

9 MAOISTS, INCLUDING 6 WOMEN, KILLED IN DANTEWADA OPERATION

INTERNAL SECURITY

CONTEXT: A recent encounter between security forces and Maoists in Chhattisgarh, India, resulted in the deaths of nine Maoists, including six women. This incident marks a significant milestone in the ongoing anti-Naxal operations in the region.

A DEADLY ENCOUNTER IN CHHATTISGARH: 9 MAOISTS KILLED

Anti-Naxal Operation Leads to Fatal Clash

In a major blow to the Maoist insurgency in Chhattisgarh, security forces killed nine Maoists, including six women, in a fierce encounter in the Dantewada district on Tuesday. The operation, conducted by a joint team of District Reserve Guards, Bastar Fighters, and the Central Reserve Police Force, was triggered by a tip-off about the presence of Maoists in the region.

Heavy Exchange of Fire

The encounter, which lasted several hours, involved intense firing between the security forces and the Maoists. Nine Maoists were eventually killed, and a large quantity of weapons and ammunition was recovered. All the deceased were identified as members of the West Bastar and Darbha Division Committee and PLGA Company No. 02.

Rising Toll of Maoist Casualties

This incident brings the total number of alleged Maoists killed by security forces this year to over 150. The government has been intensifying its efforts to eliminate Naxalism from the region, with Union Home Minister Amit Shah announcing a target of eradicating it by March 2026.

The crackdown

Chhattisgarh, a region greatly affected by left wing extremism, has seen a surge of counter-insurgency operations this year. Some major operations:

April 16: 29 Maoists, including a senior rebel leader, killed in Kanker (North Bastar)

April 10: 12 Maoists killed in Bijapur

April 2: 13 killed in Bijapur

153 Maoists killed in anti-Naxal operations so far this year; this figure is much higher than the 46 deaths in 2021, 30 in 2022, and 29 in 2023



Dantewada is where the encounter took place on Tuesday



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BENGAL PASSES BILL THAT MOOTS DEATH FOR RAPE

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

CONTEXT: The passage of a Bill in West Bengal that seeks to increase punishment for sexual assault, including the death penalty for rape in certain cases. This legislation was prompted by the recent rape and murder of a doctor in Kolkata.

Capital change

Introducing the death penalty for rape, the Bill seeks to amend the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and POCSO Act



WEST BENGAL INTRODUCES HARSHER PENALTIES FOR RAPE

Bill Passed Amid Public Outrage

In response to a recent high-profile rape and murder case, the West Bengal Assembly has unanimously passed a new law that significantly increases penalties for sexual assault. The Aparajita Women and Child (West Bengal Criminal Laws Amendment) Bill, 2024, introduces provisions for harsher punishments for various types of rape, including the death penalty for certain offenses.

Key Provisions of the Bill

- **Increased Punishment:** The Bill seeks to amend relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) to impose stricter penalties for rape, gang rape, rape resulting in death or vegetative state, rape by public servants, and repeat offenders.
- **Speedy Investigation:** To ensure swift justice, the Bill mandates that investigations into rape cases be completed within 21 days of the initial report.

Public Support and Government Response

The Bill received widespread support from both the ruling Trinamool Congress and the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee described the legislation as "historic and model," while the Leader of

BNS Section	Punishment now	Proposed
64(1) - Rape	10 years' RI that may extend to life and fine	RI for life or death
64(2) - Rape by police officer or public servant	10 years' RI that may extend to life and fine	RI for life and fine or death
66 - Rape that causes death or persistent vegetative state	20 years' RI that may extend to life or death	Death
70(1) - Gang rape	20 years' RI that may extend to life and fine	RI for life or death
70(2) - Repeat offenders	Life imprisonment or death	RI for life or death

For POSCO, it only provides life imprisonment or death sentence for penetrative sexual assault

the Opposition called for its immediate implementation. The government's decision to pass the Bill was influenced by public outrage following the tragic death of the doctor.

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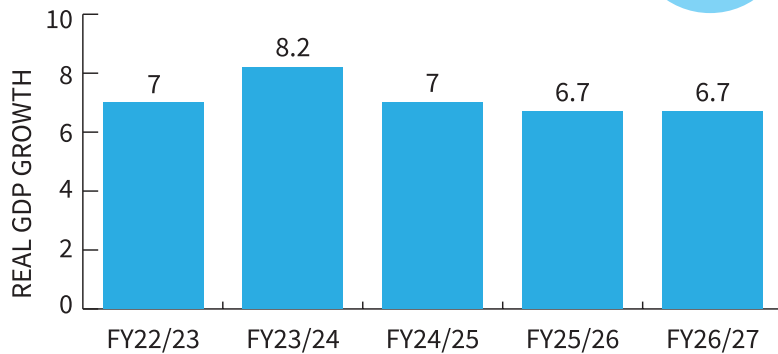
WORLD BANK HIKES INDIA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH FORECAST TO 7% FOR 2024-25

ECONOMICS & DEVELOPMENT

CONTEXT: The World Bank has revised its growth forecast for India upwards to 7% for the current fiscal year, citing the country's strong economic performance and favourable global trends. The report also highlights India's potential to further boost its growth through increased exports in various sectors.

Growth forecast

World Bank forecasts India's GDP growth will quicken to 7% in FY25 and remain strong in FY26 and FY27



India's Economic Resilience

The World Bank has revised its growth projection for India upwards to 7% for the current fiscal year, reflecting the country's strong economic performance amidst global challenges. The report, "India Development Update," highlights India's continued position as the world's fastest-growing major economy.

Drivers of Growth

Several factors have contributed to India's robust growth, including:

- **Public Infrastructure Investment:** Government spending on infrastructure projects has played a crucial role in stimulating economic activity.
- **Real Estate Boom:** A resurgence in household

investments in real estate has further boosted economic growth.

- **Manufacturing and Services:** The manufacturing sector has witnessed significant growth, while the services sector has remained resilient, offsetting the underperformance of agriculture.

Improving Employment Situation

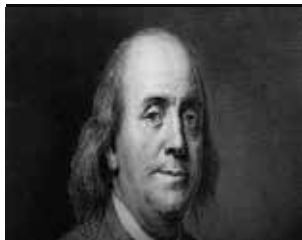
Urban unemployment rates have gradually declined since the pandemic, particularly for female workers. However, youth unemployment remains a concern, with urban youth unemployment rates still elevated at 17%.

Potential for Further Growth

The World Bank's country director in India emphasized the potential for India to further accelerate its growth by harnessing its global trade potential. In addition to its existing strengths in IT, business services, and pharmaceuticals, India can diversify its export basket to include textiles, apparel, footwear, electronics, and green technology products.

Reducing Extreme Poverty

India's robust growth prospects and declining inflation rate are expected to contribute to a reduction in extreme poverty. The World Bank's positive outlook for the Indian economy highlights the country's resilience and potential for continued development.



"If you invest more in your education, then you are likely to get more interest in it."

—Benjamin Franklin



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DRONE WARFARE IN MANIPUR: A NEW DIMENSION TO THE CONFLICT

INTERNAL SECURITY

CONTEXT: The use of drones to attack villages in Manipur, India, leading to casualties and further escalating the ongoing ethnic conflict. The drones are believed to have been assembled locally and used with ammunition looted from police armouries.

Drone Attacks Escalate Violence in Manipur

Local Assembly of Drones and Looted Ammunition

The recent drone attacks on Meitei-dominated villages in Manipur have escalated the ongoing ethnic conflict in the state. Investigations have revealed that the drones used in the attacks were likely assembled locally and armed with ammunition looted from police armouries.

Cross-Border Concerns

The drones were launched from Kuki-Zo inhabited areas in the hills, raising concerns about potential involvement from across the border. The People's Defence Force of Myanmar, which controls some border areas, has been suspected of selling arms, including drones, to groups in Manipur.

Government Response and Civilian Casualties

The Manipur government has formed a committee to investigate the drone attacks and has instructed security forces to shoot anyone attempting to cross the buffer zone between the valley and hill areas. Despite these measures, two people were killed and several others injured in the attacks on Koutruk and Kadangband villages.

Accusations and Counter-Accusations

Both sides of the conflict have accused each other of initiating the violence. The Kuki Inpi, an apex body of the Kuki tribes, claimed that the drone attacks were a calculated attempt to ambush Kuki-Zo civilians. Meanwhile, the Meitei radical group Arambai Tenggol has been accused of planning an ambush.

Central Forces Under Scrutiny

The role of central forces deployed in Manipur has come under question, with some locals alleging that they failed to respond to the attacks. The Manipur government has called for the withdrawal of 60,000 personnel, citing their ineffectiveness in maintaining peace.

A New Dimension to the Conflict

The use of drones in the Manipur conflict marks a new and concerning development. The availability of drones and the potential for acquiring arms from neighbouring countries have added complexity to the situation and raised concerns about the future of the conflict.

CENTRE GIVES NOD TO DEFENCE PROPOSALS WORTH ₹1.44 LAKH CR.

DEFENCE & SECURITY

CONTEXT: The Indian government's approval for defence procurement proposals worth ₹1.44 lakh crore, which include stealth frigates, combat vehicles, air defence systems, and patrol vessels. These acquisitions aim to enhance the capabilities of the Indian armed forces.

Investment in Indigenous Defense Capabilities

The Indian government has approved a significant package of defense acquisitions worth ₹1.44 lakh crore. The Defense Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defense Minister Rajnath Singh, granted Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) for 10 capital acquisition proposals, prioritizing indigenous



sources for 99% of the total cost.

Key Acquisitions

- **Stealth Frigates:** Seven advanced stealth frigates will be built under Project-17B by public sector defense yards GRSE and MDL.
- **Future-Ready Combat Vehicles (FRCV):** To replace the Army's main battle tanks, FRCVs with superior mobility, protection, and firepower will be procured.
- **Air Defense Fire Control Radars (FCR):** Advanced FCRs will enhance the capability to detect and track aerial targets.
- **Maritime Surveillance:** Dornier-228 aircraft, next-generation fast patrol vessels, and offshore patrol vessels will bolster the Indian Coast Guard's surveillance and patrolling capabilities.

Focus on Indigenous Development

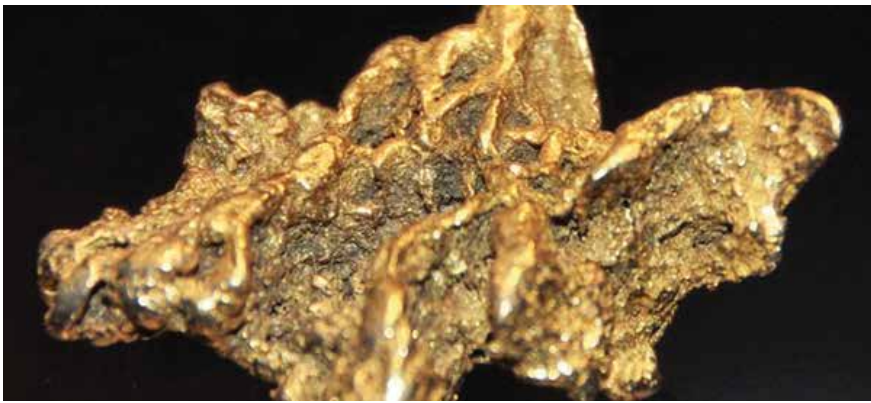
The government's emphasis on indigenous development is evident in the large share of the acquisitions sourced from Indian manufacturers. This aligns with the government's goal of promoting self-reliance in defense production.

Boosting Defense Capabilities

These procurements will significantly enhance the Indian armed forces' capabilities, ensuring national security and protecting the country's interests. The investment in defense infrastructure and technology reflects the government's commitment to modernizing and strengthening the nation's military.

COULD QUAKES EXPLAIN WHY GOLD NUGGETS ARE FOUND IN QUARTZ VEINS?

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



CONTEXT: A scientific study proposes a new explanation for the formation of gold nuggets in quartz veins. The study suggests that piezoelectric reactions triggered by seismic waves play a crucial role in the deposition of gold onto the quartz crystals.

THE GIST

- Quartz is a piezoelectric crystal; when it is squeezed or its shape is mechanically distorted in some way, it develops a voltage
- An electric field distorts the electronic properties of

quartz, causing electrons to flow from the crystal to an aqueous solution on its surface or vice versa

- A seismic wave leads to piezocatalytic reactions with gold-bearing solutions, and gold is deposited on the crystals. This process, repeated thousands of times, creates large gold nuggets

SEISMIC WAVES AND GOLD NUGGETS: A SURPRISING CONNECTION

The Mystery of Gold Nuggets

The formation of gold nuggets in quartz veins has long puzzled scientists. Despite extensive research, a single, convincing explanation has remained elusive. Traditional theories involving fluid condensation and nanoparticle formation have fallen short in explaining the highly localized nature of these deposits.

Quartz: The Key to Gold Formation

A recent study published in Nature Geoscience offers a novel explanation. The researchers propose that quartz itself, the most common piezoelectric mineral, plays a crucial role in the formation of gold nuggets.

Piezoelectric Reactions and Gold Deposition

Quartz, when subjected to mechanical stress, generates an electric field. This field can drive electrochemical reactions, leading to the deposition of gold from solution onto the quartz surface. The study demonstrates that seismic waves, which strain quartz crystals, can trigger these reactions.

A Simple Yet Effective Process

The researchers' experiment involved placing quartz slabs in gold-bearing solutions and subjecting them to mechanical strain. The results were remarkable: gold was deposited on the strained quartz slabs, while the control slabs remained devoid of gold.

Implications for Gold Formation

This discovery provides a plausible explanation for the highly localized nature of gold nuggets in quartz veins. The repeated stress from seismic waves, combined with the piezoelectric properties of quartz, creates favorable conditions for gold deposition.

A Lesson in Simple Science

The study serves as a reminder that sometimes, the most elegant solutions to complex problems can be found in seemingly simple concepts. By applying basic principles of physics and chemistry, the researchers were able to unravel a long-standing mystery in the field of geology.

A DISCOURSE ON AI GOVERNANCE THAT INDIA MUST SHAPE

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

India's Role in Shaping Global AI Governance

The Summit of the Future and the Global Digital Compact

The upcoming Summit of the Future presents a crucial opportunity for India to actively shape the international discourse on Artificial Intelligence (AI) governance. The Global Digital Compact (GDC) aims to establish a collaborative framework that addresses the digital divide, advances the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and ensures ethical and inclusive AI development.

Geopolitical Contestation and the UN's Role

The United Nations is emerging as the primary forum for shaping global AI standards. The U.S. and China have introduced competing resolutions, reflecting their respective national interests and geopolitical ambitions. India's active engagement at the UN can help ensure that the GDC aligns with its developmental priorities and ethical standards.

India's Legacy of Global South Leadership

India has a long history of advocating for the interests of developing countries at the UN, particularly in climate negotiations. This experience positions India as a key player in AI governance discussions, ensuring that the unique needs and perspectives of the Global South are considered.

Addressing the Digital Divide

India faces significant challenges in the AI landscape, including limited infrastructure, data access, and capital. By advocating for equitable access to AI technology and building technical capacity, India can help bridge the digital divide and ensure that all countries can benefit from AI advancements.

Promoting Inclusive AI Governance

India should push for a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to AI governance that respects human rights, aligns with international laws, and ensures that AI systems are fair and representative of diverse global perspectives.

Countering the Influence of Developed Countries

The bipolar dynamics between the U.S. and China risk sidelining the interests of developing countries in AI governance. India's leadership can help counter this influence and ensure that the unique needs and perspectives of the Global South are adequately represented.

Conclusion

India's active engagement in global AI governance discussions is crucial for shaping a balanced and sustainable digital future. By leveraging its historical legacy, diplomatic influence, and unique experiences, India can play a pivotal role in ensuring that AI development is inclusive, equitable, and aligned with the interests of the Global South.



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TAKE ON THE CHALLENGE OF RISING INCOME INEQUALITY

ECONOMICS & DEVELOPMENT

CONTEXT: There must be a realisation that the new economics is all about moving from 'economies of scope and scale' to 'economy.

ADDRESSING INCOME INEQUALITY: A CALL FOR ACTION

The Need for a New Economic Paradigm

Sam Pitroda, a renowned telecom technocrat and global thinker, argues that the new economics must shift from "economies of scope and scale" to an "economy of purpose." This paradigm shift is essential to address the growing challenge of income inequality.

Key Strategies for Addressing Income Inequality

- **Progressive Taxation:** Redistributing wealth through progressive tax policies is crucial for creating a more equitable society.
- **Education and Skill Development:** Investing in education and skill development can enhance employability and increase earning potential.
- **Fair Labor Laws:** Protecting workers' rights and ensuring fair labor practices can help reduce income inequality.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** Investing in infrastructure, particularly in areas related to the environment, water, sanitation, and energy, can reduce regional disparities and promote inclusion.
- **Contributions from the Super Rich:** Encouraging the super-rich to donate a significant portion of their wealth to public causes can help address social and economic disparities.

The Role of Government and the Private Sector

Governments can play a crucial role in implementing policies that promote equity and inclusion. Progressive taxation, investment in education and infrastructure, and fair labor laws are essential tools for addressing income inequality. Additionally, the private sector can contribute by adopting responsible corporate practices and supporting social initiatives.

The Importance of Decentralization and Digital Technology

The author emphasizes the importance of decentralization and digital technology in creating a more inclusive and sustainable economy. Investing in small and medium-sized enterprises and local innovations can promote local employment and prosperity. Digital platforms can facilitate networking, supply chain management, and market access.

Conclusion

Addressing income inequality requires a multifaceted approach that considers economic, social, and environmental factors. By implementing the strategies outlined in this article, India can create a more equitable and just society.

DID CORPORATE TAX CUTS INCREASE WAGES?

ECONOMICS & DEVELOPMENT

CONTEXT: The effects of corporate tax cuts in the United States and India, finding that while they may have had some positive impacts, they have not significantly benefited wage-earners.

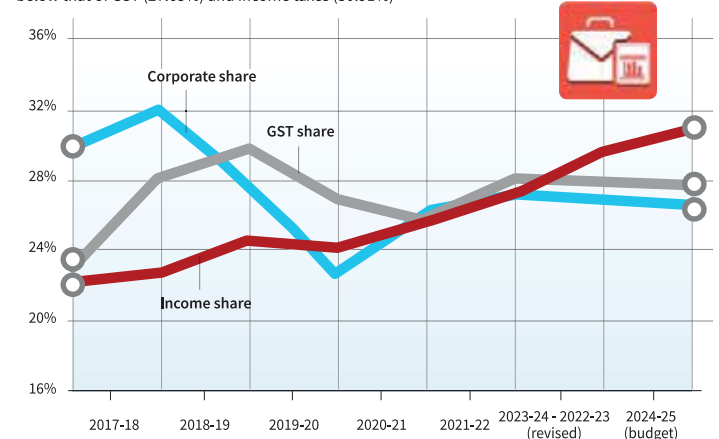
In the U.S., the tax cuts led to a modest increase in investment and wages, but the benefits were overshadowed by a significant decline in tax revenue. In India, the tax cuts had little to no effect on employment or wages, and the burden of taxation shifted from corporations to individuals.

DID CORPORATE TAX CUTS INCREASE WAGES?

Tax cuts on profits do have immediate effects on income distribution. A reduction in profit taxes boosts the profits on already invested capital without necessarily increasing future investment, thus benefiting private capital while showing little to no benefits for wage-earners.

Fig 1: The share of different tax sources

According to the budget estimates of 2024-25, the share of corporate taxes has fallen to 26.5%, below that of GST (27.65%) and income taxes (30.91%)



THE GIST

- The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was signed into law by President Donald Trump on December 22, 2017, and went into effect from January 1, 2018. One of the most significant provisions was the reduction of the top tax rate on corporate income from 35 to 21%.
- Tax rates for corporates were cut in September 2019 in India, with the rate for existing companies reducing from 30 to 22%, and that of new companies from 25 to 15%. This resulted in a tax revenue loss of around 1 lakh crore in 2020-21.
- Furthermore, tax cuts have led to a shifting of the burden of tax collections from corporates to individuals. In the years prior to the pandemic, two of the largest economies in the world — the U.S. and India — cut corporate tax rates in an attempt to stimulate growth. While the pandemic caused an unprecedented shock to the economy, enough time has passed for us to evaluate the effects of these tax cuts.

THE EFFECTS OF TAX CUTS IN THE U.S.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was signed into law by former President Donald Trump on December 22, 2017, and went into effect from January 1, 2018.

While the act affected personal and corporate taxes, one of the most significant provisions was the reduction of the top tax rate on corporate income from 35 to 21%. Proponents of the measure held that the move would ensure that companies invest more, leading to an increase in growth and employment. The new investment would also cause an upgradation in technology and productivity, leading to an increase in wages as well.

In a recent publication titled 'Lessons from the Biggest Business Tax Cut in U.S. History' (published in the Summer 2024 edition of the Journal of Economic Perspectives), economists Gabriel Chodorow-Reich, Owen Zidar and Eric Zwick examine the effects of the tax cut. They find that the cuts did have a positive impact on investment, with a range of studies estimating an increase in investment of around 8 to 14%. Furthermore, studies suggest that based on investment trends, there would likely have been a fall in investment if the tax cuts were not passed.

This is not to say that the tax cuts were an unambiguously positive outcome. This is a relatively small increase in investment, implying a long-run increase in GDP of only 0.9%, and an increase in annual wages of less than \$1,000 per worker. This is in stark contrast to the claims of an increase in wages of around \$4,000 to \$9,000 dollars advanced by the Council of Economic Advisors in favour of the move. Furthermore, the reduction in tax rates imply a long-run reduction in tax revenue of almost 41%. The fiscal health of the U.S. economy has been impaired at the cost of higher profits and a marginal increase in wages.

ON TAX CUTS IN INDIA

Tax rates for corporates were cut in September 2019 in India, with the rate for existing companies reducing from 30 to 22%, and that of new companies from 25 to 15%. This resulted in a tax revenue loss of around 1 lakh crore in 2020-21. This tax could nevertheless prove to be of net benefit to the economy if it resulted in an increase in employment and investment.

The pandemic led to severe dislocations in the labour market, leading to high unemployment. Unemployment has reduced since then, with labour force participation rates rising, particularly that of women. However, the corporate sector has had little to do with this increase. Much of the increase in employment has come in the form of insecure work, with unpaid family work showing significant increases in the rural sector. According to the PLFS, the share of workers with regular wage employment at the all-India level has fallen from 22.8% in 2017-18 to 20.9% in 2022-23. Furthermore, when comparing the periods July-September 2017 and July-September 2022, the average nominal monthly earnings of rural and urban regular wage workers displays a CAGR (compounded annual growth rate) of 4.53% and 5.75% respectively, which is barely above the rate of inflation. In real terms, rural wages for regular employment have reduced, with relative stagnation for urban wages.

This is not to say that there has been no growth; corporate tax collections have shown healthy growth since the pandemic. However, it has had little to no effect on employment or wages. Tech companies in India have recently made the news for laying off workers, rather than expanding hiring.

Furthermore, tax cuts have led to a shifting of the burden of tax collections from corporates to individuals.

Figure 1 shows the share of three major sources of taxes — corporate taxes, income taxes and GST — in gross tax revenues of the Centre. In 2017-18, corporate taxes were almost 32% of gross tax revenues. It has fallen since then while the share of income taxes rose. According to the budget estimates of 2024-25, the share of corporate taxes has fallen to 26.5%, below that of GST (27.65%) and income taxes (30.91%).

This may explain the move of the Centre to remove indexation benefits and tax long-term capital gains, as it tries to find new sources of revenue to offset the falling share of corporate taxes.

What next?

Tax cuts would not necessarily boost investment if capital believes that the prospect of future profits are uncertain. In an economy recovering from the pandemic and from supply-related disruptions, tax cuts have exercised only marginal effects on private investment.

Tax cuts on profits do have immediate effects on income distribution. A reduction in profit taxes boosts the profits on already invested capital without increasing future investment, thus benefiting private capital while showing little to no benefits for wage-earners (who would gain only if investment raised employment, productivity and wages sufficiently).

Chodorow-Reich et al make the point that a suitable policy strategy would be to have high taxes on existing profits and increased incentives promoting future investment. These tax cuts have shown the difficulty of policy-making in an uncertain world.

WHY IS GOOGLE ACCUSED OF BEING AN ILLEGAL MONOPOLY?

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

CONTEXT: The legal battle between Google and the U.S. Department of Justice, with Google being accused of monopolizing the search engine market.

THE GIST

- Google, the leading American technology company best known for its popular search engine, has lost a Court case filed against it by the U.S. Department of Justice in 2020 accusing the company of being an illegal monopoly.
- Google pays billions of dollars each year, as a share from its advertisement revenues, to device manufacturers such as Apple, Samsung etc. to be featured as the default search engine in their devices.
- Supporters of Google note that there is nothing wrong with Google sharing ad revenues with device manufacturers such as Apple and Samsung. In their view, the practice of paying to be featured as the default search engine is no different from a company buying key real estate space to gain better visibility.

GOOGLE'S ANTITRUST BATTLE: A CLOSER LOOK

Google's Dominant Position

Google has faced allegations of anticompetitive practices due to its dominant position in the search engine market. The company's practice of paying device manufacturers to make Google the default search engine has been criticized as unfair and anti-competitive.

Arguments for and Against Monopoly Accusations

While some argue that Google's market share makes it a harmful monopoly, others contend that a large market share alone does not constitute a monopoly. They point out that there are no legal barriers to entry for competitors and that Google's dominance may not be permanent.

Potential Consequences of the Court Case

The court case against Google could have significant implications for the company and the tech industry. Possible outcomes include:

- **Restrictions on Anti-Competitive Practices:** The court could order Google to stop paying device manufacturers to be the default search engine and allow users to choose their preferred search engine.
- **Forced Data Sharing:** Google may be required to share information about user searches to help competitors catch up.
- **Breakup of the Company:** In a more extreme scenario, the court could order Google to be broken up into multiple companies.

The Future of Google

The outcome of the court case will significantly impact Google's future. If found guilty, the company could face substantial fines and restrictions on its business practices. However, Google may also appeal the decision or seek to negotiate a settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice.

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THE HARM PRINCIPLE: HOW JOHN MILL'S THEORY DEFINES THE EXTENT OF LIBERTY

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

The Harm Principle and Hate Speech: A Complex Balancing Act

The Balancing Act of Free Speech and Harm

John Stuart Mill's harm principle, which states that individual liberties should be restricted only to prevent harm to others, is a cornerstone of modern liberal thought.

However, the definition of harm can be complex and multifaceted, particularly in the context of hate speech.

The Case of Hate Speech

The recent incident in Assam, where a minor girl was gang-raped and the subsequent comments made by the Chief Minister, raise important questions about the limits of free speech and the potential harm caused by hate speech. While the Chief Minister's comments were condemned as hate speech, the legal definition of hate speech in India remains ambiguous.

Applying the Harm Principle to Hate Speech

Mill's harm principle suggests that speech should be restricted only when it directly causes harm to others. However, hate speech can have subtle but significant consequences, including psychological harm, discrimination, and even violence.

The Challenges of Defining and Regulating Hate Speech

Defining hate speech is a complex task, as it often involves subjective judgments about intent and impact. Regulating hate speech can also raise concerns about censorship and the potential for governments to abuse their power.

Balancing Freedom of Speech with the Prevention of Harm

In light of these challenges, it is crucial to strike a balance between freedom of speech and the prevention of harm caused by hate speech. This requires careful consideration of the specific context, the potential consequences of the speech, and the effectiveness of legal interventions.

Conclusion

The harm principle provides a valuable framework for understanding the limits of free speech. However, its application to hate speech requires careful consideration of the complex interplay between individual rights and the prevention of harm. As societies grapple with the challenges of hate speech, it is essential to engage in thoughtful and informed discussions to find the right balance between freedom of expression and the protection of vulnerable groups.

PRIVATE SECTOR BORROWINGS TO RISE ON CAPEX PUSH: PATRA

ECONOMICS & DEVELOPMENT

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Deputy Governor, Michael D. Patra, has predicted a rise in private sector borrowings due to a revival in capital expenditure. Households are expected to be the primary source of funding for these borrowings. While foreign capital will play a role, the RBI will prioritize external debt sustainability. The overall trend indicates a shift towards increased private sector borrowing and a reliance on both domestic and external sources of financing.



KAVACH EXPANSION: RAILWAYS FLOATS TENDERS WORTH OVER ₹2,200 CRORE

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

Indian Railways has floated tenders worth over ₹2,200 crore for the Kavach train collision avoidance system across multiple states. The system, which uses radio frequency identification technology, alerts pilots to red signals and applies automatic brakes if necessary. Railways plans to install Kavach on 10,000 locomotives and cover over 68,000 route kilometres. The government aims to complete the installation of Kavach on 9,000 route kilometres by the end of this year.



CHINA HITS CANADA WITH ANTI-DUMPING PROBE IN TIT-FOR-TAT MOVE

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

CONTEXT: The trade tensions escalated between China and Canada, with China imposing anti-dumping probes on Canadian canola and chemical products in response to Canada's tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles and other goods.



TRADE TENSIONS ESCALATE: CHINA LAUNCHES ANTI-DUMPING PROBE AGAINST CANADA

Tit-for-Tat Tariffs

In response to Canada's imposition of tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles and other goods, China has initiated an anti-dumping investigation into canola imports from Canada. This move marks a significant escalation in trade tensions between the two countries.

Impact on Agricultural Trade

Canola is a major agricultural product for Canada, with China being its primary export market. The anti-dumping investigation threatens to disrupt Canada's canola exports and negatively impact its agricultural sector.

China's Countermeasures

China has also announced plans to investigate anti-dumping practices in Canadian chemical products. Additionally, China has initiated

trade investigations against pork, brandy, and dairy imports from the European Union in response to restrictions on its electric vehicle exports.

Alternative Supply Sources

With the potential disruption of Canadian canola exports, China may seek alternative suppliers, such as Australia and Ukraine. However, factors like weather conditions and existing trade relationships may limit the availability and affordability of these alternatives.

Economic Implications

The trade tensions between China and Canada could have significant economic implications for both countries. Disruptions in agricultural trade and retaliatory measures could lead to higher prices for consumers and negatively impact businesses in both nations.

The Road Ahead

The ongoing trade dispute highlights the complexities of global trade relations and the importance of finding mutually beneficial solutions. It remains to be seen how the situation will evolve and what impact it will have on the broader global economy.

ISRAEL'S PM REMAINS UNBOWED BY PRESSURE AS WAR RAGES ON

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



CONTEXT: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu remains steadfast in his refusal to concede to demands in indirect negotiations with Hamas as the conflict enters its 12th month.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu remains firm in his stance, refusing to make concessions in indirect negotiations with Hamas as the war approaches its 12th month. Amid nationwide protests following the recovery of six dead hostages, Netanyahu has faced growing criticism for potentially prolonging the conflict. He insists on maintaining control over Gaza's border with Egypt to prevent Hamas from re-arming. Meanwhile, Israeli forces continue their operations in the West Bank, with military raids killing at least 27 Palestinians over the past week, including a 15-year-old targeted in an airstrike.

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