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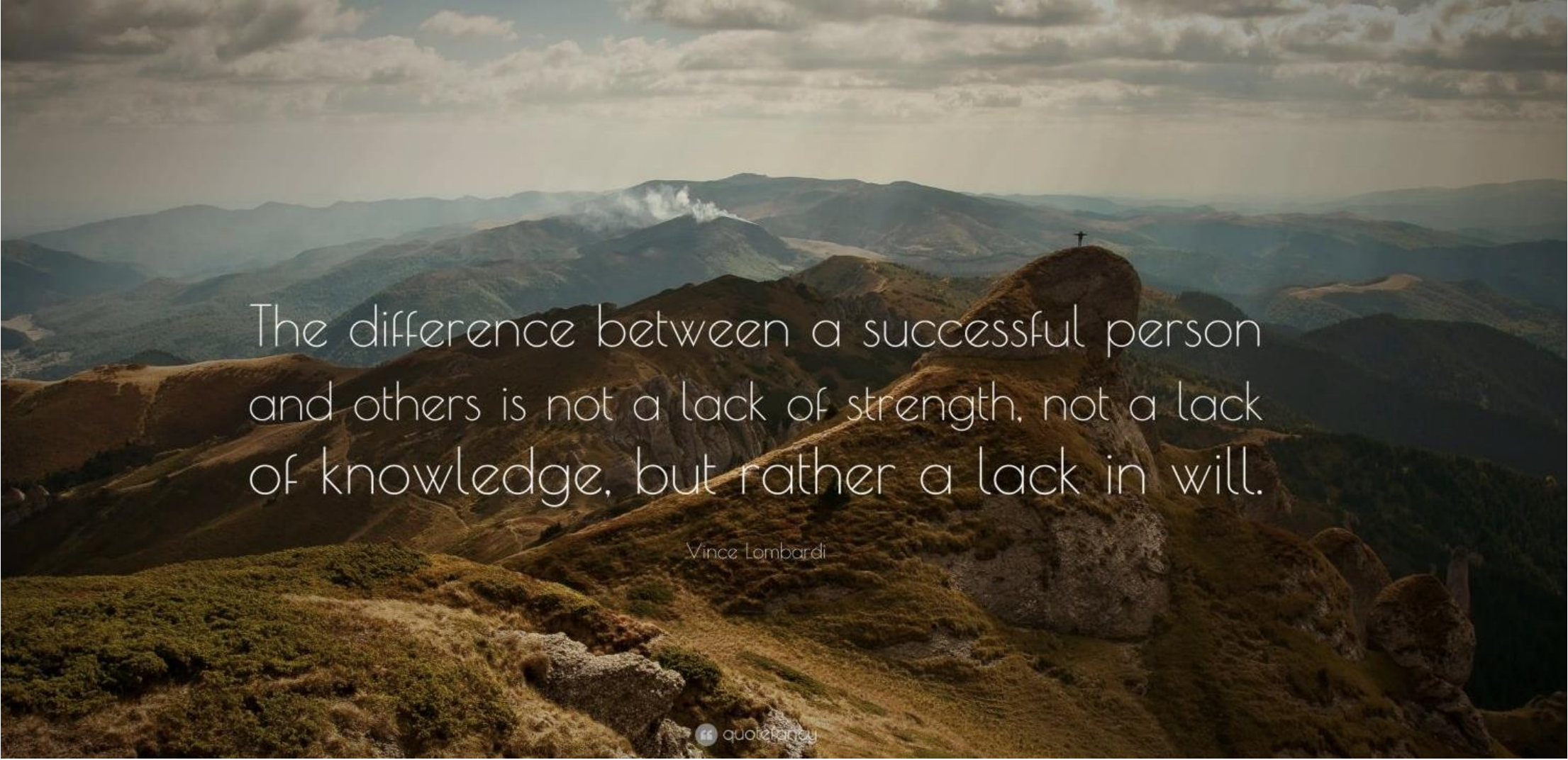
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The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather a lack in will.

Vince Lombardi

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POST-POLL VIOLENCE
Houses vandalised in West Bengal
NEWS ▸ PAGE 7

COURT STEPS IN
Ban on dangerous dogs put on hold
STATES ▸ PAGE 3

WARNING NOTE
'Ready for operation on Lebanon border'
WORLD ▸ PAGE 12

DISSECTING MANDATE
The road to revival of democracy
Civil society too has a crucial role to play
EDITORIAL ▸ PAGE 4

CHETRI'S FAREWELL
India takes on Kuwait in World Cup qualifier
SPORT ▸ PAGE 15

INSIDE

Delhi court rejects Kejriwal's interim bail plea

Sensex recovers 2,303 points on 'bargain buying'

Biden rolls out restrictions on granting asylum

Monsoon teaser

THE HINDU CSIS-LOKNTI Post-poll Survey 2024

Beginning today, The Hindu is publishing a series of articles by CSIS-Loknti, explaining the 2024 Lok Sabha election results based on their post-poll survey.

PAGES 3 & 4

NDA elects Modi as its leader; talks with allies to begin soon

Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Nadda to meet partners on the contours of the new coalition government; NDA parliamentary party meeting to be held on June 7; swearing-in likely over the weekend; TDP chief reportedly demands Central aid for A.P.

Nistala Hebbar
NEW DELHI

The process of forming a new government led by Narendra Modi was set in motion on Wednesday, with the parties of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) unanimously passing a resolution electing him their leader at a meeting at the Prime Minister's official residence. In all, 21 NDA leaders signed the resolution, which appreciated Mr. Modi's efforts in nation-building, welfare of the poor, and development, adding that they were all partners in that effort. "After a very long gap, of almost six decades, the people of India have chosen a powerful leader with an absolute majority for the third consecutive time," the resolution read. "We NDA leaders unanimously choose Narendra Modi as our leader," it said. The meeting was attended by BJP leaders Amit Shah and Rajnath Singh,



Show of strength: Narendra Modi with NDA allies at his residence in New Delhi on Wednesday.

and the BJP's allies, including Janata Dal(J) chief Nitish Kumar, Telugu Desam Party (TDP) supremo N. Chandrababu Naidu, Shiv Sena chief Eknath Shinde, Janata Dal(SP) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy, Janasena Party chief Pawan Kalyan, Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) chief Chirag Paswan, and Nationalist Congress Party (Ajit Pawar faction) leader Praful Patel. President Droupadi Murmu dissolved the 17th Lok Sabha on Wednesday after the recommendation of the Union Cabinet. Ear-

lier in the day, the Prime Minister tendered his resignation and, along with his Council of Ministers, to the President. She accepted the resignation and requested that Mr. Modi and his Council of Ministers continue until the new government assumes office. The path for government formation is being prepared, with a meeting of the NDA parliamentary party scheduled for June 7 to allow the MPs to endorse the resolution, after which Mr. Modi will stake

claim to form the government before the President. Mediation time With the BJP falling 32 seats short of a full majority on its own in the Lok Sabha, the shape of the new coalition government will require some mediation. According to sources, Mr. Modi's swearing-in will likely take place over the weekend. "The Prime Minister has a preference

for June 9, but that is also the day that Chandrababu Naidu wanted his own oath-taking ceremony (as CM of Andhra Pradesh), so either of them could move the date," said a source. Mr. Naidu met BJP leader Piyush Goyal after the NDA meeting, with sources saying that Mr. Naidu's "radical" approach around Central aid for Andhra Pradesh. "The alliance is strong. We are still working out a formula for Ministerial berths etc," said a senior BJP leader. Mr. Naidu spoke to journalists after the meetings, reiterating that he was "firmly" with the NDA. "Where is the doubt?" he said when asked about the INDIA bloc's assertions that he was an unreliable ally. JD(U) leader Rajeev Ranjan Singh also released a statement saying his party stood with the NDA "like a rock". MODI INVITES SRI LANKA PM ▸ PAGE 12 RELATED REPORTS ▸ PAGES 2, 3, 7, & 10

INDIA decides to keep doors open for Naidu, Nitish

Calling the June 4 results a mandate against the Narendra Modi government, the INDIA bloc, at the end of a two-hour meeting at Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's residence



Upbeat camp: Rahul Gandhi, Sharad Pawar, Sanjay Raut, Akhilesh Yadav and other leaders of the INDIA bloc at Mallikarjun Kharge's residence in New Delhi on Wednesday.

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI
 bloc had already anointed Mr. Kharge as the chairperson. There was little introspection on the losses faced by some of the allies such as the Rashtriya Janata Dal and the Aam Aadmi Party, both of which won far fewer seats than they had claimed at the June 1 meeting. The leaders instead would take "appropriate steps" at the appropriate time to realise the people's desire not to be ruled by the BJP government. At the meeting, 33 leaders from 21 parties said that while doors should be kept open for the TDP, led by N. Chandrababu Naidu, and their erstwhile ally the Janata Dal(J) of Nitish Kumar, the bloc will be patient for the right opportunity. It was agreed that the allies should remain vigilant whenever the BJP government moves a confidence motion in Parliament, which could possibly offer them an opening. Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav, according to sources, opined that the bloc has been successful in "demolishing 'Brand Modi'". Mr. Yadav also advised the allies to remain flexible and accommodative to keep the bloc united. Trinamool Congress's national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee was the only one to claim that a few elected BJP MPs are in touch with his party. "We have a few feeble comments on necessity for a convenor, but this conversation did not dominate the discourse as few leaders pointed out that the

Joint resolution At the end of the meeting, Mr. Kharge read out the joint resolution, thanking the people of India for the "overwhelming support received" by the alliance. "The people's mandate has given us a befitting reply to the BJP and their politics of hate, corruption and deprivation. This is a political and moral defeat of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This is a mandate in defence of the Constitution of India and against price rise, unemployment and crony capitalism of the Modi government." The resolution also pledged to continue their fight against the "fascist rule of BJP". "We will take appropriate steps at the appropriate time to realise the people's desire not to be ruled by the BJP's government," Mr. Kharge read.

Will first set the house in order: Naidu

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

A day after the TDP-BJP-Janasena Party alliance won the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections in Andhra Pradesh, TDP national president Chandrababu Naidu said his immediate task was to set the house in order. "The Indian economy is on the brink of collapse, and the state has been plundered," he said. "The YSPGP rule was so atrocious that even the fundamental rights to life were stifled," he said.

FULL REPORT ▸ PAGE 2

Facing political irrelevance, Ajit Pawar skips NDA meet

Shounollit Banerjee
PUNE

Cracks have begun to appear within the ruling Eknath Shinde-led Mahayuti coalition in Maharashtra, after Deputy Chief Minister and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Ajit Pawar skipped a key National Democratic Alliance (NDA) meeting in Delhi on Wednesday. According to sources, a sulking Mr. Ajit upset over the debacle of his party in the Lok Sabha election, gave the NDA meeting a miss. His faction of the

Fadnavis offers to resign; Opposition calls it 'drama'

Abhinav Deshpande
MUMBAI

After the BJP-led coalition Mahayuti managed to win only 17 of the 48 Lok Sabha seats in Maharashtra, BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis offered to resign as the Deputy Chief Minister. It takes responsibility for the results in Maharashtra, as I was leading the party. I request my top bosses to relieve me from governmental responsibilities, and let me work for the party for the upcoming Assembly election," he said after attending a meeting with top leaders to analyse the poll results. The Assembly election in the

State is scheduled less than six months from now. Mr. Fadnavis's resignation offer came after the BJP's Lok Sabha tally came down from 25 in 2019 to nine in the western State. This election, Mahayuti's performance was eclipsed by the Opposition coalition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), which includes the Congress, the Shiv Sena (UBT), and the NCP (Sharad Pawar). The MVA won 30 seats, reflecting significant gains for the alliance. The Congress achieved a notable increase, winning 13 seats compared to one in 2019. The Shiv Sena (UBT) got nine seats and the NCP

narrative that the Constitution will change hurt us. The Opposition was shouting 'Modi haters'. The voters kept them away from power from 2019. We worked together that could not be continued," he said. "We agenda together in the past and we will keep our working in the future. Failures must not discourage us," said Mr. Shinde. He said they would review the reason for the defeat. Drama, says Congress The Opposition Congress said Mr. Fadnavis's offer was a "drama," and it was not clear if NDA leader Modi would should quit. Earlier, Mr. Fadnavis

said coordination issues exist with Mr. Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar of the NCP. "The Congress said Mr. Fadnavis was running an "unconstitutional government" and he had publicly said that he returned to power by breaking up two parties. "His wish to resign is just drama. You [Mr. Fadnavis] used official machinery to give the original party symbol and name to the breakaway faction led by the Shiv Sena and the NCP. But the people have now expressed their opinion about who these two parties belong to," said Congress spokesperson Atul Londhe-Patil.

NDA elects Modi as its leader; talks with allies to begin soon

Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Nadda to meet partners on the contours of the new coalition government; NDA parliamentary party meeting to be held on June 7; swearing-in likely over the weekend; TDP chief reportedly demands Central aid for A.P.

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The meeting was attended by BJP president J.P. Nadda, BJP leaders Amit Shah and Rajnath Singh,



Show of strength: Narendra Modi with NDA allies at his residence in New Delhi on Wednesday. ANI

and the BJP's allies, including Janata Dal(U) chief Nitish Kumar, Telugu Desam Party (TDP) supremo N. Chandrababu Naidu, Shiv Sena chief Eknath Shinde, Janata Dal(S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy, Janasena Party chief Pawan Kalyan, Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) chief Chirag Paswan, and Nationalist Congress Party (Ajit Pawar faction) leader Praful Patel.

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lier in the day, the Prime Minister tendered his resignation, along with his Council of Ministers, to the President.

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claim to form the government before the President.

Mediation time

With the BJP falling 32 seats short of a full majority on its own in the Lok Sabha, the shape of the new coalition government will require some mediation. According to sources, Mr. Singh, Mr. Shah and Mr. Nadda will hold meetings with alliance partners to hammer out the details.

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for June 9, but that is also the day that Chandrababu Naidu wanted his own oath-taking ceremony [as CM of Andhra Pradesh], so either of them could move the date," said a source.

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"The alliance is strong. We are still working out a formula for Ministerial berths etc," said a senior BJP leader.

Mr. Naidu spoke to journalists after the meetings, reiterating that he was "firmly" with the NDA. "Where is the doubt?" he said, when asked about the INDIA bloc's assertions that he was an unreliable ally. JD(U) leader Rajeev Ranjan Singh also released a statement saying his party stood with the NDA "like a rock".

MODI INVITES SRI LANKA PM

» PAGE 6

RELATED REPORTS

» PAGES 2,3,7, 8 & 10

Sena (UBT) likely to move court over loss after recount

Snehal Mutha

MUMBAI

The Shiv Sena (UBT) is mulling over moving court after its Mumbai North West Lok Sabha candidate Amol Kirtikar lost by a wafer-thin margin of 48 votes to his opponent, Ravindra Waikar, of the ruling Shiv Sena.

Mr. Kirtikar was initially declared the winner on Tuesday by a margin of 600 votes over Mr. Waikar, the sitting MLA from Jogeshwari, but the latter won the seat after a recount.

“The counting process had issues. First the EVM votes were counted and then postal ballots,” Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray said. The Sena (UBT) is also likely approach the President over the ‘unfairness’ of Election Commission’s functioning.

According to election officials, Mr. Waikar’s polling agents raised objections after Mr. Kirtikar’s victory, leading to a recount of 9,51,582 EVM votes. Mr. Kirtikar still led by one vote after the recount. However, after counting 3,049 postal ballots, Mr. Waikar emerged with a lead of 48 votes and secured victory with a final tally of



Party to challenge Amol Kirtikar’s loss by 48 votes in Mumbai North West seat.

4,52,644 votes compared to his opponent’s 452,596.

Shiv Sena (UBT) polling agents then alleged technical errors in three voting machines and claimed a discrepancy between their count and that of the Election Commission, but officials of the polling body dismissed these claims.

‘Seat stolen’

“Kirtikar’s seat was not won but stolen by the ruling party candidate,” Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut said on Wednesday.

“After the election, anyone who is aggrieved over the results can file a petition with the court within 45 days as all the EVMs in the country are stored in the strongroom,” Maharashtra Chief Electoral Officer S. Chokkalingam told *The Hindu*.

SEBI mandates direct payout of securities



Safe, secure: Currently, securities are pooled by broker and then credited to client demat accounts. REUTERS

Ashley Coutinho
MUMBAI

The SEBI has made the process of securities payout directly to the client account mandatory from October 14. This is to protect clients' securities and ensure the stock brokers segregate client's securities so that they are not vulnerable to misuse. Currently, the securities received in payouts are pooled by the broker and then credited to the respective client demat accounts.

Client security
As per the new proposals, the securities for payout will be credited directly to the respective client's demat account by the clearing corporations (CCs). CCs will provide a mechanism for trading or clearing members to identify unpaid securities and funded stocks under the margin trading facility. The trading members will handle shortages arising due to inter-se netting of positions between clients (internal shortages) through the process of auction as specified by CCs. In such cases, the brokers shall not levy any charges on the client over and above the charges levied by the CCs.

The proposal was discussed at the meeting of the Inter-market Advisory Council (IAMAC) of the Broker's Industry Standards Forum, and discussed with the stock exchanges, CCs, and depositories. The implementation standards shall be formulated by the Broker's Industry Standards Forum (on a pilot basis) by August 5. (The writer is with The Hindu Businessline)

Gridlock-loving markets tussle with 'super majorities' in elections

Big election wins may involve big market moves, but the direction of those moves is far less obvious; what's clear from the elections in Mexico and India is that not all big majorities are treated equally, not all are necessarily negative for investors and they can deliver seismic price moves

COMMENT

Mike Polan
LONDON

For financial markets usually biased toward legislative gridlock over untrammelled government, this election-packed month so far has seen a wild ride around voting landslides and 'super majorities'.

What's clear from Mexico and India—and possibly instructive for U.S. and British elections ahead—is not all big majorities are treated equally, not all are necessarily negative for investors and they can deliver seismic price moves.

And if you were minded to think that politics doesn't matter much to markets, think again. This weekend's poll results initially threw up two big surprises for markets—

not who won the votes in Mexico and India but the scale of their victories.



Hazy picture: It is not always so clear how investors' preferences will play out in practice. REUTERS

back Mexico's stock market by more than 6% on Monday. Some soothing noises from Sheinbaum and Mexico's finance minister on fiscal restraint have since calmed investor nerves, and the initial reaction was perhaps what you would traditionally expect.

But in a stark contrast, India's rupee climbed and stock markets surged to record highs after weekend exit polls suggested Narendra Modi's BJP-led alliance would be re-elected and could secure a 'super majority' there.

Within 24 hours, as official results showed Mr. Modi's win far short of that, there was a violent market reversal that saw stocks recoil by about 6% and the biggest one-day withdrawal of foreign insti-



tutional money on record. Such polls opposite treatments of two potential landlides was remarkable.

Reasons cited are rooted in the politics of the respective governments, domestic legal and constitutional sensitivities, market positioning and relative exposure to foreign investment.

But what's not in doubt is how the dalliance with unfettered government has

seen volatility levels surge. Implied volatility in the Mexican peso over the month ahead, for example, soared back above 16% to its highest since March 2023 and more than twice levels seen two months ago. More tightly controlled by its central bank, India's rupee was calmer.

But 10-day realised stock market volatility has just jumped to its highest since the pandemic hit in 2020.

And the spike in volatility in both countries, if it were to persist, could well be the biggest negative to overseas investors.

Super charge
Investors' seeming preference for legislative stasis and split governments is often cited as a given—

about excessive regulation, and government oversight along with skepticism about the effect of free-spending on public debt and inflation and crowding out the private sector.

But, much like this week's examples, it's not always so clear how that will play out in practice.

Britain's snap election, scheduled for July 4, is throwing up some eye-popping estimates from incoming opinion polls.

Although the opposition Labour Party is almost certain to take power for the first time in 14 years on an uncontroversial manifesto, recent polling suggests it could secure a monstrous 54 seat parliamentary majority—its biggest ever.

Labour has been favourite in betting markets all year—and that seems not to bother financial markets either. It pushed the pound to its highest since 2016 and FTSE 100 blue chips to record levels.

But it's a reasonable question about whether a majority of the scale suggested by the latest polls might tempt Labour into bolder moves over the next five years and at least lift UK policy uncertainty to some degree.

Big elections win many, but globally influential elections of the year for the U.S. White House and Congress, the razor thin margins of difference projected in race polls for

President, House and Senate suggest the issue of super majorities is far from mind. And yet precisely because all those margins are thin, the equivalent legislative green light of one party getting a clean sweep of all three houses is not inconceivable—even if not the best guess five months from polling day.

Would gridlock-loving markets become restive at the prospect of two-years of one party dominance?

Fund managers and strategists certainly always say they would.

But effective clean sweeps for the Republicans in 2016 and Democrats in 2020 didn't really turn out so terrible for anyone holding the dollar and Wall Street stocks. The S&P500 gained more than 20% and 30% respectively in the 12 months after both those elections and the dollar lost just 4% and 1%.

Where gridlock matters most, however, is in the bond market—and 10-year Treasury yields were indeed higher in the 12 months after both 2016 and 2020 polls. And yet, gridlock now likely stymies any form of badly-needed U.S. fiscal consolidation for the next couple of years.

Big elections win many, but globally influential elections of the year for the U.S. White House and Congress, the razor thin margins of difference projected in race polls for

A picture in contrast



Privileged class: People take selfies in front of a musical fountain in a shopping mall, in Patna, in Bihar. Even as India's millionaires multiply, almost 90% of its 1.4 billion population earns less than the average annual income of around \$2,770, according to a World Inequality Lab study. The richest 1% own more than 60% of the country's wealth, while the bottom 50% of earners own only 3%, at

World's richest have never been so wealthy, says Capgemini in study

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

The world has never had so many rich people and their investments in soaring stock markets have made them wealthier than ever recorded, according to a study published on Wednesday.

The number of "high net worth individuals" (HNWIs) — defined as people with liquid assets of at least \$1 million — rose by 5.1% last year to 22.8 million, according to consulting firm Capgemini.

Their total wealth reached \$86.8 trillion in 2023, a 6.7% increase from the previous year, according to the annual World Wealth Report.



For equality: Rising global wealth and inequality fuelled debates on making rich pay their fair share of taxes. GETTY IMAGES VIA AFP

The number of HNWIs in 2023 while S&P 500 rose 24%. The Paris CAC 40 grew 16% while the Frankfurt DAX advanced by 20 percent.

Their fortunes have risen as stock markets have surged: New York's tech-

heavy Nasdaq surged 43% in 2023 while S&P 500 rose 24%. The Paris CAC 40 grew 16% while the Frankfurt DAX advanced by 20 percent.

The number of HNWI and their wealth had each

fallen by more than 3% in 2022, a year of macroeconomic uncertainty and geopolitical tensions, the report said. The decline in the wealth was the steepest in a decade as equities fell. "However, 2023 brought economic growth and improved fortunes for major investment sectors to reverse the fall," the report said.

"Despite ongoing interest rate uncertainty and rising bond yields, equities moved along with the tech market, fueled by enthusiasm for generative AI and its potential impact on the economy." Rising wealth and inequality in the world have fuelled debates on making the rich pay their fair share of taxes.

Mexico, South Africa and India deliver a shock to markets

NEWS ANALYSIS

Reuters
LONDON

A clobbering for South Africa's, Mexico's and even India's heavyweight markets in recent weeks proved without doubt that politics can still deliver an unexpected upset in big emerging economies.

Mexico's peso and South Africa's rand were both still sliding on Tuesday following their respective election surprises, while the likelihood that Narendra Modi hadn't secured a landslide win in India's marathon elections sent its equity markets sprawling.

The peso fell 1.5% to just shy of 18 to the U.S. dollar

at one point as traders continued to fret about the ramifications of the resounding win for the Claudia Sheinbaum-led MORENA party and its allies in Sunday's Mexican election.

That took its drop in recent days to nearly 5% and means that the peso is currently on track to be the peso's most volatile since a 19% plunge at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020.

South Africa's rand, which has also been hit by the prospect of a potentially fraught coalition government after a poor election showing from the ruling

party, fell another 1.3% too, to take its fall over the last week to around 3.5%.

"This is all a reminder of the importance of political risk events," said Graham

the tails and they materialise, then it is going to surprise market participants."

Taiwan, Pakistan, India, Russia, Turkey have all held important elections this year but this

week's trio have triggered the most dramatic market reactions so far.

Indian shares swooned almost 6% on Tuesday in what was their heaviest fall since the COVID rout—a

move all the more jarring after they had hit record highs on Monday.

With over half the votes counted from an election that began back in April, Prime Minister Modi looked set to lose his majority, raising questions whether the new alliance he spearheads will need to spend more on welfare measures rather than infrastructure and reforms.

Emkay Global said that difficult but potentially beneficial changes to land and labour policies, along with the "state-run firms, were now "off the table".

Whiplash
The Indian stock market reaction today was the classic whiplash where pe-

ple got overexcited," said Ashmore's Head of Research, Gustavo Medeiros, referring to the recent record highs.

International investors have been buying into both India and Mexico over the last year or two as an alternative to China, meaning that they had been susceptible to a sell-off, he added.

World's richest have never been so wealthy, says Capgemini in study

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For equality: Rising global wealth and inequality fuelled debates on making rich pay their fair share of taxes. GETTY IMAGES VIA AFP

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STOCKHOLM 26-year-old Swedish rapper shot dead in 'gang conflict', say police



Masked 26-year-old rapper C.Gambino — whose real name is Karar Ramadan — has been killed in a gang shooting in Gothenburg, the Swedish police said on Wednesday. The killing "is linked to a gang conflict", a police spokesperson said, adding that the rapper "was known to police".

TOKYO Palau President confirms 'major' cyberattack, points finger at China



Palau's President Surangel Whipps on Wednesday said the tiny country, one of Taiwan's few diplomatic allies, had suffered a major cyberattack, pointing a finger at China. The documents were taken in March and later appeared on the dark web. Ransomware group DragonForce claimed responsibility for the hack.

MANILA Police officers in the Philippines arrested for kidnapping 4 tourists



Four police officers assigned in the Philippine capital region have been arrested for kidnapping for ransom that victimised four foreign — three Chinese and a Malaysian — tourists, officials said on Wednesday. The captives were later freed after payment of a 2.5-million-peso (\$43,100) ransom.

MOSCOW Russian cosmonaut becomes the first to spend 1,000 days in space



A 59-year-old Russian cosmonaut has become the first person to spend 1,000 days in space, Russian space agency Roscosmos said on Wednesday. Oleg Kononenko achieved the milestone on Tuesday, having made five journeys to the International Space Station dating back to 2008.

Biden rolls out asylum restrictions to help 'gain control' of the border

The order will go into effect when the number of border encounters between ports of entry hits 2,500 per day; migrants who arrive at the border but do not express fear of returning to their home countries will be subject to immediate removal

Associated Press WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden on Tuesday unveiled plans to enact immediate significant restrictions on migrants seeking asylum on the U.S.-Mexico border as the White House tries to neutralise immigration as a political liability ahead of the November elections.



Stacked midway: Migrants seeking asylum on the U.S. being watched by the Texas National Guard, on the bank of the Rio Grande.

For months after the collapse of a bipartisan border security bill, the House of Representatives has passed legislation that the Democratic President had contemplated unilateral action

Donald Trump, the presumptive GOP presidential nominee, has said he preferred more lasting action via legislation but "Rep-

ublicans have left me no choice". Instead, he said he was acting on his own to "gain control of the border" while also insisting that "I believe immigration has always been the lifeblood of America".

Mr. Trump, on the other hand, used his social media account to assail Mr. Biden again over immigration, saying the Democrat had "totally surrendered our Southern Border" and his order was "all for show" ahead of their June 27 presidential debate.

The order will go into effect when the number of border encounters between ports of entry hits 2,500 per day, according

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Israel prepared for Lebanon border operation: Netanyahu

Agence France-Presse JERUSALEM

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Wednesday that Israel was "prepared for a very intense operation" along the border with Lebanon, where Israeli troops have exchanged near-daily fire with Hezbollah fighters.

Exchanges between Israel and the Iran-backed Hezbollah movement, a Hamas ally, have intensified over the past week, with repeated Israeli strikes deepened into Lebanese territory.

"We are prepared for a very intense operation in the north. One way or another, we will restore security to the north," Mr. Netanyahu said during a visit to the border area earlier on Wednesday. Hezbollah said later it



Benjamin Netanyahu

launched several attacks on Israeli positions during the day, including a "guided missile" strike on an "Iron Dome platform in nearly 30 kilometres north of the border".

The Prime Minister's far-right coalition partners National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich have both called in recent days for urgent action to restore security to northern Israel.

"They burn us here, all Hezbollah strongholds should also burn and be destroyed. WAR!" Mr. Ben Gvir said on Tuesday.

Mr. Smotrich said on Monday: "We must move the security strip from inside Israeli territory in the Galilee to southern Lebanon, including a ground invasion, occupation of the territory and distancing Hezbollah terrorists and hundreds of thousands of Lebanese among whom Hezbollah hides to the other side of the Litani river, nearly 30 kilometres north of the border."

The violence since early October has killed at least 455 people in Lebanon, mostly fighters but including 88 civilians, according to a tally. On the Israeli side, at least 14 soldiers and 11 civilians have been killed, as per the Army.

Western Europeans question reliability of United States: survey

Agence France-Presse WASHINGTON

Only a tiny number of people in Britain, France and Germany put great faith in the United States to guarantee their security over the coming decade, a survey said on Wednesday, ahead of an election in which Donald Trump has thrown doubt on alliances.

The Eurasia Group's Institute for Global Affairs, in its survey of the three western European nations, still found that more people than not expected the United States to be at least "somewhat" reliable.

But only 6% said that the United States would be a "very reliable" guarantor of European security over the next decade, compared with 24% of Americans who believed their country was very reliable and fair to the United States.

Spiritual Journey



Pilgrims' progress: The faithful pray around the Kaaba, Islam's holiest shrine, at the Grand Mosque in Mecca on Tuesday as pilgrims arrive ahead of the annual Hajj pilgrimage.

Use of German-made weapons by Ukraine a 'dangerous step': Putin

Associated Press ST PETERSBURG

Russian President Vladimir Putin warned Germany on Wednesday that the use of its weapons by Ukraine to strike targets in Russia would mark a "dangerous step" and ruin relations between Berlin and Moscow.

Germany joined the United States recently in authorising Ukraine to hit some targets on Russian soil with the long-range weapons they are supplying to Kyiv. The deliveries of Ger-

man tanks to Ukraine came as a shock to many in Russia, he said. "Now if they use missile systems to hit the Russian territory it will completely ruin the German relations," he said.

"Nothing will change" Taking questions from international journalists for the first time since his inauguration last month to a fifth term, Mr. Putin said nothing will change in terms of Russia-U.S. relations regardless of whether Joe Biden or Donald

Trump wins the American presidential election in November. Mr. Putin also said Mr. Trump's felony conviction at his hush money trial last week will be the result of "the use of the court system as part of the internal political struggle".

After losing majority in election, South Africa's ANC talking to all parties keen to form government

Reuters JOHANNESBURG

The African National Congress has been talking to all political parties that are keen to contribute to a new government, the party's spokesperson said on Wednesday, after it lost its majority in last week's election.

The ANC, which is still the largest party but can no longer govern alone, said it was determined to unite the broadest range of sectors in society as it addressed what it described

as the urgent need to move out of the current stalemate. "We have been meeting with all parties that are keen to contribute ideas on how we can collectively move our country forward to form a government that ensures national unity and stability, continues the transformation of South Africa, and safeguards our constitutional democracy," said Mahlagi Sibongiso Mlotshwa in a statement at the start of a news briefing.



African National Congress spokesperson Mahlagi Sibongiso Mlotshwa led to the media in Johannesburg on Wednesday.

la led it to power in the 1994 elections that marked the end of apartheid, but voters punished it this time over persistent poverty

and joblessness, rampant crime, corruption and frequent power cuts. Voters, politicians and financial markets have

China accuses U.S. of interfering after Tiananmen remarks

Agence France-Presse BEIJING

China lashed out at the United States on Wednesday after Washington's top diplomat Antony Blinken vowed never to forget the crackdown in Tiananmen Square 35 years ago.

"The move of the U.S. seriously interferes with China's internal affairs," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said. "China is strongly dissatisfied and firmly opposes it," she added.

She called upon the United States to "stop provoking ideological confrontation, and stop interfering in China's internal affairs under the pretext of human rights".

Chinese troops and tanks have forcibly dispersed peaceful protests in Beijing's Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989, quelling huge,



Mao Ning

weeks-long demonstrations demanding greater political freedoms.

The exact toll is unknown but hundreds died, with some estimates putting the figure at more than 1,000 people.

China's leaders have since sought to erase any public mention of the crackdown.

On Tuesday, Mr. Blinken — who has visited Beijing twice since last year — called the events at Tiananmen Square a "massacre".

been on tenterhooks for clues as to which party of parties will form the next national government. Mr. Sibongiso Mlotshwa said the ANC had held meetings with the Freedom Front Plus, Democratic Alliance (DA), the Marxist Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), the socially conservative Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and two smaller parties.

She added that it had approached uMkhonto we Sizwe (uMK), a party led by former President Jacob Zuma, but had been rebuffed.

MOSCOW

Russian cosmonaut becomes the first to spend 1,000 days in space



AP

▲ A 59-year-old Russian cosmonaut has become the first person to spend 1,000 days in space, Russian space agency Roscosmos said on Wednesday. Oleg Kononenko achieved the milestone on Tuesday, having made five journeys to the International Space Station dating back to 2008. AP

Launch	20 November 1998 (25 years ago)
Launch pad	Baikonur, Site 1/5, Site 200/39, Site 31/6 and Site 81/23 Kennedy, LC-39 and CCSFS, SLC-40
Mass	450,000 kg (990,000 lb) ^[3]
Length	109 m (358 ft) (overall length), 94 m (310 ft) (truss length) ^[4]
Width	73 m (239 ft) (solar array length) ^[4]
Pressurised volume	1,005.0 m ³ (35,491 cu ft) ^[4]
Atmospheric pressure	101.3 kPa (14.7 psi; 1.0 atm) 79% nitrogen, 21% oxygen
Perigee altitude	413 km (256.6 mi) AMSL ^[5]
Apogee altitude	422 km (262.2 mi) AMSL ^[5]
Orbital inclination	51.64° ^[5]
Orbital speed	7.67 km/s; 27,600 km/h; 17,100 mph ^[6]
Orbital period	92.9 minutes ^[7]
Orbits per day	15.5 ^[5]
Orbit epoch	16 August 16:19:30 ^[8]
Days in orbit	25 years, 6 months, 16 days (6 June 2024)
Days occupied	23 years, 7 months, 3 days (6 June 2024)
No. of orbits	141,117 as of August 2023 ^[8]
Orbital decay	2 km/month



International Space Station

Largest modular space station in low Earth orbit also the largest human made structure in space



Launched on

20 November, 1988
from Kazakhstan



Mission life

It is expected to
**operate till
2030.**



Orbit

It orbits LEO of earth at an
average **altitude of 400 km**
and **circles the globe every
90-93 minutes**



size

Weights **almost
450 tonnes**



Agencies involved



USA- NASA



EUROPE -ESA



JAPAN - JAXA



CANADA- CSA



RUSSIA- ROSCOSMOS

ROSCOSMOS



Components

**Station is divided into two
sections:**

The Russian Orbital Segment
(ROS), operated by Russia.

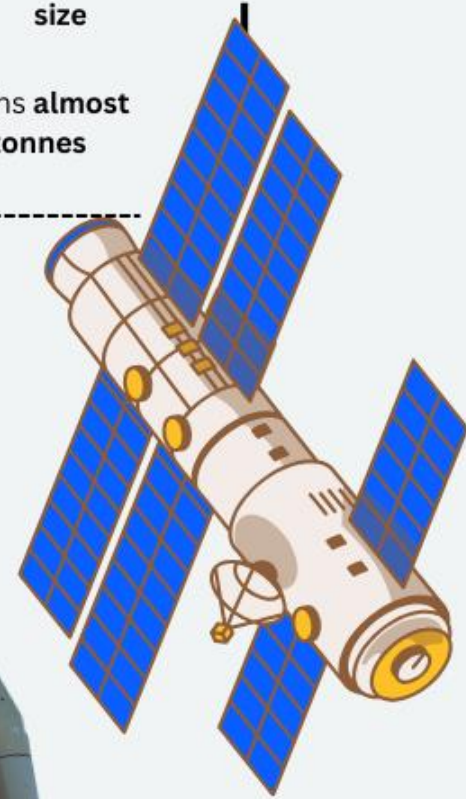
The United States Orbital
Segment (USOS), run by the
United States and other
countries.



Significance

It serves as a
**microgravity and space
environment research
laboratory**

More than 3,000
experiments have been
conducted aboard ISS.



India's mission

India plans **to have own space
station by 2035** which would
weigh 20 tonnes.

Would orbit an altitude of 400 km
above earth, where astronauts
could stay for 15-20 days.

NASA and ISRO to launch a joint
mission to ISS in 2024.



Notable success

Medical discovery- Advancements
in osteoporosis treatments and
understanding muscle atrophy.

**Dark matter- Alpha Magnetic
Spectrometer (AMS),** which is
intended to detect dark matter



20 YEARS OF LIVING IN THE SKY WITH ISS

It started with Russia launching its Zarya module on November 20, 1998, and US following up with its own Unity component. The two combined in low orbit to create the world's most expensive platform, the International Space Station. As the collaboration between the Cold War foes celebrates its 20th year, here's a look at what makes it tick

16 countries involved in the building of ISS – US, Russia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and UK

4,19,725_{kg}

How much ISS weighs. That includes the weight of up to six spacecraft it can accommodate at any one time

\$119.6_{bn}

It is the single-most expensive object ever built by man

7.71_{km/sec}

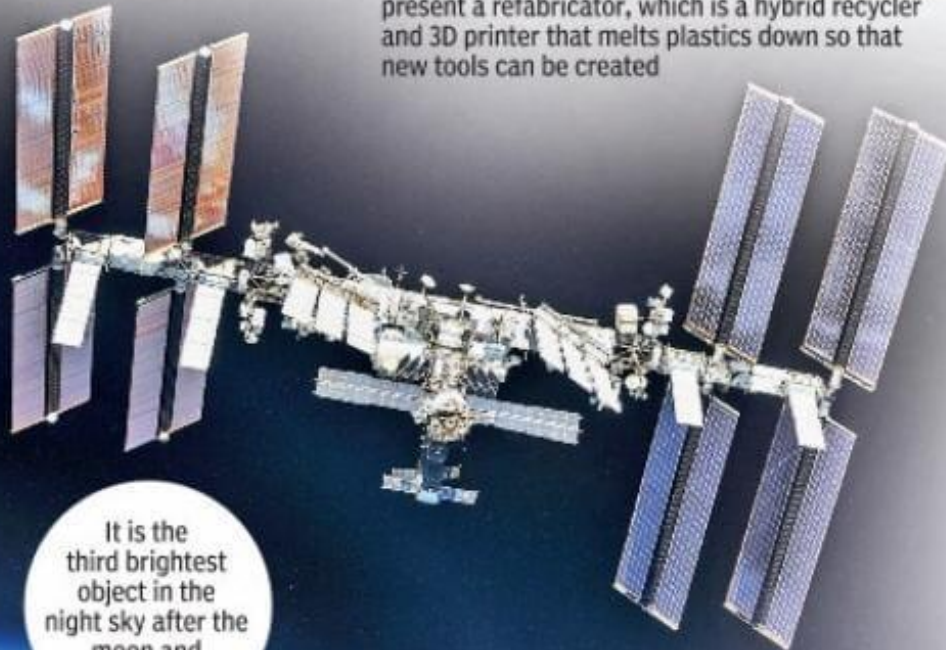
The speed at which ISS travels, fast enough to go to the moon and back in a single day

230

People from 18 nations have visited the ISS and it has been continuously occupied since November 2000

Birthday present

To mark its 20th year, the ISS is getting as a present a refabricator, which is a hybrid recycler and 3D printer that melts plastics down so that new tools can be created



It is the third brightest object in the night sky after the moon and Venus

SPACE HOME COMES WITH GYM, GREAT VIEWS



- ISS has six sleeping quarters, a gym and a 360-degree bay window, but only two bathrooms. There are no chairs; astronauts float gently in zero gravity
- Crew members need to work out in the station's gym for at least two hours a day to make up for the loss of bone and muscle mass and maintain the normal bodily health they would experience on Earth
- The water recovery system on board also recycles urine
- Software on board the ISS monitors 350,000 sensors checking in on crew health and safety. The station meanwhile carries 50 computers and about 13 km of wire

Source: The Independent



The treatment involves injecting a modified virus into the ear that smuggles in a working version of CTOF gene. AP

Gene therapy offers hope for children with hearing disability

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

Zhu Yangyang babbles away like a typical happy three-year-old, calling out for "mama" and "papa" and accurately naming colours — a remarkable achievement considering he was completely without hearing just months ago.

He is one of five children whose hearing was restored through a revolutionary new gene therapy in a clinical trial led by Chinese and American researchers, offering hope for those born with a rare genetic mutation of the CTOF gene. This means they are unable to produce the protein otocerin, which is needed for hair cells in the inner ear vital for hearing.

The treatment involves injecting a modified virus into the inner ear that smuggles in a working version of the CTOF gene.

Yangyang's mother Chang Yiyi says she was moved to tears when she realised, around three weeks after the treatment last September, that he could hear her.

The results of the study was published in *Nature Medicine* on Wednesday. "This is absolutely a turning point," Zhenhai Chen, the study's senior author at the Eaton-Peabody Laboratories at Mass Eye and Ear, said, adding that companies were now moving to conduct clinical trials with the goal of moving towards regulatory approval.

"If the results hold, without any complications, I think in three to five years, it may be a medically approved product," he added.

Europe marks 80 years of Normandy landings under the shadow of Ukraine

U.S. President Joe Biden joins a host of world leaders during a state visit to France to remember the Allied troops who gave their lives fighting Nazi occupation, as Ukraine continues to battle Russia's invasion. German and Italian leaders to attend the ceremony in a sign of post-war reconciliation

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

U.S. President Joe Biden on Wednesday began a state visit to France marking 80 years since the Second World War D-Day landings, with a new war shadowing Europe as Ukraine battles Russia's invasion.

Along with French President Emmanuel Macron, British King Charles III and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Mr. Biden will on Thursday remember the heroism of the Allied troops who gave their lives far from home in the landings on June 6, 1944, to free Europe from Nazi occupation.

For King Charles, it will be his first overseas visit since his cancer diagnosis.

While the sacrifice of Allied soldiers will be centre stage, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Italian President Sergio Mattarella will also be present as a sign of international post-Second World War reconciliation.

The landings by Allied forces, backed by airborne operations that parachuted troops directly onto occupied soil, were the biggest naval operation ever in terms of the number of ships deployed and the troops involved.

By the end of what be-



Glorious act: Paratroopers from the British, Belgian, Canadian and U.S. military take part in a parachute drop to the fields of Sannerville in France on Wednesday to re-enact the D-Day landings. GETTY IMAGES

came known as "the longest day", 1.56,000 Allied troops with 20,000 vehicles had landed in Nazi-occupied northern France despite facing a hail of bullets, artillery and aircraft fire.

Beginning of the end
The landings marked the beginning of the end of the Nazi occupation of Europe, though months of intense and bloody fighting still remained ahead before final victory over the regime of Adolf Hitler.

Three days of ceremonies will also see Mr. Macron pay tribute to French victims of Nazi occupation,

including 70 members of the French Resistance executed by the Germans at the Caen prison in Normandy on D-Day.

The 80th anniversary on Thursday will see national ceremonies at the war cemeteries on the Normandy coast, with an international ceremony attended by all the main guests at Omaha Beach.

Flying aboard Air Force One, Mr. Biden touched down at Paris Orly airport and was welcomed by Prime Minister Gabriel Attal. Mr. Biden was also expected to promote the United States as a defender of democracy and interna-

tional alliances during his state visit until Sunday, contrasting himself against election rival and former U.S. President Donald Trump. But the war that has raged in Ukraine since Russia's February 24, 2022, invasion will also be at the forefront with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy also attending and scheduled to meet with Mr. Biden, according to the White House.

No official from Russia has been invited, after Paris reversed plans to host lower-level representatives in recognition of the Soviet Union's immense contribution in Second World War.

U.S., S. Korea fly precision bombing drill after 7 years

Associated Press
SEOUL

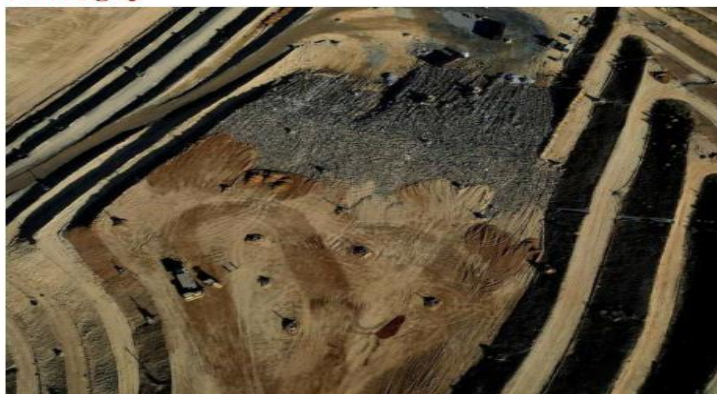
The United States flew a long-range B-1B bomber over the Korean Peninsula on Wednesday for its first precision-guided bombing drill with South Korea in seven years, South Korea said on Wednesday.

The drill — seen as a show of force against North Korea — comes as tensions are rising over North Korea's recent launches of rubbish-carrying balloons toward South Korea and other provocations. Wednesday's training involved other advanced U.S. and South Korean fighter jets along the B-1B aircraft, the second U.S. bomber temporarily deployed over the Korean Peninsula this year.

The exercise was meant to demonstrate the U.S. security commitment to South Korea and strengthen the allies' joint defence posture, according to the South Korean Defence Ministry. During the training, the B-1B dropped Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAM), a guidance system that converts unguided, conventional bombs into more precise, GPS-guided weapons, while being escorted by South Korean fighter jets, the first such bombing drill for a U.S. bomber since 2017, a Ministry statement said. The statement also said that South Korean fighter jets also conducted live-firing exercises to demonstrate the country's readiness to punish North Korea if provoked, it said.

North Korea is extremely sensitive to drills using such bombs, which it could threaten its complex web of underground military structures. North Korea has previously responded to the flights of powerful U.S. aircraft in South Korea with its own missile tests.

Covering up



Unfathomable scale: Tractors and trucks prepare layers of garbage at a landfill in Brasilia, Brazil on Tuesday. AP

Associated Press
DAKAR

When armed men entered Sadi's village in northern Burkina Faso and began firing, she hid in her home fighter jets also conducted live-firing exercises to demonstrate the country's readiness to punish North Korea if provoked, it said.

North Korea is extremely sensitive to drills using such bombs, which it could threaten its complex web of underground military structures. North Korea has previously responded to the flights of powerful U.S. aircraft in South Korea with its own missile tests.

placed are children. Many are traumatised, but mental health services are limited and children are often overlooked for treatment.

"People often think that the children have seen nothing, nothing has happened to them, it's fine," said Yulka Lukamba, the health coordinator for the International Committee of the Red Cross in Burkina Faso. He works on a programme to help identify and treat traumatised children. It often relies on mothers to spot signs in children as young as 3 or 4. The chances of a successful outcome after treatment is



The UN said surveys by it and partners showed that 10 out of 11 people affected by the conflict showed signs of trauma. FILE PHOTO

greater when the children have a parental figure in their lives, he said. Mass killings of villagers have become common in northern Burkina Faso as fighters linked to the Islamic State group and al-Qaeda attack the army and volunteer forces. Those forces

HRW says Israel used white phosphorous in Lebanon

Associated Press
BEIRUT

The Human Rights Watch (HRW), in a report published on Wednesday, accused Israel of using white phosphorous in incendiary shells on residential buildings in at least five towns and villages in conflict-hit southern Lebanon, possibly harming civilians and violating international law.

HRW said that there was no evidence of burn injuries due to white phosphorous in Lebanon, but that researchers had "heard accounts indicating possible respiratory damage."

The white-hot chemical substance can set buildings on fire and injure human flesh down to the bone. The Israeli military said that it upholds international law regarding the use of white phosphorous, using the chemical only as a smokescreen. "IFD procedures require that such shells are not used in densely populated areas, subject to certain exceptions,"

the statement added. The HRW report includes interviews with eight residents in conflict-hit southern Lebanon, and the group said it has verified almost 47 photos and videos that show white phosphorous shells landing on residential buildings in Lebanon's border towns and villages.

The Lebanese Health Ministry said at least 173 people have required medical care after exposure to white phosphorous. The researchers found that HRW Lebanon incendiaries were used in re-

sidential areas in Kfar Kila, Mays al-Jabal, Boustan, Markaba, and Aita al-Shaab.

In its report, HRW called on the Lebanese government to allow the International Criminal Court to investigate and prosecute "grave international crimes" within Lebanon since October 2023, after the Israel's war on Gaza broke out. "Israel's use of white phosphorous in Lebanon should motivate other countries to take immediate action toward this goal," said HRW Lebanon Researcher Ramzi Kais.

Mr. Biden will continue the trip in Paris on Saturday with the first state visit to his presidency in France, giving him and Mr. Macron a critical chance to push for peace in Ukraine and a ceasefire in Gaza in talks at the Elysee Palace, before winding up the visit on Sunday.

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A shell with white phosphorus from the Israeli artillery explodes over a house in al-Bustan, Lebanon, on October 15, 2023. AP

the statement added.

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WEAPONS

What are white phosphorus bombs?

White phosphorus is a lethal chemical capable of burning human skin and disintegrating tissues deep inside the body. It ignites when exposed to oxygen and continues to burn until it is deprived of oxygen or exhausted.



Airbursts of artillery-fired white phosphorus fall over the Gaza City port on October 11, 2023 [Mohammed Adeb/AFP]



EYES

Flash burns can lead to vision impairment



INHALATION

Inhaling the smoke can lead to respiratory distress



SKIN

Burns through its victims' bodies

The use of white phosphorus as an incendiary weapon in areas with civilian populations is banned by the United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.



Source: Human Rights Watch, Al Jazeera | October 13, 2023



@AJLabs ALJAZEERA

White phosphorus weapons

Controversial and notorious for the severity of the injuries they cause



WHITE PHOSPHORUS

Chemical substance that ignites and burns on contact with oxygen

Distinctive garlic-like odour

CAUSES

Intense and persistent burns

Multiple organ failure

Death

AS AN INCENDIARY DEVICE

- ◆ Dispersed by artillery shells, bombs, rockets, or grenades
- ◆ Bursts into burning flakes of phosphorus upon impact
- ◆ Creates a dense white smoke that last several minutes

INTERNATIONAL LAW

Not a chemical weapon, but an incendiary munition – one that causes fires

- ✗ **Prohibited** against civilians
- ✓ **Allowed** for military targets, used to create **smokescreens** to hide troop movements or to illuminate the battlefield

PREVIOUS USE

According to Human Rights Watch, non-exhaustive list

	By	Against
2004	United States	Iraq
2007	Ethiopian forces	Somalia
2005-2011	ISAF* and the Taliban	Afghanistan
2008-2009	Israel	Gaza
2016	Saudi Arabia-led coalition	Yemen
2017	US-led coalition	IS group in Iraq/Syria

2022:
Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky accuses Russia of using phosphorus bombs against civilians in the country, which Russia denies



Nuclear

Stockpiles: approximately 11,500, down from a maximum of over 68,000 in 1985

Treaties: Non-Proliferation Treaty (international), New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (Russia, US)

Russia and the United States account for 10,500

Around 1,000 spread among other nations including China, Britain, France, Israel, India and Pakistan



Biological

Stockpiles: unknown (programmes ended or secret)

Treaty: Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

Some potential agents:

- Anthrax
- Ricin
- Smallpox
- Botulism toxin



Chemical

Original stockpiles: 71,195 tons

Destruction: 75.37 per cent complete (April 2012)

Treaty: Chemical Weapons Convention

Types include:

- Nerve gas
- Phosgene
- Mustard gas





Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

192 member states that represent 98% of the world's population

Non members

Mission: To implement Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in force since January 1993, which calls for the destruction of all chemical weapons

Created in 1997

Director General:
Ahmet Uzumcu (Turkey)

HQ:
The Hague

Staff:
500

Nobel Prize laureat 2013



Since 1997
Overseen the destruction of 96% of the world's declared chemical weapons stocks of 72,304 tonnes

6,785 inspections of

- 3,170 sites linked to chemical weapons
- 3,615 industrial sites

Egypt

Israel

North Korea

Human Rights Watch

H U M A N
R I G H T S
W A T C H

Founded	1978; 46 years ago (as Helsinki Watch)
Type	Non-profit, NGO
Focus	Human rights, activism
Headquarters	New York City, U.S.
Area served	Worldwide
Product	Nonprofit human rights advocacy
Key people	Tirana Hassan (Executive Director)
Revenue	\$85.6 million (2019) ^[1]
Website	www.hrw.org  
Formerly called	Helsinki Watch

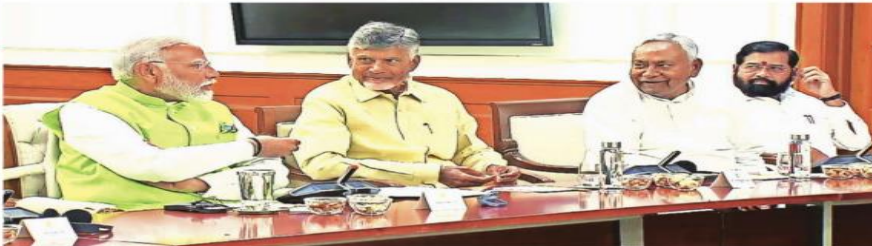
WE'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK OF US. All we need is your opinion and 40 seconds of your time. Scan the QR code and fill out an easy survey to help us keep evolving.

Biden, Putin, Sunak call Modi; Ranil & Hasina invited to swearing-in

US PRESIDENT Joe Biden called up Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday and congratulated him and the NDA on their victory, and the 'nearly 650 million voters in this historic election.' After the call, Modi said in a post on X: 'Happy to receive call from my friend President Biden. He shared his warm words of felicitations and his appreciation for Indian democracy. Conveyed that India-US Comprehensive Global Partnership is poised to witness many new landmarks in the years to come. Our partnership will continue to be a force for global good for the benefit of humanity.'

WILL GO TO PRESIDENT TOMORROW to stake claim to form govt at the Centre

NDA elects Modi, to stake claim



Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde during the meeting of NDA leaders at his residence in New Delhi on Wednesday.

Rajnath, Shah, Nadda tasked by Modi to hold talks with partners

A DAY after the BJP lost majority and the NDA secured 293 seats in the new Lok Sabha, the alliance Wednesday elected Narendra Modi as its leader and decided to stake claim to form the government. Modi, on his part, assured partners that the NDA will work with greater strength to attain its goal of a Viksit Bharat. Led by Modi, the NDA is expected to go to Rashtrapati Bhavan Friday to stake claim.

NO CLARITY ON SWEARING-IN DATE, Modi may attend TDP's Andhra ceremony

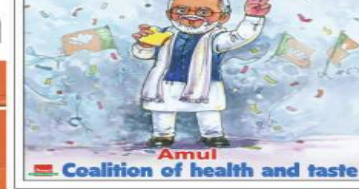
Ally TDP likely to demand special status for Andhra, Cabinet berths

Wednesday dismissed rumours of a possible switch to the NDA bloc, and argued that he is still a part of the NDA. 'I am going to New Delhi to attend the NDA meeting. I will let you know if there are any other developments,' he said before taking a flight to the national capital from Andhra. He attended the NDA meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the evening. Sources said the TDP chief is likely to seek Special Category Status (SCS) for Andhra, an issue over which he had walked out of the NDA in 2018.

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Pradhanmanthre



Message from INDIA bloc: Mandate a reply to the BJP, will keep watch on Modi Govt

Calling the mandate a reply to the BJP government, the coalition resolved to 'continue to fight against the fascist rule of the BJP' (Narendra) Modi. 'We will take appropriate steps at the appropriate time to realise the people's desire not to be ruled by the BJP government. This is our decision,' Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said, reading out a joint statement of the alliance.

We will take appropriate steps at the appropriate time: Kharge after meet

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Seat that gave Himanta heartburn, and Gogoi many reasons to smile

CONGRESS LEADER Gaurav Gogoi's commanding victory there — in a contest where the BJP ran its most aggressive campaign and where Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma led from the front — will sting the state leadership the most. 'More so since it has prompted rare dissent from within — soon after Gogoi's victory, a BJP MP said publicly that "arrogance" had cost his party the seat.'

Nine of 13 being probed by Central agencies jumped party, lost polls

shifted from one political party to another — in the fray in the elections that concluded on Saturday. Of these, 13 candidates or their family members are facing probes either by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the Income Tax Department or the Enforcement Directorate (ED). Of the 13, eight had switched sides to the BJP — seven from Congress and one from Trinamool Congress.

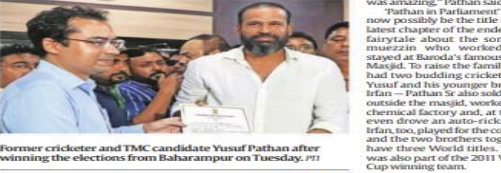
How 44 are NEET toppers because of a wrong answer, wrong textbook

Reason: their wrong answer was based on an incorrect reference in their old Class 12 NCERT science textbook. The question was based on two statements. The first said: 'Atoms are electrically neutral as they contain equal numbers of positive and negative charges.'

On Adhir upset, Pathan says 'felt same tension' before 2007 India-Pak final

was amazing," Pathan said. "Pathan in Parliament" could now possibly be the title of the latest chapter of the endearing fairy tale about the son of a musician who worked and stayed at Bandra's famous Juna Masjid. To raise the family that had two budding cricketers — Yusuf and his younger brother Eknath — Pathan was sent outside the masjid, worked at a chemical factory and, at times even drove an auto-rickshaw.

Former cricketer and TMC candidate Yusuf Pathan after winning the elections from Baharampur on Tuesday.



2007 India-Pak final

After playing 57 ODIs and 22 T20Is, Pathan retired in 2022. An animal lover — he keeps birds, rabbits and horses at this farm house — he seemed to be at a mosque, who worked and stayed at Bandra's famous Juna Masjid. To raise the family that had two budding cricketers — Yusuf and his younger brother Eknath — Pathan was sent outside the masjid, worked at a chemical factory and, at times even drove an auto-rickshaw.

AMRITPAL, ENGINEER RASHID WIN FROM JAIL: WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



Both Engineer Rashid (*left*) and Amritpal Singh are currently in prison on serious charges being probed by the NIA. *Express Archive*

APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

RESULTS OF the Lok Sabha polls have thrown up two unusual winners — Waris Punjab De chief Amritpal Singh from Punjab's Khadoor Sahib, and Engineer Rashid from Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla — both of whom are currently in jail on serious charges that are being probed by the National Investigation Agency.

Serious charges

Amritpal Singh has been in jail in Dibrugarh, Assam, under the National Security Act (NSA) since March 2023. The NSA is a preventive detention law, which allows the government to detain individuals for up to 12 months without pressing formal charges.

Rashid is currently in Delhi's Tihar jail facing charges under the stringent Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) in an alleged terror-funding case. A former MLA, he contested in the election on a Awami Ittehad Party ticket.

Taking oath

The duo's election victory means that they now have a constitutional mandate as parliamentarians. Taking oath is the first step in fulfilling this mandate.

Although this is not explicitly spelt out in the Constitution, there have been past instances where jailed lawmakers are granted temporary parole to take oath.

In March, Aam Aadmi Party leader

Sanjay Singh, who was then imprisoned in Tihar on money laundering charges, was granted permission by a court to take oath as Rajya Sabha MP for a second term. A trial court directed the jail superintendent to ensure that he is taken to Parliament with adequate security, and brought back to the jail.

In 2021, after he won from Sibsagar, Assam, Akhil Gogoi was temporarily allowed by an NIA court to leave prison to take oath as a member of the Assam Legislative Assembly.

The most famous election victory from prison, however, came in 1977, when trade unionist George Fernandes was elected from Bihar's Muzaffarpur seat while in jail during the Emergency. He was released from prison before the oath ceremony, and went on to serve as a minister in Morarji Desai's Janata government.

Duties as a lawmaker

Being allowed to take oath is not the same as being released on bail. It is akin to a special parole for a day. The jailed lawmaker has to write to the Speaker that she will not be able to attend regular proceedings. Article 101(4) of the Constitution states that if an MP is absent for over 60 days from all the meetings without permission, her seat would be declared vacant.

For attending a Parliament session or to cast a vote in the House, the lawmaker will have to move court for permission.

However, only a conviction, and a sentence of two or more years, will lead to disqualification from Parliament.

Indian varsities climb in rankings faster than G20 peers

MANU KAUSHIK
New Delhi, June 5

INDIAN UNIVERSITIES ARE climbing up the global pecking order faster than their G20 peers, according to the latest World University Rankings (WUR) 2025 by global higher education specialist firm Quacquarelli Symonds (QS). Although there are no Indian universities in the top 100 list, the rankings show that the 61% of the universities in the country have improved their rankings as compared to the previous year. Delhi University, for instance, has witnessed the biggest jump by climbing 79 notches to reach the 328th position this year.

Also, over the past decade, India has experienced the highest growth in university representation among all G20 nations, with a remarkable 318% increase from 11 universities in the 2015 edition of the QS World University Rankings to 46 in the 2025 edition," the report said.

Within the Indian universities, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay ranked the highest at 118th position, followed by IIT Delhi at 150th position. In fact, four IITs have featured amongst the top 10 Indian universities. As per the rankings, IIT Bombay has shown improvement in both research quality and reputation parameters which led to

TOP 5 QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

2025	2024	Institution	Country
1	1	Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)	US
2	6	Imperial College London	UK
3	3	The University of Oxford	UK
4	4	Harvard University	UK
5	2	University of Cambridge	UK

QS World University Rankings 2025 from India

2025	2024	Institution
118	149	Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IITB)
150	197	Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD)
211	225	Indian Institute of Science
222	271	Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur (IIT-KGP)
227	285	Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM)
328	407	University of Delhi

its rise within the Indian cohort.

The rankings points out that with 46 ranked universities, India has the third-largest representation in Asia, after Japan and China. Also, despite improving their academic and employer reputations, most Indian universities continue to lag behind in terms of internationalisation and global engagement.

"The growing prominence of Indian higher education is evident...the bold implementation of India's National Education Policy demonstrates the nation's commitment to modernising its education system and addressing challenges and leveraging opportunities. Emphasising sustainability, global engagement, and

employability will be vital in shaping India's higher education landscape," said Jessica Turner, CEO, QS.

Meanwhile, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has maintained the top slot for 13th year in a row. As per the rankings, the Imperial College of London has grabbed the second position globally by overtaking both Oxford and Cambridge to become the highest-ranked UK institution.

The 21st edition of the QS WUR has featured over 1,500 global academic institutions who were ranked on nine parameters, including academic reputation (30% weightage), citations per faculty (20%), employer reputation (15%), faculty-student ratio (10%) and others.

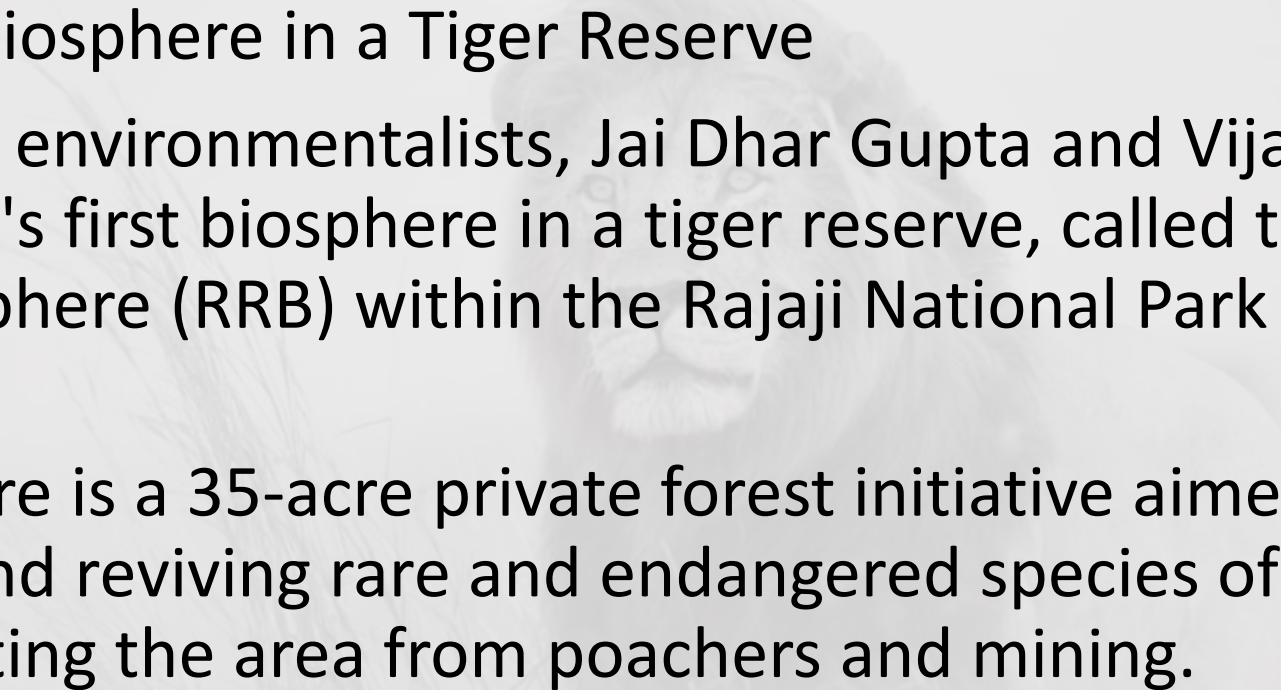


World Environment Day 2024



World Environment Day is celebrated on **5th June** every year to encourage awareness and environmental protection.

In a remarkable initiative **to combat deforestation and restore biodiversity**, two environmentalists have spearheaded the **creation of India's first biospheres within tiger reserves.**

- 
- India's First Biosphere in a Tiger Reserve
 - Recently two environmentalists, Jai Dhar Gupta and Vijay Dhasmana created India's first biosphere in a tiger reserve, called the Rajaji Raghathi Biosphere (RRB) within the Rajaji National Park in Uttarakhand.
 - The biosphere is a 35-acre private forest initiative aimed at identifying and reviving rare and endangered species of native trees while protecting the area from poachers and mining.

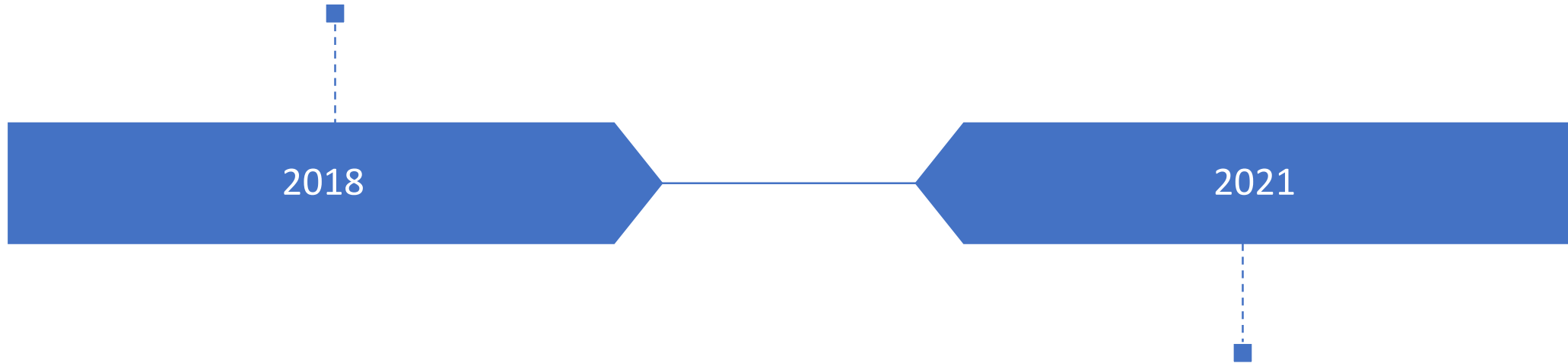
The land earmarked for RRB was previously barren and in a state of degradation.

They are also developing a second biosphere above the Koyna River in the buffer zone of the Sahyadri Tiger Reserve near Pune, Maharashtra, along the Western Ghats.

The United Nations Assembly established World Environment Day in 1972, which was the first day of the Stockholm Conference on the human environment.

World Environment Day (WED) is celebrated every year with a specific theme and slogan that focuses on the major environmental issues of that time.

WED 2024 is hosted by Saudi Arabia. India hosted the 45th celebration of World Environment Day in 2018 under the theme 'Beat Plastic Pollution'.



WED celebration in 2021 kicked off the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) which is a global mission to revive billions of hectares, from forests to farmlands, from the top of mountains to the depth of the seas.

**The theme for
2024:**

**Land Restoration,
Desertification and
Drought Resilience**



Forest and Wildlife Conservation:



India ranks third globally in net forest area gain over the past 15 years. The Forest Cover of India is 7,13,789 sq. km, which is 21.71% of the total geographical area of the country, as per the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2021.



India celebrated 50 years of Project Tiger and 30 years of Project Elephant, demonstrating its commitment to species conservation.

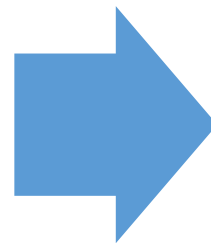
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- The Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes (MISHTI) was announced in the Union Budget 2023-24 to promote and conserve mangroves.



Preston Curve



The Preston curve refers to the empirical relationship between life expectancy and per capita income in a country, proposed by American sociologist Samuel H. Preston in 1975.

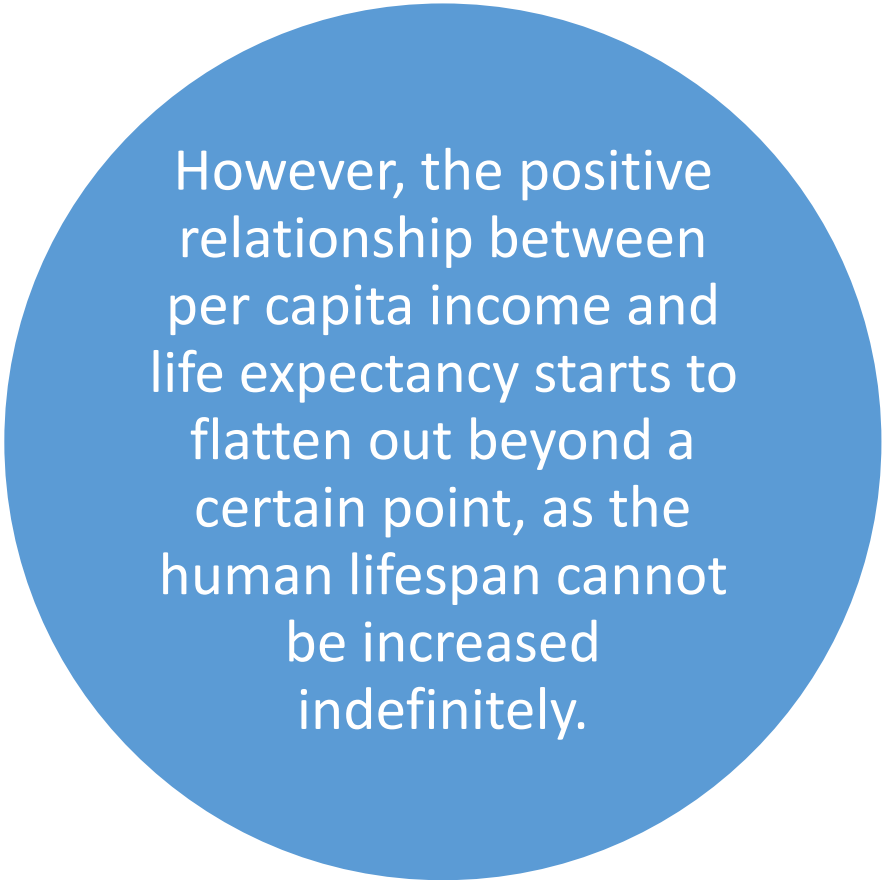


The curve shows that people in richer countries generally have longer life spans compared to those in poorer countries, likely due to better access to healthcare, education, nutrition, etc.

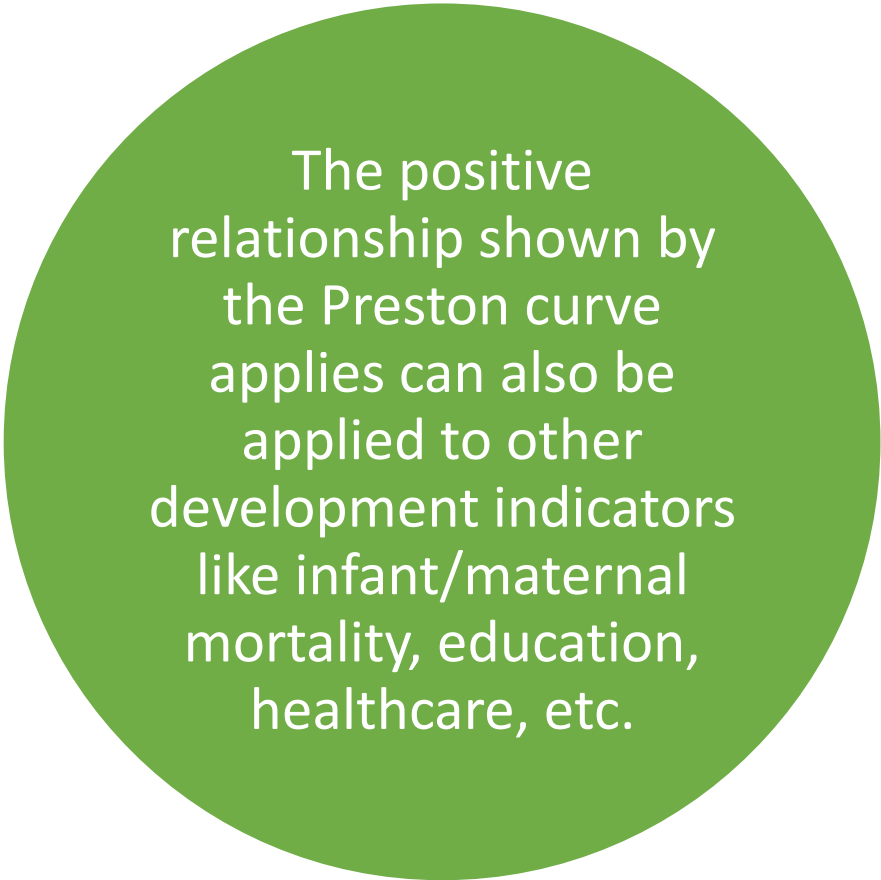
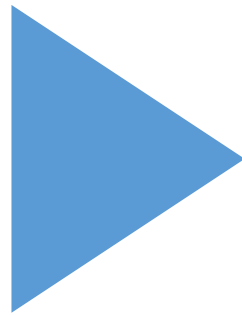
As a poor country's per capita income rises, its life expectancy increases significantly initially.

For example, **India's per capita income** rose from Rs 9,000 in 1947 to

Rs 55,000 in 2011, while **life expectancy increased from 32 to 66 years.**



However, the positive relationship between per capita income and life expectancy starts to flatten out beyond a certain point, as the human lifespan cannot be increased indefinitely.




The positive relationship shown by the Preston curve applies can also be applied to other development indicators like infant/maternal mortality, education, healthcare, etc.



Kenya-India Collaboration on Cheetah Conservation



Recently, a Kenyan delegation visited India to discuss collaboration on wildlife conservation efforts, with a particular emphasis on the ongoing Cheetah Reintroduction Project (Project Cheetah).



The delegation presented a draft MoU to the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) proposing collaboration.




It along with capacity building and knowledge sharing, also included provisions for supplying equipment to Kenyan forest rangers to enhance field patrolling and wildlife preservation efforts

Project Cheetah: The **Phase-1** of the project started in **2022**, to restore the population of cheetahs, which were declared extinct in the country in 1952.

- It involves the translocation of cheetahs from South Africa and Namibia to **Kuno National Park**.



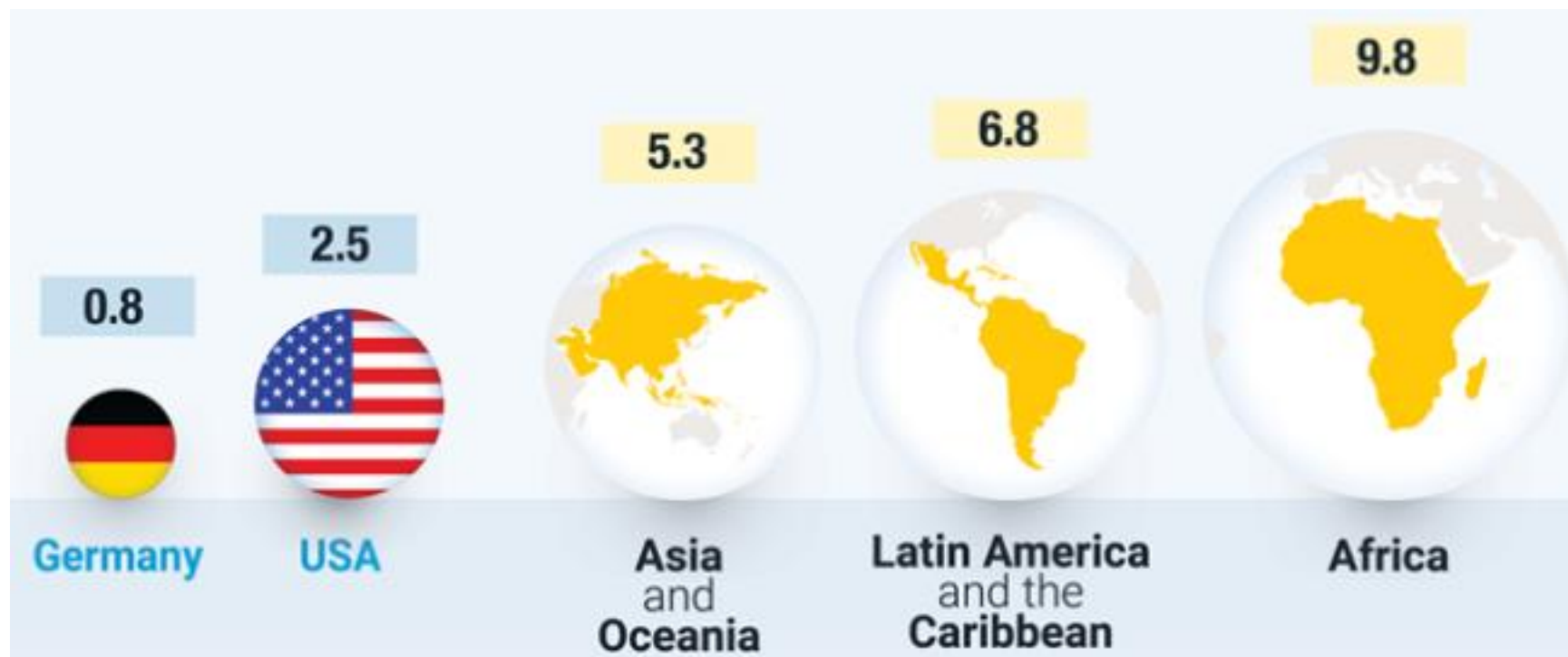
Cheetahs will be translocated to **Kuno National Park** and **Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary** (Madhya Pradesh)

A satellite view of Earth from space, showing the Americas, the Atlantic Ocean, and parts of Europe and Africa. The image is dark on the left side, where the text is overlaid.

Global Public
Debt Hits \$97
Trillion in 2023

-
- A report titled "**A world of debt: A growing burden to global prosperity**", highlights the unprecedented surge in global public debt, which reached a historic peak of \$97 trillion in 2023.
 - The report was prepared by the **UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)**.
 -

- The number of African countries with **debt-to-GDP ratios above 60%** has **increased from 6 to 27** between 2013 and 2023.
- In **2023**, developing nations paid **\$847 billion** in net interest, a 26% increase from 2021.
- The report revealed that 3.3 billion individuals reside in nations where **interest payments exceed spending** on education and health combined.
-



Public debt of India

India's public debt-to-GDP ratio has barely increased from 81% in 2005-06 to **84%** in **2021-22**, and is back to **81%** in **2022-23**.

As per the **Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act 2003**, the general government debt was supposed to be brought down to **60%** of **GDP** by **2024-25**.

The IMF states that India's general government debt, including the Centre and States, could be **100% of GDP** under adverse circumstances by fiscal 2028.



Netherlands:
India's third-
largest Export
Destination

- The Netherlands has emerged as **India's third- largest export destination** after the U.S. and UAE during 2023-24, even as the country's merchandise shipments dipped by more than 3%
- **Key Points**
- The main commodities which registered healthy exports growth in the Netherlands include petroleum products (\$14.29 billion), electrical goods, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals in the last fiscal.
- India's trade surplus with the Netherlands rose to \$17.4 billion in FY24 from \$13 billion in FY23.

- **Netherlands**

- Netherlands, country located in northwestern Europe
The Netherlands is bounded by the North Sea to the north and west, Germany to the east, and Belgium to the south



major rivers flow through the Netherlands:
the **Rhine**, the Meuse , and the Scheldt.

The **IJsselmeer** is a lake on the coast of the
Netherlands

The seat of the international court of justice is at the
Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands).

International Criminal Court (ICC) : Headquarters:
The Hague, the Netherlands



World's largest grain storage plan

- The National Level Coordination Committee (NLCC) for the world's largest grain storage plan held its first meeting in Delhi.
- The plan aims to transform **Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) into Multi-Service Societies.** The pilot project, implemented in 11 states, focuses on creating agricultural infrastructure at the PACS level, including warehouses and processing units, through various government schemes.
-

Implementation	<p>The Ministry of Cooperation will implement a pilot project in at least 10 districts to gather regional insights for nationwide implementation. An IMC will modify guidelines and implementation methodologies for creating infrastructure at Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) using available schemes.</p>	
	<p>The ministry will implement it through the National Cooperative Development Corporation with support from NABARD, FCI, and others</p>	
Schemes for Convergence	Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare	Agriculture Infrastructure Fund , Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure Scheme , Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture , Sub Mission on Agricultural Mechanization .
	Ministry of Food Processing Industries	Pradhan Mantri Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme , Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana .
	Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	Allocation of food grains under the National Food Security Act , Procurement operations at Minimum Support Price.
Benefits	<p>The plan aims to address the agricultural storage infrastructure shortage and enable PACS to function as procurement centres, fair price shops, custom hiring centres, and processing units.</p> <p>It will reduce food grain wastage, enhance food security, prevent distress sales, reduce transportation costs, and strengthen PACS.</p>	
Implementation Timeline	<p>The National Level Coordination Committee was formed within one week of approval. Implementation guidelines are issued within 15 days of approval.</p> <p>Portal for PACS linkage rolled out within 45 days of approval.</p> <p>Implementation starts within 45 days of approval.</p>	

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A group of people are clapping in a dimly lit room. The focus is on the hands and forearms of several individuals, with some in the foreground and others blurred in the background. The lighting is soft and moody, creating a sense of appreciation and collective effort. An orange horizontal bar is located in the top left corner of the image.

Thank you
guys.
