosophy, figures like Sartre argue for the capacity of individuals to redefine their essence through conscious choices. These diverse perspectives underscore a shared belief in the possibility of personal transformation and moral evolution.

Psychological Perspectives on Change and Personal Growth

Psychology provides valuable insights into the mechanisms of personal change. The stages of change model, developed by Prochaska and DiClemente, outlines a process from precontemplation to maintenance, highlighting that transformation is often a gradual and non-linear journey. Cognitive-behavioral theories emphasize the role of changing thought patterns in altering behaviors. These psychological frameworks support the idea that both saints and sinners can evolve, given the right conditions and interventions.

The Role of Forgiveness in Personal Transformation

Forgiveness is crucial in the process of personal transformation. Self-forgiveness allows individuals to release guilt and embrace growth, while forgiveness from others fosters reconciliation and support. Religious teachings often emphasize the redemptive power of forgiveness, as seen in the Christian sacrament of confession. Psychologically, forgiveness reduces negative emotions and promotes mental health, creating a conducive environment for personal change. Therefore, forgiveness is a pivotal step in moving from a past of sin to a future of sainthood.

Cultural and Societal Impacts of Labeling Individuals as Saints or Sinners

Labeling individuals as saints or sinners can have profound societal impacts. Labeling theory in sociology suggests that being labeled influences a person’s self-identity and behavior. Positive labels can encourage virtuous behavior, while negative labels may reinforce deviant actions. Society’s tendency to categorize individuals can hinder personal growth, as it often fails to recognize the fluid nature of human identity. Understanding and mitigating these impacts is essential for fostering a more supportive environment for personal transformation.

Personal Narratives and Testimonies of Transformation

Personal narratives of transformation provide powerful evidence of the essay’s theme. Stories of individuals who have overcome addiction, crime, or moral failings to lead virtuous lives are inspirational. These testimonies often highlight the role of pivotal moments, support systems, and inner resolve in driving change. By sharing such stories, we can better appreciate the potential for redemption in every individual and encourage others to believe in the possibility of personal transformation.

The Role of Suffering and Adversity in Personal Development

Suffering and adversity often serve as catalysts for personal development. Experiences of hardship can foster resilience, empathy, and a deeper understanding of oneself. Many saints and revered figures have endured significant trials, which shaped their character and moral outlook. Psychological theories, such as post-traumatic growth, suggest that individuals can emerge from adversity stronger and more virtuous. Thus, suffering is not merely a challenge but also an opportunity for profound personal growth.

The Influence of Mentors and Support Systems in Personal Growth

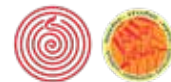
Mentors and support systems play a vital role in facilitating personal growth and transformation. Positive influences, guidance, and emotional support from mentors, family, and community can help individuals navigate their paths from sin to sainthood. Mentorship provides role models and practical advice, while supportive relationships offer encouragement and accountability. These social connections are often pivotal in helping individuals overcome their past and build a better future.

The Danger of Perfectionism and the Importance of Embracing Imperfection

Perfectionism can be a significant barrier to personal growth. The relentless pursuit of an unattainable ideal often leads to frustration, anxiety, and self-criticism. Embracing imperfection, on the other hand, allows individuals to acknowledge their flaws and focus on continuous improvement. The concept of “wabi-sabi” in Japanese culture, which finds beauty in imperfection, can be a valuable perspective. Accepting imperfections as part of the human condition is essential for genuine personal transformation and growth.

Modern Media and Its Influence on Public Perception of Saints and Sinners

Modern media plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions of individuals as saints or sinners. Media



narratives often simplify complex human behaviors into binary categories, influencing societal attitudes and stigmatizing individuals. This portrayal can impact one's self-identity and hinder personal growth. Critical media literacy is necessary to understand these portrayals' nuances and promote a more balanced view that recognizes the potential for redemption and transformation in every individual.

The journey from sinner to saint is a testament to

the profound potential for human change and redemption. By acknowledging the pasts of saints and the futures of sinners, we foster a more compassionate and hopeful view of humanity. This perspective encourages forgiveness, resilience, and the belief in continuous personal growth. Ultimately, understanding that every individual has the capacity for transformation helps build a more empathetic and supportive society.

THERE ARE BETTER PRACTICES TO BEST PRACTICES

In 2014, India launched the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Mission) to address sanitation issues and eliminate open defecation. Initially met with mixed results, the program's evolution from standardized "best practices" to adaptive, context-specific "better practices" led to remarkable success. The transition highlighted the importance of continuous improvement and local adaptability over rigid adherence to established norms. This essay explores the dynamic concept of "better practices," arguing that ongoing innovation and contextual flexibility can yield more effective outcomes than static best practices.

Understanding the Concept of Best Practices

Best practices are established methods or techniques proven to yield successful results in specific contexts. They serve as benchmarks for efficiency, effectiveness, and quality. However, their static nature can sometimes limit innovation and adaptation to new challenges. While best practices provide a solid foundation, they can become outdated if not regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changing circumstances and new insights.

The Limitations of Best Practices

Despite their benefits, best practices have inherent limitations. They may not be universally applicable due to variations in context, culture, and specific challenges. Rigid adherence to best practices can stifle creativity and prevent the exploration of innovative solutions. This can lead to suboptimal outcomes, particularly in dynamic environments where adaptability and continuous improvement are crucial.

The Evolution Towards Better Practices

Better practices emphasize continuous improvement and adaptability. Unlike best practices, they are not static but evolve based on ongoing learning and contextual changes. This approach encourages experimentation, feedback, and iterative refinement. By focusing on better practices, organizations and communities can remain agile and responsive to new challenges, fostering innovation and sustained progress.

Case Study: Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan provides a compelling case study of evolving from best practices to better practices. Initial efforts relied heavily on standardized methods, which were not always effective across diverse Indian regions. Over time, the program adapted to local contexts, incorporating community feedback and innovative solutions. This shift led to significant improvements in sanitation and public health, demonstrating the power of better practices.

The Role of Technology in Better Practices

Technology plays a pivotal role in the transition to better practices. Digital tools enable real-time data collection, analysis, and feedback, facilitating continuous improvement. For example, the use of mobile apps and online platforms in

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan allowed for better monitoring and citizen engagement. Embracing technological advancements ensures that practices remain relevant and effective in addressing contemporary challenges.

Encouraging Innovation and Creativity

Better practices thrive in environments that encourage innovation and creativity. Organizations and communities must cultivate a culture of experimentation, where new ideas are tested and refined. This approach not only leads to more effective solutions but also fosters a sense of ownership and engagement among stakeholders. By valuing creativity, better practices can drive meaningful and sustainable change.

The Importance of Contextual Adaptation

Contextual adaptation is a cornerstone of better practices. Solutions that work well in one setting may not be effective in another due to cultural, geographical, or socioeconomic differences. Recognizing and respecting these variations is crucial for successful implementation. Better practices prioritize local knowledge and context-specific adjustments, ensuring that interventions are relevant and impactful.

Learning from Failures

Failures are valuable learning opportunities in the pursuit of better practices. Rather than viewing failures as setbacks, they should be seen as integral to the learning process. Analyzing and understanding why certain approaches did not work can provide critical insights for future improvements. Embracing a mindset that views failures as lessons rather than defeats is essential for continuous progress.

The Role of Leadership in Promoting Better Practices

Leadership plays a crucial role in fostering a culture of better practices. Effective leaders champion continuous improvement, encourage innovation, and support risk-taking. They create an environment where learning and adaptation are prioritized over rigid adherence to established norms. Strong leadership ensures that the transition from best practices to better practices is embraced at all levels of an organization or community.

Building a Framework for Continuous Improvement

Establishing a robust framework for continuous improvement is essential for sustaining better practices. This includes regular review and evaluation of current practices, incorporating feedback mechanisms, and fostering a culture of open communication and collaboration. Such a framework ensures that practices are consistently updated and refined, allowing for sustained effectiveness and relevance.

The evolution from best practices to better practices underscores the importance of adaptability, innovation, and continuous improvement. By embracing a dynamic approach that prioritizes local contexts and ongoing learning, organizations and communities can achieve more effective and



sustainable outcomes. The success of initiatives like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan demonstrates that better practices, grounded in flexibility and responsiveness, can drive meaningful change

and address complex challenges more effectively than static best practices.

“EDUCATION IS WHAT REMAINS AFTER ONE HAS FORGOTTEN WHAT ONE HAS LEARNED IN SCHOOL.”

Education is often synonymous with schooling, yet the quote attributed to Einstein suggests a broader interpretation. It implies that while formal education provides foundational knowledge and skills, its true value lies in what endures over time – beyond the memorization of facts and formulas. This essay aims to unpack this idea by examining various facets of education, including its purpose, components, and enduring effects on personal development and societal progress.

The Purpose of Education

Education serves multiple purposes, beyond the mere transmission of information. At its core, education aims to foster critical thinking, creativity, and personal growth. It equips individuals with essential skills to navigate the complexities of life, contribute meaningfully to society, and adapt to an ever-changing world. Moreover, education plays a pivotal role in promoting social cohesion, advancing economic development, and nurturing democratic values.

Components of Education

Formal Education

Formal education encompasses structured learning within educational institutions such as schools, colleges, and universities. It typically follows a curriculum designed to impart knowledge across various disciplines – from mathematics and science to humanities and arts. Formal education provides the foundation for academic achievement and professional success, equipping individuals with specialized knowledge and skills relevant to their chosen fields.

Informal Education

Informal education occurs outside traditional classroom settings and is often driven by personal interests, experiences, and interactions with the environment. It includes lifelong learning through reading, exploration, experimentation, and engagement with diverse perspectives. Informal education fosters curiosity, self-discovery, and continuous personal development beyond formal schooling.

Non-formal Education

Non-formal education refers to organized learning activities that do not necessarily lead to formal certification but contribute to personal enrichment and skill enhancement. It includes workshops, seminars, vocational training programs, and community-based initiatives aimed at addressing specific learning needs and enhancing practical skills.

Beyond Memorization: Understanding Retention and Application

The quote by Einstein underscores the distinction between rote memorization and genuine understanding. While schools emphasize memorizing facts and formulas, true education involves comprehension, critical analysis, and the ability to apply knowledge in diverse contexts. Retention of information is transient, but conceptual understanding and problem-solving skills endure, enabling individuals to adapt knowledge to new situations and challenges.

Education as Personal Development

Cognitive Development

Education stimulates cognitive development by promoting intellectual curiosity, analytical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. It cultivates a deeper understanding of complex concepts and encourages individuals to question assumptions, explore diverse perspectives, and form reasoned judgments. Cognitive development through education empowers individuals to navigate intellectual challenges and contribute innovatively to their fields of expertise.

Emotional and Social Development

Education plays a crucial role in fostering emotional intelligence, empathy, and interpersonal skills. It cultivates self-awareness, resilience, and effective communication, enabling individuals to build meaningful relationships and collaborate effectively with others. Education also promotes social responsibility, ethical behavior, and civic engagement, nurturing active citizenship and contributing to social cohesion.

Education and Societal Progress

Economic Development

Education is a catalyst for economic growth and prosperity. It equips individuals with the skills demanded by labor markets, enhances productivity, and fosters innovation and entrepreneurship. A well-educated workforce drives technological advancement, enhances competitiveness in global markets, and promotes sustainable development. Moreover, education empowers individuals from marginalized communities, reducing inequalities and promoting inclusive economic growth.

Democratic Values and Citizenship

Education plays a fundamental role in promoting democratic values, civic participation, and responsible citizenship. It instills an understanding of rights, freedoms, and responsibilities within democratic societies, fostering informed decision-making and active engagement in political processes. Education empowers individuals to advocate for social justice, uphold human rights, and contribute to the common good, thereby strengthening democratic institutions and promoting social cohesion.

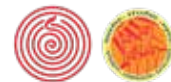
Challenges and Opportunities in Education

Challenges

Despite its transformative potential, education faces numerous challenges globally. Inequitable access to quality education perpetuates social disparities and limits opportunities for marginalized groups. Educational systems often prioritize standardized testing over holistic learning outcomes, stifling creativity and critical thinking. Moreover, inadequate funding, outdated curricula, and teacher shortages pose significant barriers to delivering quality education for all.

Opportunities

Advancements in technology present opportunities to enhance educational access, affordability, and inclusivity. Digital platforms enable distance learning, personalized instruction, and global collaboration among students and



educators. Innovative teaching methods, such as project-based learning and experiential education, foster creativity, problem-solving skills, and real-world application of knowledge. Furthermore, partnerships between governments, civil society, and private sectors can mobilize resources and expertise to address educational challenges and promote lifelong learning opportunities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Einstein's quote challenges us to reimagine education beyond its traditional confines. Education transcends memorization of facts to encompass

critical thinking, creativity, and lifelong learning. It empowers individuals to navigate complexities, contribute to societal progress, and uphold democratic values. By fostering cognitive, emotional, and social development, education cultivates well-rounded individuals capable of addressing global challenges and shaping a more inclusive and sustainable future. As we strive for educational equity and excellence, let us recognize the enduring impact of education in shaping individuals, communities, and societies worldwide.

GLOBALIZATION VS. NATIONALISM: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS

The dichotomy between globalization and nationalism presents a profound and complex discourse in contemporary political, economic, and cultural spheres. Globalization, the process by which nations and peoples become more interconnected through economic, political, and cultural exchanges, stands in stark contrast to nationalism, which emphasizes the sovereignty and cultural identity of individual nations.

Globalization has historical antecedents dating back to the Age of Exploration in the 15th century when European powers sought new trade routes and territories. However, modern globalization is often traced to the post-World War II era, marked by the establishment of international institutions like the United Nations, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The advent of the internet and advances in transportation further accelerated globalization, facilitating unprecedented levels of trade, communication, and cultural exchange.

Nationalism emerged as a significant force in the late 18th century, influenced by the American and French Revolutions. It gained momentum throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, contributing to the formation of nation-states and the decline of empires. Nationalism was often characterized by a shared sense of identity, culture, and history among a people, fostering unity and independence. However, it also led to conflicts, including the two World Wars, fueled by nationalist fervor.

Globalization: A Liberal Perspective

From a liberal perspective, globalization is seen as a force for good, promoting economic growth, cultural exchange, and international cooperation. Liberals argue that globalization fosters peace by creating economic interdependence among nations, reducing the likelihood of conflicts. They also highlight the benefits of multiculturalism, where diverse cultures coexist and enrich societies.

Conservatives often view nationalism as a means to preserve cultural heritage, social cohesion, and political stability. They argue that globalization can erode national sovereignty, disrupt traditional values, and lead to cultural homogenization. Nationalism, from this perspective, is essential for maintaining a sense of identity and belonging, ensuring that local traditions and values are not overshadowed by global influences.

Globalization has been a significant driver of economic growth, particularly in developing countries. By integrating into the global economy, nations have access to larger markets, foreign investment, and advanced technologies. The rise

of multinational corporations and global supply chains has boosted productivity and innovation. However, the benefits of globalization are not uniformly distributed, leading to economic disparities both within and between countries.

Nationalist economic policies often emphasize protectionism, aiming to shield domestic industries from foreign competition. Tariffs, trade barriers, and subsidies are employed to promote local businesses and preserve jobs. While protectionism can safeguard national industries in the short term, it may lead to inefficiencies, higher consumer prices, and trade wars. The balance between protecting national interests and participating in the global economy remains a contentious issue.

Globalization has led to the emergence of supranational organizations like the European Union (EU) and trade agreements such as NAFTA and TPP. These entities aim to facilitate cooperation and address global challenges. However, they often require nations to cede a degree of sovereignty, leading to tensions with nationalist movements that prioritize national autonomy. Brexit, the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU, exemplifies the clash between global integration and national sovereignty.

In recent years, there has been a resurgence of populism and anti-globalization sentiment. Leaders and movements advocating for stronger national borders, economic protectionism, and cultural preservation have gained traction. The election of Donald Trump in the United States, the rise of right-wing parties in Europe, and movements like Brexit reflect a backlash against globalization. These developments underscore the challenges of balancing global integration with national interests.

Technological advancements, particularly in communication and transportation, have been pivotal in driving globalization. The internet, social media, and e-commerce have created a global marketplace of ideas and goods. While these technologies facilitate global connectivity, they also pose challenges such as cyber threats, digital divides, and the spread of misinformation. The interplay between technology and globalization continues to shape the contemporary world.

The US-Mexico border wall is a tangible manifestation of the tension between globalization and nationalism. Advocates of the wall argue that it is necessary for national security, immigration control, and protection of American jobs. Critics, however, view it as a symbol of isolationism and xenophobia, hindering the free movement of people and goods. The debate over the wall highlights the complex dynamics of globalization and nationalism in the context of immigration and



border security.

The European Union represents a significant experiment in regional integration and globalization. It aims to create a unified economic and political bloc while respecting the sovereignty of member states. However, the EU faces challenges from nationalist movements that criticize its bureaucracy, lack of accountability, and perceived erosion of national sovereignty. The Brexit referendum underscored the tension between the benefits of regional integration and the desire for national independence.

Globalisation Vs Nationalism : Indian perspective

India presents a unique case study in the ongoing debate between globalization and nationalism. As one of the world's fastest-growing economies and a nation with a rich cultural heritage, India's experience with these two forces provides valuable insights into their complex interplay.

India's tryst with globalization began earnestly in 1991 with the introduction of economic liberalization policies. Facing a severe balance of payments crisis, the Indian government, led by then-Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, initiated a series of reforms aimed at integrating India into the global economy. These reforms included reducing import tariffs, deregulating markets, and encouraging foreign direct investment (FDI).

The results of these policies were transformative. India's GDP growth rate accelerated, and the country became a hub for information technology and services. Cities like Bangalore and Hyderabad emerged as global IT centers, attracting investment from multinational corporations. The rise of the Indian middle class, with increased purchasing power and global exposure, can be attributed largely to these globalization-driven reforms.

Despite the benefits of globalization, there has been a resurgence of nationalist sentiments advocating for economic protectionism. The "Make in India" initiative, launched in 2014 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is a prime example. This program aims to boost domestic manufacturing and reduce dependency on imports by encouraging both Indian and foreign companies to produce goods within India.

Nationalist economic policies emphasize self-reliance, encapsulated in the concept of "Atmanirbhar Bharat" (Self-Reliant India). This vision includes reducing import dependency, particularly from China, and fostering home-grown industries. While these policies aim to create jobs and strengthen the domestic economy, critics argue that excessive protectionism could lead to inefficiencies and higher costs for consumers.

Globalization has significantly influenced Indian culture, leading to a blend of traditional and modern practices. The influx of global media, fashion, and lifestyles has reshaped urban India. For instance, the proliferation of Western-style malls, fast food chains, and international brands in Indian cities reflects the country's integration into global consumer culture.

Moreover, Bollywood, India's vibrant film industry, has increasingly incorporated global themes and collaborations. Movies like "Slumdog Millionaire," which won international acclaim, showcase the potential of cross-cultural narratives. The digital revolution, particularly the rise of social media, has further accelerated cultural exchange, allowing Indian youth to connect with global trends and movements.

Despite the cultural integration brought about by

globalization, there is a strong undercurrent of nationalism seeking to preserve India's rich cultural heritage. The promotion of Indian traditions, languages, and practices is a key aspect of nationalist ideology. For example, the International Yoga Day initiative, spearheaded by the Indian government, aims to promote yoga as a symbol of India's ancient cultural wisdom on the global stage.

The nationalist narrative often emphasizes the revival of indigenous practices and resistance to cultural homogenization. This can be seen in the growing popularity of traditional attire, local cuisines, and regional festivals. Moreover, the emphasis on using Hindi and other regional languages in official and educational contexts underscores the importance of linguistic heritage in nationalist discourse.

In recent years, India has witnessed a surge in populist nationalism, reflected in the political landscape. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), led by Narendra Modi, has championed a nationalist agenda that resonates with a significant portion of the Indian populace. This agenda includes the promotion of Hindu cultural values, economic self-reliance, and a strong national defense.

Policies such as the abrogation of Article 370, which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir, and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) have sparked intense debate. Proponents argue that these measures are necessary to protect national integrity and security, while critics view them as undermining India's secular and pluralistic foundations.

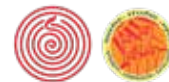
India's foreign policy reflects a delicate balance between embracing globalization and asserting national interests. As a member of various international organizations such as BRICS, the G20, and the World Trade Organization (WTO), India actively participates in shaping global economic and political agendas. India's strategic partnerships with countries like the United States, Japan, and Australia, particularly through initiatives like the Quad, highlight its commitment to global cooperation.

However, India also navigates its relationships carefully to safeguard national sovereignty. For instance, India's stance on data localization and its cautious approach to joining comprehensive trade agreements like the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) illustrate its desire to protect domestic interests in the face of global pressures.

India's IT industry is a hallmark of successful globalization. Companies like Infosys, TCS, and Wipro have become global leaders, driving India's economic growth and providing employment to millions. The industry's success is attributed to India's integration into the global market, leveraging its skilled workforce and cost advantages.

However, this sector also faces challenges from protectionist measures abroad, such as visa restrictions in the United States. Balancing global integration with the protection of domestic interests remains a critical issue for policymakers and industry leaders.

Contrastingly, the agriculture sector highlights the complexities of nationalism. The recent farmers' protests against the 2020 farm laws illustrate the tension between market liberalization and protection of traditional livelihoods. Farmers feared that these laws, aimed at deregulating agricultural markets, would favor large corporations at the



expense of small and marginal farmers.

The government's eventual repeal of the laws after extensive protests underscores the influence of nationalist sentiments in safeguarding domestic interests and ensuring that liberalization efforts do not undermine local economies and social structures.

The ancient Indian philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," meaning "the world is one family," offers a profound perspective on the current discourse of globalization and nationalism. Rooted in the Upanishadic tradition, this concept emphasizes the interconnectedness and unity of all human beings, transcending national, cultural, and ethnic boundaries.

In the context of globalization, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam aligns with the ideals of global cooperation, cultural exchange, and collective progress. It advocates for a world where resources, knowledge, and opportunities are shared for the common good, fostering a sense of global solidarity. This philosophy supports the integration of economies and societies, encouraging nations to work together to address global challenges such as climate change, poverty, and pandemics.

Conversely, in the realm of nationalism, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam serves as a reminder that the assertion of national identity and sovereignty should not lead to exclusion or conflict. While it is crucial for nations to preserve their cultural heritage and safeguard their interests, this ancient wisdom suggests that such pursuits should be balanced with the recognition of our shared humanity. It encourages nations to pursue self-reliance and cultural preservation without losing sight of mutual respect and global responsibility.

In contemporary India, the philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam can bridge the gap between globalization and nationalism. It promotes a vision of inclusive growth and harmonious coexistence, urging India to be a global leader that champions both national pride and global unity. This balanced approach can guide policy-making, international relations, and cultural exchanges, fostering a world where diversity is celebrated and unity is embraced.

Globalization has a dual impact on environmental conservation. On one hand, it enables the dissemination of sustainable technologies and practices, fostering global cooperation on environmental issues. International agreements like the Paris Climate Accord exemplify collective efforts to address climate change. On the other hand, globalization contributes to environmental degradation through increased consumption, resource extraction, and pollution. The challenge lies in balancing economic growth with environmental sustainability.

The future of globalization and nationalism depends on finding a new paradigm that reconciles the benefits of global integration with the need for national sovereignty and cultural identity. This requires inclusive policies that address the concerns of marginalized communities, promote equitable economic growth, and foster intercultural dialogue. Governments, international organizations, and civil society must collaborate to create a more balanced and sustainable global order.

International organizations play a crucial role in mediating the relationship between globalization and nationalism. Institutions like the United Nations, World Trade Organization (WTO), and International Monetary Fund (IMF) must adapt to changing geopolitical realities, ensuring that their policies are inclusive and responsive to the needs of all nations. Strengthening global governance while respecting national sovereignty is essential for addressing global challenges effectively.

The interplay between globalization and nationalism presents both opportunities and challenges for the contemporary world. While globalization fosters economic growth, cultural exchange, and international cooperation, nationalism emphasizes the importance of sovereignty, identity, and local traditions. Balancing these forces requires nuanced policies that address economic disparities, promote social cohesion, and protect cultural heritage. As the world navigates the complexities of the 21st century, finding a harmonious balance between globalization and nationalism will be essential for fostering a more inclusive and sustainable global community.

The interplay between globalization and nationalism continues to shape the contemporary world, presenting both opportunities and challenges. Globalization has facilitated economic growth, technological advancements, and cultural exchange, promoting a more interconnected and cooperative global community. However, it has also led to economic disparities, cultural homogenization, and the erosion of national sovereignty, fueling nationalist sentiments.

Nationalism, on the other hand, emphasizes the preservation of cultural identity, social cohesion, and political autonomy. While it fosters a sense of belonging and pride among citizens, excessive nationalism can lead to isolationism, protectionism, and conflicts. The rise of populist movements and anti-globalization sentiments reflects the growing concerns over the adverse effects of globalization on national interests.

India's experience with globalization and nationalism offers valuable insights into the complexities of balancing these two forces. The economic liberalization of the 1990s propelled India onto the global stage, driving economic growth and technological innovation. Yet, the resurgence of nationalist policies underscores the need to protect domestic industries and cultural heritage.

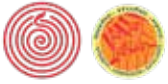
The philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" serves as a guiding principle in this discourse, advocating for global cooperation while respecting national identities. It emphasizes the interconnectedness of humanity, urging nations to pursue inclusive growth and harmonious coexistence.

As we move forward, finding a new paradigm that reconciles the benefits of globalization with the need for national sovereignty and cultural identity is imperative. This requires inclusive policies, equitable economic growth, and intercultural dialogue. By embracing the principles of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, we can foster a balanced and sustainable global order where diversity is celebrated and unity is embraced.



MODEL QUESTION PAPER-MCQ





Q1. Which of the following statements accurately describes sympatric speciation?

- A. Sympatric speciation occurs when species diverge due to geographic isolation, leading to reproductive isolation in separate environments.
- B. Sympatric speciation happens when new species evolve from a single ancestral species while inhabiting the same geographic region.
- C. Sympatric speciation is the process by which species evolve new traits to adapt to different climates and environments.
- D. Sympatric speciation involves species adapting to different food sources, leading to reproductive isolation in distinct habitats.

Q2. The species 'Paraparatrechina neela,' often seen in news, is classified as a:

- A. New species of butterfly
- B. New blue ant species
- C. New type of marine algae
- D. New species of bird

Q3. Consider the following pairs.

(CITES Appendix: Significance)

- 1. Appendix I: Trade is allowed but regulated to avoid over-exploitation.
- 2. Appendix II: Lists species that are protected in at least one country
- 3. Appendix III: Contains species that are threatened with extinction

How many of the above pair/s is/ are correctly matched?

- A. One pair only
- B. Two pairs only
- C. All the three pairs
- D. None of the pairs

Q4. The 'State of the Ocean Report 2024,' often seen in news, is released by which of the following organizations?

- A. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- B. World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
- C. International Oceanographic Commission (IOC)
- D. UNESCO

Q5. Consider the following statements regarding 'Montreux Record' often seen in news.

- 1. The Record is a list maintained under the Ramsar Convention, focusing on wetland sites in danger.
- 2. The Record identifies wetlands that require urgent attention due to threats affecting their ecological character.
- 3. Inclusion on the Record signals that a wetland site faces significant threats, potentially impacting its conservation status and management.

How many of the above statement/s is/ are correct?

- A. Only One
- B. Only Two
- C. All the Three
- D. None of the above

Q6. The theme of World Environment Day 2024 is:

- A. Ecosystem Restoration for Sustainable Development
- B. Climate Action for a Better World
- C. Our Land, Our Future, We Are Generation Restoration
- D. Protecting Biodiversity for a Sustainable Future

Q7. The Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary (SWS), often mentioned in the news, is located in which state in India?

- A. Uttar Pradesh
- B. Madhya Pradesh
- C. Uttarakhand
- D. Rajasthan

Q8. Consider the following statements regarding 'High Seas Biodiversity Treaty' sometimes seen in news.

- 1. The high seas are vast ocean areas beyond national jurisdictions, yet poorly protected by current laws.
- 2. India is a signatory of this treaty.

Which of the above statement/s is/ are incorrect?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Q8. Consider the following pairs.

(Moon Mission: Space Agencies)

- 1. Apollo program: NASA
- 2. Change 3: Russia
- 3. Kaguya (SELENE): ROSCOSMOS

How many of the above pair/s is/ are correctly matched?

- A. One pair only
- B. Two pairs only
- C. All the three pairs
- D. None of the pairs

Q9. Which Russian cosmonaut became the first person to spend 1,000 days in space?

- A. Alexey Ovchinin
- B. Gennady Padalka
- C. Sergey Revin
- D. Oleg Kononenko

Q10. Which of the following statements accurately describes the Trishna Space Mission?

- A. Trishna Space Mission, a collaborative effort between ISRO and France, focuses on analyzing deep space phenomena for new cosmic discoveries.
- B. Trishna is a mission by ISRO and France designed to enhance Earth's satellite communication capabilities through advanced technology.
- C. Trishna, a joint mission by ISRO and France, aims to provide unprecedented climate data by studying Earth's surface and atmospheric conditions.
- D. The Trishna Space Mission, initiated by ISRO and France, is dedicated to exploring the outer planets of the solar system for new resources.

Q11. Consider the following statements regarding 'CRISPR-Cas9' often seen in news.

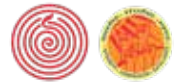
- 1. It is a gene-editing tool that enables precise modification of DNA sequences in various organisms.
- 2. The system consists of a guide RNA that directs the Cas9 enzyme to a specific DNA sequence for cutting.
- 3. Applications include correcting genetic defects, developing disease models, and potentially treating genetic disorders such as cystic fibrosis.

Select the correct statement/s using the code given

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

Q12. The 'International Year of Quantum Science and Technology' is celebrated in which year?

- A. 2023



- B. 2024
- C. 2025
- D. 2026

Q13. Which of the following statements accurately describes the 'Meaty Rice' initiative?

- A. It is a global program aimed at enhancing meat production quality through advanced agricultural techniques.
- B. It refers to a research project that explores the development of rice varieties with enhanced nutritional profiles for better health.
- C. It is an international initiative focusing on increasing the meat content in rice varieties to combat malnutrition.
- D. It is a sustainable agriculture project designed to improve the yield and quality of rice crops using eco-friendly methods.

Q14. With reference to 'Reusable Launch Vehicle' sometimes seen in news, consider the following statements.

- 1. They are spacecraft designed to be launched, recovered, and launched again, reducing overall space mission costs.
- 2. These vehicles reduce costs by allowing multiple launches from the same hardware, aiming to make space access more economical.

Identify the correct statement/s.

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Q15. Who is known as the 'Father of India's Three-Stage Nuclear Power Programme'?

- A. Homi J. Bhabha
- B. Vikram Sarabhai
- C. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
- D. Rajagopala Chidambaram

Q16. Consider the following statements about the leader of the opposition.

- 1. The LOP must belong to the largest opposition party having not less than one-tenth of the total seats in the Lok Sabha.
- 2. The post of the leader of the opposition is mentioned in the Constitution of India
- 3. The LOP is entitled to a salary, allowances, and other facilities equivalent to that of a Cabinet Minister.
- 4. They are ranked No. 7 in the official rank of precedence in the Govt. of India.

Which of the following is/are true about the above statements

- A. 1 and 2
- B. 1, 3 and 4
- C. 2,3 and 4
- D. 1 and 4 only

Q17. Consider the following statements and find out how many are correctly matched

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q18. Consider the following statements regarding India and Financial Action Task force

- 1. India Became a member of the Financial Action Task Force in 2010.

2. The FATF Secretariat is headquartered at the OECD headquarters in Paris, France.

How many of the following is / are true regarding the above statements

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both 1 and 2

Hydro electric project	Rivers
Ratle	Chenab
Baglihar	Kishanganga
Pakal dul project	Marusdar River

D. Neither 1 nor 2

Q19. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Statement-I: Constitution framers chose the parliamentary system over the presidential system.
- 2. Statement-II: The parliamentary system ensures that the executive is accountable to the legislature.

Which of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

- A. Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is the correct explanation for Statement-I
- B. Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is not the correct explanation for Statement-I
- C. Statement-I is correct but Statement-II is incorrect
- D. Statement-I is incorrect but Statement-II is correct

Q20. Consider the following statements regarding the speaker and pro tem speaker

- 1. The speaker administers the oath of office to the Pro tem speaker .
- 2. Pro tem speaker administers oath of office to all member of the Lok Sabha.
- 3. Office of the Pro tem speaker ceases to exist with election of the speaker by the Loksabha.

Which of the following is/are true?

- A. Only 1 and 3
- B. Only 1 and 2
- C. Only 2 and 3
- D. Only 3

Q21. Consider the following statements about Chief of Defence Staff (CDS):

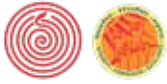
- 1. CDS is the Principal Military Adviser to the Defence Minister on all tri-Services matters.
- 2. The post of CDS was created in 2019 on the recommendations of a Lt General DB Shekatkar committee.
- 3. CDS will not exercise any military command, including over the three Service Chiefs.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

Q22. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Investment in an area where no previous facilities exist is referred to as Brownfield project.
- 2. The projects which are modified or upgraded are called Greenfield projects.



Which of the statements is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Q23. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Article 3 empowers Parliament to alter name of any State by a simple majority
- 2. Any such Bill needs to be referred to the legislature of the concerned State by the Parliament.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Q24. Bandar-e-Anzali, a port city recently in news, is located on the shores of

- 1. Caspian Sea
- 2. Black Sea
- 3. Mediterranean Sea
- 4. Baltic Sea

Q25. Which of the following committees have members elected only by the Lok Sabha?

- A. The Committee on Public Accounts
- B. The Committee on Estimates
- C. The Committee on Public Undertakings
- D. Departmentally Related Standing Committees

Q26. Consider the following:

- 1. Speaker of Lok Sabha
- 2. Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha
- 3. Chairman of Rajya Sabha
- 4. Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha

How many of the above can preside over a joint sitting of both the houses of Parliament?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

Q27. Which country has exited UN-brokered deal to export Ukrainian grain via Black Sea?

- A. USA
- B. Russia
- C. UK
- D. Germany

Q28. Dar es Salaam Port, recently seen in the news, is located in which country?

- A. Tanzania
- B. Madagascar
- C. Somalia
- D. Libya

Q29. Recently, which country decided to allow non-citizen residents from the Five Eyes Alliance to join its armed forces?

- A. Australia
- B. Canada
- C. US
- D. UK

Q30. Crete Island, recently seen in news, is the largest island of which country?

- A. Malaysia
- B. Maldives
- C. Greece

D. Indonesia

Q31. The drainage basin of the Brahmaputra River covers which of the following states?

- 1. Assam
- 2. Tripura
- 3. Nagaland
- 4. Sikkim
- 5. Meghalaya

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1, 2 and 4 only
- b) 2, 3 and 5 only
- c) 1, 3, 4 and 5 only
- d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Q32. Consider the following countries:

- 1. Belarus
- 2. Estonia
- 3. Hungary
- 4. Czech Republic
- 5. Poland

Which of the above has borders with Ukraine?

- a) 1, 2 and 4 only
- b) 3, 4 and 5 only
- c) 1, 3 and 5 only
- d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Q33. Which of the following rivers does not originate in the Indian subcontinent?

- a) Ganges
- b) Brahmaputra
- c) Indus
- d) Yangtze

2. The 'Roaring Forties' refer to:

- a) Westerlies
- b) Easterlies
- c) Tropical cyclones in the Pacific Ocean
- d) Monsoon winds in India

Q34. Which of the following is a tropical cyclone that originates in the Bay of Bengal?

- a) Typhoon
- b) Hurricane
- c) Tornado
- d) Cyclone

Q35. The concept of 'El Niño' is associated with:

- a) Ocean currents
- b) Earthquakes
- c) Desertification
- d) Monsoon winds

Q36. The largest coral reef system in the world is located near the coast of:

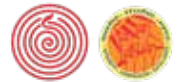
- a) Australia
- b) Brazil
- c) Madagascar
- d) Philippines

Q37. Which of the following is a landlocked country in South America?

- a) Brazil
- b) Peru
- c) Bolivia
- d) Argentina

Q38. The 'Ring of Fire' is associated with:

- a) Volcanoes
- b) Earthquakes















- c) Tsunamis
d) Tornadoes
- Q39. The Himalayan mountain range runs through which of the following countries?
- a) Nepal and Bhutan
b) India and Pakistan
c) China and Myanmar
d) Afghanistan and Iran
- Q40. The process of soil formation primarily involves:
- a) Deposition
b) Erosion
c) Weathering
d) Sedimentation

Answers:

1. d) Yangtze
2. a) Ocean currents in the Southern Hemisphere
3. d) Cyclone
4. a) Ocean currents
5. a) Australia
6. c) Bolivia
7. a) Volcanoes
8. a) Antarctica
9. a) Nepal and Bhutan
10. c) Weathering
- Q41. Which of the following statements best describes the term 'Scheme for Sustainable Structuring of Stressed Assets (S4A)', recently seen in the news?
- a. It is a procedure for considering the ecological costs of developmental schemes formulated by the Government.
b. It is a scheme of RBI for reworking the financial structure of big corporate entities facing genuine difficulties.
c. It is a disinvestment plan of the Government regarding Central Public Sector Undertakings.
d. It is an important provision in the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code' recently implemented by the Government.
- Q42. Consider the following statements regarding Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban).
1. The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) intends to provide housing for all in urban areas by the year 2022.

2. The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) provides Central Assistance to the implementing agencies for providing houses to all eligible families/beneficiaries.
Which among the above statements is/are correct?
- a. 1 only
b. 2 only
c. Both 1 and 2
d. Neither 1 nor 2
- Q43. Biocarbon Fund Initiative for Sustainable Forest Landscape is managed by the
- a. Asian Development Bank
b. International Monetary Fund
c. UNDP
d. World Bank
- Q44. Which of the following factors are taken into consideration for the determination of MSP by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)?
1. Demand and supply
2. Cost of Production
3. Price trends in the domestic and international market
4. Terms of trade between agricultural and non-agricultural sectors.
- Select the correct answer using the codes given below:
- a. 1 and 3 only
b. 2 and 4 only
c. 1, 2 and 3 only
d. 1, 2, 3 and 4
- Q45. Which of the following methods has been adopted for improving agriculture marketing in India?
1. Privatization of all wholesale mandis.
2. Promotion to cooperative marketing.
3. Minimum support prices (MSP) for agricultural products.
- Select the correct answer using the codes given below:
- a. 1 only
b. 1 and 3 only
c. 2 and 3 only
d. 1, 2 and 3

SPACE FOR ROUGH WORK

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Candidate Sign	<p>INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING THE SHEET</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This sheet should not be folded or crushed. 2. Use only blue/black ball point pen to fill the circles. 3. Use of pencil is strictly prohibited. 4. Circles should be darkened completely and properly. 5. Cutting and erasing on this sheet is not allowed. 6. Do not use any stray marks on the sheet. 7. Do not use marker or white fluid to hide the mark. <p>WRONG METHODS CORRECT METHOD</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">    </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> </div>																																																																																																																																																
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3	<input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D	23	<input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D	43	<input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D	63	<input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D	83	<input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D
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SPACE FOR ROUGH WORK





**SAMKALP
VEDHIK
CURRENT AFFAIRS
JUNE 2024**



SAMKALP

SAMKALP BHAWAN

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