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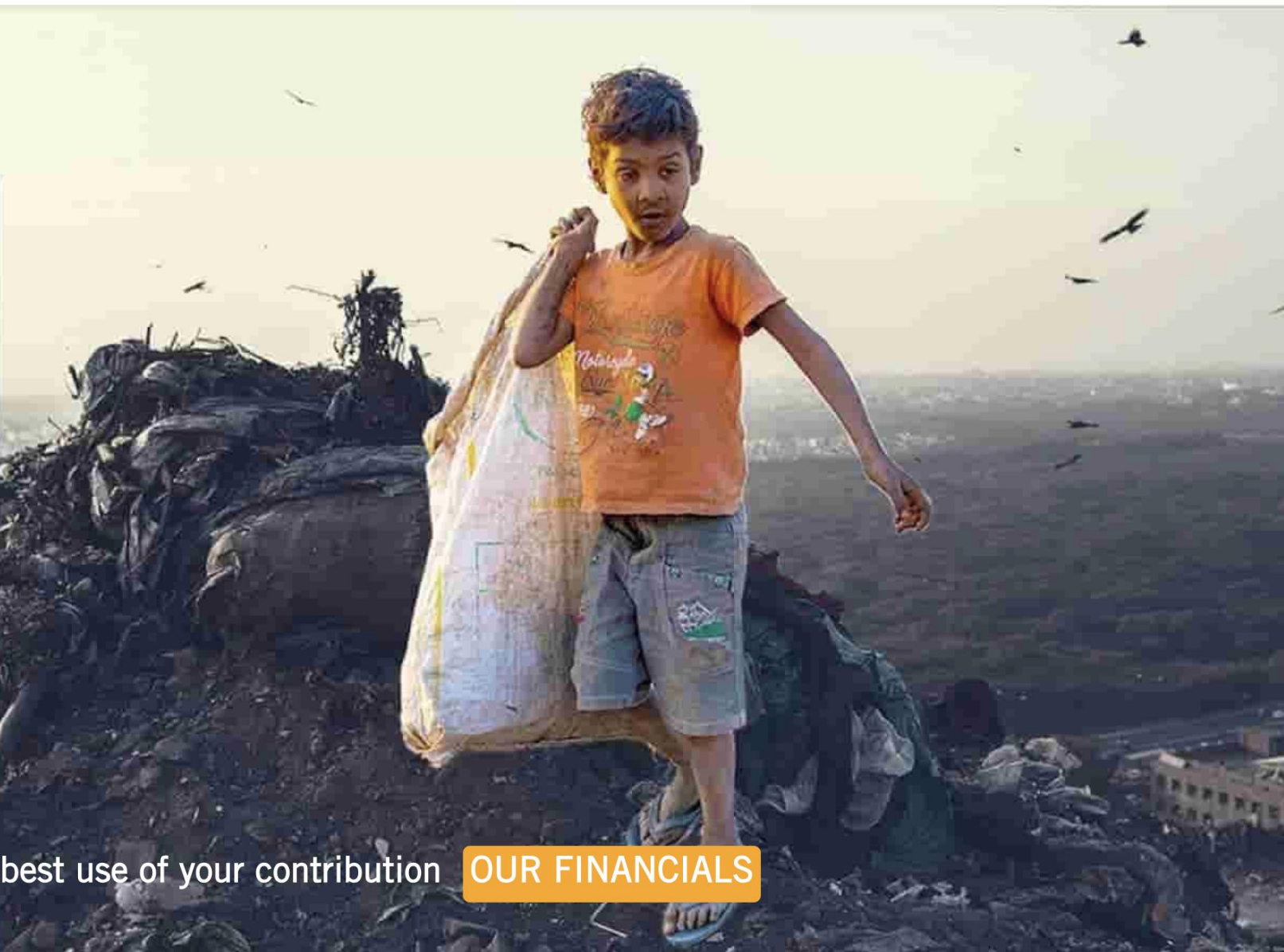
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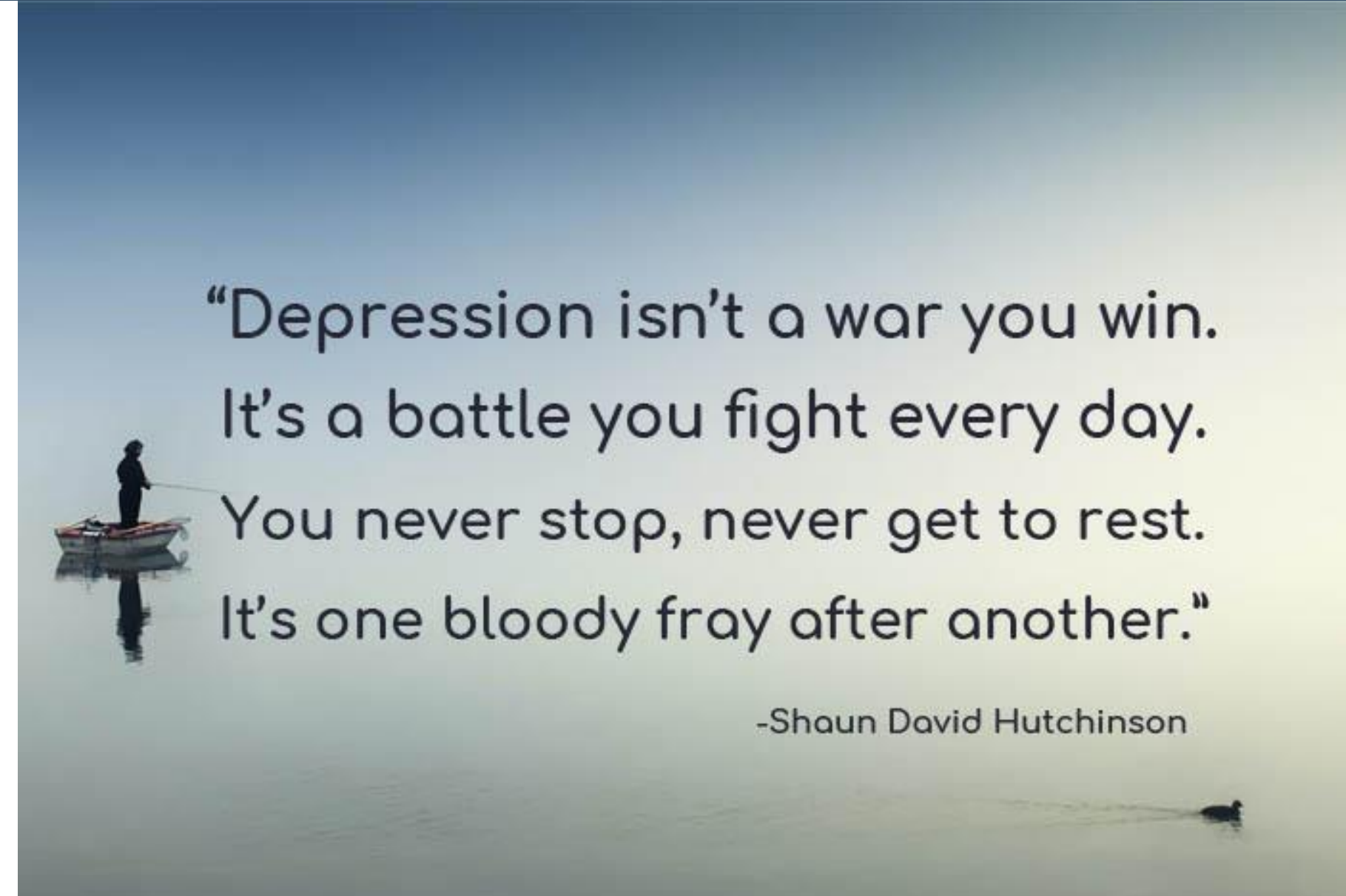


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A person in a small boat is silhouetted against a calm, misty body of water. The sky is a pale, hazy blue, suggesting dawn or dusk. The water is still, reflecting the light from the sky. In the distance, another small boat is visible, leaving a faint wake. The overall mood is quiet and contemplative.

“Depression isn’t a war you win.  
It’s a battle you fight every day.  
You never stop, never get to rest.  
It’s one bloody fray after another.”

-Shaun David Hutchinson



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**TDP unleashing 'violence', says Jagan Reddy**

**NEW DELHI**  
Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party chief Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy held a protest in Delhi on Wednesday, accusing the State's ruling Telugu Desam Party of unleashing violence against his party. » PAGE 3



**No progress on UNSC expansion: former envoys**

**NEW DELHI**  
Despite consistent efforts by India and other countries, the move for United Nations Security Council reform and expansion has made "no progress" so far, conceded two former Indian Ambassadors to the United Nations. » PAGE 4

**Centre defends formation of fact-check unit**

**MUMBAI**  
Defending the formation of a fact-checking unit, the Union government said in the Bombay High Court on Wednesday that the right to know factually correct information and the right to not be misled were equally important under Article 19(1)(a). » PAGE 5

**Bangladesh back to normalcy after deadly unrest**

**DHAKA**  
Bangladesh returned to normalcy on Wednesday after a five-day nationwide violent protests over quotas in government jobs with, rush hour traffic returning to streets in the capital, and limited reopening of banks and garment factories. » PAGE 14



**Ukraine seeks 'common ground' with Beijing**

**BERLIN**  
Ukraine's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba on Wednesday said he is seeking "common ground" in talks this week with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Guangzhou as the ending Ukraine's war with Russia. » PAGE 24

# Budget excludes non-NDA States: Opposition

In both Houses of Parliament, the Opposition attacks the government for presenting a 'discriminatory budget,' terming this accusation outrageous. Finance Minister says the Opposition was maligning the government. Congress president Kharge says only two States benefited from the Budget, which was aimed at safeguarding the NDA government

**The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI**  
In both Houses of Parliament, the Opposition on Wednesday attacked the government, accusing it of presenting a "discriminatory budget" that excluded the States ruled by parties not in the National Democratic Alliance.  
Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman issued a strong rebuttal to this in Rajya Sabha, saying the Opposition was deliberately maligning the government and giving a wrong impression that some States had been left out.  
The Rajya Sabha saw a sharp exchange of words between the two sides on Wednesday, as the Opposition staged a walkout in protest. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge

said that only two States had benefited from the Union Budget, presented on Tuesday. He said it was a Budget aimed solely at safeguarding the BJP-led NDA government. "I condemn all this. Opposition party-ruled States had been neglected. How will development happen if there is no balance? I condemn this and the parties continue this type of attitude," Kharge said.  
Ms. Sitharaman reacted strongly to the accusation, saying that all the States could not be named in the Budget, and the Congress, which had been in power for long, should know better than to make such an allegation. The finer details about scheme-wise allocations were available for all to see in the Budget documents, she said.  
"The Cabinet, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, decid-



**Locking horns:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge speaking in the House on Wednesday. PTI

ed to set up a port at Vadhavav, but Maharashtra's name was not included in the Budget [speech] yesterday. Does this mean that Maharashtra should feel ignored?" she said, adding that ₹76,000 crore had been allocated for this project. "This is a deliberate attempt of the Opposition parties led by the Congress

to give the people the wrong impression that their States were not allocated funds or schemes," she said.  
"I would challenge the Congress party to show that in every Budget speech they have delivered, all the States have been listed out. This is an outrageous allegation," she

added.  
Later in the afternoon, initiating the debate, former Finance Minister and Rajya Sabha MP P. Chidambaram criticised the special treatment to Andhra Pradesh and Bihar in the Budget. "I don't grudge at from the government on inflation. He said the bank rate set by the Reserve Bank of India is a good measure to know where inflation is moving and added that the Centre was unable to reach the target of 4% inflation in the last four years.  
"I think what the Chief Economic Adviser said in the Economic Survey [on inflation] is injury, and the honourable Finance Minister dismissing the subject in 10 words is adding insult to injury," he said.  
In the Lok Sabha, too, the Opposition levelled a similar charge, initiating the debate in the Lok Sabha, Congress MP Kumari Selma termed the budget a collection of "jumbos", cautioning NDA members Nishu Kumar and N. Chandrababu Naidu that they, "may celebrate today for getting a large share" but time could change.  
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other States? We are a federal country. This is the death knell of federalism if you pick and choose among States. You are the Union of India, you are the Union government, you are the government of all the States. You cannot pick and choose one State and deny relief to another State," Mr. Chidambaram said.  
While unemployment is the biggest challenge for the government, Mr. Chidambaram said that the government's latest employment-linked scheme did not instil confidence and will be another election *Jumla* (insincere promise).  
On inflation, he said the Finance Minister had dismissed the subject in 10 words. "Is inflation such a trivial subject?" Mr. Chidambaram asked, citing from the government on inflation. He said the bank rate set by the Reserve Bank of India is a good measure to know where inflation is moving and added that the Centre was unable to reach the target of 4% inflation in the last four years.  
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The debris of the Saurya Airlines' plane after it crashed following take-off at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu on Wednesday.

# 18 passengers killed as plane crashes in Nepal after take-off, pilot survives

**Sanjeev Satgajanya KATHMANDU**  
As many as 18 passengers, a Yemeni national and a child among them, were killed on Wednesday after an aircraft crashed shortly after taking off from the Tribhuvan International Airport in Nepal's capital Kathmandu.  
There were 19 persons aboard the Saurya Airlines 9N-AME plane, a non-scheduled flight headed to Pokhara, a tour destination which is a 25-minute flight from Kathmandu.  
One injured person was rescued and taken to the hospital, and 18 persons were found dead, the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) said.  
Pilot Captain Manish Ratna Shukla is the lone survivor in the crash, is undergoing treatment at



**Lone survivor:** Captain Manish Ratna Shukla of Saurya Airlines being rescued from the wreckage of the aircraft. PTI

the Kathmandu Model Hospital.  
Hospital officials said Captain Shukla remains in a critical condition.  
According to airline officials, the aircraft was heading to Pokhara for a C-Check, a comprehensive inspection carried out every 18 to 24 months.  
After take-off, the plane turned in the wrong direction, Jagannath Niraula, chief of Tribhuvan International Airport, said. "As soon as it took off, it turned right instead of turning left," Mr. Niraula was quoted as saying by the BBC News. Nepal. However, "the cause of the accident has not been revealed yet," Prime Minister K.P.

# As cloud lingers over NEET, UPSC likely to implement biometric authentication

**Vijaita Singh NEW DELHI**  
The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) is all set to revamp its examination system through technological solutions such as Aadhaar-based fingerprint authentication and facial recognition systems using artificial intelligence.  
The decision comes amid allegations of cheating in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NET) for undergraduate medical admissions conducted by the National Testing Agency.  
The UPSC floated a tender on June 20 seeking bids from public sector undertakings to revamp the examination process.  
The move also coincided with the controversy over trainee IAS officer Punit Khedkar, who allegedly forged documents to appear for the Civil Services Examination on 12 occasions, far above the number of permitted attempts.  
"The Commission intends to make use of the latest digital technology to match and cross-check the biometric details of the candidates and to monitor various activities of the candidates during the examination even for cheating, fraud, unfair means and impersonation," the tender document read.  
The UPSC will provide the data and images submitted by applicants during the online registration process to the service provider for the Aadhaar-based fingerprint authentication and facial recognition system on the day of the exam. To rule out attempts at imper-



Various organisations protesting over the alleged irregularities in the NEET exam. PTI

# A half-burnt scrap of paper becomes vital clue

**Krishnadev Rajagopal NEW DELHI**  
A half-burnt scrap of a printout from a leaked NET/UGC question paper, with its unique bar code intact, helped to unravel the conspiracy and modus operandi of a gang whose leader is yet to be caught. The story behind the paper leak was narrated by the CBI Additional Director ANV. Krishna in the SC.  
**FULL REPORT**  
» PAGE 4  
has to be done," the UPSC said.  
**CCTV surveillance**  
The Commission said it has decided to "implement the CCTV/video surveillance with recording and live broadcast system to monitor various activities of the candidates and other persons deployed to conduct the Commission's Examinations at the various centres and venues across the country under secure environment."  
The service provider will also have to make arrangements for remote live viewing of the CCTV footage at the UPSC's own control room.

Over 60,000 vacancies in CAPF being filled: MHA

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) informed the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday that more than 60,000 vacancies in the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) have been notified and are in different stages of recruitment.

The Minister said 67,345 people have been recruited between April 2023 and February 2024. "Further, 64,091 vacancies have been notified and are at different stages of recruitment. It is clear from the above, with insignificant effective vacancies compared to the size of the forces, the question of 'overturn' doesn't arise,"

As on July 1, the number of vacancies in CAPFs stood at 84,106 against the total sanctioned strength of 10,45,751, the Minister said. The government has decided to reserve 10% vacancies in CAPFs for ex-servicemen, Mr. Rai said.

"Cut-off marks for shortlisting candidates for constable/GD has been lowered to get sufficient candidates especially in categories where shortfalls have been observed," the Minister said.

BJP demands apology from Rahul after SC's order on NEET-UG

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

A day after the Supreme Court dismissed pleas seeking cancellation and re-test of the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (Undergraduate) (NEET-UG), holding that there was no evidence of a "systemic breach" of the sanctity of the exam, the BJP demanded an apology from Congress leader and Opposition leader in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi.

Lok Sabha member and former Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad at a press conference on Wednesday said that the Opposition, especially Mr. Gandhi, had tried to defame India's examination globally with his strong words. "His choice of words is violative of Parliament's dignity and the dignity of the office of the Leader of the Opposition," Mr. Prasad said.

No progress on UN Security Council expansion, say former Ambassadors

Subhasini Halder NEW DELHI

Despite consistent efforts by India and other countries, the move for United Nations Security Council (UNSC) reform and expansion has made "no progress" so far, conceded two former Indian Ambassadors to the United Nations, stressing that India must, however, continue to pursue its demand for inclusion in the top global decision-making body.

The lack of progress has been the subject of considerable frustration ahead of this year's Summit of the Future at the UN (September 22-23) that is expected to bring in more than 150 world leaders to discuss pathways to "reboot" the UN, with India and its partners in the G-4 (Brazil, Germany

India committed to FTA with the U.K., says Modi

British Foreign Secretary David Lammy refers to 'unique living bridge' between the two countries, and says they are working together on climate action and creating opportunities for businesses

Kalpal Bhattacharjee NEW DELHI

India is committed to concluding a Free Trade Agreement with the United Kingdom, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday, after meeting the visiting Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, David Lammy — the highest ranking official from the United Kingdom to visit India since the Labour government won a landslide victory in the recent election.

"[I] appreciate the priority accorded by PM Keir Starmer to broaden and deepen the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Remain committed to elevating the ties. Welcome the bilateral Technology Security Initiative and the desire of the government to mutually beneficial FTA," Mr. Modi said.

Mr. Lammy was hosted by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar for a round of talks where the two sides exchanged ideas on a wide range of issues. Mr. Jaishankar said the two sides should cooperate on "global matters on global platforms", indicating that India is seeking collaboration with the U.K. to deal with the two sides are building on "climate action while creating opportunities for British and Indian businesses".

"We are both countries which have a big global presence in different ways. So I think it's also important India and the U.K. work together on global issues and to global platforms," said Mr. Jaishankar. After meeting Mr. Modi, Mr. Lammy referred to the "unique living bridge" that connects India with the United Kingdom and said the two sides are building on "climate action while creating opportunities for British and Indian businesses".



Strengthening ties: Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a meeting with U.K. Foreign Secretary David Lammy, in New Delhi on Wednesday.

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"I am travelling to India in my first month as Foreign Secretary because re-setting our relationship with the Global South is a key part of India's strategy. The government will reconnect Britain for our security and prosperity at home," Mr. Lammy had said in a statement ahead of his departure, calling India "an emerging superpower of the 21st century", one of the fastest growing economies, with the world's largest population.

28,458 Indians died abroad in the past three years, says MEA in reply to RTI query

Maitri Porecha NEW DELHI

A total of 28,458 Indians died abroad in the past three years, a Right to Information (RTI) reply given by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) states.

It said 24,278 Indians died of natural causes, 1,622 in accidents, 686 due to occupational hazards, 1,736 from suicide, and 136 from violence and murder. Some of which [deaths] pertain to Indian students, Praveen Kumar Munjal, chief public information officer, MEA has said in a reply to an RTI filed by activist Dr. Vivek Pandey.

The Diaspora Engagement Division of the MEA has said that most of the deaths of Indians residing abroad were caused by natural causes. Some deaths were reported due to traffic accidents, occupational hazards, violence, and suicides. While the RTI asks for details of total number of Indian students who died abroad in last five years till date, as well as country and year-wise details of the deaths, they have not been provided. The MEA also did not



State of alarm: Indian students return from Bangladesh after violent anti-quota protests in the country. PTI

reply to the details of total number of ill students and those who had requested MEA to bring them back to India in case of medical emergency in the last five years till date.

Also, the details on the amount of money spent by the Indian government to bring back students who are in any kind of medical emergency in last five years till date, eleven Indian deaths, including a shooting, kidnapping, suicides and so on, in last five years till date, were not provided.

Mr. Salgotra was a Master's student working at a convenience store in West Georgia, Atlanta, when he attacked his wife with a hammer

up to fifty times. Two Indian students around the same time were found dead, reportedly due to Pantanyi overdose in their Connecticut home.

Take urgent action "I urge the government to take immediate action to protect our citizens abroad. We need to establish robust support systems, emergency assistance and better co-ordination with foreign governments. The MEA must prioritise safety and well-being of Indians abroad by enhancing consular services, increasing awareness about local laws and safety protocols, and providing timely assistance in emergencies," Dr. Pandey told *The Hindu*.

A half-burnt paper scrap proves vital clue for CBI investigation into NEET-UG paper leak

Krishnadas Rajsopal NEW DELHI

A half-burnt scrap of a printout from a leaked NEET-UG question paper, with its unique bar code intact, helped to unravel the conspiracy and media operation of a gang whose leader is yet to be caught.

The story behind the leak of the medical entrance examination paper was narrated by the CBI Additional Director A.V. Krishna in the Supreme Court before a three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud during a full-day hearing on Tuesday. According to the 1995-batch IPS officer, the gang started their work three months ahead of NEET. Their members started contacting parents of candidates and authorities of "vulnerable" exam centres who would not mind giving



Raising concerns: NSUI activists protest demanding re-examination of NEET in New Delhi on Tuesday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

to pry open the trunk, unseal the plastic wraps and click pictures of the question paper. It was unique in its plastic wrap using a cigarette lighter and placed back in the trunk. The photographs were taken by a ghostographer waiting at a posthouse with eight 'problem solvers' and five 'beneficiary' students. Several copies of the solved sheets were then given to the students to memorise before they left for their exam centres. Students had been divided into groups in Patna and Hazaribagh.

Pankaj had easily entered the school premises and was sitting patiently in a room hardly two feet away from the control room, waiting for the coast to clear. The centre coordinator at Oasis School had already hidden an "exhaustive" tool kit inside the control room to help Pankaj open the trunk locks. It took Pankaj exactly one hour and 20 minutes

to pry open the trunk, unseal the plastic wraps and click pictures of the question paper. It was unique in its plastic wrap using a cigarette lighter and placed back in the trunk. The photographs were taken by a ghostographer waiting at a posthouse with eight 'problem solvers' and five 'beneficiary' students.

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The gang had tried to burn the question papers after the students had left.

However, the unique number on the burnt scrap had led the CBI to the girl student to whom the question paper was actually assigned. "Every question paper has a unique number meant for each student," Mr. Krishna narrated. We traced the number found on the scrap in Patna to a candidate whose exam centre was in Hazaribagh. She was genuine, she had notified the court mark on the resealed plastic wrap covering her paper but had kept silent. She later made a statement to the court.

Chief Justice Chandrachud wondered aloud whether the photos of the questions were also sent to other locations. This would mean the leak was not confined to Patna and Hazaribagh.

BSNL data breached in May, admits Union govt.

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Union government confirmed a data breach in BSNL's systems, saying that the breach was reported on May 20.

"Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-IN) reported possible intrusion & Data Breach at BSNL on 20.05.2024," Minister of State for Communications, Chandra Sekhara Panigrahi said on Wednesday in a written response to a Lok Sabha query by Congress MP Amar Singh.

While the breach led to "no service outage," Mr. Panigrahi said, "one BSNL server was having the data similar to the sample data shared by CERT-IN." An inter-ministerial committee has been formed to "conduct audit of the telecom networks".

Facets of governance and the preparatory journey towards IAS

The Hindu Bureau CHENNAI

Union and *The Hindu* jointly held a two-day summit for civil services aspirants during the weekend in which over 200 aspirants participated. The speakers touched up on many aspects of governance and what UPSC aspirants should expect in their preparatory journey. The summit had former chief minister and Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Jairam Gadkari, former Deputy Chief Minister of Rajasthan, and All India Congress Committee general secretary Sachin Pilot, political activist and academic Yogendra Yadav, In-



lian Olympic medalist Mary Kom, and impacting the health of people in which over 200 aspirants participated. The speakers touched up on many aspects of governance and what UPSC aspirants should expect in their preparatory journey. The summit had former chief minister and Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Jairam Gadkari, former Deputy Chief Minister of Rajasthan, and All India Congress Committee general secretary Sachin Pilot, political activist and academic Yogendra Yadav, In-

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boxing journey and gave tips on tackling stress. Mr. Bhagwat, a police officer, explained the various career paths through UPSC and the responsibility of Indian youth. He offered COVID-19 as a reflection of imbalance and loss of habitat and biodiversity that increased the vulnerability of humanity." Speaking on "What will India's infrastructure look like in 2030?", Mr. Gadkari said the country was undergoing a massive transformation, and pointed out that a pilot project with electric vehicles for public transport was under way in Nagpur. Dr. Radhakrishnan spoke about the role of an IAS officer and the challenges in public policy. Mr. Kom spoke of her



# 28,458 Indians died abroad in the past three years, says MEA in reply to RTI query

**Maitri Porecha**  
NEW DELHI

A total of 28,458 Indians died abroad in the past three years, a Right to Information (RTI) reply given by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) states.

It said 24,278 Indians died of natural causes, 1,622 in accidents, 686 due to occupational hazards, 1,736 from suicide, and 136 from violence and murder.

“Some of which [deaths] pertain to Indian students,” Praveen Kumar Munjal, Chief Public Information Officer, MEA has stated, replying to an RTI filed by activist Dr. Vivek Pandey.

The Diaspora Engagement Division of the MEA said that most of the deaths of Indians residing abroad were caused by natural causes. Some deaths were reported due to traffic accidents, occupational hazards, violence, and suicides.

While the RTI asks for details of total number of Indian students who died abroad in last five years till date, as well as country and year wise details of the deaths, they have not been provided.

The MEA also did not



**State of alarm:** Indian students return from Bangladesh after violent anti-quota protests in the country. PTI

reply to the details of total number of ill students and those who had requested MEA to bring them back to India in case of medical emergency in the last five years till date.

Also the details on amount of money spent by the Indian government to bring back students who are in any kind of medical emergency in last five years was not provided.

In 2024, eleven Indian and Indian-origin students died due to shooting, kidnappings, suicides and so on. In January earlier this year, Vivek Saini, 25, an Indian student was killed in Georgia.

Mr. Saini was a Master's student and working at a convenience store in West Georgia. A drug addict attacked him with a hammer

up to fifty times. Two Indian students around the same time were found dead, reportedly due to Fentanyl overdose in their Connecticut home.

## Take urgent action

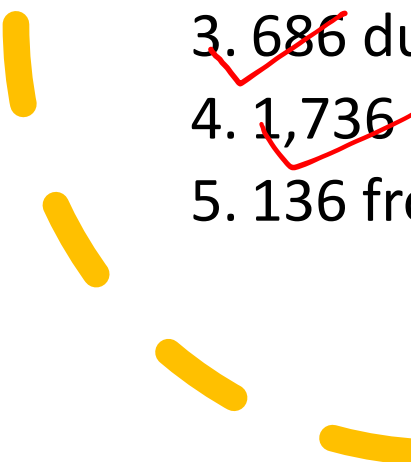
“I urge the government to take immediate action to protect our citizens abroad. We need to establish robust support systems, including mental health resources, emergency assistance and better co-ordination with foreign governments. The MEA must prioritise safety and well-being of Indians abroad by enhancing consular services, increasing awareness about local laws and safety protocols, and providing timely assistance in emergencies,” Dr. Pandey told *The Hindu*.



- **Number of Deaths Abroad:**

1. A total of 28,458 Indians died abroad in the past three years.

2. Breakdown of causes:

- ✓ 1. 24,278 died of natural causes.
  - ✓ 2. 1,622 in accidents.
  - ✓ 3. 686 due to occupational hazards.
  - ✓ 4. 1,736 from suicide.
  - ✓ 5. 136 from violence and murder.
- 

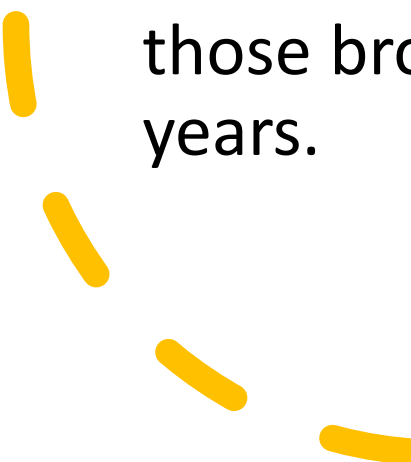


- **Details on Indian Students:**

1. Some deaths pertain to Indian students.

2. Praveen Kumar Munjal, Chief Public Information Officer, MEA, provided details in response to an RTI filed by Dr. Vivek Pandey.

3. MEA has not provided details on the total number of ill students and those brought back to India in medical emergencies over the last five years.





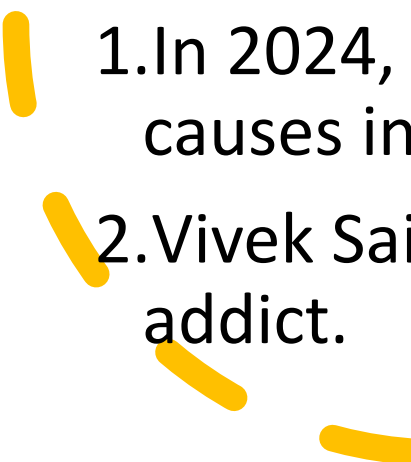
- **Government Expenditure:**

- 1.No information was provided on the amount of money spent by the Indian government to bring back students in medical emergencies over the last five years.

- **Specific Cases and Incidents:**

- 1.In 2024, eleven Indian and Indian-origin students died due to various causes including shootings, kidnappings, suicides, and so on.

- 2.Vivek Saini, 25, an Indian student, was killed in Georgia by a drug addict.



1948

Kulwal

- **Calls for Action:**

1. Dr. Pandey urged the government to take immediate action to protect citizens abroad.
2. Suggested measures include mental health resources, emergency assistance, and better coordination with foreign governments.
3. Emphasis on prioritizing safety and well-being of Indians abroad by enhancing consular services and increasing awareness about local laws and safety protocols.



• **Question:** Consider the following statements regarding the deaths of Indians abroad as reported by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA):

1. A total of 28,458 Indians died abroad in the past three years.

~~2.~~ The majority of deaths were due to accidents and occupational hazards.

3. 1,736 Indians died from suicide during this period.





• Which of the above statements is/are correct?

• a) 1 and 2 only

• ~~b) 1 and 3 only~~

• c) 2 and 3 only

• d) 1, 2 and 3



IN BRIEF

DRDO tests Phase-II ballistic missile defence system

The DRDO on Wednesday successfully flight tested the Phase-II Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system demonstrating the indigenous capability to intercept ballistic missiles of 5,000-km class. Phase I of the BMD, which can intercept ballistic missiles with a range of 2,000 km, has already been deployed. The maiden test of the Phase-II BMD was carried out in November 2022. "The Target Missile was launched from LC-47 Dharmu at 1620 hrs mimicking adversary ballistic missile, which was detected by weapon system radars deployed on land and sea and activated the Air Defence (AD) interceptor system", DRDO said in a statement.

Body of missing naval sailor of INS Brahmaputra found

The body of Leading Seaman Sitendra Singh, who went missing after the fire on board INS Brahmaputra that also tilted to a side, has been found after intensive diving operations, the Navy said on Wednesday. A fire had erupted on the guided missile frigate on Sunday. After the fire was doused, the ship tilted to the left. Following the unfortunate incident of INS Brahmaputra in Naval Dockyard Mumbai, Adm Pk Vishweshwari (Tripathi), Chief of Naval Staff (CNS), visited Mumbai on Tuesday. The body of Sitendra Singh, Leading Seaman, has been found after intensive diving operations, Commander Mehal Karnik, spokesperson of Western Naval Command said.

Right to shelter is a fundamental right, says SC

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday urged a balance to be struck between railway infrastructure development at Haldwani, considered to be the doorway to the hills in Uttarakhand, and the fundamental right to shelter of nearly 50,000 people accused of illegally living on railway land. "They are also human beings," a Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant observed.

The court said while it cannot be rubbished about the fate of these families, its orders cannot also be misinterpreted as a note of encouragement for future encroachments.

The hearing was based on an application filed by the Railways to modify a 2023 top court order staying a Uttarakhand High Court direction to evict these families within a week. It said a flooding Ghaula river has disrupted railway operations in the region. The railway needed more land urgently to lay new tracks.

It asked the State Chief Secretary to meet with the Railways authorities and the Ministry of Urban Affairs to iron out a "fair and equitable" rehabilitation project for the families.

Grasslands in Kutch likely to host cheetahs from Africa

While the Gandhi Sagor sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh is the preferred location for the next lot of imports, Banni in Gujarat is also getting ready to house some of the big cats to land in India

Jacob Koshy NEW DELHI

Some of the next batch of cheetahs being brought in from Africa, as part of the next phase of Project Cheetah, may be housed in a cheetah-breeding and conservation centre being built in the sprawling grasslands of Banni in the Kham of Kutch in Gujarat, senior officials in the Environment Ministry told The Hindu.

While the Gandhi Sagor sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh is the preferred location for the next lot of wild cats, with Banni being considered a potential habitat for over a decade, officials there are keen to set up infrastructure to set up basic infrastructure in Banni and get it ready this year.

"The next [lot of] animals will go to Gandhi Sagor," said a Gujarat government official. Banni is a vast grassland where cheetahs can be bred. If all goes to plan, there is no reason the site cannot be readied in the next six months, he said.

Banni is a vast grassland in the southern part of Kutch and extends to near-



Banni is a vast grassland in the southern part of Kutch and extends to nearly 3,500 sq km. (AP/WIDE WORLD)

ly 3,500 square kilometres. While that is plenty of space, more than that of any other cheetah habitat in the world, there is barely enough prey to sustain a cheetah population. The species such as cheetah, blackbuck and gazelle are protected in the Banni landscape, but not enough for cheetahs to hunt. It takes years for enough prey, and practically this means chital — the main prey for cheetahs in India — needs to be brought into these grasslands. There isn't an official plan yet but it is a site that is under consideration, the official added.

While the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department is tasked with managing the

cheetahs at Kuno in Madhya Pradesh, an expert steering committee gives scientific input on managing the programme. This includes recommending future sites for introducing fresh batches of cheetahs at regular intervals.

Of the 20 adult cheetahs brought to Kuno since September 2022, 13 survive. Additionally there are 13 cubs, making it 26 animals overall. However, the maximal capacity (in terms of available prey) of the Kuno reserve is for 21 adult animals.

The government's estimate is that India will need to import anywhere between 10 and 12 adult cheetahs every year for the next five years to groom a sus-

tainable breeding population. "One attractive aspect of Banni is that there are no leopards. So with enough prey, we can eventually sustain a larger population. But this is a long-term plan," an official said.

In October, all of the cheetahs in Kuno are expected to be released into the wild. Currently, most of them are in the boxes, or large enclosures that are a kilometre wide and long. These animals were brought in after infections and acclimatisation problems led to fatalities. Following the release of all the animals into the wild, preparations for the next batch are expected to begin — again from South Africa and Namibia.

Aadhaar enrolment ID for PAN to be disallowed

N. Ravikumar HYDERABAD

From October 1, the option of quoting the enrolment ID of the Aadhaar application form at the time of applying for a Permanent Account Number (PAN) or filing return of income will be withdrawn.

It is imperative to discontinue the option since any allotment of PAN against the enrolment ID of the Aadhaar application form may lead to duplication and misuse of PAN. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed in the Budget 2024-25 documents tabled in Parliament on Tuesday.

It is further proposed that every person who has been allotted PAN on the basis of the enrolment ID of the Aadhaar application form should intimate his/her Aadhaar number on or before a notified date to the Income Tax authorities.

The option of quoting the enrolment ID in the application form for allotment of PAN or in the return of income was introduced in 2017. Since then, coverage of Aadhaar has been increasing and encompassed a majority of the population, the Finance Minister said in the documents.

ICMR ready to transfer technology of a 'breakthrough' TB detection system

Bindu Shajan Perappadan NEW DELHI

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has begun work on spreading an affordable, faster and easy-to-use testing technology for detection of tuberculosis.

The council has invited an Expression of Interest from organisations, companies and manufacturers for "transfer of technology" for commercialisation of the CRISPR Cas-based TB detection system.

Developed by the ICMR Regional Research Centre, Dibrugarh, the technology is touted as the "world's cheapest TB testing system". It can detect the TB bacterium using DNA from saliva at a very low cost. It can identify the bacterium with preliminary symptoms, and test over 1,500 samples within two hours.



Over 1,500 samples can be simultaneously tested within two hours.

"It is so simple that it can be used even in the primary health centre of a village," says researchers at the centre.

TB kills an estimated 4,80,000 Indians every year or over 1,400 patients every day. Additionally, the country has more than a million "missing" TB cases annually, which are not notified. Most remain either undiagnosed or unaccountably and inadequately diagnosed and treated in the private sector.

A senior Health Ministry official had noted that India's efforts to achieve rapid decline in the burden of TB morbidity and mortality, towards the elimination of the infection by 2025, have plateaued.

He added that there is now a move to rework the protocol to tackle the disease, specifically TB medication and its duration, to rebirth the TB-free initiative with zero deaths, disease, and poverty resulting from the disease.

Expert guidance

The ICMR has developed the "CRISPR Cas-based TB detection system" and is lawfully entitled to enter into any form of exclusive or non-exclusive agreements with eligible manufacturers through a defined agreement for licensing and commercialisation of the system, which shall be go-

governed by the ICMR IP Policy, it said.

Listing out its role, the council has noted that the Dibrugarh centre will provide expert guidance and technical support for the production of the system in all phases.

"The ICMR through its institutes will provide support and facilitate to conduct the R&D/clinical study of new technology product in India, in collaboration with the company/entrepreneur, professional and mutually agreed upon manner and timelines, which will be decided later under the Agreement," it noted.

It will also provide technical support in development of technology product and will also facilitate the validation as per the terms of commercialisation of the agreement. It shall have no financial implications unless otherwise specified," it said.

The Hindu Bureau MUMBAI

Defending the formation of a fact-checking unit (FCU), the Union government said on Wednesday that the right to know factually correct information and the right to not be misled were equally important as the right to freedom of speech under Article 19(2A).

Stand-up artist Kunal Kamra, the Editor Guild of India, and the Association of Indian Magicians challenged the constitutional validity of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules, 2023 that permit an FCU of the Union government to identify "fake or false or misleading" online content "related to the business of the Central Government" and



The Centre will continue its arguments in the Bombay High Court on Thursday.

demand its removal.

The breaker judge Justice A.S. Chandurkar is hearing arguments in the case after a division bench of the High Court delivered a split verdict on January 17.

The petitioners contended in their writ petition in April, contending that the right to be informed by the government to be "prosecutor, the judge, and in that case, the executor" of what constitutes the "truth" online, thereby violating the cardinal principles of natural justice. They also pointed out that the "over-broad and vague" nature of the rules created a "chilling effect" on the freedom of speech

and expression guaranteed under Article 19(2A) of the Constitution.

Mr. Mehta said the argument of "chilling effect" was incorrect. "We (government) are not the final arbiter here, just like individuals and the government can also initiate litigation in a judicial way of doing that. And being a statutory regime, it has consequences. We are not the arbiter. The final arbiter is the intermediate court of competent jurisdiction. The right to be informed correctly is necessarily inherent in my right under Article 21. Because, if somebody's freedom of speech incites violence or threatens public order, it directly infringes my right under Article 21," Mr. Mehta added.

The government will continue its arguments on Thursday.

THE CROSSWORD 14236

Crossword puzzle grid with clues and solutions.

- Across 1 Snoring in the middle of stripped-down popular English crossword, perhaps? (6)
4 Computer from American city functions essentially when dropped in soda! (6)
9 Harvest of farmer ultimately stolen by policeman (4)
10 Queen in USA too surprised with last president's references! (10)

To solve this puzzle online, get access to our crossword site, at: https://www.hindu.com/crossword/

- 11 Make another effort to communicate with Harry, finally getting involved in Peter's problem! (6)
12 Lost time in part of book on escort (8)
13 Dead Queen on last parade with king perhaps? (6,3)
15 Change - remove last letter and last word (4)
16 No fatterly repaid King (4)
17 Classless society and music with no beats? Married man's into it! (5)
21 Electronic system's temporary - company needs to replace one (8)
22 It might keep one warm - a frog perhaps? (6)
23 Avoided collisions close to girls (4,6)
24 Black finger's tip chopped off (4)
26 Too's wounded at one end - work extremely likely to be held back (6)
27 Some boys torseise animal (6)
Down 1 One recently became rich - built unapproved pool outside? (7)
2 Lively and fast - gets last batsman out for zero (5)
3 One in Barcelona that looks Louvre often for a drink? (7)
5 One form of tax - a revenue, mainly (6)
6 Family of bees in Meotana migrating? (9)
7 Water transport leaving river quickly - reaching edges of ocean? (10)
8 Intermediate fits next? (6)
14 Refer to mob upspring around Iran's and Russia's capitals at different points to get factually correct? (10)
16 Oil producer's products leach ecstasy on river when going upstream? (7)
19 Orator's point gets limitless press coverage, when brought up? (7)
20 Keenness of upper classes to live in London, for example (6)
23 Wet duck seen in fog (5)

Sudoku puzzle and solution grid.

FAITH

The greatness of Guru
Only four people matter in this world: Mata, Pita, Guru, and Ivaan (God). Man's ultimate goal is to reach God, but it is not possible to realise that without the guidance of a Guru. Just as one qualifies for material prosperity through academic pursuits, so too should one learn the nuances of spiritual progression from a Guru.
Vishnavites consider Lord Narayana as their first Guru, followed by Mahalakshmi, Visvakeetna and then Narayana. Guru Purnima is dedicated to offering our salutations and gratitude to all the spiritual masters of the past and present.
In the Hindu tradition, the Guru is revered at the highest position. It is the Guru-Sishya parampara that has preserved the Hindu civilisation as a living tradition to this day, said Swami Mitranandaji. Adi Sankara described the Guru as someone who knows the truth, can articulate the scriptures and is always concerned about the well-being of the student.
Sage Viswamitra was a powerful ascetic who had brought all three worlds to a standstill with his penance. The gods conferred on him the status of a Brahma rishi (one who is born into a pious environment and gains enlightenment).
The sage donned the role of a Guru to Rama and taught Him everything there was to learn. Guru had him from varying backgrounds - Vyasa, the son of a fisherman, copied the Vedas, wrote the Mahabharata and the Puranas. Without him, Hinduism would not possess the extensive spiritual literature it does today. His birth day is celebrated as Guru Purnima, in honour of all Gurus.

# Grasslands in Kutch likely to host cheetahs from Africa

While the Gandhi Sagar sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh is the preferred location for the next lot of imports, Banni in Gujarat is also getting readied to house some of the big cats to land in India

**Jacob Koshy**  
NEW DELHI

Some of the next batch of cheetahs being brought in from Africa, as part of the next phase of Project Cheetah, may be sent to a cheetah-breeding and conservation centre being built in the sprawling grasslands of Banni in the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat, senior officials in the Environment Ministry told *The Hindu*.

While the Gandhi Sagar sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh is the preferred location for the next lot of wild cats, with Banni being considered a potential habitat for over a decade, officials say there is a surge in activity to set up basic infrastructure in Banni and get it ready this year.

“The next [lot of] animals will go to Gandhi Sagar. However, the Gujarat government is setting up suitable enclosures in Banni where cheetahs can be bred. If all goes to plan, there is no reason (the site) cannot be readied in the next six months and some animals sent there,” an official told *The Hindu*.

Banni is a vast grassland in the southern part of Kutch and extends to near-



Banni is a vast grassland in the southern part of Kutch and extends to nearly 3,500 sq.km. VIJAY SONEJI

ly 3,500 square kilometres. While that is plenty of space, more than that available in Kuno and Gandhi Sagar, there is barely enough prey to sustain a viable population.

Antelope species such as chinkara and blackbuck – the prey for the cheetah – are present in the Banni landscape but not enough for the big cat. “It will take years for enough prey, and practically this means chital – the main prey for the cheetahs in India – needs to be brought into these grasslands. There isn’t an official plan yet but it is a site that is under consideration,” the official added.

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cheetahs at Kuno in Madhya Pradesh, an expert steering committee gives scientific input on managing the programme. This includes recommending future sites for introducing fresh batches of cheetahs at regular intervals.

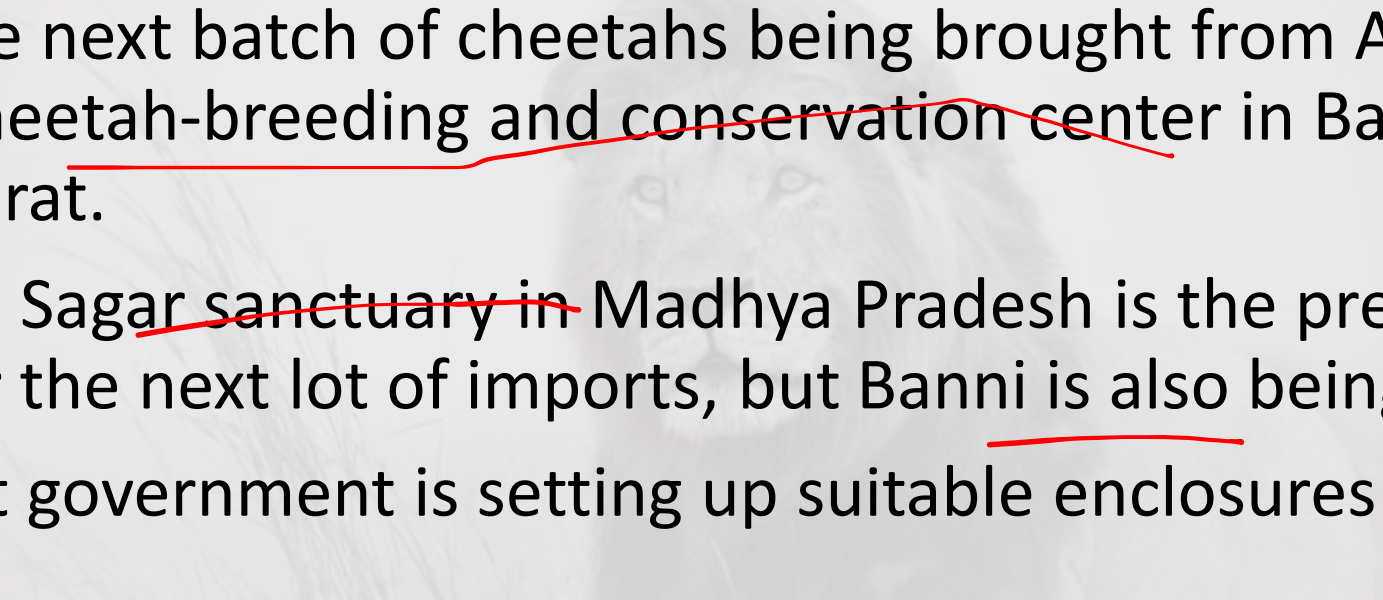
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The government’s estimate is that India will need to import anywhere between 10 and 12 adult cheetahs every year for the next five years to groom a sus-

tainable breeding population. “One attractive aspect of Banni is that there are no leopards. So with enough prey, we can overtime sustain a larger population. But this is a long-term plan,” an official said.

In October, all of the cheetahs in Kuno are expected to be released into the wild. Currently, most of them are in the bomas, or large enclosures that are a kilometre wide and long. These animals were brought in after infections and acclimatisation problems led to fatalities. Following the release of all the animals into the wild, preparations for the next batch are expected to begin – again from South Africa and Namibia.



- 
- Some of the next batch of cheetahs being brought from Africa may be sent to a cheetah-breeding and conservation center in Banni, Rann of Kutch, Gujarat.
  - The Gandhi Sagar sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh is the preferred location for the next lot of imports, but Banni is also being prepared.
  - The Gujarat government is setting up suitable enclosures in Banni for cheetahs.

- 1.अफ्रीका से लाए जा रहे चीता समूह का कुछ हिस्सा गुजरात के कच्छ के रण में बन्नी में चीता-प्रजनन और संरक्षण केंद्र में भेजा जा सकता है।
- 2.मध्य प्रदेश में गांधी सागर अभयारण्य अगली खेप के लिए पसंदीदा स्थान है, लेकिन बन्नी को भी तैयार किया जा रहा है।
- 3.गुजरात सरकार बन्नी में चीतों के लिए उपयुक्त घेराबंदी कर रही है।

Banni is a vast grassland in the southern part of Kutch, extending to nearly 3,500 sq. km.

It has ample space and is being readied with basic infrastructure.

Antelope species like chinkara and blackbuck, prey for cheetahs, are present but not in sufficient numbers.

1. Of the 20 cheetahs brought to Kuno since September 2022, 13 survive, and three more are expected to join soon, making it 26 cheetahs.
2. The maximum capacity of Kuno is 21 adult animals.
3. India plans to import 10 to 12 adult cheetahs annually for the next five years to establish a sustainable breeding population.



• Consider the following statements regarding the cheetah relocation project in India:

1. The Banni grasslands in the Rann of Kutch, Gujarat, are being prepared as a potential habitat for cheetahs from Africa.
2. The Gandhi Sagar sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh remains the preferred location for cheetah imports.
3. Banni has sufficient antelope species to sustain a viable cheetah population.

• Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

## Right to shelter is a fundamental right, says SC

**The Hindu Bureau**

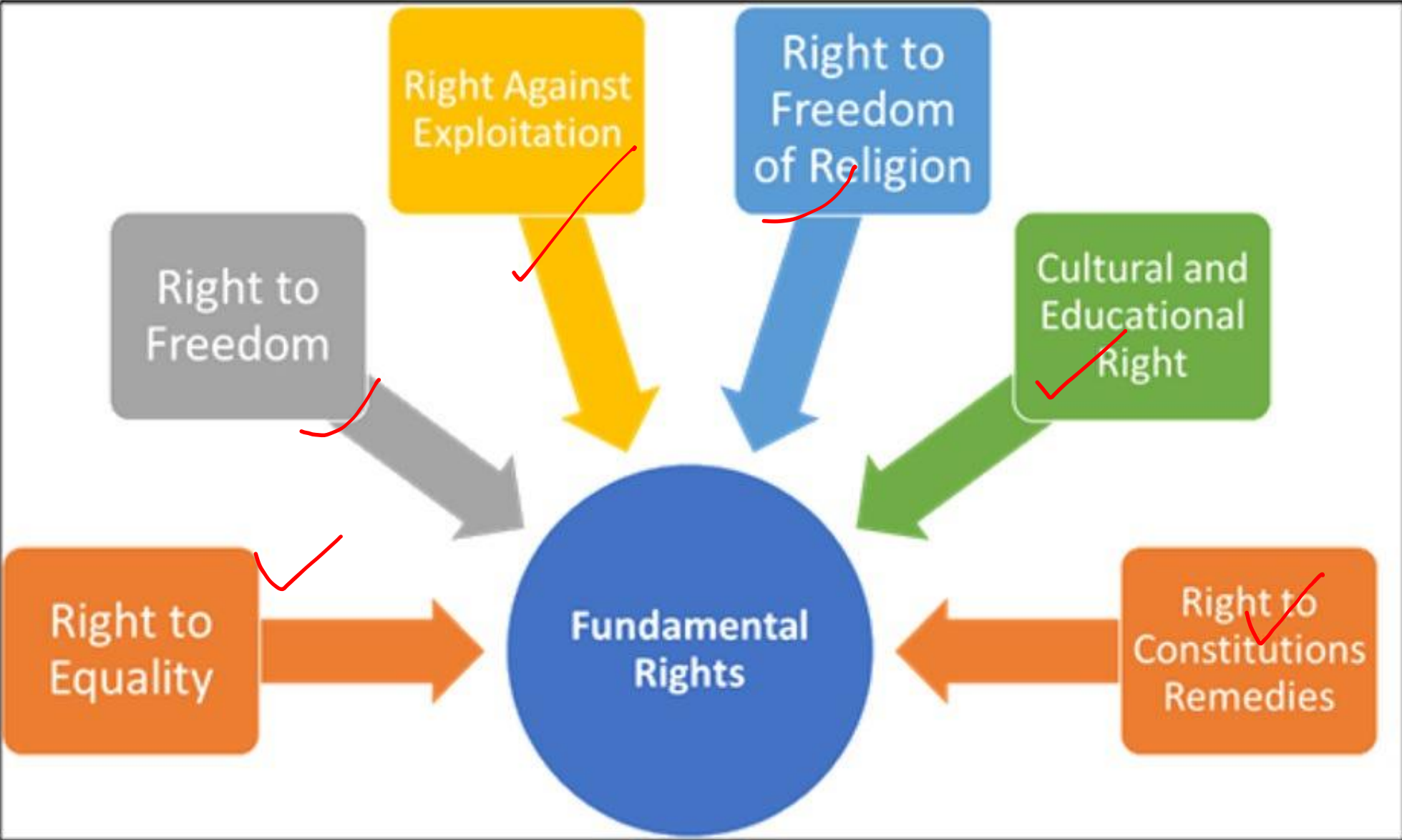
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday urged a balance to be struck between railway infrastructure development at Haldwani, considered to be the doorway to the hills in Uttarakhand, and the fundamental right to shelter of nearly 50,000 people accused of illegally living on railway land. "They are also human beings," a Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant observed.

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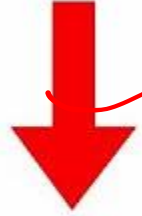
# समानता का अधिकार (Right To Equality) Article 14 -18



**Trick : Ek DOUT (एक डाउट)**



**Ek**

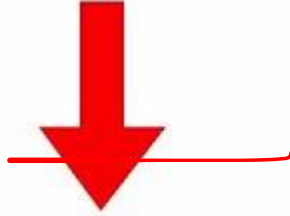


Equality  
समानता

14

Article/अनुच्छेद

**D**

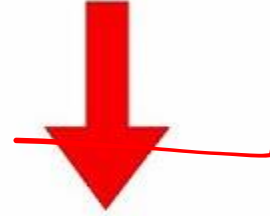


Discrimination  
भेदभाव

15

Article/अनुच्छेद

**O**



Opportunity  
अवसर

16

Article/अनुच्छेद

**U**

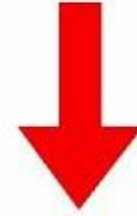


Untouchability  
अस्पृश्यता

17

Article/अनुच्छेद

**T**



Titles  
खिताब

18

Article/अनुच्छेद



## SPARKS FLY

Morocco beats Argentina in contest marred by controversy



Morocco beat Argentina 2-1 in their opening game of the men's Olympic football, but only after a late equaliser for the South American side was disallowed and the final minutes were played in an empty stadium following crowd trouble. Spain edged Uzbekistan 2-1 in another contest.

## THROAT TROUBLE

Jannik Sinner pulls out of the Paris Games due to tonsillitis



Jannik Sinner has withdrawn from the Olympics. "I am saddened to inform you that I will not be able to participate... after a good week of classical training I started to feel unwell. I spent couple of days resting and during a visit the doctor found tonsillitis and strongly advised me against playing," wrote the Italian on X.

## ILL TREATMENT

Video shows suspended Dujardin whipping horse's legs



The video footage that led to Britain's joint-most decorated female Olympian Charlotte Dujardin pulling out of the Paris Games shows her whipping her horse's legs. The three-time Olympic champion, who was provisionally suspended on Tuesday, said it was an "error of judgement" and did not reflect how she trained.

## TENURE CONTINUES

Nita Ambani unanimously re-elected as IOC Member



Nita Ambani was re-elected as the IOC member from India, winning unanimously with 100% vote, at the ongoing 142nd IOC session in Paris. "The election is not just a personal milestone but also a recognition of India's growing influence in the global sporting arena. I share this moment of joy and pride with every Indian," said Nita.

## India's athletics aspirations rest on the golden arm of Neeraj

The reigning Olympic champion insists he is on course for another big performance despite a dip in form; steeplechaser Sable needs to be tactically smarter to finish in the medal bracket; the men's 4x400 relay team will be watched closely

## PARIS 2024



## Ultra Ganesan

When Neeraj Chopra threw to 87.58m on a wet and windy August 7 evening in 2021 in conditions less than ideal to sporting excellence, there were few to applaud the significance of a maiden track and field gold, may medal, for independent India in the history of Olympics.

Since then, however, the man with the golden arm has not only become one of the most recognised and loved Indian athlete across the world but also the most written about.

## Keeping pace

To be fair, his achievements have kept pace with his rising popularity, making Neeraj the most obvious medal prospect at Paris.

Despite some struggle



**History beckons:** Neeraj will look to emulate his Tokyo heroics and become the first Indian individual to win back-to-back gold medals in the Summer Games. FILE PHOTO: K.R. DEEPAK

with achieving and maintaining optimum fitness ahead of the big event and few competitive outings, Neeraj has insisted he is on track for another big one.

## Pushing hard

There are not guarantees though, with Tokyo silver medalist Czechia's Jakub Vadlech pushing hard in both performance and consistency.

There are others, in-

cluding the German duo of Julian Weber and teen sensation Max Dehnring, Finn Oliver Helander, Anderson Peters, compatriot Kishore Jena and of course, Arshad Nadeem.

But Neeraj has been known to bring out his best at big-ticket events and it doesn't get bigger than the Olympics.

On the field, there are a few others who can give a genuine surprise, with Ab-



has fallen short in big competitions, often due to lack of experience or smartness in switching tactics or diffidence on the track.

This time around, India's best steeplechaser ever has admittedly worked more on his strategies and mindset and unless he has a terrible day, should make the finals.

**Parul Jayothi in focus:** On the women's side, the consistently improving Parul Chaudhary can be expected to do the same.

And if she has a good day, Jayothi Varraji may just surprise everyone in the 100m hurdles.

There is also the men's 4x400m relay team, the quartet of Anas, Ajmal, Anmol Jacob and Rajesh Ramesh made the world sit up and take notice at the World Championships last year, pushing powerhouse USA all the way to the heat and finishing fifth in the final, running under three minutes both times.

Although they haven't been able to replicate the same, the recent outing Poland saw the Indians run quick, with Rajesh Ramesh clocking a season's best returning from injury that was the centrepiece that can make the finals.

dulla Aboobacker being the lone possibility in triple jump, and while hoping for an Indian medal might be far-fetched in most other track and field disciplines, there are genuine contenders expected to do at least make it to the top of their respective events, none so more than Avinash Sable in the 3000m steeplechase.

Despite impressive other- wise all through, Sable

## India has a tough passage to traverse in its group

## HOCKEY

## Ultra Ganesan

Three years back, in front of an empty stadium in a world so wrecked by Covid that sports seemed almost an afterthought, the Indian men's hockey team finally overthrew the giant albatross of glorious Olympic history of eight gold medals (with two bronze and a silver) and scripted its own success story with a bronze medal.

Even though it of the 16 players from the side that took the podium in Tokyo head to Paris hoping to get a second medal, this time a different colour, the current Indian side is very different.

There is a new coach in Craig Fulton, who has had just over a year to adjust, adjudge and prepare for the biggest challenge.

He has brought in a new playing style, one that embraces defensive control against the earlier offensive chaos, a style that on paper should be less exciting but more effective but not exactly in the Indians' arc of comfort.

That India managed to keep to his structure with a quick-witted South Africa – and while there can be guesses on the top-four, it is clear that they will be the main opposition lying



**Big ask:** The Indian team's first priority would be to make the quarterfinals and that is easier said than done. X@THEHOCKEYINDIA

in Europe and Australia, also in Group B with India, making it a tricky first round.

Getting through to the quarterfinals should be India's first target and that is easier said than done. There is Harmanpreet Singh – tricky former champion Argentina, and a dangerously rising Ireland, the Indian men have their task cut out to finish among the top four in the group, after which will be the knockout challenges.

Pool A has Netherlands, Spain, Germany, France, Britain and South Africa – and while there can be guesses on the top-four, it is clear that they will be the main opposition lying

Then again, there can be no easy games at the Olympics.

Some of the key members from Tokyo are no longer there. The experienced Rupinderpal Singh has since retired, leaving captain Harmanpreet Singh to largely shoulder the burden of scoring on his own. Simranjeet Singh and Dilpreet Singh have fallen out of favour and Sunder Kumar is no longer the defender he used to be.

There are new faces up front in Abhishek and Sukhjeet, both extremely intelligent and talented. There is Harmanpreet Singh at the back with Sanjay and Rajkumar Pal as playmakers in the middle. And then there is P.R. Sreejesh, having declared his retirement after Paris and hoping to go out on a high one last time. But the combination of youth and experience is a tricky one and Fulton would be hoping he has got the balance right.

## The path to glory will not be straightforward, but the shuttlers will have to persevere

## BADMINTON

## Ashwin Achal

If P.V. Sindhu climbs onto the podium at Paris, she will create history as the first Indian to win three Olympic medals in an individual sport.

The path to glory, however, will not be straightforward. Sindhu has not been in good form this year, with a silver medal at the Malaysia Masters counting as the lone bright spot. The 29-year-old will also have to overcome a tough draw at Paris, which includes potential clashes with World No. 8 He Bingjiao and reigning Olympic champion Chen Yu Fei in the last-16 and quarterfinal respectively.

H.S. Prannoy and Lakshya Sen need to play at their very best to make a mark in the men's singles. World No. 13 Prannoy's last noteworthy performance came in January, when he won a bronze in the Yonex Sunrise India Open. Early exits



**Golden opportunity:** Sindhu will aim to become the first Indian to win three Olympic medals in an individual sport. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

have plagued the 32-year-old since.

While Prannoy should have no trouble advancing from the group stage, Lakshya faces an early minefield. The 22-year-old, semifinalist at the All England Championships and French Open, must surpass World No. 3 Jonatan Christie in Group 'L'. Christie has the wood over

Lakshya, having won their last four meetings. Sindhu and Lakshya will benefit greatly from having Indian legend Prakash Pa-

dukone by their side. Padukone will travel to Paris as the squad mentor.

**Genuine shot at a medal:** The rise of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty as a formidable men's doubles pair adds strength to India's badminton squad. The French Open and Thailand Open champions, Satwiksairaj and Chirag present a genuine chance of claiming a Paris medal. The pair has broken new ground, having won bronze at the 2022

World Championships and gold at the 2022 Asian Games, apart from posing India to a Thomas Cup title.

Satwiksairaj-Chirag, coached by Danish doubles stalwart Matthias Bow, must first focus on a tricky Group 'C' match against World No. 6 Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Rian Ardianto.

To even make it to the Olympics women's doubles main draw is an achievement for Ashwini Ponnappa and Tanisha Crasto. The duo, who only started playing together in January last year, put up excellent shows to force their way into contention.

Ashwini, 34, makes her return to the mega event after her last appearance in the 2016 Rio Games.

Ashwini-Tanisha is up against it in Group 'C', drawn alongside World No. 4 Nami Matsuyama and Chiharu Shida (Japan), and Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist Kim So-yeon and Kong Hee Young (South Korea).

## Indian challenge in other sports

## Y.B. Sarangi

The Indian representation will be limited to just one or a few athletes in several disciplines in the Paris Olympics.

**Weightlifting:** Mirabai Chanu, who bagged a silver in the Tokyo Olympics, will compete in her third consecutive Games. The Indian, who has been troubled by injuries in recent years, has recovered after her hip injury in the Asian Games last year and will be eager to bag a medal in the 49kg category.

**Mixed martial arts:** Mirabai 184kg in the IWF World Cup in April after a five-month injury layoff, needs to lift more than 200kg in Paris to ensure a medal. China's defending champion Hou Zhilui is the overwhelming favourite to win the gold.

**Tennis:** Doubles star Rohan Bopanna will be the centre of attraction at Roland Garros. Bopanna, who will be Australian Open with Matthew Ebden

will also bank on her Tokyo experience. Multiple professional title winners Shaubhankar Sharma and Gaganjeet Bhullar should not find it difficult to adapt. **Sailing:** Vishnu Saravaram and Nethra Kumaran, who will take part in men's and women's dinghy, will appear in their second Olympics. **Swimming:** Srihari Nataraj and 14-year-old girl Dhini-



**Lifting hopes:** Mirabai will look to provide the thrust to India's Paris campaign with a medal. FILE PHOTO: SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

qualify for his second Olympic Games.

**Golf:** Aditi Ashok, competing in her third Games, will draw to appear in her fourth place finish in the Tokyo Games. Diksha Dagar, a Deaflympics gold medalist and a two-time Ladies European Tour winner, will also bank on her Tokyo experience.

**Table tennis:** Multiple professional title winners Shaubhankar Sharma and Gaganjeet Bhullar should not find it difficult to adapt.

**Sailing:** Vishnu Saravaram and Nethra Kumaran, who will take part in men's and women's dinghy, will appear in their second Olympics. **Swimming:** Srihari Nataraj and 14-year-old girl Dhini-

## Archers begin campaign, bank on WC showing

## Y.B. Sarangi

## PARIS

The Indian men and women archers will trust their hard training while trying to overcome last-minute distractions due to the absence of Korean coach Bae Hyeon-ki, an psychologist Gayatri Madhekar as they begin their campaign to win India's first archery medal at the Games.

While the women's competition will be staged in the morning, the men's competition will take place in the afternoon in the grand backdrop of Invalides.

The men's team of B. Dhiraj, Tarundeep Rai and Pravin Jadhav will take confidence from its World Cup Stage-1 gold medal win in Shanghai where it upstaged the elite Koreans.

The women's side, comprising the seasoned Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhanot and Bhajan Kumar, performed well in the World Cup Stage-1 gold medal win in Shanghai where it upstaged the elite Koreans. The women's side, comprising the seasoned Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhanot and Bhajan Kumar, performed well in the World Cup Stage-1 gold medal win in Shanghai where it upstaged the elite Koreans. The women's side, comprising the seasoned Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhanot and Bhajan Kumar, performed well in the World Cup Stage-1 gold medal win in Shanghai where it upstaged the elite Koreans.

## TENURE CONTINUES

# Nita Ambani unanimously re-elected as IOC Member



PTI

▲ Nita Ambani was re-elected as the IOC member from India, winning unanimously with 100% vote, at the ongoing 142nd IOC session in Paris. “This re-election is not just a personal milestone but also a recognition of India’s growing influence in the global sporting arena. I share this moment of joy and pride with every Indian,” said Nita.



IOC headquarters in [Lausanne, Switzerland](#)

<b>Formation</b>	23 June 1894; 130 years ago
<b>Founders</b>	<a href="#">Pierre de Coubertin</a> <a href="#">Demetrios Vikelas</a>
<b>Type</b>	Sports federation (association organised under the laws of the Swiss Confederation)
<b>Headquarters</b>	Olympic House, <a href="#">Lausanne, Switzerland</a>
<b>Membership</b>	107 active members, 41 honorary members, 206 individual National Olympic Committees
<b>Official language</b>	<a href="#">French</a> (reference language), <a href="#">English</a> , and the host country's language when necessary
<b>President</b>	<a href="#">Thomas Bach</a> <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Vice Presidents</b>	<a href="#">Ng Ser Miang</a> <sup>[1]</sup> <a href="#">John Coates</a> <a href="#">Nicole Hoevertsz</a> <a href="#">Juan Antonio Samaranch</a> <a href="#">Salisachs</a>
<b>Director General</b>	<a href="#">Christophe De Kepper</a>

Imported iPhones to still be costlier than other countries

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY, JULY 25, 2024



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HANG SENG: 17,311.05 ▼ 158.31 TSE 100: 83.72 ▼ 2.02 R/€: 90.76 ▲ 0.20 BRENT: \$81.49 ▲ \$0.48 GOLD: ₹68,918 ▼ ₹378

IN THE NEWS

COST OF RAISING FUNDS VIA BONDS TO BE LOWER NOW

To lower the fiscal deficit target to 4.5% of GDP, along with inflows from JPM index bonds, will help ease yields, thereby reducing the cost of raising funds from the bond market, reports Sachin Kumar.

FOOD SUBSIDY MAY OVERSHOOT BE OF ₹2.05 TRN

THE FOOD SUBSIDY outgo in FY25 may see a sharp jump against the Budget estimate of ₹2.05 trillion due to the cost of PDS rice, with stocks being 3.5 times the buffer at present, reports Sandip Das.

HC QUASHES DRI SUMMONS TO HERO'S MUNIAL

THE DELHI HIGH COURT has quashed summons issued to Hero Motor Corp chairman Pawan Munial in a case registered by the DRI relating to foreign currency, reports PTI.

INDIA'S BUSINESS ACTIVITY GROWS TO 3-MONTH HIGH

INDIA'S BUSINESS ACTIVITY grew at a three-month high in July due to strong demand, according to HSBC's flash India composite PMI, reports Reuters.

RESULTS CORNER: L&T profit up 12%, beats Street estimates

Axis Bank profit up 5.7%, flags asset quality

Tesla profit margins worst in five years

Alphabet beats Q2 profit, revenue estimates

FE SPECIAL

Need for a climate finance taxonomy

NUMBER OF INTRA-DAY TRADERS SKYROCKETS: SEBI STUDY

70% of daily traders make losses

AKSHATA GORDE

MORE THAN 70% of daily traders in the equity cash segment made losses in FY23, a study by the Securities and Exchange Bureau of India (Sebi) has shown, reaffirming the perils of intra-day trading.

Similar to futures and options (F&O)

Diwanji's exit to change the face of consumer banking at Kotak

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TV SOMANATHAN, FINANCE SECRETARY

NO GOING BACK TO THE OLD PENSION SCHEME, BUT WE ARE TRYING TO ADDRESS CORE CONCERNS...

LTCG tax hike to serve equity, boost receipts: Somanathan

PRASANTA SAHU & KG NARENDRANATH

CORRECTING THE RATES of capital gains tax was a "necessity in terms of equitable collection of taxes," finance secretary TV Somanathan said on Wednesday, but added that "the rates need not be funded further."

LIBERALLY, capital gains "are a source of rising inequality," mainly because of appreciating financial assets, he said.

THE INCORPORATION of equity-linked income — would hold good, the differential (in the tax incidence on the two instruments) has been known to be justified, he said.

THE RISING share of personal income tax in government receipts (19% now, versus 17% from corporate tax), he said, that in a country where a large number of people have started owning shares, and organisations like EPFO invest in markets, adding to the tax base from companies to individuals "is actually a pro-equity step."

THE INTENT IS ADOPTION OF NEW REGIME, NO DISCUSSION HAPPENING CURRENTLY REGARDING DISCONTINUING THE OLD TAX REGIME

THE INTENT IS ADOPTION OF NEW REGIME, NO DISCUSSION HAPPENING CURRENTLY REGARDING DISCONTINUING THE OLD TAX REGIME

Realty players grapple with indexation move

BAGHAVENDRA KAMATH

A DAY AFTER the Union Budget removed the indexation benefit for the sale of properties, the real estate sector is still coming to grips with the change.

THE FINANCE minister's move to reduce long-term capital gains (LTCG) tax rate from 20% with indexation to 12.5% without indexation for real estate will benefit in almost all cases, the I-T department said.

INDEXATION means adjusting the purchase price of a property for inflation, thereby reducing the gains and ultimately the tax liability.

"NO INDIAN real estate returns are generally in the region of 12-16% per annum, much higher than inflation. The indexation for inflation is in the region of 4-5% depending on the period of holding. Therefore, substantial tax savings are expected to a vast majority of such tax payers," the department said.

BUT industry players have different views. Sanjay Dutt, CEO and managing director at Tata Realty and Infrastructure, said while the government has reduced LTCG tax, it has reduced indexation. So there is no benefit, he said, adding "they should have maintained indexation. How can you ignore inflation? Alternative, they should make it 5%," he said.

Ritesh Mehta, senior director/head - north, east & west, residential services, India, JLL, said

THE ESTATE OF AFFAIRS

I-T dept says the nominal real estate returns are generally in the region of 12-16% per annum

Industry says the move likely to deter sellers in the secondary market due to higher taxable capital gains

Experts say in some cases returns are way below inflation rate if a property is kept for a longer duration

Continued on Page 4

Diwanji's exit to change the face of consumer banking at Kotak

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TUHIN KANTIA PANDEY, CFO, KOTAK SECURITIES

With seemingly less appetite for privatisation in the current political environment, department of financial management and public asset management (DPMAM) secretary Tuhin Kantia Pandey told

Prasanta Sahu that the approach towards capital management is to re-evaluate incremental value for all shareholders and not rush through disinvestments.

THE STRATEGIC sale of LICRI through the current financial year, Pandey added.

Has the government lowered its ambitions on disinvestments? I would say, yes. There is a

change in strategy in a way, the time horizon is a little more flexible in the way you look at value creation and monetisation. We have to keep concentration on value creation. Dividend continues to be important to us. Dividend should be in sync with how an investor looks at it.

So, the government as an investor and minority shareholder as investors, we are trying to align. We want companies to be profitable, push capex which is fruitful and push management for the growth of the companies.

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DISCUSSIONS ON RATIONALISING GST SLABS ARE GOING ON, AND CURRENTLY REGARDING STRUCTURE IS VERY MUCH A POSSIBILITY

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Some complaints and a lot of hope as Paris turns into a stadium

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ANES HUSSAIN

BANGALURU, JULY 24

STARTUP EMPLOYEES WILL not be subjected to higher tax incidence as a result of the changes in the provision related to taxation of buyback of shares announced in the Union Budget.

FROM October 1, share buybacks will be treated like dividend income with recipient investors liable to pay taxes rather than the companies.

HOWEVER, analysts and tax experts say startups usually do not pay back their shares as large, listed companies do. Instead, share transfer takes place to either the promoters or new investors or entities. As such, liquidation of Esops will continue to be treated as secondary sale and taxed at applicable long-term capital gains tax rate, which has now been raised to 12.5% from the earlier 10%.

IN case of a buyback, recipient investors will now pay tax as per their income tax slab, and the incidence in some cases can go up to 40%, including surcharge and cess.

ANISH SHAH, partner, M&A tax and regulatory services at BDO India, said that employees of startups won't get impacted by this, since usually transfer of shares take place and not buyback. "Startups are generally not sitting on a huge pile of cash. Instead, they need funds

through investors," Shah said. "Large, listed companies go for buybacks when they have huge cash reserves, but do not have enough avenues to deploy it. Quite in contrast, startups need funds and Esops is a way to compensate employees in lieu of higher salaries," he added.

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OLYMPICS KICKS OFF EXCITING MOMENT

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SMC Global Securities Ltd Maiden Public Issue of Secured, Rated, Listed, Redeemable Non Convertible Debentures (NCDs) Effective Yield upto 10.40% p.a.\* Issue Size ₹75 Cr. + ₹75 Cr. Min. Investment ₹10,000 (10 NCDs) Tenure (Months) 24/36/60 Allotment on first come first serve basis\*\*

# Man faces action for posing on bonnet of moving car in Spider-Man costume



The man posed on the bonnet of the car in Dwarka, on Monday. *X/delhipolice*

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, JULY 24

DRESSING UP as 'Spider-Man' and posing on the bonnet of a moving car in Dwarka landed a West Delhi resident in trouble who was apprehended by the police on Monday. Besides, the driver and owner of the car were also prosecuted. The Delhi Traffic police took note of the offence after people complained on social media about the episode. The man who dressed up as Spider-Man has been identified as Aditya, 20, who is a Najafgarh resident. The driver was identified as Gaurav Singh, 19, a resident of Mahavir Enclave.

"The car was registered in the name of the driver's father. We

official. "The youngsters were making videos for attention on social media," he said.

A fine of Rs 26,000 was imposed for dangerous driving and other violations, officials said.

According to the police, they received a complaint on social media platform X about a Scorpio car seen on Dwarka roads with a person dressed as Spiderman on its bonnet. Police traced the car and located the occupants near Ramphal Chowk, Dwarka.

"Such reckless behaviour on the roads will not be tolerated, and strict action will be taken against offenders to uphold the law and protect the lives of road users," Delhi Police said as it urged citizens to report any instance of dangerous driving or traffic violations promptly.

# India successfully flight-tests Ph-II ballistic missile defence system

*New Delhi:* India successfully flight-tested the second phase of its ballistic missile defence system Wednesday. The target missile was launched at 4.20pm mimicking an adversary ballistic missile from launching complex IV at Abdul Kalam island off coast of Odisha.

It was detected by the weapon system radar and the AD interceptor system was activated, according to a government statement.

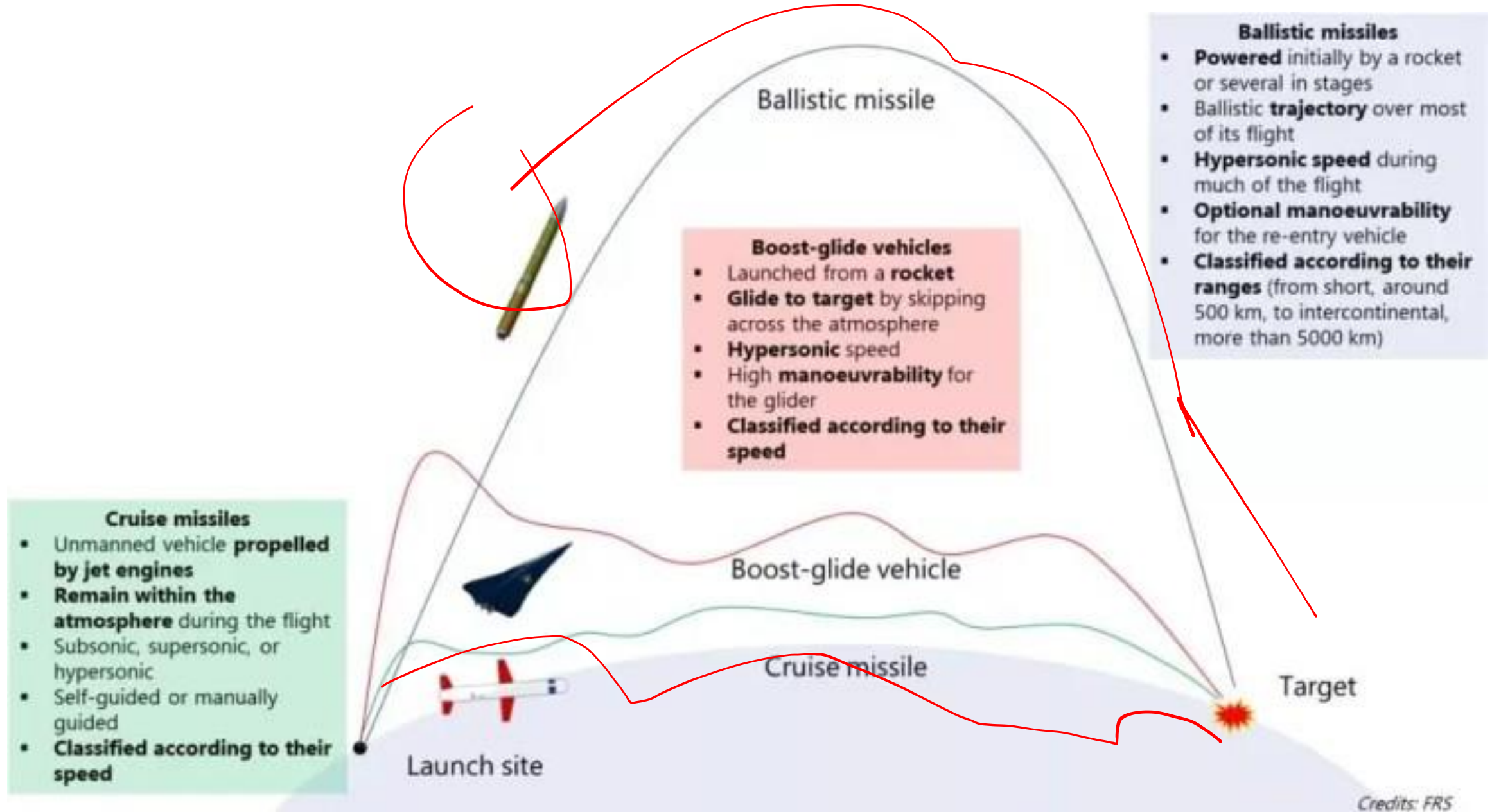
The interceptor AD endo-atmospheric missile was launched at 4.24 pm from launching complex III at Chandipur. The flight test fully met all the trial objectives validating a complete network-centric warfare weapon system consisting of long range sensors, low latency communication system, and MCC and Advance Interceptor missiles, the statement said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh complimented the DRDO for successful flight test and stated it has again demonstrated India's ballistic missiles defence capability. DRDO chief Dr Samir V Kamat congratulated the entire team for their untiring effort and contribution. **ENS**

**Table 1 – Key characteristics of ballistic and cruise missiles**

Characteristics	Ballistic missiles	Cruise missiles
Range	From low to very high <i>Up to 15 000 km</i>	Mostly around 1 000 km <i>Up to 4 000 km</i>
Altitude	High <i>Easily detectable</i>	Low <i>Hard to detect</i>
Precision	Low – around a few hundred metres <i>Fit for large targets</i>	High – a few metres <i>Fit for small and mobile targets</i>
Speed	Up to 25 000 km/h at impact <i>Very hard to intercept</i>	Around 1 000 km/h <i>Possibility to intercept</i>

Data source: EPRS.





SINGAPORE, WHICH SUBSISTS ON IMPORTED FOOD, IS LOOKING TO SECURE ITS FUTURE WITH NEW WAYS OF FEEDING PEOPLE

# In Singapore, customers can now buy meat grown in a lab

SUI-LEE WEE

SINGAPORE, JULY 24

IT WAS a remarkable moment in the annals of food, perhaps even humanity: A store in Singapore started selling lab-grown meat directly to the general public in May.

On a recent Saturday, visitors to the store, Huber's Butchery, watched as a chef sautéed filets — 3% of which were generated from chicken cells and the rest from plant proteins — and served them in taco shells with avocado, pico de gallo and coriander.

It looked, cooked and tasted

like chicken. Sascha Wenninger, 39, put three packs of the meat in his shopping basket. "I like eating meat, and if I can do it without animal cruelty, it's ideal," he said. Others were not so enthused about meat cultivated in a lab. "Why eat something artificial when you can get fresh live chicken from nature?" said Philippe Ritoux, 58.

The city-state, which is smaller than New York City, has spent tens of millions of dollars to study novel ways of producing food because it has very little land to farm and imports 90% of its food. It has looked at urban



A shopper at Huber's Butchery, which is selling lab grown meat, in Singapore on July 13. *NYT*



and vertical agriculture, approved insects for human consumption and given generous subsidies to cultivated meat startups. Singapore became the first country to approve a lab-grown, or "cultivated meat" product for commercial sale in 2020 (the US followed two years later, but Florida banned it in May) and has since given the green light to other futuristic products including a protein-rich powder synthesised from air and a concoction that does not require animal cells to grow meat in a lab. "Before Singapore, cultivated meat was completely science fiction," said

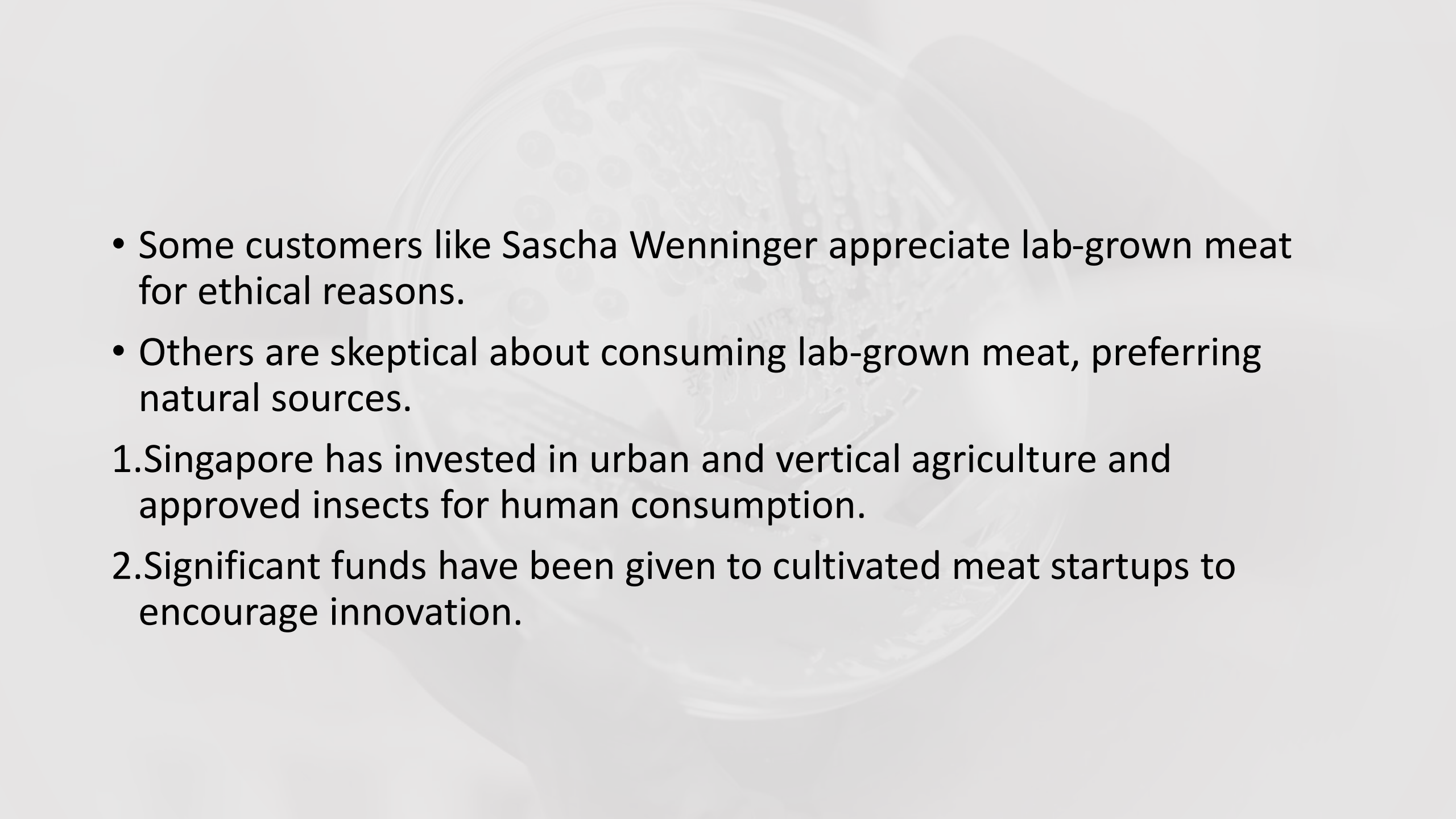
Josh Tetrick, co-founder of Eat Just, the company behind the cultivated meat being sold at Huber's. Consequently, any success Singapore has could have global significance. But for many experts, lab-grown meat has failed to live up to its promise of replacing traditional meat and reining in climate change by reducing greenhouse gases that are emitted from livestock farming.

The price tag of the quarter-pound bags of cultivated meat at Huber's — 7.20 Singapore dollars, about \$5.30 — is a testament to how incredibly expensive it is to produce it. "There are enormous

scaling challenges between where we are and where we need to get to, and those scaling challenges are not guaranteed to be solved," Tetrick said. Partly because of this, new funding for lab-grown meat startups is drying up. Before it began retail sales, cultivated meat in Singapore was available only in the restaurant within Huber's. Starting in January 2023, Huber's sold a sandwich with fries and greens and a pasta dish with spring vegetable orzo. Both dishes were priced at 18.50 Singapore dollars and heavily subsidized by Eat Just's subsidiary, Good Meat. *NYT*

epaper.indianexpress.com

- 
- 
1. A store in Singapore, Huber's Butchery, started selling lab-grown meat directly to the public in May.
  2. The lab-grown meat consists of chicken cells and plant proteins, served in various dishes.
  3. Singapore approved the first lab-grown meat product for commercial sale in 2020.

- 
- Some customers like Sascha Wenninger appreciate lab-grown meat for ethical reasons.
  - Others are skeptical about consuming lab-grown meat, preferring natural sources.
1. Singapore has invested in urban and vertical agriculture and approved insects for human consumption.
  2. Significant funds have been given to cultivated meat startups to encourage innovation.

- 
- Lab-grown meat faces challenges such as high production costs and scalability issues. Despite the challenges, Singapore continues to explore new ways to secure its food future.
- 



- Consider the following statements regarding the lab-grown meat initiative in Singapore:

1. Singapore started ~~selling lab-grown meat directly to the public in May 2023.~~

2. Lab-grown meat in Singapore is ~~made from chicken cells and plant proteins.~~

3. Singapore was the first country to approve lab-grown meat for ~~commercial sale in 2020.~~

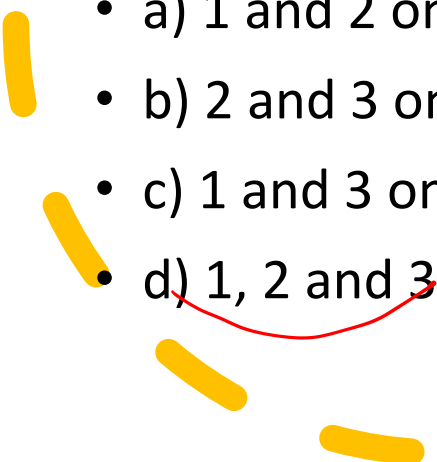
- Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only

- b) 2 and 3 only


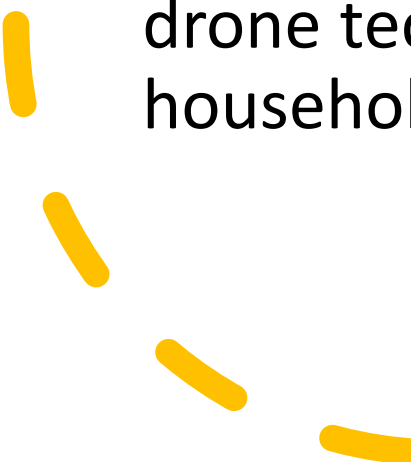
- c) 1 and 3 only

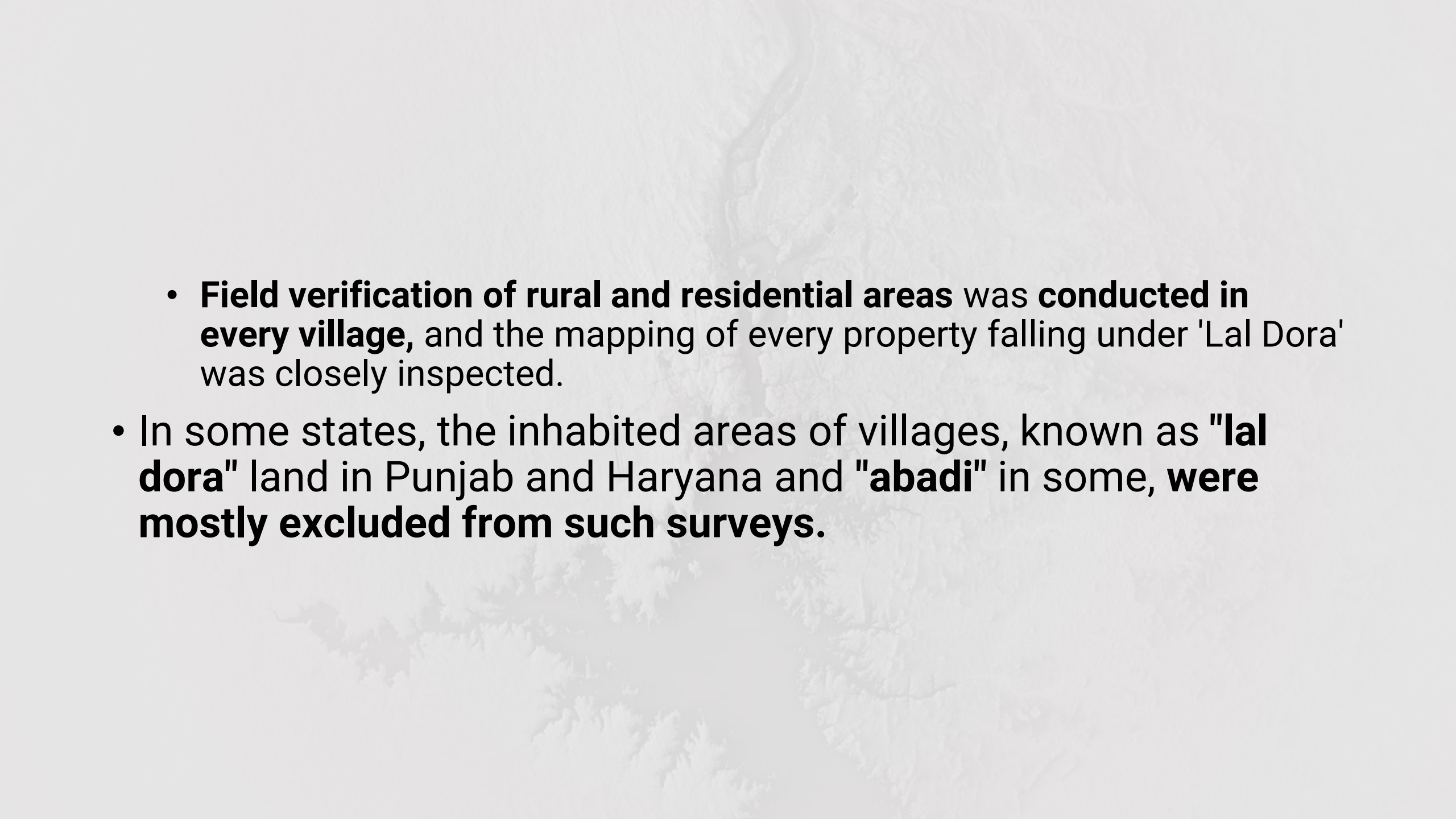
- d) 1, 2 and 3



# Lal Dora-Free Haryana

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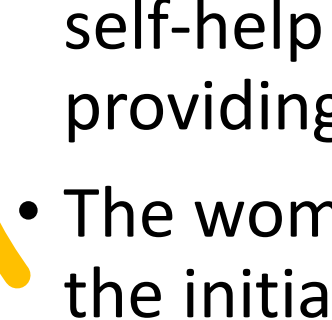
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- All villages of Haryana have been made Lal Dora-free.
  - The state government launched a scheme to make villages "Lal Dora-free" on Good Governance Day on 25th December 2019.
  - It is a reformative step towards the establishment of clear ownership of property in rural inhabited areas by mapping land parcels using drone technology and providing a 'Record of Rights' to village household owners with the issuance of legal ownership cards.
- 

- 
- **Field verification of rural and residential areas** was **conducted in every village**, and the mapping of every property falling under 'Lal Dora' was closely inspected.
  - In some states, the inhabited areas of villages, known as "**lal dora**" land in Punjab and Haryana and "**abadi**" in some, **were mostly excluded from such surveys.**



- Many Indian village **communities lacked documented land rights**, relying instead on **actual possession to claim ownership** of land in residential areas.
- Rural property owners **cannot use their properties as financial assets to obtain loans** from banks without a legal document.

Namo Drone Didi scheme

- 
- The Finance Ministry has allocated **Rs 500 crore for the Nammo Drone Didi scheme** and **Rs 365.64 crore for National Mission on Natural Farming** for 2024-25.
  - **Nammo Drone Didi scheme**
  - It is an initiative aimed at providing drones to **15,000** selected women self-help groups (SHGs) during the period 2023-24 to 2025-2026 for providing rental services to farmers.
  - The women beneficiaries are trained to become drone pilots under the initiative.
- 

---

- **How will Drone Didis help farmers?**

- The trained women drone pilots will help farmers in various agricultural operations like **fertilizer spraying, sowing seeds and crop monitoring**.
- The initiative intends to modernize Indian agricultural practices and enhance productivity by placing the cutting edge technology at the disposal of rural women.
- The Centre will provide each SHG identified a **subsidy up to 80 per cent** towards the cost of a drone or a maximum of Rs 8 lakh.

# Tinzaparin

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- 
- Researchers found tinzaparin significantly reduced damage to human cells due to spitting cobra venom.

- **About Tinzaparin**

- Tinzaparin is a type of medication known as a low molecular weight heparin (LMWH).

- It is used to prevent and treat blood clots, particularly deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism (PE).
- It works by inhibiting certain clotting factors in the blood, thereby reducing the risk of blood clots forming or worsening.

- 



- **Recent research**

- Tinzaparin blocks venom's interaction with cell receptors, preventing damage.
- It mimics heparan sulphate, which the venom targets, thereby reducing toxicity.
- Researchers are planning human clinical trials following promising results.

## Importance

The study's findings may lead to a breakthrough in snakebite treatment, especially in regions with high snakebite morbidity.

Tinzaparin, a widely available and inexpensive drug, could revolutionize snakebite treatment.





# World's Forests 2024 Report



The theme for this year is “Accelerating forest solutions through innovation.”



Key highlights include a decrease in the deforestation rate to 10.2 million hectares per year in 2015-2020 from 15.8 million hectares per year in 1990-2000, with India ranking 3rd for average annual net gain in forest area from 2010-2020.

**Non-timber forest products** support the livelihoods of about **275 million** people in India.

There is a **pressing need for innovation in the forest sector to address climate change stress** through resilient forest and land management strategies against wildfires and pests.

**Innovations Enhancing Forest Potential:**

**Technological:** Remote sensing and cloud computing improve forest management by generating high-quality data (e.g., NASA and ESA's Landsat and Copernicus programs).

**Social, Policy, and Institutional:** Engaging women, youth, and Indigenous People through dynamic innovations (e.g., **India's Joint Forest Management Programme mandates 1/3rd female representation** on committees).

**Financial:** Innovations to enhance the value of standing forests and boost restoration efforts (e.g., **SCRIPT – Soft Commodity Risk Platform**).

# Dark oxygen



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Scientists have discovered “dark oxygen” being produced in the deep ocean by metallic nodules on the seafloor, challenging the belief that oxygen production requires sunlight.

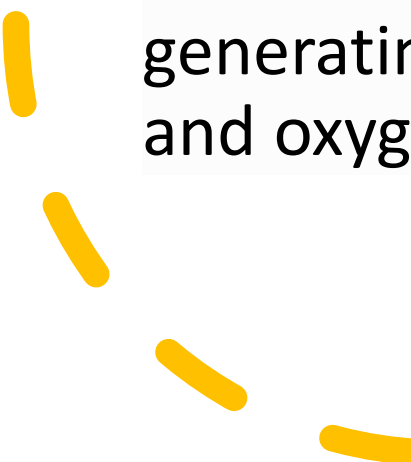


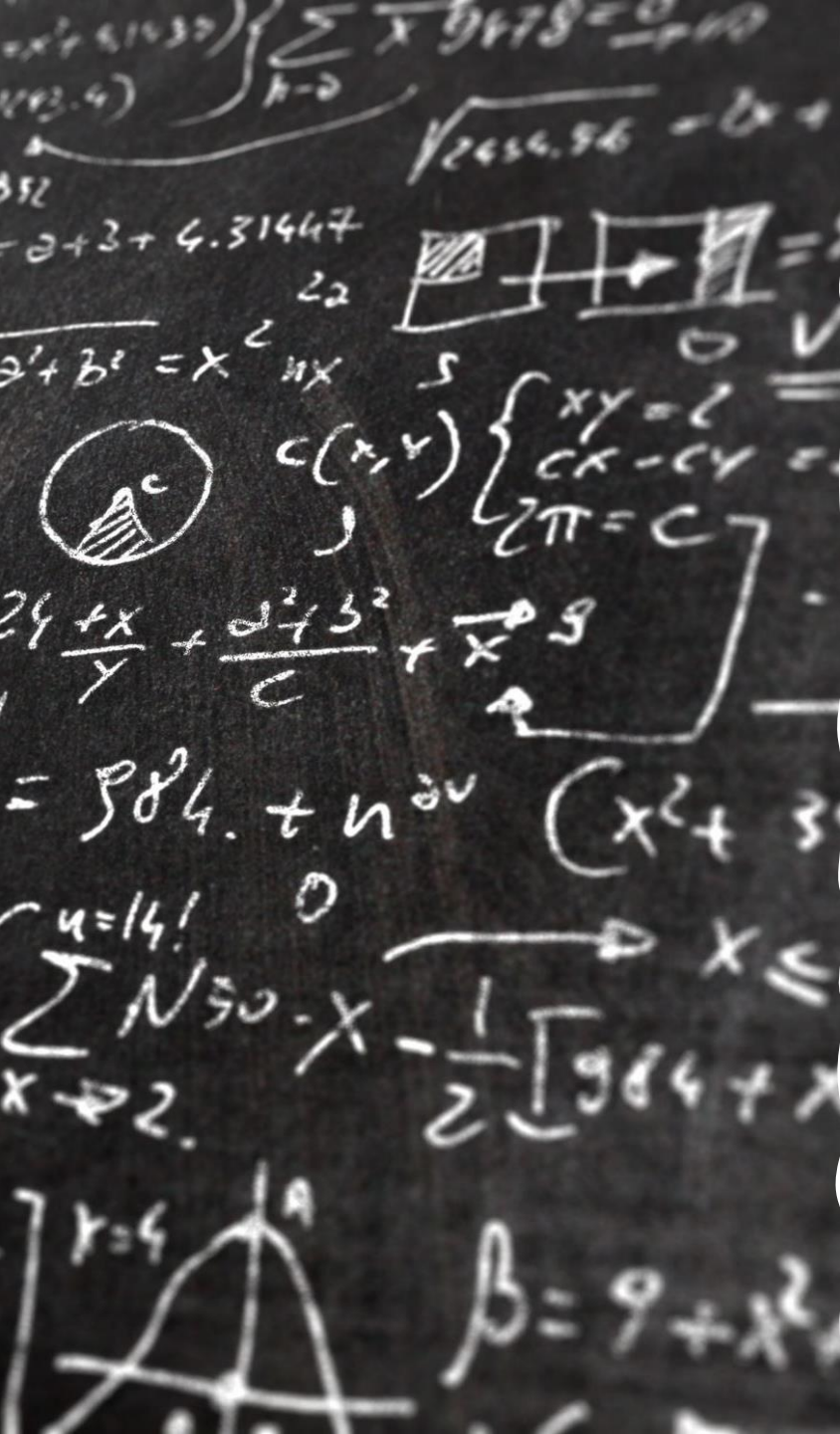
- What is “Dark Oxygen”?

- “Dark oxygen” is oxygen produced in the deep ocean, independent of sunlight, by metallic nodules on the seafloor.

- How is it being produced?

- These naturally occurring metallic nodules act like batteries, generating electric currents that split seawater (H<sub>2</sub>O) into hydrogen and oxygen





# Word: Ephemeral

- 
- **Part of Speech:** Adjective
  - **Definition:** Lasting for a very short time.
  - **Example Sentence:** The beauty of the sunrise was ephemeral, fading away within minutes as the day progressed.



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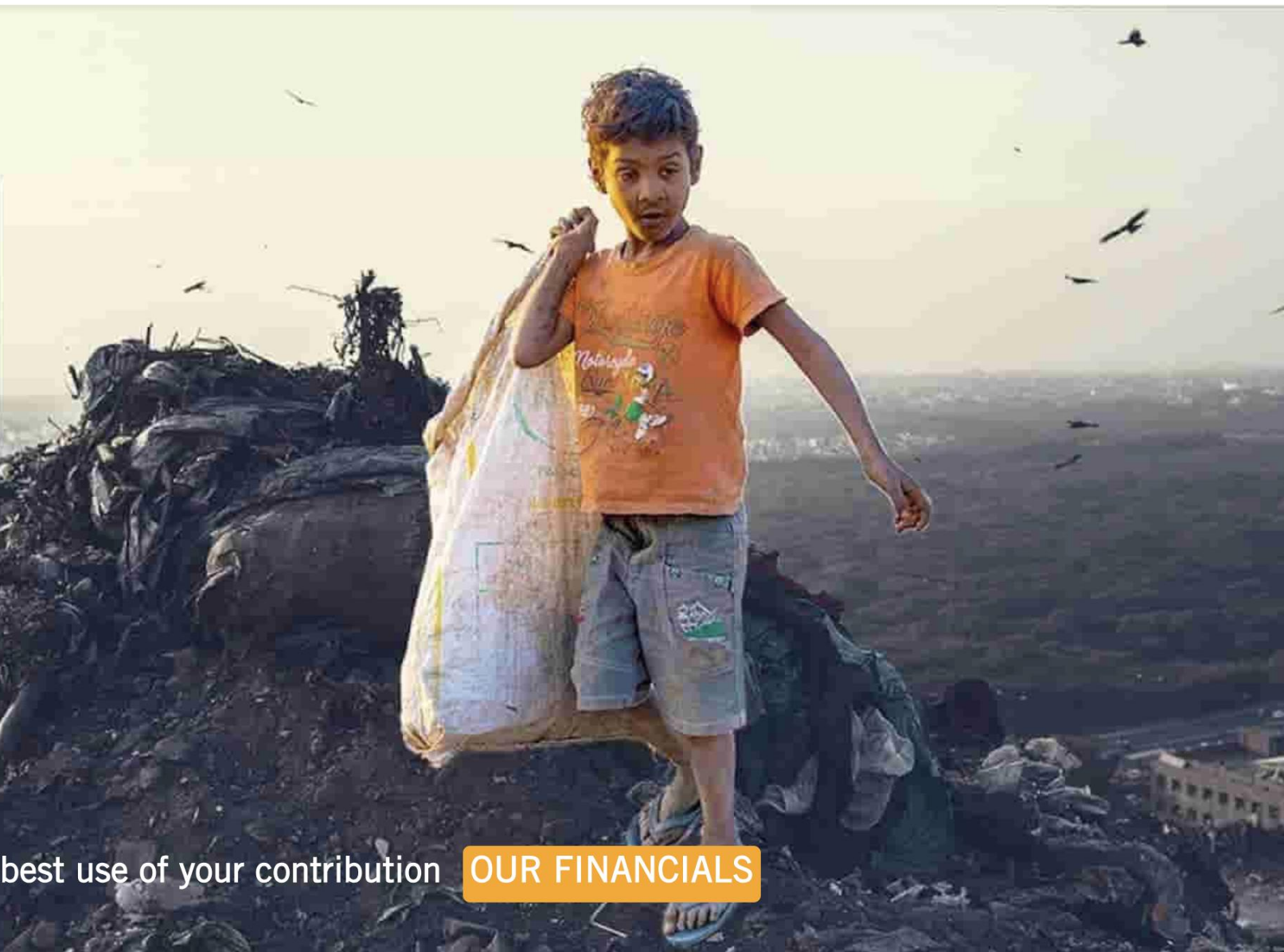





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A group of people are clapping in a dimly lit room. The focus is on the hands and forearms of several individuals, some in the foreground and some blurred in the background. The lighting is soft and moody, with a blueish tint. In the top left corner, there is a solid orange horizontal bar and a cluster of small, faint red dots of varying sizes.

Thank you  
guys.

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