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Industrial disasters and poor inspections
Checks and penalties will rein in accidents
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CHAMPIONS RETURN
Indian cricket team to be felicitated today
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INSIDE

'Ensure return of Indians stuck in Ukraine war'
NEW DELHI
Expressing "strong concern" about Indian nationals fighting in Ukraine, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar called upon Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in Astana on Wednesday to ensure their return to India soon. » PAGE 5

Labour in lead. Tories to fight as U.K. goes to polls
LONDON
The U.K.'s Conservative Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, faced with the prospect of a crushing defeat at the hands of the opposition Labour Party, said on the last day of campaigning that he was still "fighting hard for every vote". » PAGE 14

Champai quits, Hemant Soren set to return as Jharkhand CM

MLAs from JMM-led alliance unanimously elect Hemant, who was released on bail in a money laundering case on June 28, as new leader as Champai Soren tenders resignation to end his 5-month term; BJP accuses JMM of playing dynastic politics

Amarnath Tewary
PATNA
Jharkhand Chief Minister Champai Soren, resigned on Wednesday, paving the way for his predecessor Hemant Soren to stake his claim to form the government and return to the State's top post after being unanimously elected leader of the ruling alliance's legislators at a marathon meeting in Ranchi. Mr. Hemant Soren, son of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) supreme Shibu Soren, had resigned as Chief Minister in January shortly before he was taken into custody by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case linked to an alleged land scam. He was released on

bail on June 28. Ending his five-month term, Mr. Champai Soren met Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan at the Raj Bhavan on Wednesday evening and tendered his resignation in the presence of Mr. Hemant Soren, who staked his claim soon afterwards. The outgoing CM is said to be "upset" over the development, though he has denied this, and is likely to be given a new responsibility as the chairperson of INDIA bloc coordination committee in the State or an executive president of the JMM, sources said. "I have resigned on my own," Mr. Champai told presspersons. "I was given the responsibility by the coalition partners. Now, the alliance has decided in favour of Hemant Soren,"



Change of guard: Outgoing Jharkhand CM Champai Soren, JMM leader Hemant Soren and State Congress chief Rajesh Thakur meet Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan in Ranchi on Wednesday. PTI

he said. Alliance partners from the Congress, including Ghulam Ahmad Mir, the party's in-charge for the State, and State Congress chief Rajesh Thakur, were present at the meeting of legislators from a

third term of Chief Minister for a unified command ahead of the upcoming State elections in October this year," a JMM leader said. Mr. Hemant Soren may now be invited by the Governor to take office as CM for the third time on Thursday. Jharkhand BJP president Babul Marandi said tribal people outside Shibu Soren's family are only temporary faces in the JMM, accusing the family of using people as per their needs and requirements. "It is clear that once a dynast, always a dynast. The momentary transition of power to Champai Soren was nothing but a façade created to look democratic," said BJP spokesperson Vinay Singh. (With inputs from PTI)

We must rise above politics for peace in Manipur, says Modi

Vijaya Singh
NEW DELHI

In his first detailed remarks on the Manipur conflict in Parliament since ethnic violence broke out in the State over a year ago, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told the Rajya Sabha that efforts were on to bring peace, adding that history suggests that "social tensions" in the State are deep-rooted. About 11,000 FIRs have been registered and over 500 people arrested so far, he said, noting that when a similar but more violent unrest took place in the State in 1993, the violence had lasted for five years. "We have to rise above politics to bring normalcy. The elements trying to add fuel to the fire in Manipur should stop. There will be a time when Manipur will reject them," there is a long history of social tensions that are deep-rooted... We have to act wisely. Whoever wants to contribute to peace-building is welcome," Mr. Modi said.



Narendra Modi

as well, he added. At least 221 people have been killed and more than 50,000 people displaced after ethnic tensions between the Meitei people and the tribal Kuki-Zo people erupted into violence in the State on May 3, 2023

Hathras stampede toll hits 121; organiser pins blame on 'anti-social elements'

Ishtia Mishra
HATHRAS
With the death toll in the Hathras sex-rage stampede touching 121, Sooraj Pal Singh, alias Narayan Salwan Vishwa Hari, the self-styled godman who was heading the prayer meeting, said a ruckus was created by "anti-social elements" after he left the event. "I express deepest condolence to the families of the deceased and pray to god for the speedy recovery of the injured," Pal Singh said, adding that he will "take legal action against the 'anti-social elements'". Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who on Wednesday visited the spot, ordered a judicial probe into the incident. He did not rule out the possibility of a "conspiracy" behind the stampede, and said the accused will be punished. "A judicial probe by a retired High Court judge will be conducted into the incident," Mr. Adityanath said after meeting the injured and the kin of the deceased. The Chief Minister asked if the stampede was not an accident, then "whose conspiracy is this?"



Struck by grief: A villager who lost his mother, wife and daughter in the stampede being consoled after their burial at Hathras in Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday. IAN MCCRORY

FIR against aide
The police have filed an FIR against a close aide of Mr. Pal Singh but did not name the godman as an accused. The FIR said followers of the preacher had thrown away slippers and other belongings of the victims in nearby farmlands to destroy evidence. On why Mr. Pal Singh, also known as Ishore Baba, was not named as an accused by the police, Mr. Adityanath said, "primarily, the case has been filed against those who had ap-

plied for permission for the event. "All those who are guilty will be punished," he said. On the Opposition's allegations that the law and order situation in the State is deteriorating and the government is trying to hide the death toll, Mr. Adityanath said, "Some people have a tendency to dig up politics in such tragic incidents. Everyone knows with whom that gentleman has had higher political connections. I think it is necessary to get to the bottom of it." Several BJP affiliates have shared photographs of Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav participating in previous meetings of the godman.

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AVOIDABLE TRAGEDY
» PAGE 8

26/11 accused Rana can be extradited, says U.S. attorney

Eress Trust of India
WASHINGTON
Pakistan-origin Canadian businessman Tahawwur Rana, wanted in India for his role in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, is extraditable under the plain provisions of the U.S.-India extradition treaty, a U.S. attorney has told a court. Rana faces charges for his role in the Mumbai attacks and is known to be associated with Pakistani-American terrorist David Coleman Headley, one of the main conspirators of the attacks.

write challenging the court order, which acceded to the request of the U.S. government that the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks accused be extradited to India. "Rana is extraditable to India under the plain provisions of the treaty, and India has established probable cause to prosecute Rana for his role in terrorist attacks that resulted in 166 deaths and 259 injuries," Mr. Alden said. Rana faces charges for his role in the Mumbai attacks and is known to be associated with Pakistani-American terrorist David Coleman Headley, one of the main conspirators of the attacks.

Spike in pollution levels may raise death rates in cities with cleaner air, says study

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI
A spike in air pollution in Indian cities that have cleaner air may raise death rates higher than in cities that have higher pollution loads. Thus, the same increase in air pollution, say, Bengaluru, can raise death rates more than in Delhi, which has much higher background levels of air pollution. Overall, however, cities that had high pollution loads saw a big reduction of annual deaths attributable to air pollution, with Delhi's annual deaths attributable to air pollution down 4.8% in Bengaluru. The latter's population had 30% the exposure



Hard to breathe: Delhi had about 12,000 deaths linked to air pollution per year between 2008 and 2019. FILE PHOTO

to daily air pollution than an average Delhi resident is subjected to, says a first-of-its-kind multi-city analysis led by researchers from health effects of short-term exposure to air pollution, published in the peer-reviewed Lancet Planet Health journal. The scientists analysed pollution and death registra-

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cubic metre increase in the average PM 2.5 exposure over a two-day period, the study found. From air pollution, Delhi had about 12,000 deaths per year and Shimla 59 a year - the lowest among the 10 cities - between 2008 and 2019. "Our findings confirmed that the risk of mortality rose more quickly at lower PM 2.5 levels but plateaued as levels increased. Significantly, we found mortality risk to be very high (2.65%) even when annual days with PM 2.5 levels below the current Indian national air quality standard of 60 microgram per cubic metre," the authors from multiple institutes in Europe and India, reported.

Spike in pollution levels may raise death rates in cities with cleaner air, says study

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

A spike in air pollution in Indian cities that have cleaner air may raise death rates higher than in cities that have higher pollution loads. Thus, the same increase in air pollution in, say, Bengaluru, can raise death rates more than in Delhi, which has much higher background levels of air pollution.

Overall, however, cities that had high pollution loads saw a greater fraction of annual deaths attributable to air pollution, with 11.5% of Delhi's annual deaths attributable to air pollution, and 4.8% in Bengaluru. The latter's population had 30% the exposure



Hard to breathe: Delhi had about 12,000 deaths linked to air pollution per year between 2008 and 2019. FILE PHOTO

to daily air pollution that an average Delhi resident is subjected to, says a first-of-its-kind multi-city analysis in India that studied the health effects of short-term exposure to air pollution, published in the peer-reviewed *Lancet Planet Health*.

The scientists analysed pollution and death regis-

try data from Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Pune, Shimla, and Varanasi.

Nearly 30,000 deaths, or 7.2% of the annual deaths in the 10 cities, were due to short-term PM 2.5. The total daily deaths in these cities rose by 1.42% for every 10 microgram per

cubic metre increase in the average PM 2.5 exposure over a two-day period, the study found.

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DEATHS IN CITIES

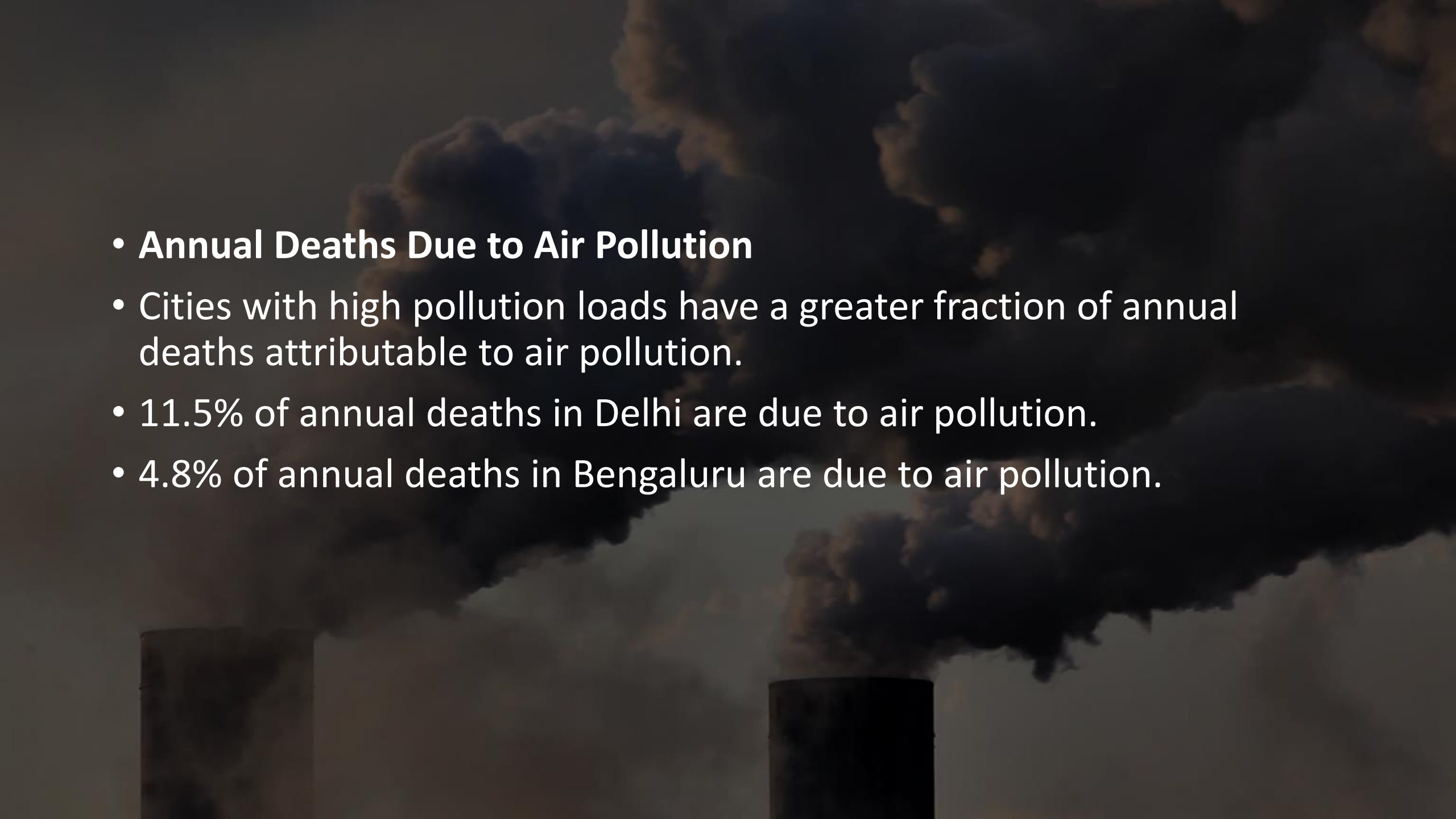
Average number of deaths attributable to air pollution every year

Delhi	11,964
Mumbai	5,091
Kolkata	4,678
Chennai	2,870
Ahmedabad	2,495
Bengaluru	2,102
Hyderabad	1,597
Pune	1,367
Varanasi	831
Shimla	59



- **Impact of Pollution on Death Rates**

- A spike in air pollution in cities with cleaner air can raise death rates more than in highly polluted cities.
- Example: Bengaluru can see higher death rates increase compared to Delhi despite lower baseline pollution levels.

- 
- **Annual Deaths Due to Air Pollution**
 - Cities with high pollution loads have a greater fraction of annual deaths attributable to air pollution.
 - 11.5% of annual deaths in Delhi are due to air pollution.
 - 4.8% of annual deaths in Bengaluru are due to air pollution.

Study Data and Scope

Data from 10 cities: Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Pune, Shimla, and Varanasi.

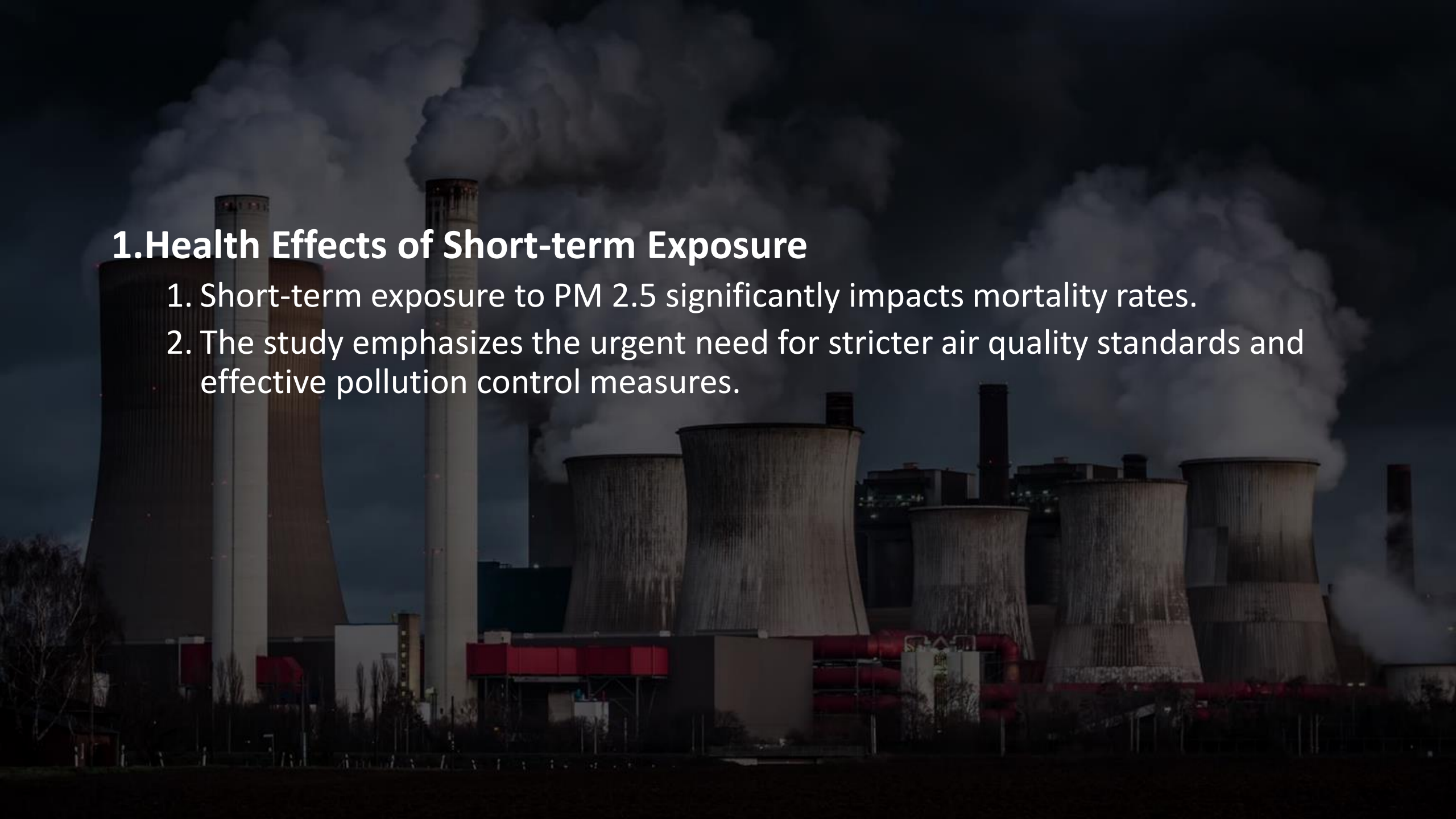
Nearly 30,000 deaths (7.2% of annual deaths in these cities) are linked to short-term PM 2.5 exposure.

The study covered the period from 2008 to 2019.



- **Specific Findings**

- Delhi had about 12,000 deaths per year due to air pollution.
- Shimla had the lowest number of deaths (59 per year) among the 10 cities.
- The risk of mortality rose more quickly at lower PM 2.5 levels but plateaued as levels increased.
- Mortality risk remained high (2.65%) even at PM 2.5 levels below the current Indian national air quality standard of 60 micrograms per cubic meter.



1. Health Effects of Short-term Exposure

1. Short-term exposure to PM 2.5 significantly impacts mortality rates.
2. The study emphasizes the urgent need for stricter air quality standards and effective pollution control measures.

- **Q: According to the study mentioned in the article, what is a significant finding regarding the impact of air pollution on death rates in Indian cities?**
- A) The increase in air pollution has a uniform impact on death rates across all cities regardless of their baseline pollution levels.
- B) Cities with cleaner air experience a higher increase in death rates due to a spike in air pollution compared to highly polluted cities.
- C) Only cities with high pollution loads see a significant increase in death rates due to air pollution.
- D) The risk of mortality does not change with varying levels of PM 2.5 exposure.

Petition in SC seeks panel to probe Hathras stampede

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A writ petition was filed in the Supreme Court on Wednesday to appoint a five-member expert committee under the supervision of a retired Supreme Court judge to inquire into the Hathras stampede which has seen over 121 deaths.

The petition filed by advocate Vinhal Tiwari also asked the court to lay down safety guidelines for mass meetings and public gatherings.

The incident happened during a prayer meeting held by a self-styled godman, Narayan Saakar Hari, in Hathras district of Uttar Pradesh. The event had drawn a large crowd.

"Several questions brew up from this horrific incident of stampede thereby questioning the duty and lapses of State Government and Municipal Corporations," the petition submitted.

It urged the court to direct the Uttar Pradesh government to submit a status report and initiate legal action against those who had acted negligently about the safety and crowd control measures.

Hathras stampede: amid the dead, search on for the living

The district hospital staff say they have never seen a tragedy of such scale, people at the village where the event was held say the death toll is higher than what the government has put out

Ishita Mishra
HATHRAS

The tragedy of the Hathras stampede that left 121 dead kept unfolding in the district hospital and health-care centres here on Wednesday as family members of those who are still missing frantically searched for their near and dear ones.

Chandan Jataw, 28, said he picked up a bag and left Agra as soon as he heard about the stampede. His mother and paternal aunt were visiting the event. The two have not been home and their mobile phones are switched off.

"I was asked to uncover what was going on. They were lying in the mortuary. None of them were of my mother and name. They then asked me to go to Aligarh and Etah as the rest of the bodies were sent there," said Mr. Jataw who is inconsolable when his brother called him to ask if he had managed to find the two. After the meeting was held, a crowd gathered to witness the forensic teams screening the spot to ascertain the cause of the stampede.

"I have counted 300 bodies at this site. Buses and lorries were full. Many people left the spot with the bodies of their kin before the police could arrive and take them for post-mortem examination. The number of dead in this incident is far more than what is being told by the government," said a crowd gathered to witness the forensic teams screening the spot to ascertain the cause of the stampede.



In shock: Vinod cries after the burial of his mother, wife and daughter after the stampede at Hathras on Tuesday. K. V. MOORTHY

At Phulrai village in the Sikkandraru area, where the meeting was held, a crowd gathered to witness the forensic teams screening the spot to ascertain the cause of the stampede.

"I have counted 300 bodies at this site. Buses and lorries were full. Many people left the spot with the bodies of their kin before the police could arrive and take them for post-mortem examination. The number of dead in this incident is far more than what is being told by the government," said a crowd gathered to witness the forensic teams screening the spot to ascertain the cause of the stampede.

Kishida and Putin express condolence

MOSCOW
Russian President Vladimir Putin and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida expressed condolences over the stampede in Hathras, U.P. "President of Russia Vladimir Putin sent a condolence message to President of India Droupadi Murmu & Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi over the tragic stampede in Uttar Pradesh; kindly accept the most sincere condolences," Russian Embassy in India posted on X.

ing held responsible for the stampede by the localities. Vishal Kumar, who hails from Mathura, said he is yet to find his mother who was at the meeting.

At Sokhna village, Vinod was yet to accept that he lost his mother, wife, and 10-year-old daughter in the stampede. He faints every now and then while talking for the cremation of the three whom he loved the most.

Family of Agniveer killed in landmine blast will get compensation of ₹1.65 cr.

Dinakar Peri
Sandeep Thukun
NEW DELHI

The Army late on Wednesday clarified that the family of Agniveer Ajay Kumar, who was killed in a landmine blast, would receive a compensation of approximately ₹1.65 crore. The Army emphasised that the "emoluments due to a fallen hero are paid expeditiously" to the next of kin of the departed soldiers, including Agniveers.

The Army's clarification was prompted by a social media post by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, in which he demanded an apology from Defence Minister Rajnath Singh for misleading Parliament.

"Certain posts on social media have brought out that compensation hasn't been paid to the next of kin of Agniveer Ajay Kumar who lost his life in the line of duty. It is emphasised that the Indian Army salutes the supreme sacrifice made by Agniveer Ajay Kumar. The last rites were carried out with full military honours," the Army said in a post.

The 23-year-old was killed on January 18 in a landmine blast near a Line of Control in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir.



Standing by sides: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with the father of a deceased Agniveer. PTI

₹98.39 lakh paid Of the total amount due, the family of Agniveer Ajay has already received ₹98.39 lakh, the Army said. Ex gratia and other benefits amounting to approximately ₹77 lakh, as applicable according to the provisions of the Agniveer scheme, will be paid on final account settlement shortly, post due police verification, it said. "The total amount will be ₹1.65 crore approximately."

Giving a break-up of the ₹1.65-crore compensation, defence officials said this includes ₹48 lakh as insurance from the government, ₹50 lakh as insurance from financial institutions under a memorandum of understanding, and an additional sum of ₹50,000, all of which have been paid to the family of Agniveer Ajay Singh. In addition, an ex gratia of ₹44 lakh, ₹8 lakh from the Army welfare fund, ₹13 lakh approximately as balance of pay till completion of his tenure, and Seva Nidhi fund of ₹2.3 lakh — together amounting to ₹67.3 lakh — would be paid after due process, officials stated.

Rajinder Khanna is Additional National Security Adviser

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

The National Security Council Secretary has overseen a series of changes in the past couple of days which include ministerial continuity.

Pavan Kapoor, Secretary (West) in the External Affairs Ministry, has been appointed Deputy National Security Adviser (NSA).

In a significant move, Rajinder Khanna, Deputy NSA and former chief of India's external intelligence agency Research & Analysis Wing (RAW), has been promoted as Additional NSA. There was no Additional NSA so far.

"A former RAW chief, Mr. Khanna has been Deputy NSA (TM) since January 2018. As in most other appointments, this signals continuity in the NSCS too," officials said.

The appointment of Mr. Kapoor as Deputy NSA follows the recent appointment of Vikram Misra as the next Foreign Secretary on July 15. The other appointment is of T. V. Ravichandran, IPS, as the Deputy NSA in place of Mr. Khanna. He is serving as Special Director in the intelligence Bureau.

With these changes, effectively there will be an Additional NSA in addition to three Deputy NSAs under the NSA Aji Doyal. At the same time, former Border Security Force chief Panikaj Kumar continues as Deputy NSA. With the latest changes in the NSA, all eyes are on who would fill the positions of UN Permanent Representative in New York and Ambassador to the U.S. that are vacant at present and other important postings due to become vacant later this year.

(With inputs from Subhasini Haidar)

Mother, son assaulted by Trinamool worker

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

Instances of mob violence are on the rise in West Bengal. Recently, a mother and son were beaten up allegedly by a Trinamool Congress strongman at Aftabnagar in North 24 Parganas.

The incident came to light barely after a couple of days of the Chhogra incident, in which Trinamool strongman Tajmool Haque, known as 'CRIF', was seen beating up a couple on a road, accusing them of relations outside marriage.

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Review time



Border watch: Chief of Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi during his visit to the forward locations of White Knight Corps and a review of the security situation along the Line of Control in Poonch, Jammu and Kashmir, on Wednesday. PTI

No Indian industry presence in Board of National Research Foundation

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

The Executive and Governing Boards of the Anantnagar National Research Foundation (ANRF) — a high-level body charged with strategic direction to scientific research in industry — has no representation from Indian industry, Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh had said this in discussions surrounding the passage of the Bill in Parliament last year.

Appoint members To this end, the text of the Act specifically empowered the President of the Governing Board — in this case the Prime Minister of India — to nominate or appoint up to "...five members from business organisations or industry", into the Board.

The 15-member Governing Board, as notified by the MoST, however, has only two Indian industry draws inspiration. Only two universities are represented in the Body by the Directors of the Sym-



The foundation seeks to promote basic research in science and engineering. phony Technology Group. There are two other Americans with Indian roots Manjul Bhargava, Professor, Princeton University, U.S., and Subra Suresh, Professor at Large, Brown University, and former head of the U.S. National Research Foundation, who draws inspiration.

Only two universities are represented in the Body by the Directors of the Sym-

Indian Institute of Science, and the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. Ajay Sood, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Union government, is the Member Secretary of the governing body, with the rest of the members being the Ministers of Science, Education, and the Secretaries of the departments under the MoST.

The ANRF replaces the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), established in 2008.

The ANRF is a significant reform in that it proposes a more expansive definition of industry, which includes science, engineering, information technology, Liberal Arts, Social Sciences, and the Humanities.

Smart Cities Mission period extended till March 2025

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Centre has extended the Smart Cities Mission (SCM) under the Union Urban Development Ministry till March 31, 2025.

Under the SCM, launched in June 2015, 100 cities were chosen through a competition to be developed as smart cities. The mission envisions developing areas within selected cities in the country as model areas based on an area development plan, which is expected to have a real effect on other parts of the city.

More than 8,000 multi-sectoral projects are being developed by the 100 cities under the SCM. As on July 3, the 100 cities have completed 7,188 projects (90% of total pro-

Centre issues advisory for ads on food and health products only

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Information and Public Relations on Wednesday issued a fresh advisory, asking advertisers and advertising agencies issuing advertisements for products and services related to the food and health sectors to upload an annual self-declaration certificate on the platform made available for the purpose.

According to a senior Digital Media Publisher Association (DNPA) office-bearer, the advisory supercedes all previous advisories issued by the Ministry. It is limited to the food and health sector only, meaning these sectors are only required to upload the self-declaration certificate annually.

According to the new advisory, the facility for uploading the self-declaration certificate by the advertiser/advertising agencies has been made available on the Broadcast Seva Portal for TV and advertisements and on the portal of the Press Council of India for the advertisements on print media/internet.

Accordingly, in view of the Supreme Court order dated May 7, 2024, and in suppression of the previous advisories dated June 3, 2024, and June 5, 2022, the advertiser/advertising agencies issuing advertisements for products and services related to food and health sectors have been advised to upload an annual self-declaration certificate on these platforms, as applicable.

They also have to make available the proof of uploading the self-declaration certificate to the media stakeholders concerned for the record.

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More than 8,000 multi-sectoral projects are being developed by the 100 cities amounting to around ₹1.6 lakh crore under the SCM.

As on July 3, the 100 cities have completed 7,188 projects (90% of total pro-



Under the SCM, 100 cities were chosen through a competition to be developed as smart cities.

jects) amounting to ₹1,44,237 crore as part of the mission.

The balance 830 projects amounting to ₹19,926 crore are also in advanced stages of completion, an official statement said on Wednesday.

The mission has an allocated a budget of ₹48,000 crore for the 100 cities. As on date, ₹46,585 crore or 97% of the allocated budget has been released.

Out of these funds released to the cities, 93% have been utilised as on date.

“The mission has been getting multiple requests from some States/city government representatives to grant some more time to complete the balance 10% projects. These balance ongoing projects are in advanced stage of implementation and got delayed due to various on-ground conditions. Taking cognisance of these requests, the Government of India has extended the mission period up to March 31, 2025 to complete these balance 10% projects,” the statement said.

This extension has been informed to the cities that it would be without any additional cost, beyond the already approved financial allocation under the mission.

Extension of Smart Cities Mission

Mission Extension

- The Smart Cities Mission (SCM) has been extended till March 31, 2025.
- Managed by the Union Urban Development Ministry.

- 
- An aerial night view of a city, likely London, showing a dense network of lights and a prominent bridge crossing a river. The city lights are illuminated against a dark sky, with a bridge spanning across a river in the middle ground. The overall scene is a high-angle, wide-area view of an urban landscape at night.
- **Objectives and Scope**
 - Launched in June 2015.
 - 100 cities chosen through a competition to be developed as smart cities.
 - Envisions developing selected areas to influence the broader city and nearby towns.

A silhouette of a construction site at sunset. In the foreground, several workers are silhouetted against the bright orange and yellow sky as they work on a building's steel framework. Scaffolding and structural beams are visible. In the background, a large tower crane stands tall, its jib extending across the upper left portion of the frame. The overall scene conveys a sense of active construction during the 'golden hour' of the day.

- **Project Development**

- Over 8,000 multi-sectoral projects underway.

- Total budget allocation: ₹1.6 lakh crore.

- As of July 3, 2023, 7,188 projects completed (90% of total projects).

Funding and Utilization

Budget allocated: ₹48,000 crore.

₹46,585 crore (97% of allocated budget) released to cities.

93% of the released funds utilized.



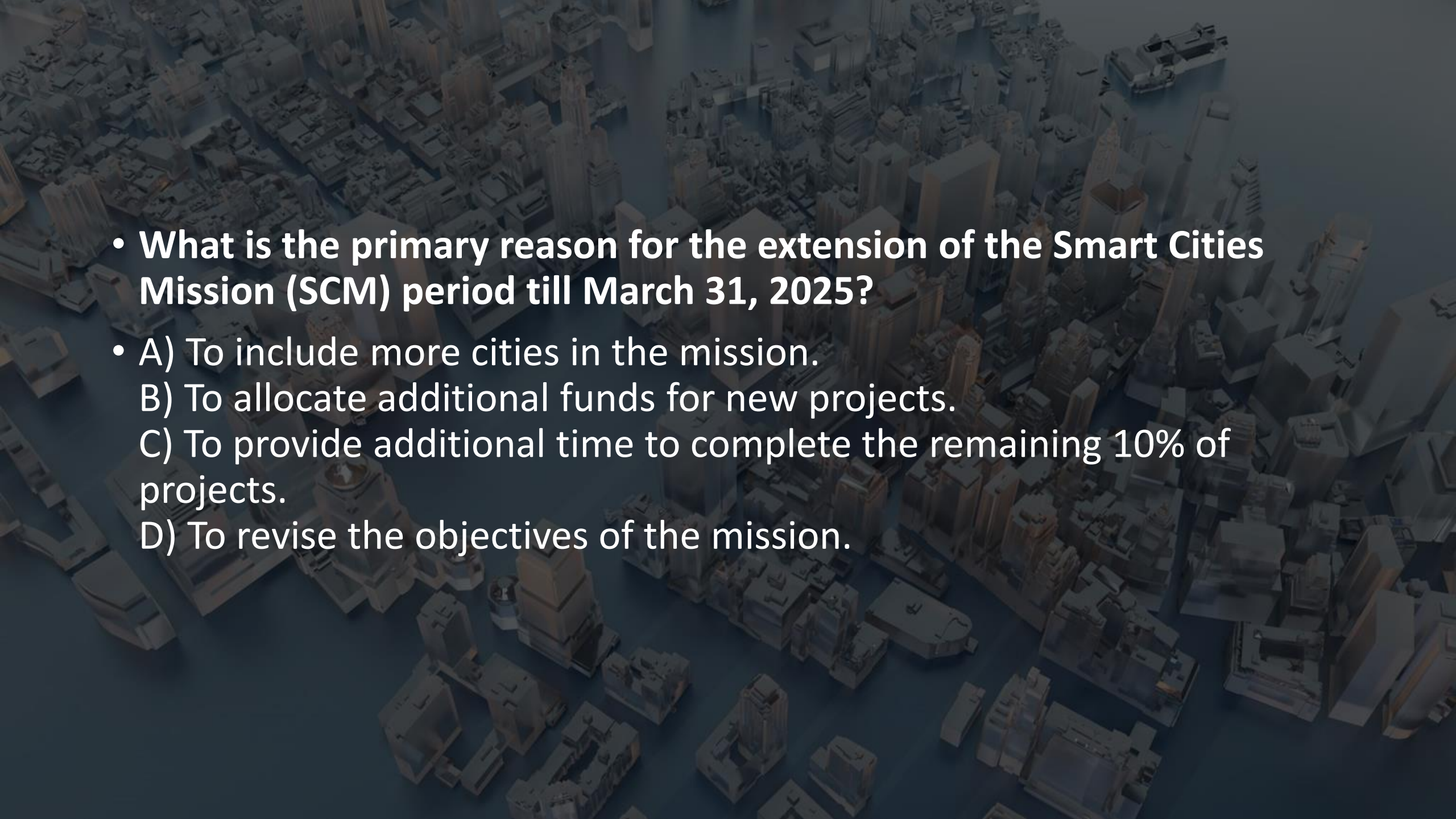
- **Completion and Requests**

- 830 projects worth ₹19,926 crore in advanced stages.
- Multiple requests from states and city representatives for more time to complete the remaining 10% of projects.
- Government extended the mission period without additional costs beyond the already approved financial allocation.

An aerial, high-angle view of a dense city skyline, likely New York City, with numerous skyscrapers and buildings. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark blue-grey filter. The text is positioned on the left side of the image.

• **Key Statistics**

- 100 cities chosen for development.
- 7,188 projects completed out of 8,000.
- ₹1,44,237 crore allocated for the mission.
- 93% of funds utilized.
- Extension granted due to on-ground delays and to ensure project completion.

- 
- **What is the primary reason for the extension of the Smart Cities Mission (SCM) period till March 31, 2025?**
 - A) To include more cities in the mission.
 - B) To allocate additional funds for new projects.
 - C) To provide additional time to complete the remaining 10% of projects.
 - D) To revise the objectives of the mission.

IN BRIEF

Maintain vigil, says Centre as Maharashtra reports Zika

With some cases of the Zika virus reported from parts of Maharashtra, the Union Health Ministry on Wednesday issued an advisory to all States...

'Are you well?' Delhi HC asks man seeking to debar Modi

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday dismissed an appeal seeking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's debarment from the Lok Sabha over claims that he plotted a fatal air crash and indulged in anti-national activities.

India to host 46th UNESCO heritage panel session

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The 46th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, being hosted by India from July 21-31, will be held at the Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.

The event will be attended by over 2,500 delegates from State Parties, advisory bodies, senior diplomats, heritage experts, scholars, and researchers from 195 countries, a senior official said.

Sources said the event, being organised by the Archaeological Survey of India, is likely to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The World Heritage Committee has representatives from 21 State Parties to the World Heritage Convention (1972) elected by the General Assembly.

In a repeat of 2023, vegetable prices upset family budgets

Consumer Affairs Ministry says situation will ease soon, but wholesale prices of tomato have gone up by 65.7%, onion by 35.36% and potato by 17.57% in past 30 days; officials say next harvest of tomato in States such as Karnataka will ensure supply

A.M. Haseeb NEW DELHI

Marking back to the high prices in July and August last year, when a kilogram of tomato cost as much as ₹250 in various parts of the country, its retail price and those of essential vegetables such as onion and potato have increased by 15% to 58% in the past month.

The Union government, however, said the rise was temporary, and the prices, except that of potato, would be under control soon.

The wholesale prices of the three vegetables have increased - by 65.7% for tomato, 35.36% for onion and 17.57% for potato - in the past 30 days.

The all-India average retail price of tomato was ₹55.04 for a kg on Wednesday.



The all-India average retail price of tomato was ₹55.04 for a kg on Wednesday. NARAYAN GOPAL

year, on July 3, the price was ₹57.57 a kg. By July 15, and in the first week of August in 2023, the price had risen to ₹250 for a kg of tomato in various places.

The price of onion too is on the rise. Wednesday's all-India average retail price for a kg of onion was ₹42.46, an increase of 15.02% from the June price of ₹37.30. A year ago, on the corresponding date, the price was ₹25.04, thus showing a 69.57% increase

year-on-year. The price of potato was ₹27.57 a kg. By July 15, and in the first week of August in 2023, the price had risen to ₹250 for a kg of potato in various places.

The price of onion too is on the rise. Wednesday's all-India average retail price for a kg of onion was ₹42.46, an increase of 15.02% from the June price of ₹37.30. A year ago, on the corresponding date, the price was ₹25.04, thus showing a 69.57% increase

of Consumer Affairs, on the condition of anonymity, told The Hindu that the increase was temporary, and the Ministry expected the prices of tomato and onion to come down soon.

However, the price of potato was likely to remain elevated for the next season. He said that the demand for potato was usually high during summer, and as green vegetables arrived in the markets during the monsoon, the demand would come down.

In States such as Karnataka has started and it will ensure adequate supply in the markets," he said.

On onions, the official said its production during the last rabi season was down by 40 lakh tonnes and this was the reason for the increase in prices. "We are expecting a good monsoon. So once the sowing and transplantation scenario is clear, the prices will be stabilised. But for the time being, the prices will be on the higher side," he said.

He said the rate of reduction of potatoes from cold storage units was high recently. The prices would come down slightly in the coming days, but it would be higher than that of last year. "But it will be regulated," the official said.

The price of potato was usually high during summer, and as green vegetables arrived in the markets during the monsoon, the demand would come down.

CBI arrests key accused in NEET paper leak case

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday arrested an alleged key conspirator in connection with the Patna National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (UPSC Graduate) paper leak case.

The accused, Aman Singh, was picked up by the agency from Dhanbad in Jharkhand following a tip-off. Earlier, three persons were arrested by the CBI from Hazaribagh for their purported role in the incident. They were identified as - a Hindi newspaper journalist Jamshuddin, Oasis School Principal Abanubul Haque and the Vice Principal Anil Kumar.

Two others allegedly involved in the racket were Manish Prasad and Anshu Toshi Kumar. They had been arranging Learn Boys Hostel and Play School on rent in Patna's Scheme 20, where the leaked papers were allegedly distributed to the 20 to 25 candidates appearing there on the eve of the test, the sources could not disclose the names.

NCERT textbooks for three subjects of Class 6 will reach students late

Maitri Porecha NEW DELHI

Students of Class 6 will be without textbooks for mathematics, science and social sciences as schools reopen for the academic year 2024-25 in July. The introduction of the new National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) textbooks based on the National Curriculum Framework and New Education Policy, 2020 for Class 6 has been delayed.

The NCERT had said that in 2024-25, students of Classes 3 and 6 would get new books. "While new textbooks for Class 3 have hit the market, the entire lot for Class 6 has not yet been made available to students, leaving students with no textbooks to study from," an official from the Education Ministry told The Hindu.

Officials said the students are likely to get the new books within two months. Last July, the Ministry constituted the National



Students are likely to get new books in two months. M. NARAYANAN

Syllabus and Teaching Learning Material Committee (NSTC) to develop new textbooks for Classes 3 to 12. It had set an ambitious deadline to develop new textbooks for all grades within seven months of constituting the NSTC by February. The deadline was later revised, and it was decided that only students of Classes 3 and 6 will get new textbooks this academic year.

Even online, only books on the language subjects - English, Hindi and Urdu - are available for download. Ministry sources said there

was a possibility that three books on social science subjects - Our Past (History), Our Earth, Our Habitat (Geography) and Social and Political Life (Practical science) - will be merged into one. However, there is no clarity on this yet, as the NSTC has not sent drafts for publication to the NCERT.

For Class 3, new books for English, Hindi, Urdu, mathematics, environmental education and arts are in the process of being printed and supplied, officials said.

Fourth generation texts The new books will be the fourth generation of NCERT textbooks since the 1990s.

While the first generation was published in the 1990s, between 2002 and 2004, under the NDA government of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, there were "profound" changes in the generation of textbooks were released between 2005 and 2014 under the Congress-led government.

Assam floods claim 8 more lives as death toll rises to 46; 16.25 lakh people affected

The Hindu Bureau GUWAHATI

The second wave of floods in Assam claimed the lives of eight people, the most in a 24-hour space - on Wednesday, taking the death toll since May to 46, NCERT.

The first wave of floods in May was not as devastating as the second that started on June 16. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, touring the flood-hit areas, attributed the scale of devastation to geographical factors beyond the control of the State.

Officials of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) said eight people, including a woman in Sonitpur district and a child in Darrang district, drowned during the past 24 hours while three others were reported missing.

"So far, 46 people are confirmed dead in the two waves of flood since the last week of May," an ASDM



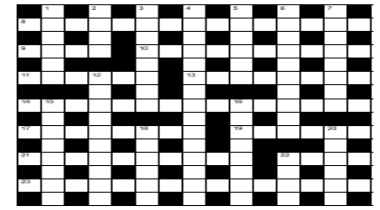
Familial members of a marooned house shift their belongings to a safer place in Morigaon district on Tuesday. HITU RAJ HONNAR

MA spokesperson said. Data provided by ASDMA said 16.25 lakh people have been affected across 29 flood-hit districts with 25,744 people shifted to 181 relief camps.

In Kawranga National Park and Tiger Reserve, nine of the 233 submerged anti-poaching camps had to be vacated while 179 others were flooded to a "tolerable" level. The park

authorities rescued 65 animals while 11 died, most of them hog deer. Earlier, the Chief Minister said heavy rainfall in Arunachal Pradesh, Bhutan, and China led to the recent floods in Assam. "Otherwise, the suffering of rice people to be down considerably due to several flood control measures would have been over the years," he claimed.

THE CROSSWORD 14218 (set by Vidwan)



To solve this puzzle online, get access to our crossword site, at: https://craze.page/hmk_14218

- 14 Vacation? Cold in England? Come with wine and irremovably document! (7,8)
17 Pilot carried trash of sticky stuff that catches insects (8)
19 Make thinner, air fry, maybe! (6)
21 These fishers with ai can make mineral water (10)
22 Price's about right! Gratis! (4)
23 Refer to nothing, talk and argue evasively after losing head on Zeus, for example (1,5)
Down
1 Height could be 12.5%? (6)
2 Fancy working hard in marketplace, at start (4)
3 Test car scoring 1 in 100 (8)
4 Accommodation for Lady Killer/Intelligence Officer, alone and slightly more than half mad (6,9)
5 Group of entertainers travelling about, mostly with people in general (6)
6 Short swashbuckling Indian batsman's small escapee, gets runs, stands tall like Burj Khalifa! (10)
7 One who implements some regimen for certain? (8)
12 Cosmetic item for loud master-keeping Germany in control (4,6)
15 Hypersensitive - every unit of energy is consumed at start! (8)
16 Unknown street guard (8)
18 Quietly arrive address (6)
20 Wild fire and ice! Most wild! (6)
22 Following the law for contract (4)

SUDOKU

Table with 9 rows and 9 columns of numbers for a Sudoku puzzle. Some cells are empty, some contain numbers like 8, 1, 3, 6, 2, 4, 6, 2, 8, 3, 8, 2, 6, 7, 6, 8, 9, 7, 6, 3, 4, 1, 9, 3, 7, 5, 8, 7.

Solution to previous puzzle and Solution to yesterday's Sudoku. The solution for the previous puzzle is a 9x9 grid of numbers. The solution for yesterday's Sudoku is a 9x9 grid of numbers.

FAITH Pay a visit to Divya Desams

We often face hindrances in material and spiritual progress. The supreme being is ever alert to the needs of those who reach out to Him for succour. The more grama one develops, the better. One way to achieve this is to visit the Vaishnavite Divya Desams. Even the Pandavas visited a number of shalams in south India in order to expiate their sins which they felt they had incurred due to the war, said Dushyanth Sridhar in a discourse.

Shalams are a way of life and one should seek divine help to surmount them. The shala puranam associated with the five abodes in Kancheepuram states that Brahma sought help from Perumal to conduct Ashvamedha Yagam without Saraswati. Each of the abodes testify to the various impediments she used to try to obstruct the yaga. When she sent eight women to stop the yaga, they were all stopped by Ashtabujanga Perumal, at Ashtabujayagam.

At Tiruvettkka, Saraswati hindered Brahma's yaga by sending a demon to darken the world. On Brahma's prayer, Perumal appeared bright as a light, holding a lamp. Praying to the deity Vilakkoil Perumal will dispel one's inner darkness. Tiruvavukkai is another place where Saraswati despatched demons to obstruct Brahma's work. Perumal took the form of Nalintha to overpower them. A visit to this temple will help one conquer one's inner demons of fear and cowardice.

India to host 46th UNESCO heritage panel session

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The 46th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, being hosted by India from July 21-31, will be held at the Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.

The event will be attended by over 2,500 delegates from State Parties, advisory bodies, senior diplomats, heritage experts, scholars, and researchers from 195 countries, a senior official said. State Parties are countries which have adhered to the World Heritage Convention.

Sources said the event, being organised by the Archaeological Survey of India, is likely to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. UNESCO has already released a provisional agenda and timetable for the meeting.

The World Heritage Committee has representatives from 21 State Parties to the World Heritage Convention (1972) elected by the General Assembly.

Sensex 80,000: Doubles in 5 yrs, took 12 to climb from 20,000 to 40,000

HITESH VYAS & GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, JULY 3

A MONTH AFTER the Lok Sabha election results were declared, the BSE's 30-share Sensex crossed the 80,000 mark for the first time on Wednesday during intraday trades. The index took nearly seven months or 139 sessions to add 10,000 points, after it surpassed the 70,000 level on December 11, 2023, as a host of factors like expectations of continuity in government policies, higher economic growth forecast and heavy domestic fund buying boosted the bullish fervour.

The Sensex jumped 545.35 points, or 0.69 per cent, to end at 79,986.8 on Wednesday. It hit a new peak of 80,074 during intraday trades, rising 632.85 points. The broader Nifty 50 added 162.65 points, or 0.67 per cent, to close at an all-time high of 24,298.5.

MOVING UP

Sensorex rise	Time taken
10000-20000	13 years
20000-40000	11.5 years
40000-80000	5 years

The rise in domestic indices on Wednesday was boosted by large caps, with financials taking

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Amaravati to irrigation projects: Armed with wishlist, Naidu in Delhi

SREENIVAS JANALA & RITIKA CHOPRA
HYDERABAD, NEW DELHI, JULY 3

WITH A long wishlist for his state, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu will spend Thursday and Friday in the national capital, meeting the Prime Minister as well as a host of Cabinet ministers, it is learnt.

After storming to power in the recently concluded Assembly elections and emerging as the second largest NDA constituent in the Lok Sabha, this is the first time Naidu is going to meet Union Ministers specifically for issues related to his

EXPLAINED Focus for his first Delhi trip

WHILE SPECIAL category status for Andhra Pradesh has been a longstanding demand, Naidu's focus during this trip is likely to be on pressing for funds for projects considered close to his heart, including the Amaravati redevelopment.

state. He had earlier attended Prime Minister Narendra Modi's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Out on bail, Soren set to return as CM, Champai quits



Soren had resigned before arrest five months ago

ABHISHEK ANGAD
RANCHI, JULY 3

JHARKHAND CHIEF Minister Champai Soren on Wednesday stepped down from the post, paving the way for his predecessor and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) executive president Hemant Soren's return as CM.

Champai Soren met Governor C P Radhakrishnan on Wednesday evening and tendered his resignation after which Hemant Soren submitted his request to form the government. Earlier in the day, the ruling coalition's 45 MLAs elected Hemant as their leader and, according to insiders, convinced Champai to step down to ensure a smooth transfer of power.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

STAMPEDE TOLL 121, CM ORDERS JUDICIAL PROBE



At the cremation of a victim of the stampede in Hathras on Wednesday. Abhinav Saha

Hathras preacher claimed he could revive dead, was arrested in 2000

NEETIKA JHA & MANISH SAHU
HATHRAS, LUCKNOW, JULY 3

NARAYAN SAKAR Vishwa Hari or 'Bhole Babar', the local preacher who addressed the 'satsang' in Hathras where the stampede occurred on Tuesday — the toll rose to 121 on Wednesday — is revered by his followers who believe he's a "healer" with "cures".

an "exorcist" who "gets rid of evil spirits", and a "godman" with "magical powers" who can grant their wishes.

In fact, his alleged claim of "magical powers" even got him arrested in Agra in 2000, when he allegedly took the body of a 16-year-old girl forcibly from her family, claiming he would bring her back to life. The case was later closed.

Over more than two decades

now, after leaving the Uttar Pradesh Police in the 1990s where he was Constable Suraj Pal from Kasganj), to become a self-styled religious preacher, he has gathered a considerable following — mostly low-income Dalit families, whose the men are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

MORE REPORTS

PAGE 13
BUSINESS AS USUAL
By UNNY



CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

OPP WALKS OUT FROM RS

Hope for peace, violence down: PM on Manipur

Targets Gandhis, says family makes a Dalit take blame for election defeats

VIKAS PATHAK
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

A DAY after the Opposition interrupted his speech in Lok Sabha by raising slogans on the issue of Manipur, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Wednesday that there was "hope for peace" and incidents of violence had declined in the state ruled by ethnic clashes.

Replying to the debate in Rajya Sabha on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address, Modi said there should be no politics over the happenings in the state and cautioned



PM Narendra Modi in Rajya Sabha on Wednesday. ANI

"those elements who are adding fuel to the Manipur fire". "I request them to stop this. A time will come when Manipur will reject them," he said. He also

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Manipur seeks 5,000 PMAY units, enhanced allocation for security

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

AHEAD OF the presentation of the Union Budget, the Manipur government has approached the Centre with a wishlist that includes demand for additional funds over and above the 10% usually earmarked from gross budgetary support for North-East states, financial support for

5,000 units of housing for violence-affected victims as a special project under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), and enhanced allocation for security-related expenditure, which has increased significantly in the wake of the ethnic violence.

Sources told The Indian Express that these issues were flagged to the Finance Ministry during the pre-Budget meeting

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

MARUTI SUZUKI

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We want to be part of planetary defence mission, study asteroid: ISRO Chairman

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

BENGALURU, JULY 3

ISRO IS keen on participating in a planetary defence mission in space and study the asteroid Apophis when it comes close to the Earth, ISRO Chairman S Somanath said in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

"When Apophis comes in 2029, we should be able to go and meet this asteroid when it is very close to Earth. It is a one-time opportunity and India should be part of such efforts. It is yet to be decided in what way we should participate," Somanath said.

Discovered in 2004, Apophis was seen as a potential contender to have a collision with the Earth. But subsequent measurements have shown that there was no risk of Apophis impacting the Earth for at least a century, according to NASA. In 2029, however, it would make a fly-by of the Earth at a distance of about 32,000 km. NASA has redirected one of its operational spacecraft to study this asteroid, and this spacecraft would



ISRO chief S Somanath speaks at Antariksh Bhavan in Bengaluru, Wednesday. PTI

get as near to Apophis as 4,000 km on April 23, 2029. It will therefore, keep following the asteroid for 18 months to map its terrain and understand its chemical make-up.

ISRO is looking at working in some capacity to study the asteroid Apophis when it is 32,000 km away from Earth in 2029 to prepare for planetary defence efforts, ISRO scientists said.

"We must provide whatever support we can in the asteroid mission to participate and learn. We are eager to spread our knowledge," Somanath said.

Referring to NASA's Double

Asteroid Redirection Test (DART) mission in 2022, which facilitated the change of trajectory of an asteroid in deep space, he said, "When there is information that an asteroid will strike Earth in a couple of years, there will be a demand to act. It would be better if we act when there is no threat. This is why there are many missions to go near asteroids and understand them. One of them is DART."

"It is a mission to show it is possible to change the asteroid trajectory a little and cause it to depart from its course. If we can change the trajectory, it will miss Earth by a whisker. That will be good enough to save Earth," he said.

DART showed that a spacecraft's kinetic impact with its target asteroid, Dimorphos, had successfully altered its orbit. "This marks humanity's first time purposely changing the motion of a celestial object and the first full-scale demonstration of asteroid deflection technology," NASA had stated in 2022.

As a major space-faring nation with the capability "to carry out complex missions of taking a

spacecraft from one place to another", Somanath said India "will one day be in a position to handle an asteroid mission, land on an asteroid and possibly carry out a planetary defense action to protect Earth".

"We should start by collaborating with other nations that have already started work in this area. For example, there is Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), which has gone to an asteroid and collected samples. There are also many other agencies," he said.

Associate director of ISRO's Telemetry, Tracking and Command Centre (ISTRAC), Anil Kumar A K said, "In 2004, our observatories were able to see an object 340 meters in size was coming close. Our people calculated with the available data that the threat of this object coming and impacting Earth is more than one in 100 probability which is a high risk."

"The object is known as Apophis and its sphere is 360 days which is almost one Earth year and as a result it can be seen often in the vicinity of Earth," he said.

ISRO's Interest in Planetary Defence

Participation in Planetary Defence Mission

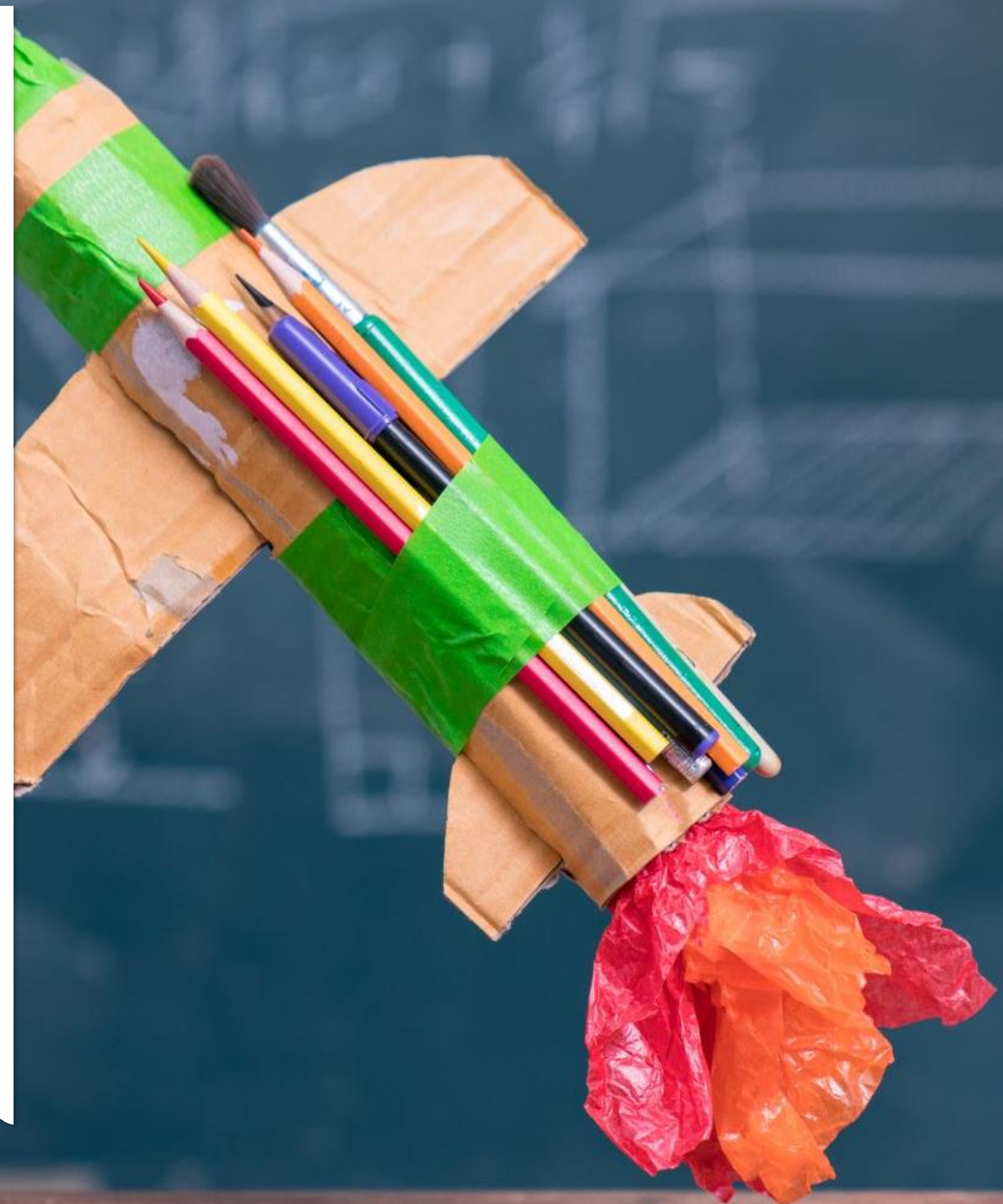
- ISRO aims to study asteroid Apophis as part of a planetary defence mission.
- Chairman S Somanath highlighted this interest during a talk in Bengaluru.
- Apophis will come close to Earth in 2029, presenting a unique opportunity.

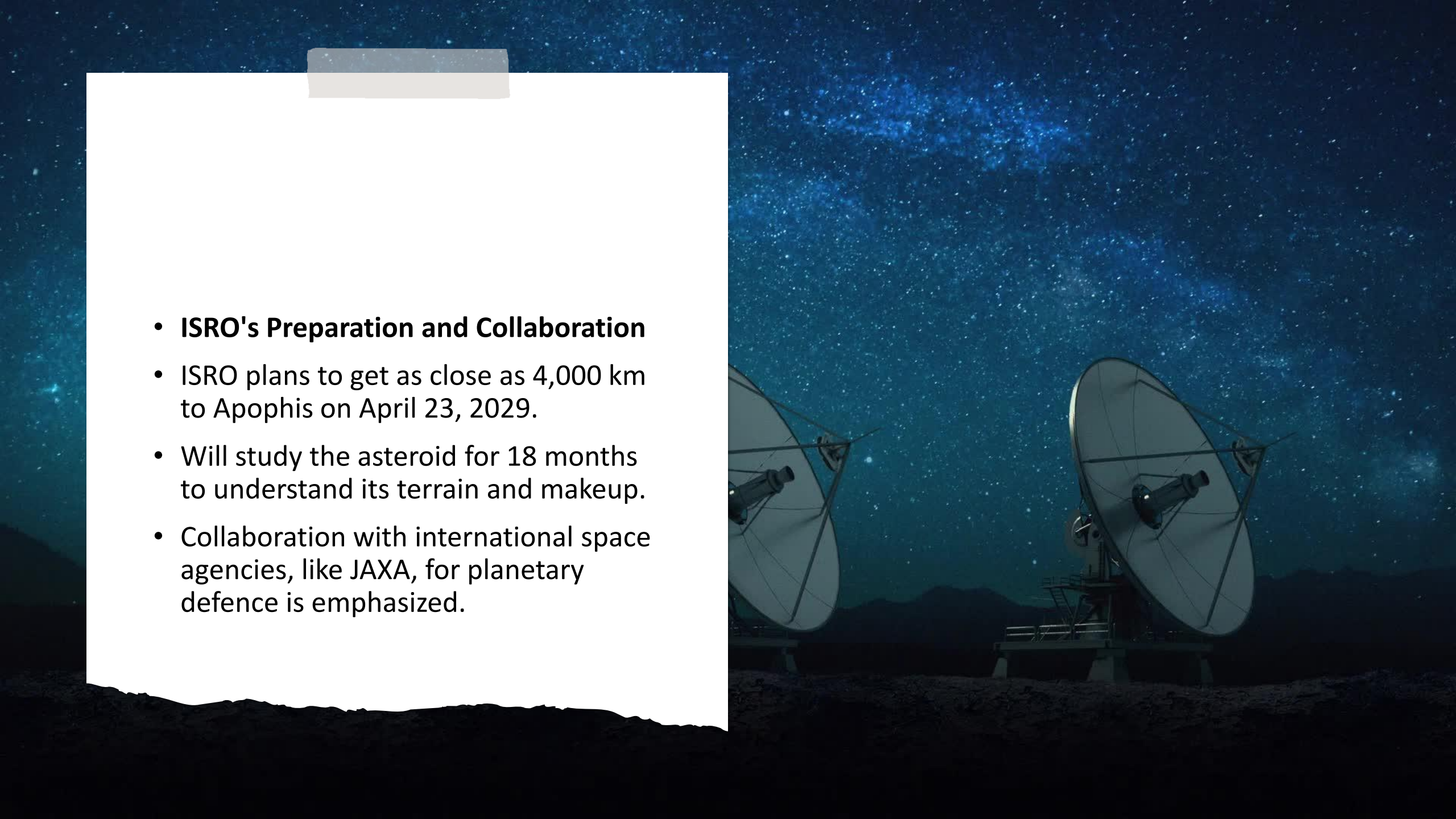


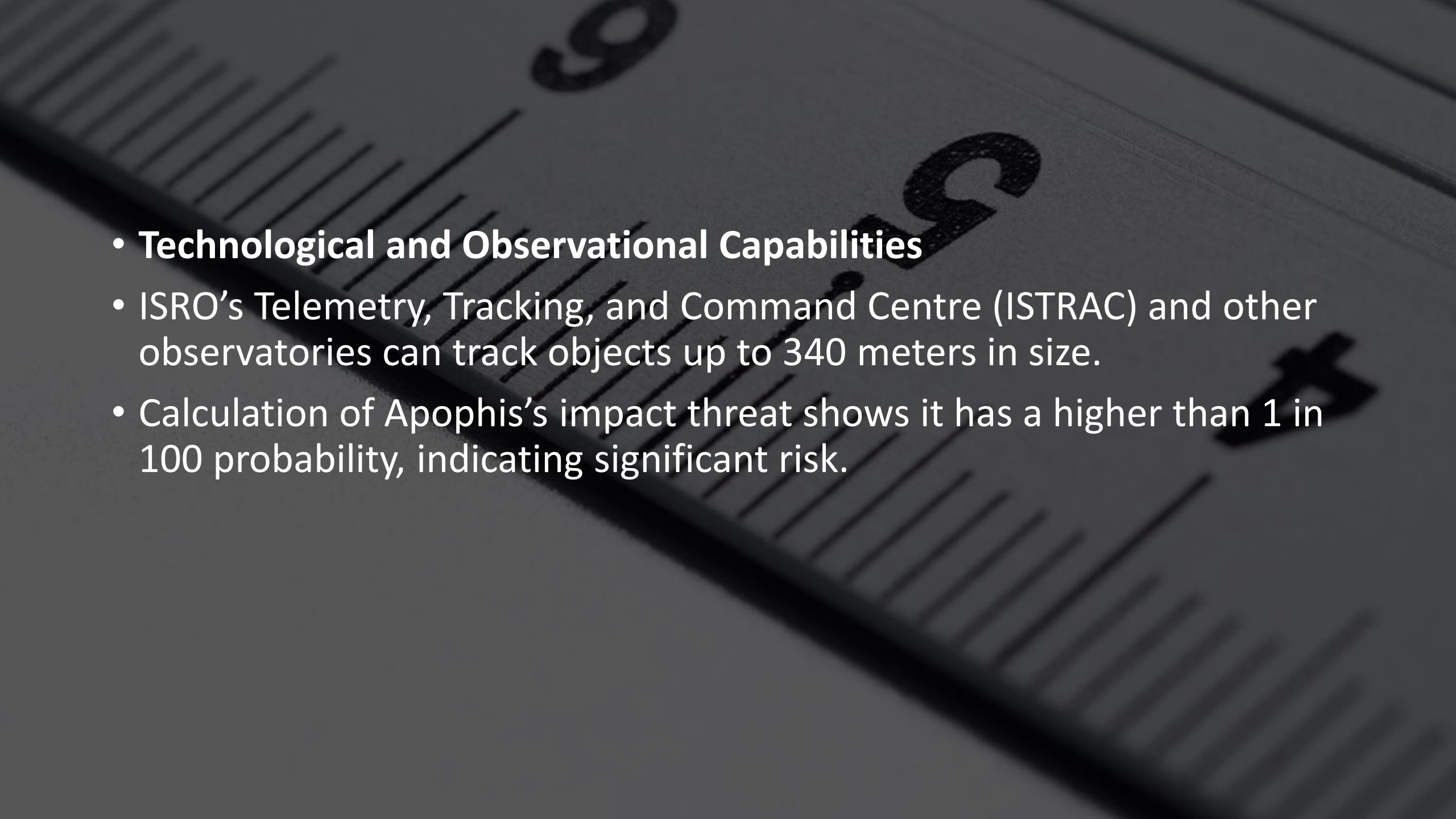
- **Details on Apophis**

- Discovered in 2004, initially considered a collision threat to Earth.
- Later measurements showed no risk for at least a century.
- Will make a close fly-by at a distance of 32,000 km from Earth in 2029.

- **NASA's Role and DART Mission**
- NASA redirected a spacecraft to study Apophis and understand its makeup.
- DART mission in 2022 successfully demonstrated asteroid deflection by altering the trajectory of Dimorphos.
- DART's success is humanity's first step in changing the motion of a celestial object for planetary defence.

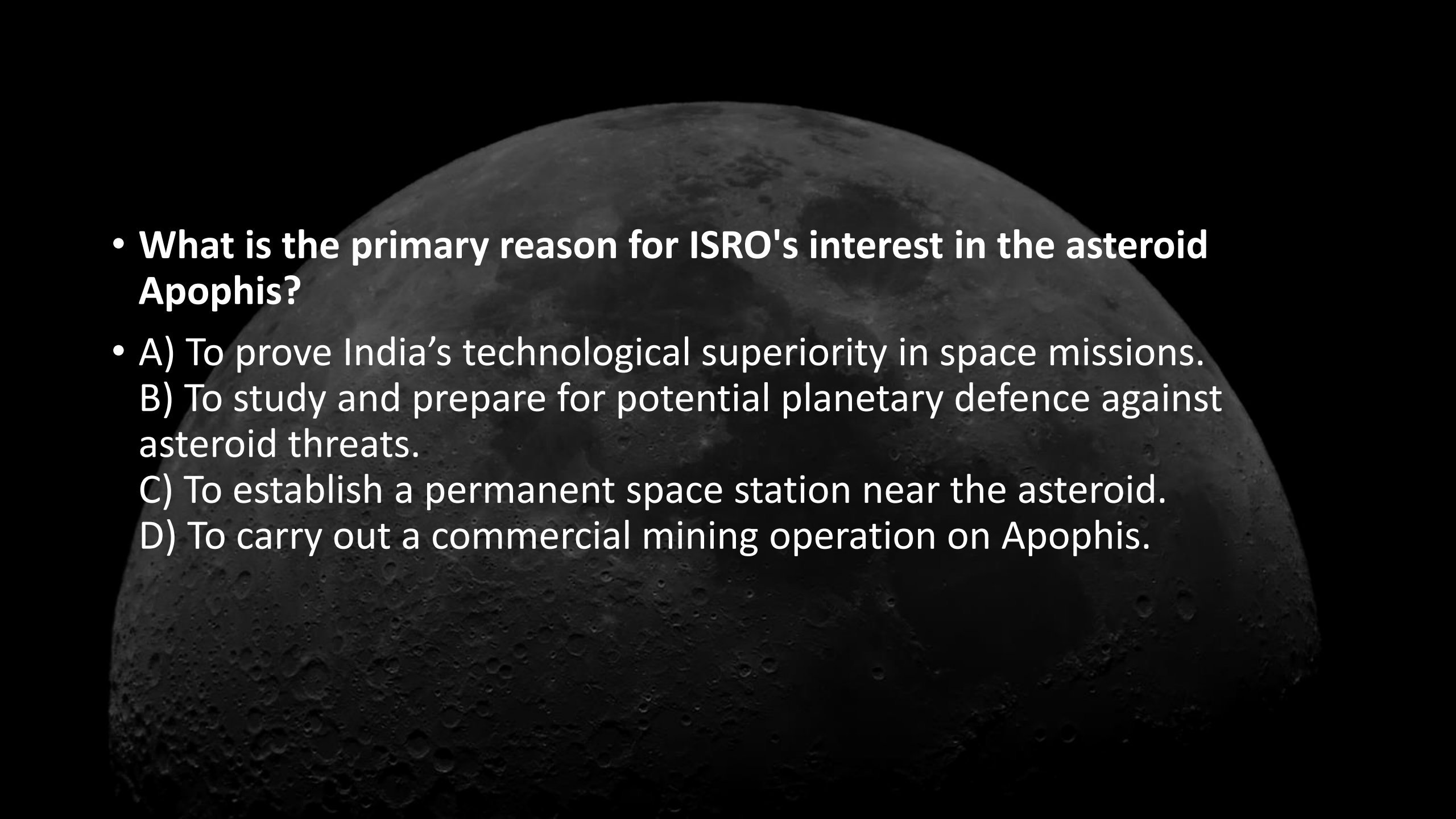


- 
- **ISRO's Preparation and Collaboration**
 - ISRO plans to get as close as 4,000 km to Apophis on April 23, 2029.
 - Will study the asteroid for 18 months to understand its terrain and makeup.
 - Collaboration with international space agencies, like JAXA, for planetary defence is emphasized.

- 
- The background of the slide features a dark, grayscale image of a ruler and a document. The ruler is positioned diagonally across the frame, with markings and numbers visible. The document behind it has some text, including the number '3' and the word 'ST', which are partially obscured and out of focus.
- **Technological and Observational Capabilities**
 - ISRO's Telemetry, Tracking, and Command Centre (ISTRAC) and other observatories can track objects up to 340 meters in size.
 - Calculation of Apophis's impact threat shows it has a higher than 1 in 100 probability, indicating significant risk.

1.Future Aspirations

1. India's goal to be a major space-faring nation with the capability to handle asteroid missions and potentially protect Earth.
2. Importance of international collaboration and technological advancement in planetary defence.

- 
- **What is the primary reason for ISRO's interest in the asteroid Apophis?**
 - A) To prove India's technological superiority in space missions.
 - B) To study and prepare for potential planetary defence against asteroid threats.
 - C) To establish a permanent space station near the asteroid.
 - D) To carry out a commercial mining operation on Apophis.

FASTEST-EVER 10,000-POINT RALLY

SENSEX TOPS 80,000

Closes just shy of the historic mark; banks drive gains

VIVEK KUMAR M
Mumbai, July 3

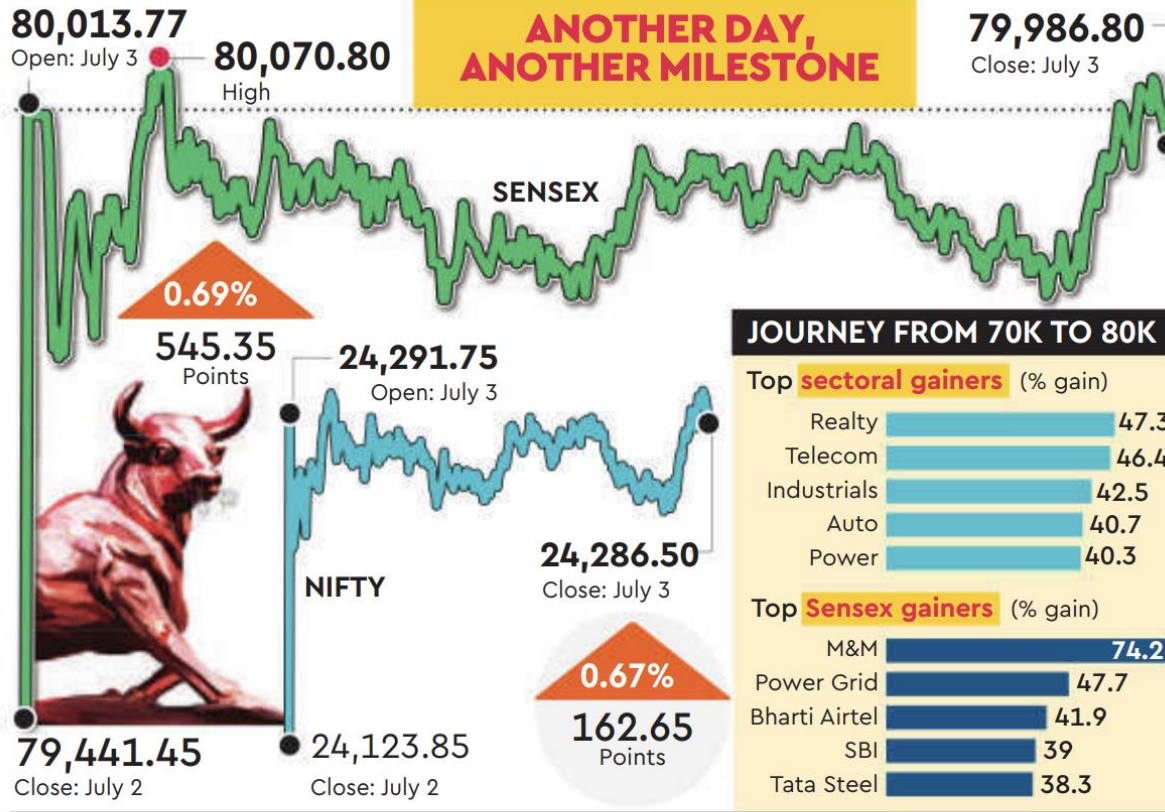
THE RECORD-BREAKING rally of equities crossed a fresh milestone on Wednesday as Sensex touched the 80,000-point mark for the first time. With this, the benchmark index of 30 stocks has registered its fastest-ever 10,000-point rally, rising from 70,000 to 80,000 in just 136 trading sessions.

In comparison, the benchmark index took nearly 1,000 days on average for each of its previous five 10,000-point rallies.

On Wednesday, Sensex rose 545.34 points or 0.7% to close at 79,986.80, after hitting a record high of 80,074.30 intra-day. The Nifty index also ended with gains of 0.7% or 162.65 points at 24,286.50 points.

Mahindra & Mahindra, Power Grid Corp, Bharti Airtel and State Bank of India (SBI) are the biggest Sensex gainers in the index's journey from 70,000 to 80,000 points.

In the last seven trading sessions, Sensex has hit three mile-



stones — 78,000, 79,000 and 80,000 points.

Nilesh Shah, managing director at Kotak Mahindra AMC, said this is a journey, not a destination. "Early in June, when the election outcome came, quite a few investors expected

volatility in the market. But it has not panned out that way. The flows have been quite strong," said Janakiraman R, chief investment officer - emerging markets equity - India, Franklin Templeton.

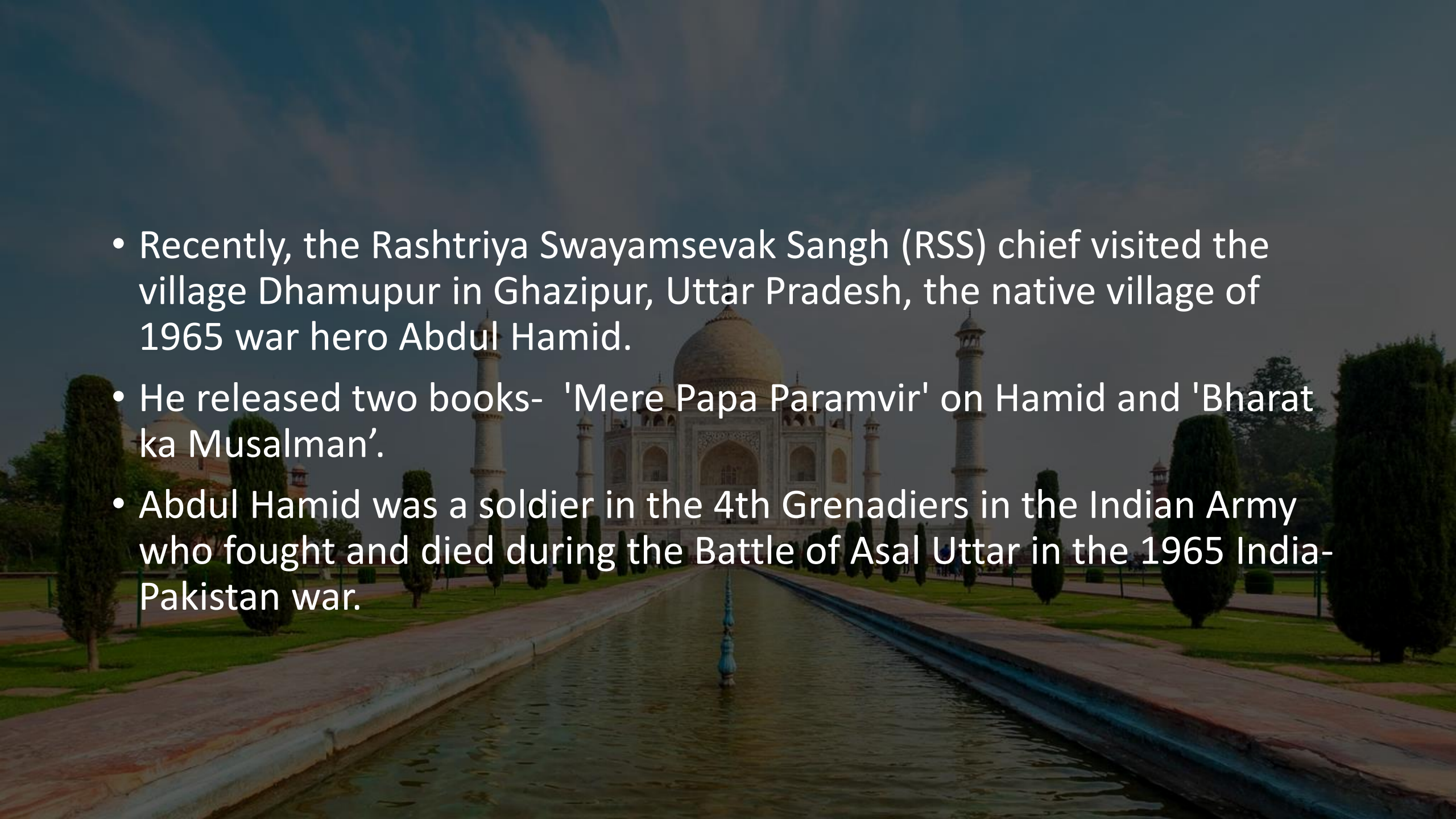
As per the provisional data, for-

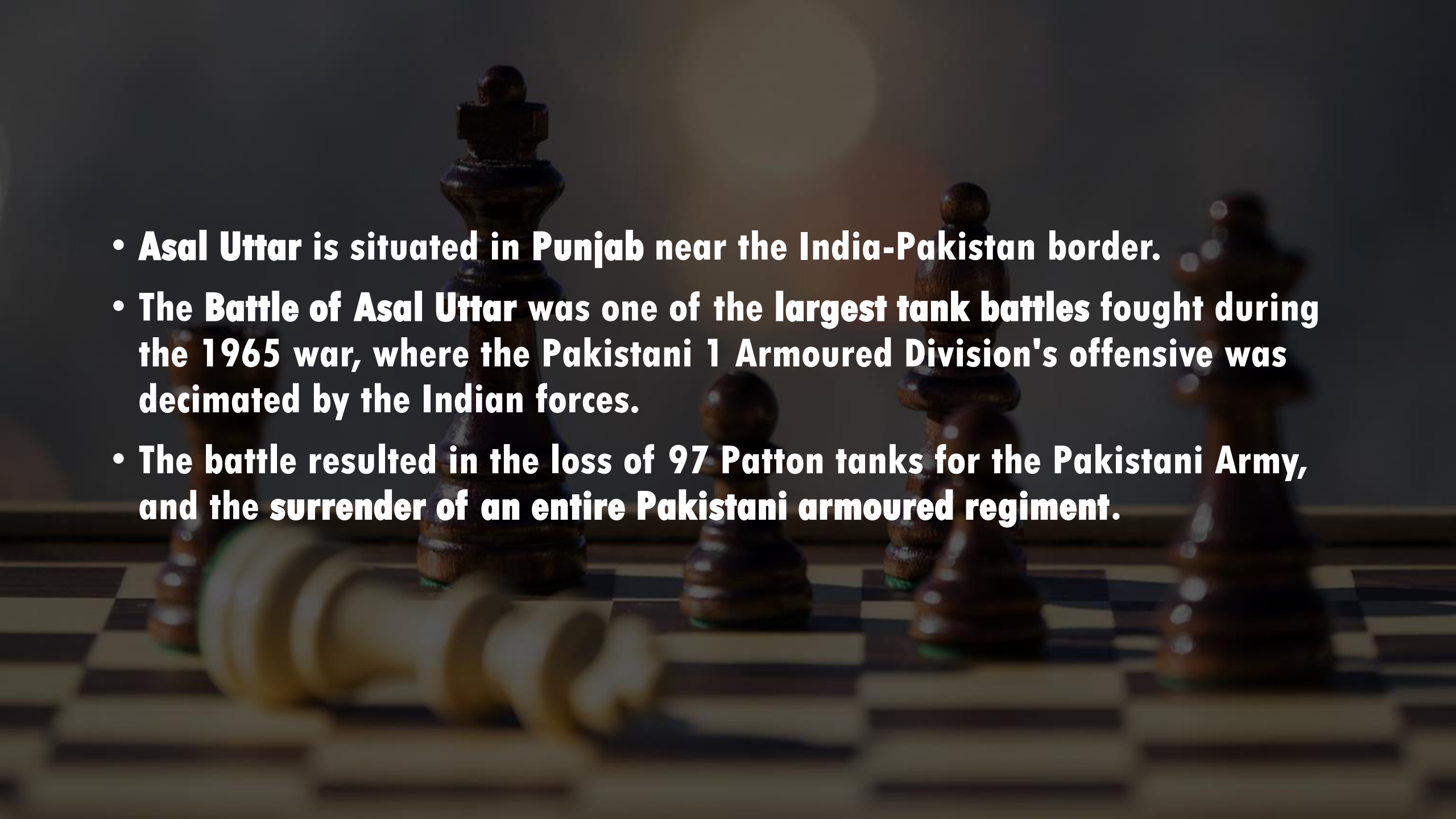
ign portfolio investors (FPIs) bought ₹5,483.63 crore worth of shares on Wednesday, while domestic institutional investors sold ₹924.43-crore shares.

Continued on Page 7


The background features a series of overlapping, wavy, ribbon-like shapes. The colors transition from a vibrant green on the left, through a dark brown in the center, to a deep purple on the right. The shapes have a soft, glowing appearance, creating a sense of depth and movement.

Havalдар Adbul Hamid

- 
- Recently, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief visited the village Dhamupur in Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh, the native village of 1965 war hero Abdul Hamid.
 - He released two books- 'Mere Papa Paramvir' on Hamid and 'Bharat ka Musalman'.
 - Abdul Hamid was a soldier in the 4th Grenadiers in the Indian Army who fought and died during the Battle of Asal Uttar in the 1965 India-Pakistan war.

- 
- A chessboard with several pieces, including a king and a queen, set against a dark background. The pieces are dark wood, and the board is a light and dark square checkerboard pattern. The king and queen are the most prominent pieces, standing tall in the center. Other pieces, including pawns and a knight, are scattered around them. The background is dark and out of focus, with a soft light source creating a glow behind the pieces.
- **Asal Uttar is situated in Punjab near the India-Pakistan border.**
 - **The Battle of Asal Uttar was one of the largest tank battles fought during the 1965 war, where the Pakistani 1 Armoured Division's offensive was decimated by the Indian forces.**
 - **The battle resulted in the loss of 97 Patton tanks for the Pakistani Army, and the surrender of an entire Pakistani armoured regiment.**

Hamid was deployed near Chima village. On 10th September 1965, he destroyed 3 Pakistani tanks and disabled a 4th one but was **killed in the process**.

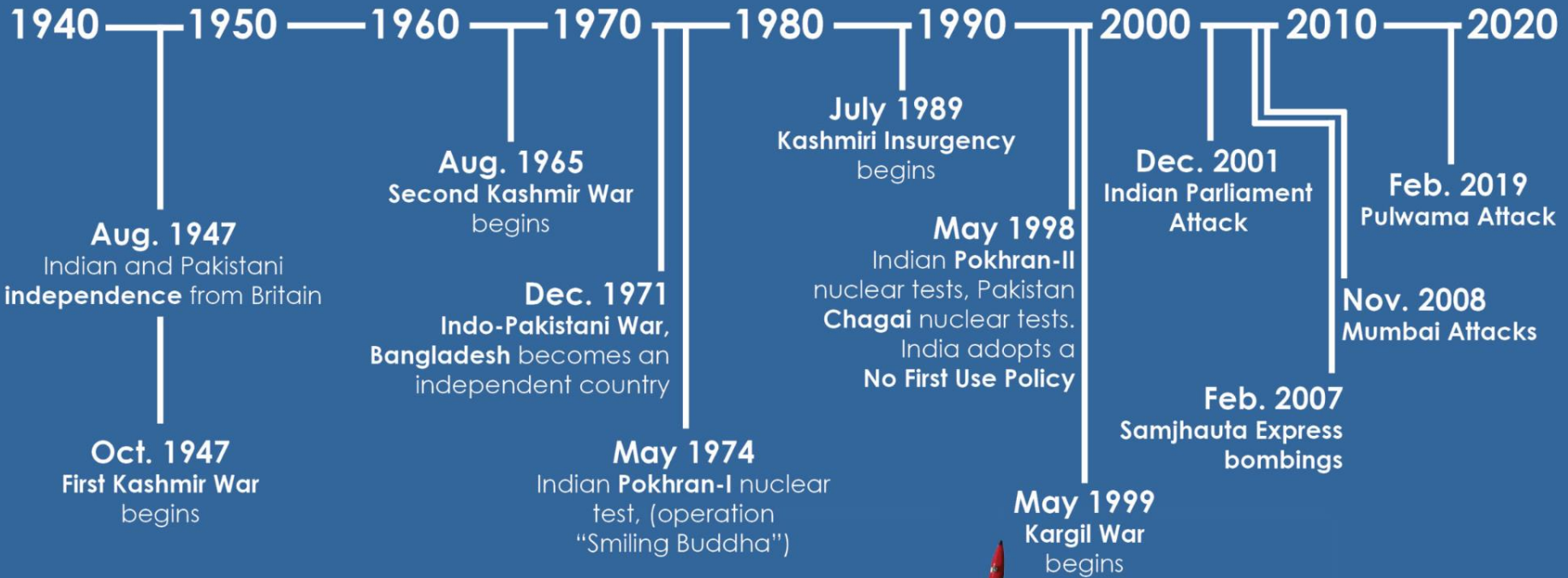


Hamid was awarded the **Param Vir Chakra**, India's highest gallantry award, posthumously for his bravery.

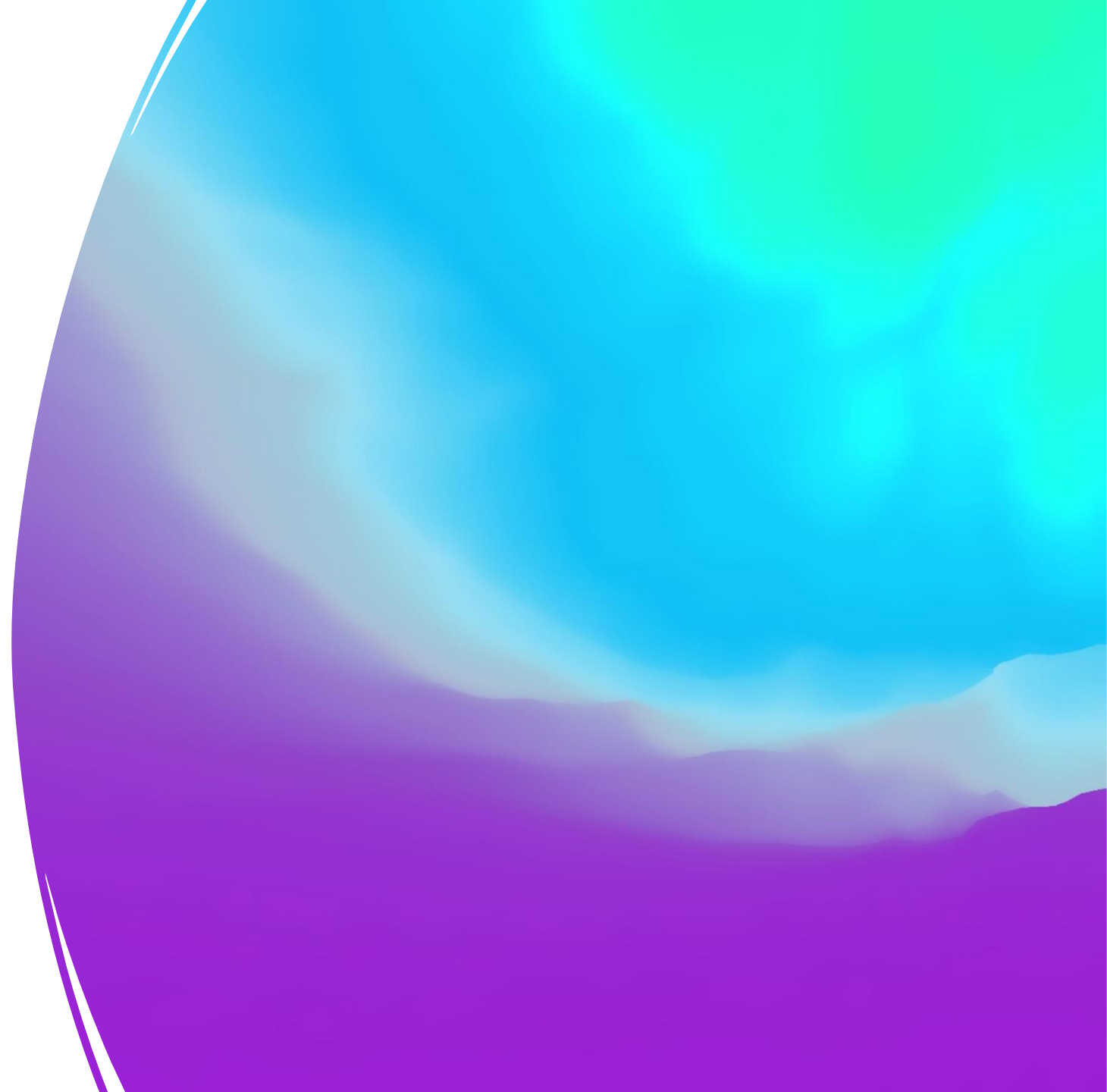


The site of his death is now part of a **war memorial**, with a captured Pakistani Patton tank standing as a tribute.

INDIA-PAKISTAN HISTORY OF CONFLICT



Rudram-1

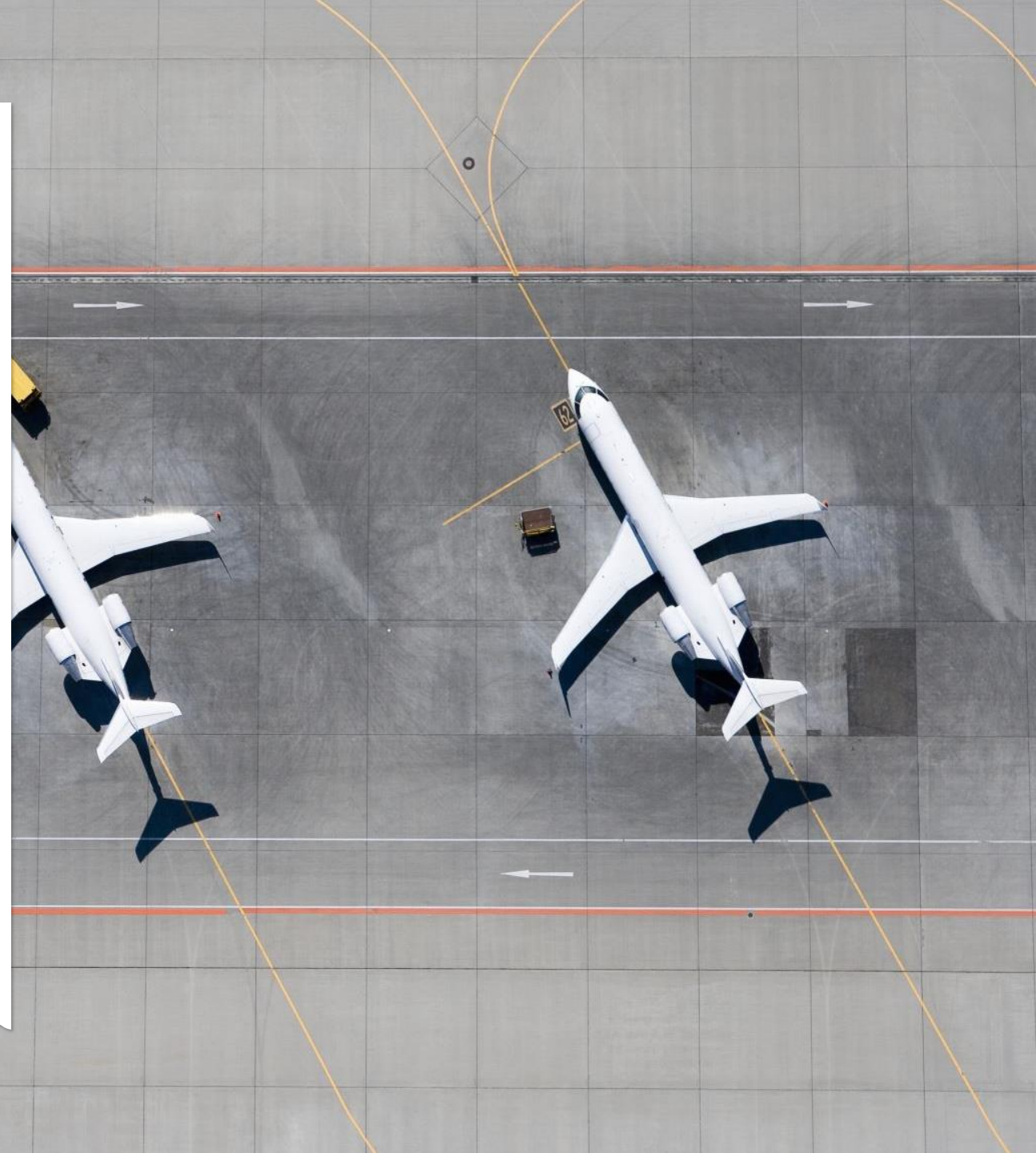


- India successfully test-fires new generation anti-radiation missile 'Rudram-1'
- **About Rudram-1**
- It is the first indigenous anti-radiation missile developed by the DRDO for the Indian Air Force (IAF).



- **Key Features:**

- **Launch Platform:** Sukhoi-30MKI fighter jets
- **Guidance System:** Inertial Navigation Systems (INS)-GPS navigation and Passive Homing Head for final attack
- **Range:** 100-250 km
- **Speed:** Up to Mach 2 (twice the speed of sound)



-
- **Significance**
 - **Enhances IAF's Suppression of Enemy Air Defence (SEAD)**
Capability: Rudram-1 allows the IAF to conduct SEAD operations deep within enemy territory, neutralizing critical air defense installations and paving the way for other aircraft to operate safely.
 - **Force Multiplier:** The missile acts as a force multiplier by enhancing the survivability and effectiveness of air operations.
 - **Indigenous Development:** Its indigenous development is a significant step towards self-reliance in defense technology.

WHO's Polio Eradication Missing Deadline

- The **WHO's Global Polio Eradication Initiative** is set to miss its deadline of **eradicating polio by the end of 2024.**

- **About**

- Polio eradication is one of the top priorities of the World Health Organisation (WHO).

- **Of the 3 strains of wild poliovirus** (type 1, type 2 and type 3), wild poliovirus **type 2 was eradicated in 1999** and wild **poliovirus type 3 was eradicated in 2020.**

- Endemic wild poliovirus **type 1 remains in two countries: Pakistan and Afghanistan.**

- But according to a recent report in Science, the virus is **beginning to reappear in big cities in these two countries.**
 - This reemergence is a result of **vaccine hesitancy** due to misinformation, conflict, poverty, and limited access to these isolated regions.



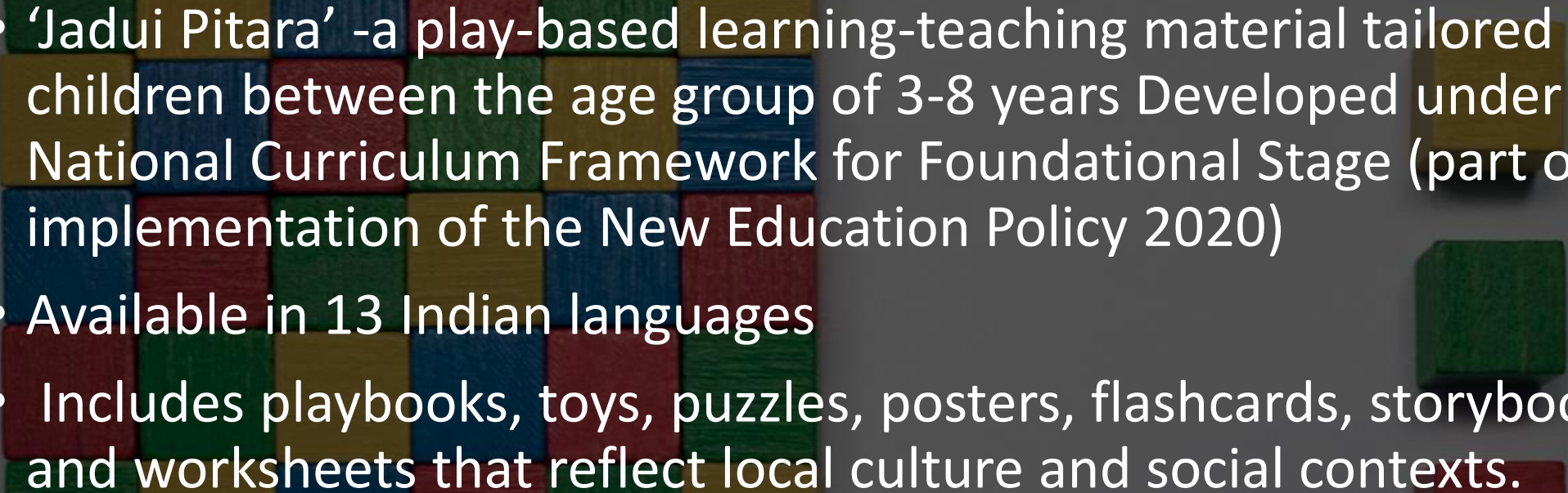
-
- **Polio**
 - **Poliomyelitis (polio)** is a **highly infectious viral disease** that largely affects **children under 5 years of age**.
 - The virus is transmitted by **person-to-person** spread mainly through the faecal-oral route or, less frequently, by a common vehicle (e.g. contaminated water or food) and **multiplies in the intestine**, from where it can invade the nervous system and **cause paralysis**.

- **Vaccination:** There is no cure for polio, it can only be prevented.
 - Polio vaccine, given multiple times, can protect a child for life.
 - There are two vaccines available: oral polio vaccine and inactivated polio vaccine. Both are effective and safe.



'Jadui Pitara'



- 
- 'Jadui Pitara' -a play-based learning-teaching material tailored for children between the age group of 3-8 years Developed under the National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (part of the implementation of the New Education Policy 2020)
 - Available in 13 Indian languages
 - Includes playbooks, toys, puzzles, posters, flashcards, storybooks, and worksheets that reflect local culture and social contexts.

Aim:

Accommodate the diverse needs of learners and pique curiosity

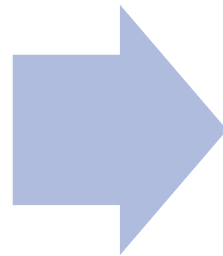
Making the learning-teaching environment more child-centric, lively, and joyful



Minami-Torishima island (Japan)

-
- Researchers discovered **230 million tons of minerals, including cobalt and nickel**, off a remote island 1,200 miles from Tokyo.
 - This find could supply **Japan's EV battery needs for over a decade**. The seabed near **Minami-Torishima island contains 610,000 metric tons of cobalt and 740,000 metric tons of nickel.**
 - **Mining is set to begin in 2025**, with commercial extraction expected by 2026.
 - The discovery is significant as global demand for these minerals is projected to rise sharply, though deep-sea mining poses technical and environmental challenges.

Minami-Torishima Island, also known as Marcus Island, is an isolated Japanese coral atoll in the northwestern Pacific Ocean, 1,950 km southeast of Tokyo.



It is Japan's easternmost territory and the only one on the Pacific Plate. The island is shaped like an equilateral triangle and formed by a raised coral reef, with flat terrain and a maximum altitude of 9 meters.



Word of the day

Pestiferous:

contaminated with infecting organisms; likely to spread and cause an epidemic disease; tending to corrupt or pervert; causing irritation or annoyance

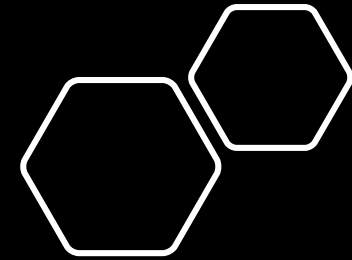
Synonyms: dirty, pestilent, perversive, corruptive

Usage: *Those pestiferous boys won't leave my guava tree alone.*

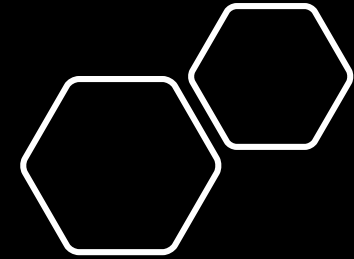
Pronunciation: bit.ly/pestiferouspro

International Phonetic

Alphabet: /ˌpɛsˈtɪfərəs/



WHY OCTOPUS
HAVE THREE
HEARTS
AND BLUE BLOOD?



Octopuses have three hearts! Two of their hearts pump blood to the gills, where oxygen is taken up, while the third heart pumps the oxygenated blood to the rest of the body.

When an octopus swims, the heart that delivers blood to the body actually stops beating, which is one reason why these creatures prefer crawling over swimming.

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TODAY

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We make the best use of your contribution **OUR FINANCIALS**

A group of people are clapping in a dimly lit room. The focus is on the hands and forearms of several individuals, with some wearing suits. The background is blurred, showing more people and a window. An orange horizontal bar is located in the top left corner.

Thank you
guys.
