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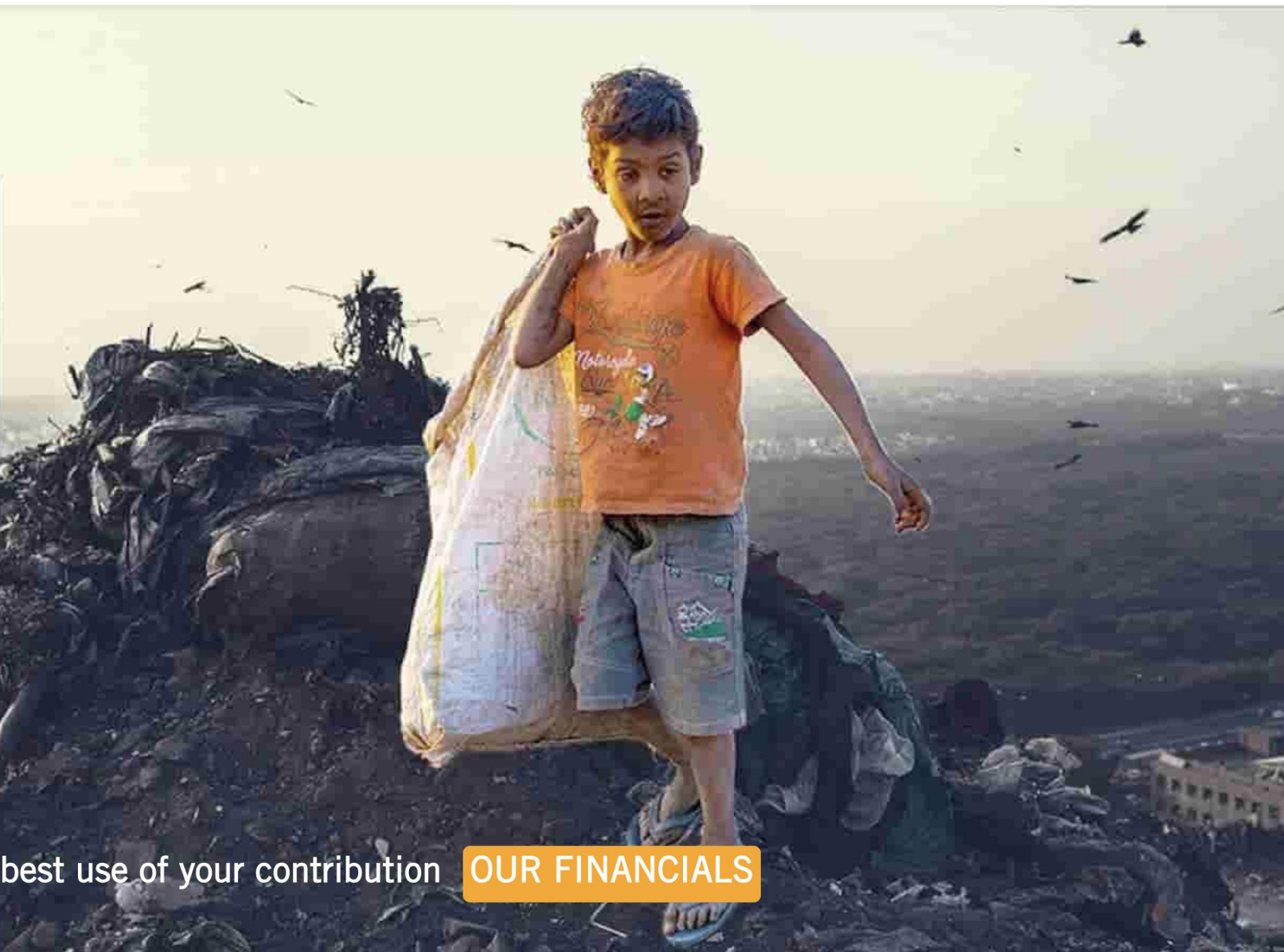




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DAMAGE CONTROL
Tungabhadra dam gate repair begins
STATES » PAGE 3

TEMPLE TRAGEDY
Seven dead, 16 injured in Bihar stampede
NEWS » PAGE 4

MANIPUR CONFLICT
CM calls for survey to reorganise districts
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RAISING THE VIGIL
Disinformation, AI and 'cyber chakravayuh'
There is a growing danger of digital threats
EDITORIAL » PAGE 5

COLLECTIONS IMPROVE
Net direct tax kitty surges by 22.5%
BUSINESS » PAGE 12

INSIDE



Minorities issue being used to 'defame nation'
NEW DELHI
Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Monday said that a campaign was being run across the globe to project minorities were not safe in India. He accused Opposition parties of defaming the country in foreign media. » PAGE 4

20 Afghan Sikhs gets citizenship under CAA
NEW DELHI
Twenty Sikhs from Afghanistan, part of the first group of Afghan Sikhs who had applied for citizenship online nearly 100 days ago, have been accorded citizenship under the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019 in the past one week in New Delhi. » PAGE 4

SC declines plea against decision to hold fresh NET
NEW DELHI
A three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain a petition challenging a decision of the Centre to conduct the University Grants Commission National Eligibility Test afresh from August 21. » PAGE 6

Iran could launch 'significant' attack this week: US
WASHINGTON
Iran could launch a "significant" attack on Israel as soon as this week, the House said on Monday. "We have to be prepared for what could be a significant attack," National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said. » PAGE 14

Cloud over SEBI chief: BJP rejects JPC probe

It alleges 'wider conspiracy' between Congress, Hindenburg Research to 'destabilise economy' and 'crash the stock market'; Congress threatens nationwide protest if demand is not met; Congress urges Supreme Court to transfer the probe against Adani group to the CBI or a special investigation team given the likelihood that SEBI is compromised

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress on Monday continued to spar over Hindenburg Research's allegations against Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch, with the ruling party rejecting the Opposition demand for a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe.

The BJP alleged that the Congress was part of a "wider conspiracy" involving Hindenburg Research and "a tool kit" gang to destabilise the Indian economy, crash the stock market on a Monday and create economic hardships.

However, investors had seen through the plot as the markets remained stable, former Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad told a



press conference. Mr. Prasad said billionaire George Soros is an investor in Hindenburg and is known to be "running propaganda against the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi".

It is obvious that Hindenburg is in the same game... the pathological hatred of the Congress leadership against the Prime Minister has developed into a hatred against India itself," Mr. Prasad said, adding that the report was "fictitious".

"Control Raj" "Does Congress want to go back to the same era of 'Control Raj' during Jawahar Nehru when India was faced with an economic hardship? It was D. V. Narasimha Rao who opened the economy. The tool kit gang is not at all concerned about the progress, but what has happened to the Congress which has ruled the country for 55 years?" Mr. Prasad asked.

Why is the government afraid of a JPC? Doesn't it imply that there is something to hide and be afraid of? I.E.A. VENUGOPAL, Congress general secretary (organisation)

opened to the Congress which has ruled the country for 55 years?" Mr. Prasad asked. Stripping up its attack on the Modi government over the latest Hindenburg report, the Congress threatened to launch a nationwide protest if its demand for a JPC was not accepted. The principal Opposition party urged the Supreme Court to transfer the probe against the Adani group to the Central Bureau of Investigation or a Special Investigation Team "given the likelihood that SEBI is compromised".

"The SEBI chairperson, responsible for regulating the stock market, ensuring its credibility and taking action against scams, allegedly has investments in shell companies (associated with Adani Group). How does the government view this news? It is astonishing that despite such a serious allegation, Mr. Buch remains in the same position," Congress general secretary (organisation), K.C. Venugopal said in a Twittergram.

"The Prime Minister's report on Saturday, the benchmark stock indices on Monday ended range-bound. FULL REPORT » PAGE 12

Stock markets remain calm

Lalatesh Mishra MUMBAI

Contrary to fears of a massive fall owing to the publication of the Hindenburg Research

silence on the matter amounts to destruction of credibility," he added. On Saturday, Hindenburg Research has alleged that Ms. Buch and her husband had undisclosed investments in obscure offshore funds in Bermuda and Mauritius, the same entities allegedly used by Vinod Adani - the elder brother of Adani group chairman Gautam Adani - to round-trip funds and inject into stock markets. Mr. Venugopal asked "why is the government afraid of a JPC?"

later, SEBI has revealed that a critical investigation, likely regarding whether Adani violated Rule 19A relating to minimum public shareholding, remains incomplete, he added.

"The fact is that SEBI's seeming inability to close two of its 24 investigations delayed the publication of its findings for over a year. This delay conveniently allowed the Prime Minister to navigate an entire general election without addressing his role in facilitating his close friend's illicit activities," Mr. Ramesh said.

"The Supreme Court, empowered by the Constitution, must transfer the investigation to the CBI or Special Investigation Team given the likelihood of SEBI's compromise. At a minimum, the SEBI chairperson must resign to restore SEBI's integrity," he added.

Adieu Paris



Flag bearers Manu Bhaker and P.V. Sindhu led the Indian contingent at the closing ceremony at the Paris Olympics on Monday, Los Angeles will host the 2028 edition of the Games. (REPORT ON PAGE 10)

Statistical effects pulled inflation to 59-month low of 3.54% in July

Milan Ghose NEW DELHI

Inflation in India's consumer prices cooled dramatically from 5.3% in June to an almost five-year low of 3.54% in July, with food price rise moderating to a 12-month low of 0.6% from a six-month high of 9.4% a month earlier.

However, this was driven by the base effect from last July when retail inflation stood at 7.4% and the food index was 11.7%, rather than a tangible relief for consumer wallets with overall prices rising 1.4% over June and food prices ticking up by 2.8%. The decline in headline inflation was accompanied by a rise in core inflation (excluding food and energy prices), which is estimated at 3.4% from 3.5% in June, in June, economists noted.

Inflation faced by urban consumers dropped to just under 3% in July, from 4.4% in June, while rural consumers experienced a latest higher price rise of 4.1%, down from 5.7% in June. Food price rise was also higher in rural India at 5.9% compared with 4.6% in urban areas. In June, rural food inflation was lower at 9.5% while urban food prices rose to 9.6%.

July's inflation pace is not only the slowest recorded since September 2019, but also marks the first time since then that it

has dropped below the 4% median target pursued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its monetary policy framework. With the RBI raising its inflation projection for the July to September quarter to 4.4% at its latest monetary policy review last week, price rise is expected to regain momentum over this month and next.

Vegetables inflation recorded the biggest drop in sequential terms, falling to 0.2% in July from 20.2% in June. While the Statistics and Programme Implementation Ministry emphasised that July clocked a decline in all groups of the Consumer Price Index, with a significant dip in vegetables, fruits and spices sub-groups, economists flagged that some pain points remain.



IIT-Madras retains top spot in NIRF ranking for sixth consecutive year

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Indian Institute of Technology, Madras is the best educational institution in the country for the sixth time since 2019, shows the overall ranking based on parameters identified and defined in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF).

In the 2024 rankings, released here by Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Monday, the IIT-Madras also retained the first position in engineering for the ninth year since 2016. The Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru is the top institution under both the universities and research categories, retaining both positions

since 2016 and 2021, respectively. The ranks were given in 16 categories this year, three more than last year. Open universities, skill universities and State public universities are the three new categories. Mr. Pradhan said the Ministry is considering "sustainability" as a criterion, probably from next year.

While the IIT-Madras had continued to be the top management institute for the fifth consecutive year since 2020, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi is the best place to study medical sciences as it retained the top spot for the seventh consecutive year. The IIT-Bombay is the best institutional for nursing dental science. Colleges from New Delhi remained at the top in the colleges category with Hindu College and Miranda House being the top two. The IIT Bombay retained its first position in architecture and planning for the fourth consecutive year. The National Law School of

Top institutions in India

The table shows the top 10 overall institutions and Central and State universities, according to India Rankings, 2024. IIT-Madras secured the top spot in several categories.

Rank	Overall	Top Universities	State Universities
1	IIT Madras	IIT, Bangalore	Anna University
2	IIT, Bangalore	Jawahar Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research	Jadavpur University
3	IIT Bombay	Jamia Millia Islamia	Savitribai Phule Pune University
4	IIT Delhi	Indira Gandhi University	Calicut University
5	IIT Kharagpur	Banaras Hindu University	Central Board of Secondary Education
6	IIT Roorkee	University of Delhi	Orissa University of Technology
7	Anna, Coimbatore	Anna University, Indraprastha	Andhra University
8	IIT Bhubaneswar	Aligarh Muslim University	Bharathiar University
9	IIT Guwahati	Vellopper University	Anna University
10	JNU	Velloper Institute of Technology	CUPED

India University, Bengaluru, retained the top spot in the school, for the seventh year in a row. The Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi is the best institution for study agriculture and allied sectors, according to

Fresh draft Broadcasting Bill likely after review: govt.

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Information and Broadcasting Ministry on Monday extended the time for receiving feedback on the draft Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill till October 15, stating that a fresh draft would be published after detailed consultations with stakeholders. The draft bill was placed in the public domain on September 30, and the Ministry is considering discussion of institutions in the neighbourhood, including the media, to make it more comprehensive. REPORT » PAGE 5

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The Hindu Bureau
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The IIT-Bombay is the best ‘innovational institution’ followed by the IIT-

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Ranks	Overall	Top universities	State universities
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2	IISc, Bengaluru	Jawaharlal Nehru University	Jadavpur University
3	IIT-Bombay	Jamia Millia Islamia	Savitribai Phule University
4	IIT-Delhi	MAHE, Manipal	Calcutta University
5	IIT-Kanpur	Banaras Hindu University	Punjab University
6	IIT-Kharagpur	University of Delhi	Osmania University
7	AIIMS, Delhi	Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham	Andhra University
8	IIT-Roorkee	Aligarh Muslim University	Bharathiar University
9	IIT-Guwahati	Jadavpur University	Kerala University
10	JNU	Vellore Institute of Technology	CUSAT



Madras, and IIT-Delhi.

Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi is the best college for pharmacy, while Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences, Chennai is the best college to pursue dental science.

Colleges from New Delhi

remained at the top in the colleges category with Hindu College and Miranda House being the top two. The IIT-Roorkee retained its first position in architecture and planning for the fourth consecutive year. The National Law School of

India University, Bengaluru was named the best law school, for the seventh year in a row.

The Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi is the best institution to study agriculture and allied sectors, according to

the rankings. Anna University, Chennai tops the State public universities category and Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi is the best open university. Symbiosis Skill and Professional University, Pune emerged the best in the skill universities category.

Jawaharlal Nehru University and Jamia Millia Islamia, both in New Delhi, have secured the second and third ranks in the university category. Jadavpur University, Kolkata and Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune are the second and third best universities under State public universities category. St. Stephen's College, New Delhi and Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira, Howrah shared third place in col-

leges category. IITs in Madras and Delhi secured second and third places in research institution subject.

Increased participation

A total of 6,517 institutions participated in the ranking under overall, category-specific or domain-specific rankings. “In all, 10,845 applications for ranking were made by these 6,517 unique institutions under various categories/domains,” the Ministry said in a release, highlighting a “noticeable increase” in institutional participation in the rankings exercise.

Mr. Pradhan said the Centre is considering inclusion of institutions in the neighbouring countries in the ranking to make it more comprehensive.

IIT-Madras Ranking

Retained top spot in NIRF ranking for the sixth consecutive year.

IIT-Madras is the best educational institution in India since 2019.

Retained first position in engineering category for the ninth year since 2016

2024 NIRF Rankings

Rankings released by Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

IIT-Madras topped overall and engineering categories.

IISc Bengaluru:

- Topped the universities and research categories.

New Categories Introduced:

- Open universities, skill universities, and state public universities.

Consideration for Next Year:

- "Sustainability" as a criterion in rankings.

Top	Top Institutions in Specific Categories
Top	IIM-Ahmedabad: Top management institute for the fifth consecutive year.
Place	AIIMS, New Delhi: Best place to study medical sciences for the seventh consecutive year.
Best	IIT-Bombay: Best 'innovational institution.'
Best	Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi: Best college for pharmacy.
Best	Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences, Chennai: Best college for dental science.
Best	India Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi: Best institution for agriculture and allied sectors.
Law	National Law School of India University, Bengaluru: Best law school for the seventh year.

Increased Participation

6,517 institutions participated in 2024 rankings.

Total of 10,845 applications for rankings across various categories.

Highlighted by Ministry as a "noticeable increase" in institutional participation.

Consideration to include institutions from neighboring countries in the rankings for comprehensiveness.

Best Universities by Category


State Public Universities: Anna University, Chennai.

Open University: Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi.

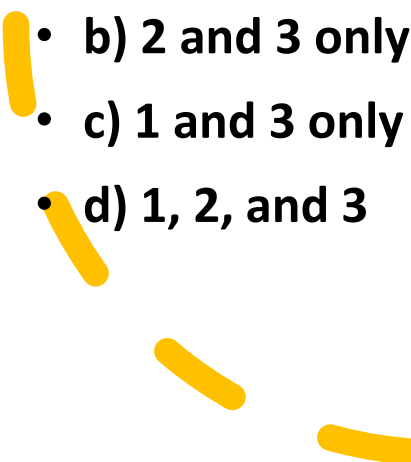
Skill University: Symbiosis Skill and Professional University, Pune.

Top Universities:

- Jadavpur University, Kolkata
- Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune
- Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi

- 
- Consider the following statements regarding the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2024:
 1. IIT-Madras has retained the top position in the overall NIRF rankings for the sixth consecutive year.
 2. The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru has topped both the universities and research categories.
 3. AIIMS, New Delhi, has been ranked the best place to study medical sciences for the tenth consecutive year.
 - Which of the above statements is/are correct?

• **Answer:**

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

INDIA'S TOP 5

	2024	2023
Overall		
IIT Madras	1	1
IISc Bengaluru	2	2
IIT Bombay	3	4
IIT Delhi	4	3
IIT Kanpur	5	5

Universities

IISc Bengaluru	1	1
JNU	2	2
Jamia Millia Islamia	3	3
Manipal Academy of Higher Education	4	6
BHU	5	5

	2024	2023
Engineering		
IIT Madras	1	1
IIT Delhi	2	2
IIT Bombay	3	3
IIT Kanpur	4	4
IIT Kharagpur	5	6

Medical

AIIMS Delhi	1	1
PGIMER Chandigarh	2	2
CMC, Vellore	3	3
NIMHANS Bangalore	4	4
JIPMER Puducherry	5	5

Adieu Paris



Flag bearers: Manu Bhaker and P.R. Sreejesh led the Indian contingent at the closing ceremony of the Paris Olympics on Monday. Los Angeles will host the 2028 edition of the Games. ANI (REPORT ON: PAGE 16)

India at the 2024 Summer Olympics



Flag of India

IOC code

IND

NOC

Indian Olympic Committee

Website

olympic.ind.in 

in Paris, France

26 July 2024 – 11 August 2024

Competitors

110 in 16 sports

**Flag bearers
(opening)**

P. V. Sindhu and Sharath Kamal

**Flag bearers
(closing)**

Manu Bhaker and P. R. Sreejesh

Medals

Gold

0

Silver

1

Bronze

5

Total

6

Ranked 71st

India at the Olympics



Flag of India

IOC code

IND

NOC

Indian Olympic Association

Website

olympic.ind.in 

Medals

Gold

Silver

Bronze

Total

Ranked

10

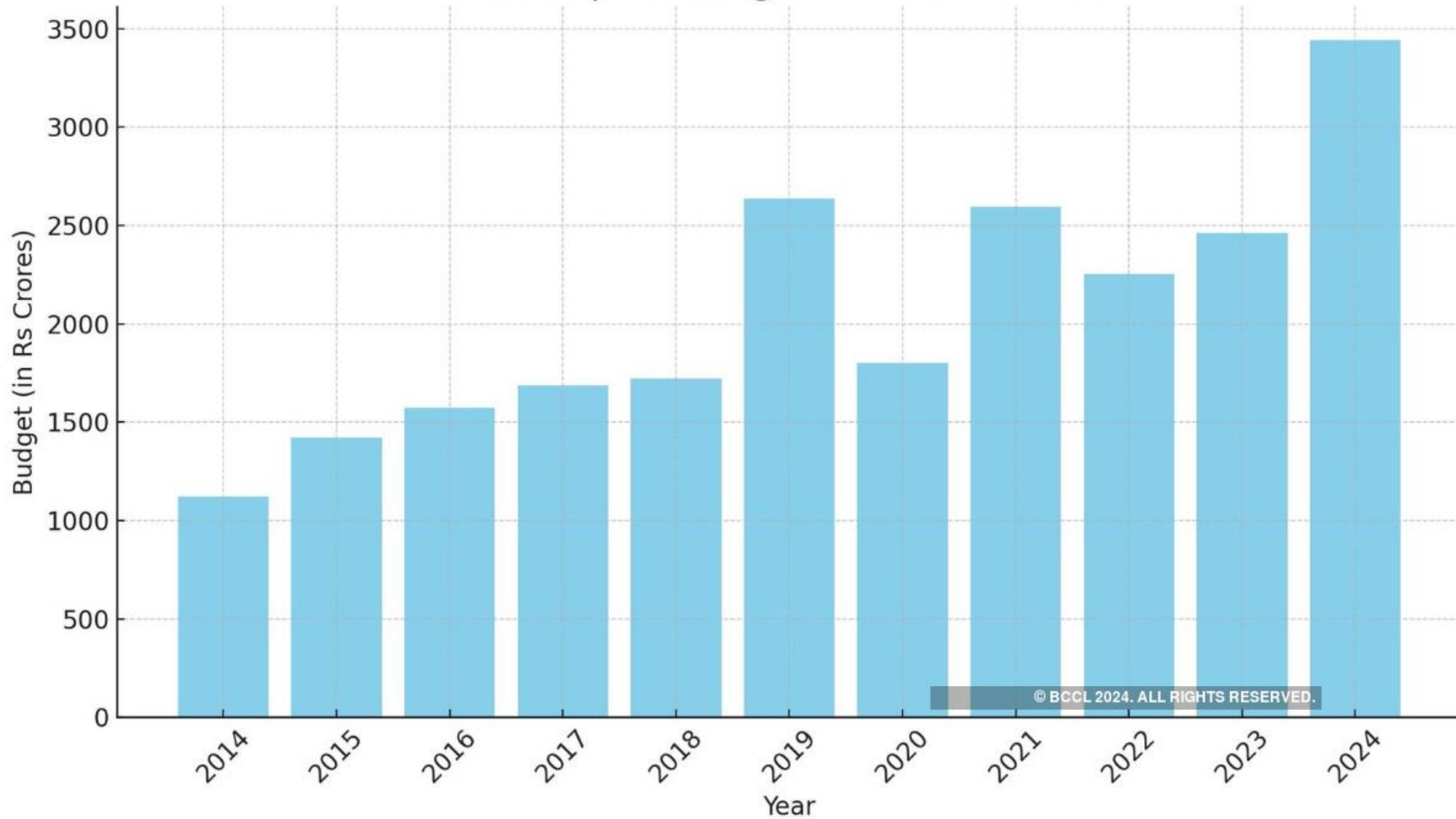
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21

41

58th

India's Sports Budget from 2014 to 2024



Rooted in the Soviet model, the Chinese system relies on the state to scout tens of thousands of children for full-time training at more than 2,000 government-run sports schools.

To maximize its golden harvest, Beijing has focused on less prominent sports that are underfunded in the West or sports that offer multiple Olympic gold medals.

It's no coincidence that nearly 75 percent of the Olympic golds China has won since 1984 are in just six sports: table tennis, shooting, diving, [badminton](#), gymnastics and weight lifting.



More than two-thirds of China's golds have come courtesy of female champions, and nearly 70 percent of its Tokyo delegation are women.

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More than two-thirds of China's golds have come courtesy of female champions, and nearly 70 percent of its Tokyo delegation are women.

POPULATION-TO-MEDAL RATIO OF INDIAN STATES (PARIS OLYMPICS 2024)

India Medals

6

**Individual
Medals**

5

**Team Medal(s)
in Hockey**

1



States



Medals



Population

**Population
Per Medal**

Haryana

4

28 M

7 M

Maharashtra

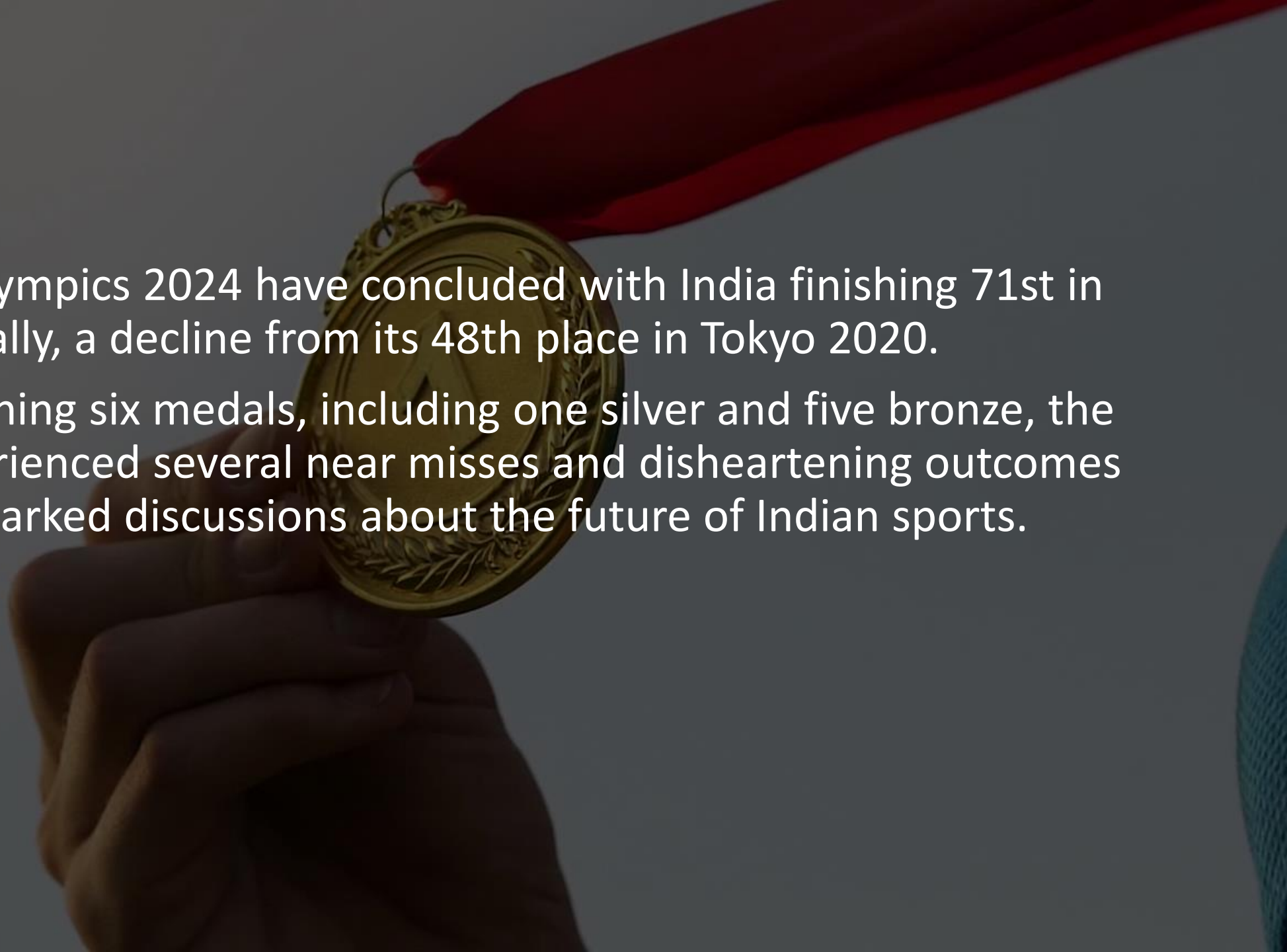
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125 M

125 M

POPULATION-TO-MEDAL RATIO (PARIS OLYMPICS 2024)


 Country	 Medals	 Population	Population Per Medal
India	6	1.45 B	241.67 M
China	91	1.42 B	15.6 M
US	126	332 M	2.64 M
Brazil	20	203 M	10.15 M
Kenya	11	55.65 M	4.44 M


- 
- A hand is shown holding a gold medal with a red ribbon. The medal is circular and features a central emblem surrounded by a laurel wreath. The background is a dark, muted blue-grey color.
- The Paris Olympics 2024 have concluded with India finishing 71st in the medal tally, a decline from its 48th place in Tokyo 2020.
 - Despite winning six medals, including one silver and five bronze, the nation experienced several near misses and disheartening outcomes that have sparked discussions about the future of Indian sports.

Indian Medal Winners at Paris Olympics 2024

Indian athletes	Medal	Event
Manu Bhaker	Bronze	Women's 10m air pistol event
Manu Bhaker and Sarabjot Singh	Bronze	10m air pistol mixed team event
Swapnil Kusale	Bronze	Men's 50m rifle 3 positions
Indian hockey team	Bronze	Men's hockey
Neeraj Chopra	Bronze	Men's Javelin Throw
Aman Sehrawat	Bronze	Wrestling Men's 57kg freestyle event

- 
- A hand is shown holding a gold Olympic medal. The medal is circular with a laurel wreath border and a central emblem. A red ribbon is attached to the top of the medal. The background is a dark, muted blue-grey color.
- **To date, India has won a total of 41 Olympic medals. Notable milestones include Norman Pritchard's Silver Medals (1900 Paris), KD Jadhav's Bronze (1952 Helsinki), Karnam Malleswari's Bronze (2000 Sydney), Abhinav Bindra's Gold (2008 Beijing), and Neeraj Chopra's Gold (2020 Tokyo).**

- 
- **Men's Hockey has won 13 medals, including eight golds, and Wrestling has won eight medals. India's best-ever Olympic performance was at Tokyo 2020, with seven medals, including one gold. India's second-best performance was in the 2012 London Olympics when it won six medals(two silver and four bronze).**

- 
- **Why India Struggles to Secure Olympic Medals?**
 - **Talent Identification:**
 - **Infrastructure and Resources**
 - **Cricket's Dominance**
 - **Insufficient Sports Policies:**
 - **Long-term Development:**
 - **Corruption and Politics in Sports Administration**
 - **Absence of a Sports Culture**



• **Consider the following statements in respect of the Laureus World Sports Award which was instituted in the year 2000: (2021)**

- 1. American golfer Tiger Woods was the first winner of this award.**
- 2. The award was received mostly by 'Formula One' players so far.**
- 3. Roger Federer received this award maximum number of times compared to others.**

• **Which of the above statements are correct?**

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

IN BRIEF

SP names six in-charges for U.P. Assembly byelections

Samajwadi Party on Monday announced its in-charges for six out of 10 Assembly seats in Uttar Pradesh where byelections are to be held. While party national general secretary Shivprasad Singh Yadav will be in-charge of Kanauj seat, Faizabad MP Awadhesh Prasad and Leader of Opposition in U.P. Legislative Council Lal Bihari Yadav will be in-charge of Mirzapur seat, a senior SP leader said. MP Virendra Singh has been given charge of Mirzapur seat, ex-Minister Chandradev Yadav will be in-charge of Karhal, MLA Indrajit Saroj will be in-charge of Phulpur seat and MLA Rajendra Kumar will be in-charge of Sissamau seat, he said.

Women Sakhi workers stage protest over their demands

Demanding status of government employee and salary, hundreds of women from Uttar Pradesh working under the BC Sakhi (Banking Correspondent) Yojna held a protest in Lucknow on Monday. They were detained when they tried to storm the U.P. Assembly. The women workers alleged that the U.P. government is organising different events to mark the Independence Day, but silent on rightful demands of the needy people. The police first tried to stop the march when started near the Assembly. Some of the protesters did not agree, they were detained before reaching their U.P. Assembly.

Rajasthan govt. under fire for lack of clarity over Disaster Relief Minister's resignation

The Hindu Bureau JAIPUR

The Opposition Congress in Rajasthan on Monday criticised the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government over the lack of clarity on Disaster Relief Minister Kirodi Lal Meena's resignation amid heavy rain and several accidents in the State.

No decision yet
Mr. Meena, 72, a veteran tribal leader, had tendered his resignation last month, taking responsibility for the BJP's disappointing performance in the 2024 Lok Sabha election in the State, and the defeat at four of the seven seats put under his charge. The party's central leadership is yet to decide on the accep-



Kirodi Lal Meena

tance of his papers. While Mr. Meena has refused to withdraw his resignation and stopped attending his office, Congress leader and former Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said it was unfortunate that the public did not know during the disaster situation whether Mr. Meena was in office or his resignation had been accepted. Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel Khandelwal said he also needs to clarify the situation so that proper monitoring may be ensured and directions given

for relief and rescue operations. Such a state of confusion in difficult circumstances amounts to disrespect with the people of the State," Mr. Gehlot said in a post on X.
Public vote before poll
Mr. Meena was in the reckoning for the Chief Minister's post after the BJP's victory in the 2023 State Assembly election, but the party high command selected first-time MLA Mr. Sharma for the position. The septuagenarian BJP leader said he had opted to step down as a Minister because of his public vote before the poll.
Resolving a disaster management and relief, Mr. Meena holds agriculture, tribal development, and public grievances portfolios in the Cabinet. A five-time MLA, he is also a former MP.

MNS, Sena (UBT) attempt to defuse tensions after attack on Uddhav and Raj's convoys

Raj appeals to his cadre to exercise restraint after cow dung, coconuts, tomatoes were hurled at Uddhav's car in Thane; Raut distances his party from attack on MNS chief's motorcade in Beed

Ateesh Shaikh MUMBAI

Days after the convoys of estranged cousins Uddhav Thackeray and Raj Thackeray came under attack, leaders of their respective parties Shiv Sena (UBT) and Maharashtra Nationalist Sena (MNS) — have sought to defuse escalating tensions ahead of the Maharashtra Assembly election. While the Sena (UBT) has distanced itself from the incident, the MNS has appealed to its cadre to exercise restraint.

A group of MNS workers had allegedly targeted Mr. Uddhav's convoy in Thane with cow dung, coconuts, and tomatoes on Saturday evening, a day after betel nut (supari) was hurled in the motorcade of Mr. Raj in Beed following allegations that he took a 'support contract' to go solo in the upcoming election. While eight people were booked in connection with the attack, Raj's UBT leadership, about 40 MNS workers were detained for targeting



Uddhav and Raj Thackeray have had strained ties after the latter quit the undivided Shiv Sena in 2008. FILE PHOTO

Mr. Uddhav's convoy.

"One should ensure that such tension-building incidents are prevented. Politics means clash of views, not creating hurdles in others' journeys," Mr. Raj said, appealing to MNS workers to not create hurdles from their actions of those detained in Beed and took a dig at the MNS and the BJP. "We have already clarified that the party has nothing to do with the [Beed] attack, still, if anyone wants to term the attack in Thane as a 'reaction to an action', then they are confused. We will show them after we see what the real reaction is," he said.

'Bid to mislead'
Meanwhile, Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut distanced the party from the actions of those detained in Beed and took a dig at the MNS and the BJP. "We have already clarified that the party has nothing to do with the [Beed] attack, still, if anyone wants to term the attack in Thane as a 'reaction to an action', then they are confused. We will show them after we see what the real reaction is," he said.

The MNS chief said his cadre gave a 'bitting reply' to the UBT leaders, but they had failed to discourage their workers from indulg-

Politics means clash of views, not creating hurdles in others' journeys
RAJ THACKERAY
speaking

ter Amit Shah described Mr. Uddhav as the chief of the 'Aurangzeb fan club', the Sena (UBT) chief on August 3 called him the "political heir of century Afghan ruler Ahmad Shah Abdali and that he indulges in power lynch" by splitting political outfits to form his party's own government.

Mr. Raut also took a swipe at Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, who criticised the attack on Mr. Uddhav as a "reaction to an action", without naming him. "We have already clarified that the party has nothing to do with the [Beed] attack, still, if anyone wants to term the attack in Thane as a 'reaction to an action', then they are confused. We will show them after we see what the real reaction is," he said.

Will support Centre if it extends quota to Marathas: Pawar

Snehal Mutha MUMBAI

Under pressure from Maratha reservation protesters over clearing his stand, Nationalist Congress Party (Shivrajchandra Pawar) chief Sharad Pawar on Monday said he will back the Centre if it decides to extend quota benefits to the community by charge beyond the 50% ceiling.

"The power to cross the 50% ceiling on reservation lies with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government at the Centre, and if it decides to extend the limit and provide the quota to the Maratha community, I will support the move," he said, putting the ball in the Centre's court. On Sunday, protesters had stopped Mr. Pawar's convoy in Solapur's Barshi town, waved black flags and raised slogans in support of quota activist Manoj Jarange-Patil. Following this, Maratha Kranti Thok Morcha co-ordinator Ramesh Kere Patil led a 'Jal Jai' protest in front of Mr. Pawar's house in Pune on Monday.

Mr. Patil slammed the ruling Mahayut alliance as well as the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi for "using" the Maratha reservation is-



Sharad Pawar

due for their political gains. "If parties don't clear their stance, we will boycott the Assembly election," he said while extending support to Mr. Jarange-Patil's Maratha reservation demand.

Mr. Pawar on Monday also urged Chief Minister Eknath Shinde to conduct an all party meeting and invite Mr. Jarange-Patil and other Backward Classes (OBC) leaders such as Chhagan Bhojraj to discuss the reservation issue.

Legal complexities
"All political parties in Maharashtra should come together and urge the Centre for removal of the cap," if the policy is changed, the Opposition will cooperate," the NCP (SP) leader said, pointing to the legal complexities involved and citing the example of Tamil Nadu, which has reservations beyond 50%.

'Women can be tried for penetrative sexual assault on children'

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

Criminal proceedings can be initiated against a woman for committing the offence of "penetrative sexual assault" on a child. The Delhi High Court has said that the offence is not restricted to only men. The court made the observation on August 9 while hearing a plea by an accused in a case lodged under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. The accused had argued the since she was a woman, the offences of "penetrative sexual assault" and "aggravated penetrative sexual assault" could not be made out against her.

The public prosecutor had contended that the POCSO Act is a gender-neutral legislation and holds perpetrators, regardless of their gender, accountable

for sexual offences against minors.

Agreeing with it, the Bench of Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani in the POCSO Act was enacted to protect children from sexual offences "regardless of whether an offence is committed upon a child by a man or a woman."

"There is no reason why the word penetrative meaning in Section 3 of the POCSO Act should be read as referring only to a male," the court said. The court held that the word "he" appearing in the POCSO Act cannot be given a restrictive meaning, to say that it refers only to a "male." "It must be read in its intended meaning, namely that it includes within its ambit any offender irrespective of their gender," it said, adding that the petitioner can be put to trial for the offences as charged.

Teachers' federation issues appeal not to come to school drunk after one case too many

Shubhomoj Sinker JASHPUR (GHATEESGARH)

"School is our temple and education is our religion, and when it comes to religion and temple, consuming alcohol within those limits is a big sin. It is a sin that no teacher should come to school drunk from today onwards..."

Troubling trend
The court issued a plea comes from a teachers' body in Jashpur district of Chhattisgarh, as the State grapples with a troubling trend: an increasing number of incidents where teachers have reported to duty under the influence of alcohol. Ajay Gupta, the president of the Jashpur Teachers' Association, said that the incident of a teacher drinking alcohol led to the registration of an FIR. The incident occurred at another alleged incident in which a teacher and his

registered body that counts nearly one lakh teachers as its members. He said that the incident last week taking note of the rising number of such cases. On August 7, Romanus Kujur, the principal of a school in Jashpur's Farsa-bahar, reported drunk and disorderly conduct by a teacher that went viral showed him engaged in a heated argument with a fellow teacher. He was suspended subsequently. In July, one such case was reported in Kambhiram district.

FIR registered
Similarly in Bilaspur, the violation of an assistant teacher drinking alcohol in a primary school had gone viral on a social media platform. The registration of an FIR. The incident occurred at another alleged incident in which a teacher and his

brother had both gone to the school intoxicated. It is alleged that the inebriated brother had assaulted a Class V student for merely asking him the time and addressing him as 'Bhaiya', a common way of addressing elders.

'Mahua very common'
Rampalash Pandey, a lawyer cum social activist from Jashpur, says there is also the question of easy availability of alcohol. "In the tribal areas, mahua liquor is easily made and stored. The excise laws provide some exemptions as far as storage and sale of such liquor in tribal areas are concerned. This encourages consumption."

Manish Mishra, the State president of the teachers' federation, says they would file a petition against the incident in which another alleged incident in which a teacher and his

Rescued bonded labourer sets up school for underprivileged

Muhammed Iqbal JAIPUR

Having emerged as a role model for the tribal community, a survivor of bonded labour and trafficking has established a community school for underprivileged children in his native village in Rajasthan's Rajasamand district. The school is catering to children in the age group of 4 to 16 years who have been deprived of the benefits of a formal education system. Khemraj Gameti, who supervises the school's functioning from a village in the Pachhimata village panchayat, was confined to a brick kiln along with his wife and a daughter in a neighbouring village for four years. The family was forced to work for Mr. Gameti's fa-

ture to return ₹40,000 which he had borrowed from the brick kiln's owner to repay some of his debts. Mr. Gameti, who was only other adults like him were exploited at the kiln, situated in Kuvayara village, working for 18 hours a day and not paid the prescribed minimum wages. The children's job was to carry the bricks as they dried in the sun, to make them dry evenly. Together as a family, they managed ₹500 to ₹800 for the whole week in spite of making 1,500 bricks a day.

Rescued after raid
Even after years of work, the owner said the advance was not paid off and did not allow the family to leave the kiln under the threat of violence. Mr. Gameti and the family members were rescued in a raid



conducted by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate and the police in April 2016, when a total of 24 persons were saved from the bonded labour at the site. The State government issued 13 release certificates to the adult labourers after an inquiry unbooked the brick kiln owner under Section 370 (trafficking of persons) of Indian Penal Code, the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, and the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. Since his release, Mr. Gameti, 43, has been generating awareness about bonded labour among the villagers and asking them to combat traf-

ficking with sustained efforts. Six months ago, he came up with the idea of founding a school for his tribal community in Pachhimata, as the only primary government school in the region is far away from the village and is not easily accessible.

Project supervisor
Mr. Gameti told 'The Hindu' that he conducted a survey in the village to understand the requirements of underprivileged children who had never been to school before. He established the school with the help of a tribal community organisation, the Shikshabala Project. As many as 30 children from the tribal community study in the school, with Mr. Gameti acting as a supervisor for the project. "Over time, these chil-

drren will be enrolled in regular school colleges as needed. A teacher, who comes every day from the tribal community in Pachhimata, takes care of the children as a group, giving them lessons and clarifying their doubts," Mr. Gameti said. The children are happy, as they are getting education for the first time. Mr. Sanku Sanku, the Director Shikshabala Project, said the innovative scheme of the State Government was for facilitating the overall development of children in remote villages of tribal-dominated districts in southern Rajasthan. There was no basic facility even for primary education in the tribal community schools are at present. Functioning in Rajasamand, Jashpur, Jaisalmer and Pratnagarh districts.

'Peacock curry recipe' lands YouTuber from Telangana in a soup

Press Trust of India HYDRABAD

A case has been registered against a YouTuber for allegedly uploading a video on a 'peacock curry recipe' on his channel, in Telangana's Rajasamand district. The YouTuber, apparently, wanted to garner more views for his channel, reportedly to a lab for forensic analysis and investigation is on. A case has been filed against the man

Home raided
Upon receiving information that a man posted a video on his channel on how to cook peacock curry, a team of forest officials reached Tangallapalli vil-



Video taken down
The video was removed after the forest officials reached Tangallapalli vil-

'Women can be tried for penetrative sexual assault on children'

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Criminal proceedings can be initiated against a woman for committing the offence of "penetrative sexual assault" on a child, the Delhi High Court has said noting that the offence is not restricted to only men.

The court made the observation on August 9 while hearing a plea by an accused in a case lodged under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. The accused had argued that since she was a woman, the offences of "penetrative sexual assault" and "aggravated penetrative sexual assault" could not be made out against her.

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for sexual offences against minors.

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"There is no reason why the word person appearing in Section 3 of the POCSO Act should be read as referring only to a male," court said.

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Article
defus
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International Conventions on Child Rights

The Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1924)

- The Declaration listed **5 principles** directed toward the **development of children**. However, these principles considered children as an object of protection, **instead of holders of rights**. The Declaration **did not put any obligation** on the member States.

Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959)

- It was adopted by the UNGA in 1959. The Declaration recognised the need for the protection of children against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1966)

- Article 10 recognised that children and young persons should be **protected from economic and social exploitation**. **Employment of children in work harmful** to their health, life or likely to hamper their normal development should be **punishable by law**.



United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (1990)


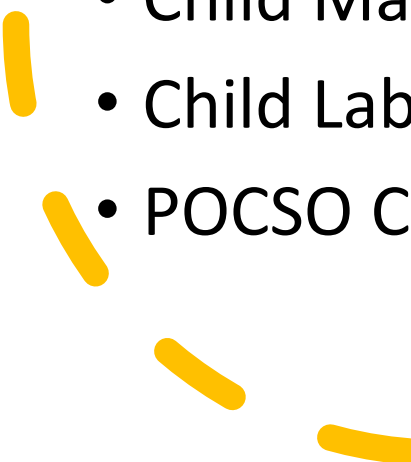
- It was adopted by UNGA in 1989 and entered into force in 1990. It offered a **legally binding instrument** that recognised children's rights. It established a **Committee on the Rights of the Child** to monitor the progress of the member States in realising the goals envisioned by CRC. It recognised State parties' obligation to **protect children from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation**.



POCSO Act came into effect on 14th November 2012 which was enacted in consequence to India's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992.

The aim of this special law is to address offences of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, which were either not specifically defined or in adequately penalised.

- 
- The Act defines a **child** as any person below the age of **18 years**.
 - The Act provides **punishment** as per the gravity of offence.
 - **The Act was further reviewed and amended in 2019 to Introduce more stringent punishment including the death penalty for Committing sexual crimes on children, with a view to deter the perpetrators & prevent such crimes against children.**
- 

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- What are the Initiatives to Curb Child Abuse?
 - Child Abuse Prevention and Investigation Unit
 - Beti Bachao Beti Padhao
 - The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015
 - Child Marriage Prohibition Act (2006)
 - Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation Act, 2016
 - POCSO Courts under Special Fast Track Courts.
- 

UNDER FIRE FOR 'OVERREACH'

Facing criticism, Govt withdraws new draft of broadcast Bill

Draft expands remit to include social media accounts, content creators

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 12

THE MINISTRY of Information and Broadcasting has had to have withdrawn the new draft Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill, 2024, which triggered a controversy and criticism over fears that the government was trying to exert greater control over online content. The draft Bill had raised several questions on the freedom of speech and expression, and the government's powers to regulate it. Last month, the ministry had shared the new draft Bill with a handful of stakeholders and invited their comments.

THE KEY CRITICISM

THE NEW draft Bill faced criticism for including independent online news creators within its ambit — seen as government overreach. The ministry is now expected to re-work and fine-tune the definition of who can be called a broadcaster. The ministry is expected to go back to the drawing board and work on a new proposal, said sources. The ministry did not respond to requests for comment on the issue. But, in a statement posted on X at the end of the ministry draft Bill. The stakeholders re-

ATTACKS MAINLY IN BANGLADESH RURAL, BORDER AREAS

5 dead, 200 incidents: Fear grips Hindus, leaders meet Yunus today

Police in hiding, their absence gives attackers a free run



SHUBHRAJIT ROY
DHAKA, AUGUST 12

ON AUGUST 5, Gopal Rajbongshi, who runs Manda Pharmacy in Dhaka, was at home when he saw visuals of Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina leaving the country. He rounded up his staff at the store, told them to shut shop and head home.

By 4.30 pm, a group of people vandalised his pharmacy; they broke open the shutters,



Grffiti by students on a Dhaka wall. It reads: 'Dhorno jar jar, Bangladesh sobar (Bangladesh is for all faiths)'. Shubhrajit Roy

looted the medicines, the computer system, and cash of about Rs 27,000 (in local currency). "My shop had medicines and equipment worth about Rs 2.15 lakh, they took away everything," he told The Indian Express. He was terrified as he heard the mob was "looking for me."

P4
MANISH SENODEA
FORMER DELHI DEPUTY CM

THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW

To match Paris 2024, Los Angeles faces Mission Impossible



Tom Cruise at the Olympics closing ceremony. Anshu

EXPRESS AT OLYMPICS

MIHIR VASAVDA
PARIS, AUGUST 12

BUSINESS AS USUAL
BY UNNAY

MIHIR VASAVDA



Protesters marched to R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata on Monday. Anshu Paul

Doctor's rape-murder: Protests swell, CM sets cops a deadline

ATRI MITRA
KOLKATA, AUGUST 12

DOCTORS' PROTESTS over the rape and murder of a junior doctor at a state-run medical college in Kolkata intensified on Monday evening after the principal of the medical college, who had resigned earlier in the day, was immediately deputised to another institution in the city. Earlier in the day, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said that if the state police are unable to solve the case by Sunday, it would be handed over to the CBI.

PROTESTS SPREAD

RESIDENT DOCTORS in Delhi Monday joined the strike, affecting services at several hospitals. AIIMS Delhi saw a 20% reduction in registrations in its OPD. IN SEVERAL other cities, resident doctors held candlelight vigils. In Maharashtra, resident doctors announced an indefinite strike from Tuesday.

REPORTS, PAGES 4, 12

was found dead in a seminar hall at R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata on Friday, sending shockwaves through the state and prompting a protest by doctors at several hospitals. Police have arrested a civic volunteer, Sanjay Roy, in connection with the case. The Chief Minister on Monday met the family of the doctor, and later told reporters: "We are trying our best to solve the case. I don't know how this type of incident can happen at a hospital. Police are giving utmost importance to the investigation. If there are more accused, and all are not arrested by Sunday, we are not arrested by Sunday, we are not arrested by Sunday, we are not arrested by Sunday."

After five years, retail inflation falls below 4% — to 3.54% in July

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 12

AFTER REMAINING above the 4 per cent mark for nearly five years, retail inflation slipped to a 59-month low of 3.54 per cent in July mainly due to a high base effect, data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) showed Monday. The last time retail inflation rate was below the 4 per cent mark — a key level in the 4+/- 2 per cent band of medium-term inflation target set by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) — was in September 2019. Food inflation rate also slipped to a 13-month low of 5.42 per cent in July, from 9.36 per cent in June. Food inflation has hovered between 8-9 per cent during the last eight

months as prices of vegetables, cereals and pulses have stayed consistently elevated. On a month-on-month basis, however, the Consumer Price Index (combined), on which retail inflation is based, gained momentum across the categories of food, clothing, housing and the overall index value. According to analysts, retail inflation is expected to breach the 4 per cent mark in August 2024, stoked by food inflation. Data released separately showed the country's factory output for June, as measured by the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), eased to a five-month low of 4.2 per cent, mainly due to a slower growth in manufacturing output. The lower inflation rate has also put the investment

NEW HINDENBURG REPORT

As Opp seeks JPC probe, BJP hits back: Fictitious report, bid to destabilise markets

Concerned person, regulator have made their statements, nothing further to be added by Govt: Finance Ministry

LIZ MATHEW & VIKAS PATHAK
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 12

COUNTERING ALLEGATIONS by US-based Hindenburg Research regarding SEBI Chairperson Madhavi Puri Buch and Adani Group, the BJP Monday rejected the Opposition's demand for a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe.

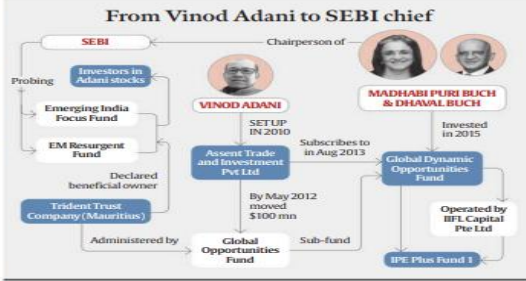
GOVT & POLITICS

WILL LAUNCH STIR IF JPC PROBE DEMAND NOT MET: CONGRESS

At a press conference held at the BJP headquarters, senior party leader and former Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad slammed the Congress demand for a JPC probe, accusing the Opposition party of "seeking foreign help to discredit (and) destabilise our financial markets and to create chaos in the country... by spreading anarchy on a fictitious report". "Any Tom, Dick and Harry sitting in a foreign country will seek

to destabilise India and they (the Congress) will say JPC. They will belittle India's investors. They will belittle India's stock market. That is their game. The JPC demand is a sham." Prasad said. In its first official reaction to the Hindenburg allegations, the Union Ministry of Finance said it had nothing to add after the SEBI and Buch had issued their statements. Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Sethi told reporters: "The SEBI has given a statement. The concerned person has given a statement. If there is nothing further to be added."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



Fund Buch couple invested in part of structure under Sebi probe

JAY MAZOOMDAR & SANDEEP SINGH
NEW DELHI, MUMBAI, AUG 12

MALIBUTUS-BASED IPI Plus Fund 1, which is at the centre of the controversy surrounding SEBI Chairperson Madhavi Puri Buch and her husband Dhanraj Buch, not only had investments by Vinod Adani, elder brother of industrialist Gautam Adani, but was also part of the investment

structure used by two of the 13 overseas funds being probed by the market regulator for opaque fund flows into Adani Group companies since 2016-17. Information from multiple sources, including corporate records accessed by The Indian Express, the consent form of Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) and additional information made available by US-based Hindenburg Research, show that

the investments by Madhavi Puri Buch and her husband in 2015, are clearly linked to the fund which had significant investments by Vinod Adani. A scrutiny of the web of funds and investments also reveals that the parent fund (Global Opportunities Fund) of the sub-fund (Global Dynamic Opportunities Fund) where Buch invested, was administered by Trident Trust Company

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Delhi Development Authority

Khushiyon Ko Mile Thikana Apna Bane Aashiyana

Launching **3 Housing Schemes** — 19th August, 2024

FREEHOLD PROPERTY

1 DDA Sasta Ghar Housing Scheme 2024
First Come First Serve Basis

- Affordable housing for low-income group
- LIG and EWS Flats in Ramgarh Colony, Siraspur, Rohini, Loknayakpuram and Narota
- Starting price ₹ 11.5 lakh
- Price offered is same as in the last year's scheme

2 DDA Madhyam Vargiy Housing Scheme 2024
First Come First Serve Basis

- HIG, MIG, LIG and EWS Flats in Jansik, Loknayakpuram & Narota
- Starting price ₹ 29 lakh

3 DDA Dwarka Housing Scheme 2024
e-Auction Basis

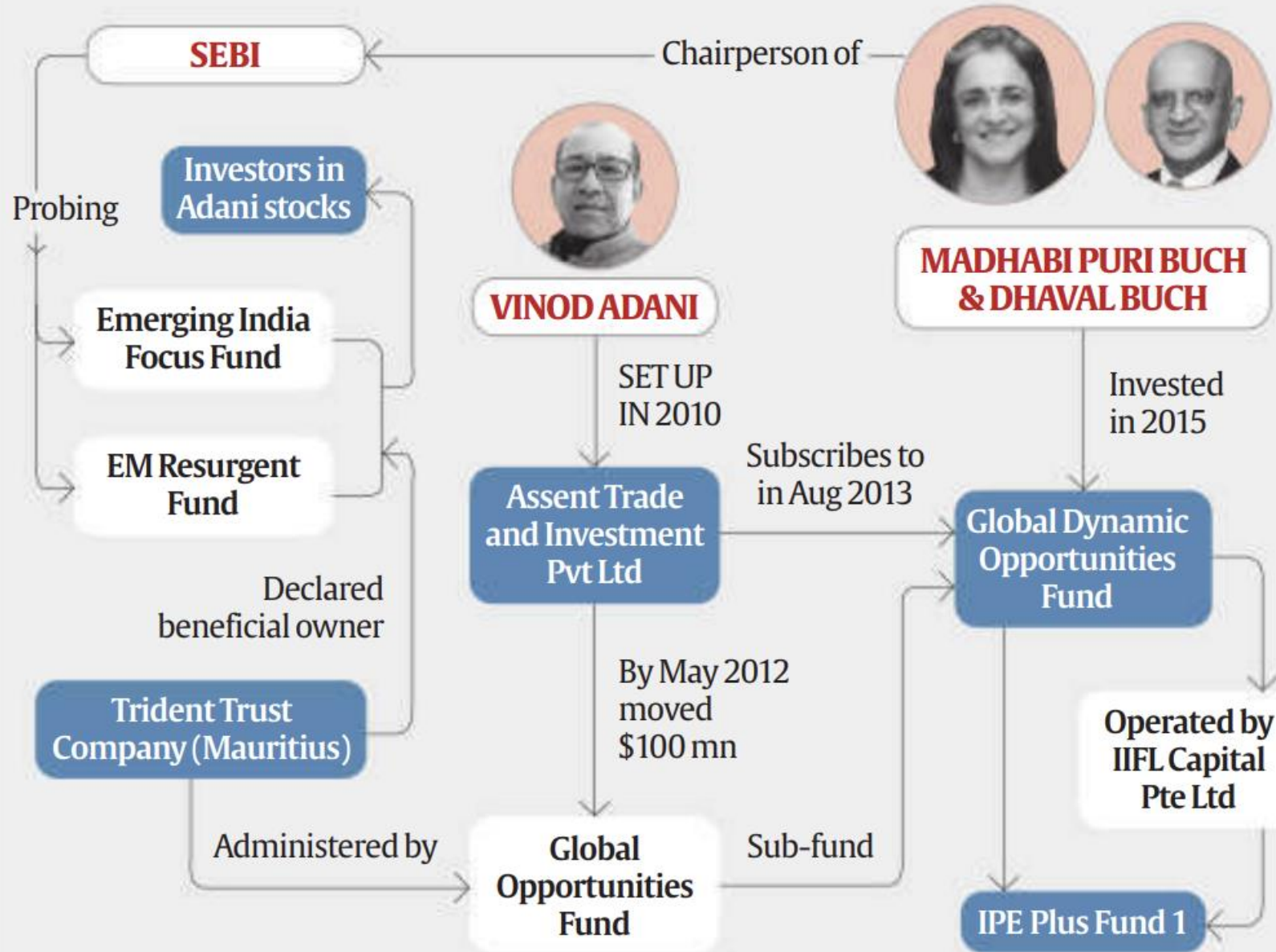
- MIG, HIG & higher category flats in Sector 14, 16B and 19B of Dwarka
- Starting price ₹ 128 lakh

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From Vinod Adani to SEBI chief



TO BE UK FIRM'S LARGEST SHAREHOLDER

Bharti Global to acquire 24.5% in Britain's BT Group for around \$4 bn

JATINGROVER
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 12

BHARTI GLOBAL, the international investment arm of Bharti Enterprises, will acquire a 24.5 per cent stake in BT Group, Britain's largest broadband and mobile company, from Altice UK.

Though Bharti did not disclose the transaction size, the deal at the current market price is likely to be valued around \$4 billion (Rs 31,850 crore), making it one of the biggest out-bound deals struck by an Indian company.

Bharti Enterprises chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal said that though growth in fully-developed economies like the UK is very small at around 1-2 per cent a year, revenues are pretty large — \$25 billion in current revenue and \$10 billion in Ebitda.

"I think it's a very attractive buy. In the UK, we have many companies that are trading at low multiples. So, given the cash flows from BT, we believe it's going to be a good and a long-term investment," Mittal said.

"As far as BT's businesses are concerned, out of a revenue of \$25 billion, around \$9-10 billion is through enterprise, but it is the top mobile provider in



“At this stage, we are not asking for a board seat. We got into the company through a public block and the seller also didn't have any board seat ... I think I can add a tremendous amount of value within and outside the board.

SUNIL BHARTI MITTAL
CHAIRMAN, BHARTI ENTERPRISES

the UK under the EE brand," Mittal said.

He said that BT covers around 30 million homes on fibre broadband. "They have home broadband, they have wholesale fiber open reach, they have mobile and they have enterprise. So, this is exactly like Airtel. And if you look at Airtel, the revenue and Ebitda are mirror images. We provide all the similar services that we do in India and they do in the UK," Mittal said, explaining the rationale behind the stake purchase.

He made it clear that Bharti Airtel has nothing to do with the deal. "Airtel has not made this move. This is an invest-

ment from Bharti Enterprises. However, best practice sharing can always take place given the common shareholder on both sides. But Airtel at the moment is not engaged in this particular process of seeking any technology or any help from BT," Mittal said.

The way the deal is structured is that shares will be purchased through Bharti Televentures UK, a company established and wholly-owned by Bharti Global. Bharti Televentures UK has entered into a binding agreement with Altice UK to acquire a 9.99 per cent stake of BT Group and issued capital imminently with the balance 14.51 per cent to be

BINDING PACT WITH ALTICE UK

■ Bharti Televentures UK has entered into a binding agreement with Altice UK to acquire a 9.99% stake of BT Group and issued capital imminently with the balance 14.51% to be acquired following the receipt of applicable regulatory clearances

acquired following the receipt of applicable regulatory clearances.

Bharti has no immediate plan of buying out the rest of BT, and has not asked for a board seat. "At this stage, we are not asking for a board seat. We got into the company through a public block and the seller also didn't have any board seat. For me, I think I can add a tremendous amount of value within and outside the board. It will be probably in the future sometime if this particular issue needs to be addressed," Mittal said.

On whether Bharti Airtel is also looking at any overseas acquisition, he said that Airtel has

been busy building India and it will probably be focused on the country for the next 2-3 years on missions that are still to be completed in terms of more 5G, gaps of 4G, more fiber being rolled out, FWA, enterprise business and data centres.

"Airtel has its hands full. In 2-3 years' time, Airtel's cash profile looks pretty strong to us and at that point of time, based on what the board decides with large cash flows and India's capex becoming smaller, there could be an opportunity for Airtel to go global," Mittal said.


Bharti and BT have a relationship going back more than two decades. In 1997, BT acquired a 21 per cent stake in Bharti Airtel, which it sold in 2001.

Timotheus Höttges, chief executive of Deutsche Telecom, which owns 12 per cent of BT Group, described Bharti Global's stake purchase as a positive step. "We have a long and good working relationship with Bharti. So, we are looking forward to working together with Bharti and the board of directors for the sake of BT shareholders and customers," Höttges said.

Reacting to the development, commerce minister Piyush Goyal said the deal is a "testimony to the growing strength of India". FE



- **Bharti Global's Acquisition**

- Bharti Global, the investment arm of Bharti Enterprises, to acquire a 24.5% stake in Britain's BT Group.
 - The acquisition is valued at approximately \$4 billion (₹31,850 crore).
 - This deal makes Bharti one of the largest outbound deals by an Indian company.
- 

- **Details of the Deal**

- Bharti Global has entered into a binding agreement with Altice UK.
- The initial acquisition involves a 9.99% stake in BT Group.
- The remaining 14.51% stake will be acquired after regulatory clearances.
- Bharti does not intend to seek a board seat with BT Group.

- **Strategic Importance**

- Sunil Bharti Mittal, Chairman of Bharti Enterprises, highlights the strategic importance of this acquisition.
- The UK market has a smaller growth rate but offers high revenue opportunities.
- BT Group generates around \$25 billion in revenue and \$10 billion in profit annually.
- Bharti sees this as a long-term investment with potential for growth in the UK market.

- **Operational and Market Synergies**

- Bharti identifies similarities between the operations of Airtel and BT in broadband and mobile services.
- BT owns 30 million homes on fiber broadband and has a broad wholesale fiber open reach, with strong mobile and enterprise segments.
- Bharti intends to add value without directly engaging in BT's operations or seeking help from BT.

• **Future Outlook**

- Bharti's immediate focus remains on India, particularly completing 5G rollout, 4G gap closure, and expanding fiber coverage.
- Bharti may consider a global opportunity for Airtel as the Indian market stabilizes.
- Bharti's relationship with BT dates back over two decades, with Bharti previously holding a stake in BT's mobile arm, Airtel.

• Consider the following statements regarding Bharti Global's acquisition of a stake in Britain's BT Group:

1. Bharti Global is set to acquire a 24.5% stake in BT Group, making it one of the largest outbound deals by an Indian company.
2. The acquisition deal is valued at approximately \$2 billion.
3. Bharti Global plans to seek a board seat in BT Group as part of the acquisition agreement.

• Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

China test-flies biggest civilian cargo drone as low altitude economy takes off

REUTERS

BEIJING, AUGUST 12

CHINA FLEW its biggest-yet unmanned cargo aircraft designed for civilian use, as the world's top drone-making nation steps up test flights of autonomous aerial vehicles (UAVs) that could ultimately ferry everything from takeouts to people.

Packing a payload capacity of 2 metric tonnes, the twin-engine aircraft took off on Sunday on an inaugural flight, state media said, citing developer Sichuan Tengden Sci-tech Innovation Co, for a trip of about 20 minutes in southwestern Sichuan province.

China's civilian drone makers are testing larger payloads as the government pushes to build a low-altitude economy, with the aviation regulator seeing a 2-trillion-yuan (\$279-billion) industry by 2030, for a four-fold expansion from 2023.

With a wingspan of 16.1 m (52.8 ft) and a height of 4.6 m (15 ft), the aircraft, built entirely by government-funded Tengden, is slightly larger than the world's most popular light aircraft, the four-seat Cessna 172.

Tengden's test flight followed the maiden flight in June of HH-100, a cargo drone developed by Aviation Industry Corp of China (AVIC) with payload ca-



An unmanned cargo aircraft developed by Sichuan Tengden Sci-tech Innovation takes part in a maiden flight at an airport in Zigong, China. *Reuters*

capacity of 700 kg (1,543 pounds) and a flight radius of 520 km (323 miles).

Next year, AVIC plans to test its biggest cargo drone, the TP2000, which can carry up to 2 tons of cargo a distance of 2,000 km (1,243 miles). In a report this year, the government identified the low-altitude economy as a new growth engine for the first time, with vertical mobility seen as a "new productive force" in areas such as passenger transport and cargo deliveries.

In April, aviation authorities issued a production certificate to UAV maker EHang Holdings,

based in the southern city of Guangzhou, for its passenger-carrying drone, China's first such document for an autonomous passenger drone.

A month later, cargo drone firm Phoenix Wings, part of delivery giant SF Express, started delivering fresh fruit from the island province of Hainan to southern Guangdong, using Fengzhou-90 drones developed by SF, a unit of S.F. Holding. By 2023, China had more than 2,000 enterprises engaged in the design or manufacture of UAVs, led by privately held DJI, the world's largest drone maker.

China's Civilian Cargo Drone Test Flight

China conducted a test flight for its largest unmanned cargo aircraft designed for civilian use.

The aircraft, developed by Sichuan Tengden Sci-tech Innovation Co., took off from southwestern Sichuan province.

The test flight lasted about 20 minutes.



- **Drone Specifications**

- The twin-engine aircraft has a payload capacity of 2 metric tonnes.
- Dimensions: Wingspan of 16.1 meters (52.8 feet) and a height of 4.6 meters (15 feet).
- The drone is larger than the Cessna 172, the world's most popular light aircraft.
- Completely government-funded and designed for future expansion.



- **China's Low-Altitude Economy Push**

- The government is pushing for a low-altitude economy with an expected expansion to a \$279 billion industry by 2030.
- A new growth engine for the low-altitude economy has been identified, especially in areas like passenger transport and cargo deliveries.
- Over 2,000 enterprises in China are involved in UAV development or manufacture.

Future Plans and Developments

The Aviation Industry Corp of China (AVIC) is planning to test an even larger cargo drone, the TP2000, in 2024, capable of carrying up to 20 tonnes.

The government is promoting the development of autonomous aerial vehicles (AAVs) as a significant force in transportation.

EHang Holdings and Phoenix Wings have also made significant strides in the UAV sector.

Industry Growth and Expansion

The Civil Aviation Administration of China issued its first production certificate to EHang Holdings for a passenger-carrying drone.

In 2023, UAV delivery services, like SF Express's Fengzhou-90 drones, began transporting fresh produce within China.

The industry is poised for significant growth, with a focus on urban mobility and cargo solutions.

-
- Consider the following statements regarding China's development of civilian cargo drones:
 1. The largest unmanned civilian cargo aircraft in China has a payload capacity of 2 metric tonnes and is developed by Sichuan Tengden Sci-tech Innovation Co.
 2. The Chinese government aims to expand its low-altitude economy to a \$279 billion industry by 2030.
 3. The TP2000, China's largest planned cargo drone, is set to carry up to 5 tonnes of cargo over a distance of 2,000 km.
 - 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

World Biofuels Day 2024

Recently, **World Biofuel Day** was observed on 10th August 2024. It aims to raise awareness about **non-fossil fuels as sustainable energy alternatives** and to highlight government initiatives that support the biofuel industry.

The day also commemorates the **successful operation of an engine on peanut oil by German engineer Sir Rudolf Diesel on 9th August 1893.**

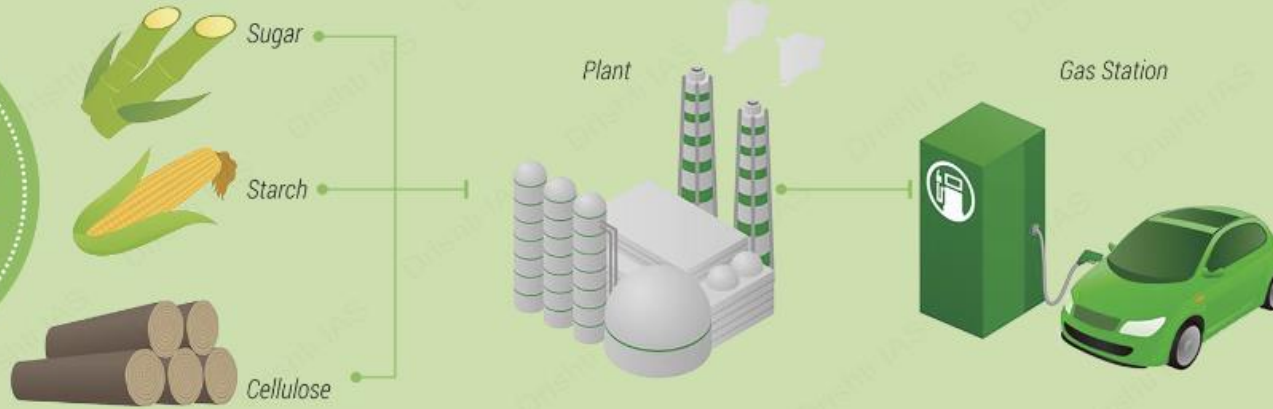
About Ethanol

- One of the principal biofuels
- Also called ethyl alcohol (C₂H₅OH)

Produced

- Naturally by fermentation of sugar (or corn, rice etc)
- By petrochemical processes (ethylene hydration)

World Biofuel Day is celebrated on 10 August to raise awareness about the importance of non-fossil fuels.



Ethanol Blending

Blending ethanol with petrol to burn less fossil fuel while running vehicles.

Blending Target

- 20% ethanol blending in petrol (E20) by 2025

Currently, ethanol makes up 10% of the petrol used in vehicles.

Significance

- Reduce oil imports
- Equivalent efficiency at a lower cost than petrol
- Burns completely and cleaner than petrol
- Ethanol produced from farm residue to boost farmers' income

Challenges in Success

- High land requirement for sugarcane (+ consequent food prices issue)
- High water requirement of biofuel crops

Related Initiatives

- Roadmap for Ethanol Blending in India (Report by NITI Aayog) (2021)
- E100 Pilot Project (Network for production and distribution of ethanol) (2021)
- Pradhan Mantri **JI-VAN** Yojana (to boost 2G ethanol projects) (2019)
- The National Policy on Biofuels (2018)

A group of cows in a barn, some with white tags on their ears, are eating from troughs filled with feed. The scene is dimly lit, with the cows' faces and the feed in the troughs being the primary focus.

- What are Biofuels?

- **About:**

- **Biofuels are the fuel derived from the biomass of plants or animal wastes.**
- **It is commonly produced from corn, sugarcane and animal waste like cow dung.**
- **These come under renewable sources of energy.**

-

- **Significance:**
- **Environmental Benefits**
- **Energy Security**
- **Economic Benefits**



Generations of Biofuels

First Generation

- Derived from edible plants grown on arable land.
- Ethanol and butanol produced via yeast fermentation.
- Crops include wheat, sugar cane, and oily seeds.
- Attributed as a potential reason for recent spike in food prices.
- Net energy negative.

Second Generation

- Produced from non-edible crops grown on non-arable land.
- Sources have high lignocellulosic content, which include wood and organic waste.
- Potential to be net energy positive.

Third Generation

- Produced from algae and other microorganisms.
- Resilient organisms that can be grown from sunlight, CO₂ and brackish water.
- Does not use arable land.
- Fastest growing of all biofuel sources.
- Potentially carbon neutral

Fourth Generation

- Genetic engineering of organisms for efficient production of biofuels.
- Includes altering lipid characteristics and introducing lipid excretion pathways.
- Aim to be carbon negative by creating artificial carbon sinks.



Given below are the names of four energy crops. Which one of them can be cultivated for ethanol? (2010)



- (a) Jatropha**
- (b) Maize**
- (c) Pongamia**
- (d) Sunflower**



- **According to India's National Policy on Biofuels, which of the following can be used as raw materials for the production of biofuels? (2020)**

- 1. Cassava**
- 2. Damaged wheat grains**
- 3. Groundnut seeds**
- 4. Horse gram**
- 5. Rotten potatoes**
- 6. Sugar beet**

- **Select the correct answer using the code given below:**
- **(a) 1, 2, 5 and 6 only**
- **(b) 1, 3, 4 and 6 only**
- **(c) 2, 3, 4 and 5 only**
- **(d) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6**

Timor-Leste Bestows Top Civilian Honor on President Murmu



- Recently, President Horta of Timor-Leste awarded President Droupadi Murmu the Grand-Collar of the Order of Timor-Leste, recognizing her contributions to public service, education, and women's empowerment.
- President Murmu and Prime Minister Gusmão observed the signing of three MoUs covering Cultural Exchanges, the collaboration between Prasar Bharati and Timor-Leste Radio & Television (RTTL), and visa exemptions for diplomatic, official, and service passports.



THAILAND

*SOUTH
CHINA
SEA*

PHILIPPINES

*PACIFIC
OCEAN*

BRUNEI

MALAYSIA

INDONESIA

INDONESIA

**EAST
TIMOR**
DILI

**PAPUA
NEW
GUINEA**

*INDIAN
OCEAN*

AUSTRALIA

East Timor, colonised by Portugal in the 18th century, was annexed by Indonesia in 1975 after Portugal withdrew, leading to a long struggle for independence.



In a 1999 UN-supervised referendum, East Timorese voted for independence, which led to further violence until peace-keeping forces intervened, and the country was officially recognized by the UN in 2002.



World Elephant Day

The theme for 2024 is “**Personifying prehistoric beauty, theological relevance, and environmental importance**”.

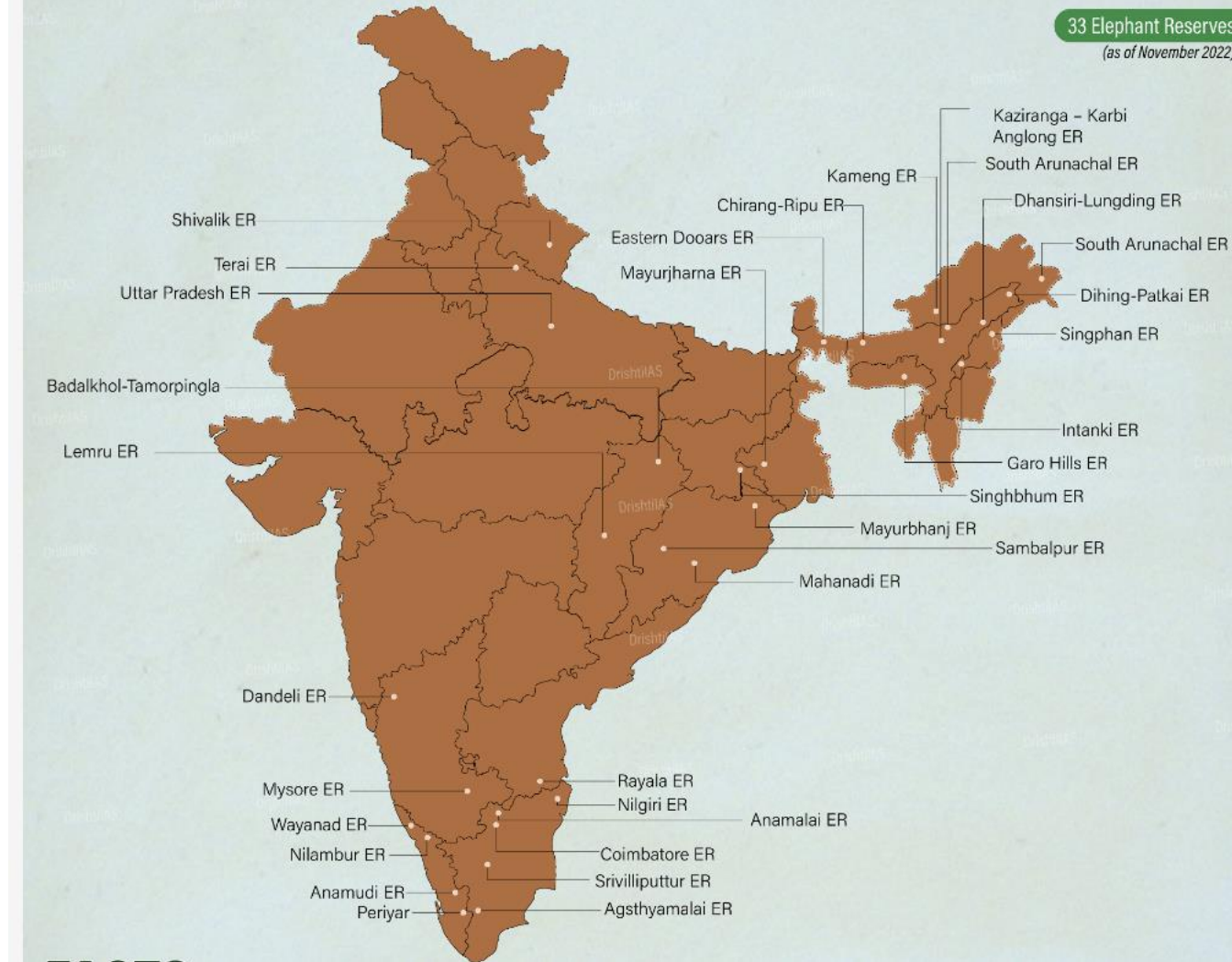
India is home to about **60%** of the world's Asian elephant population, with an estimated 27,312 individuals as per the 2017 census and 138 identified **elephant corridors**.

Elephants have a gestation period of about 22 months, the longest of any land animal.

Asian elephants(Indian) are classified as Endangered on the IUCN Red List due to habitat loss, human-elephant conflict, and poaching.

Elephant Reserves

33 Elephant Reserves
(as of November 2022)





Asiatic Lion

Panthera Leo Persica

Features

- ⇒ Asiatic lions are slightly smaller than African lions.
- ⇒ The most striking morphological character, which is always seen in Asiatic lions, and rarely in African lions, is a longitudinal fold of skin running along its belly.

Habitat

- ⇒ At present Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary (Gujarat) is the only abode of the Asiatic lion.

Protection Status

- ⇒ Endangered: IUCN Red List
- ⇒ Appendix I: CITES
- ⇒ Schedule I: Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972

Threats

- ⇒ Human Animal Conflict
- ⇒ Poaching
- ⇒ Genetic Inbreeding
- ⇒ Diseases such as plague, canine distemper

Conservation Efforts

- ⇒ Asiatic Lion Conservation Project
- ⇒ Project Lion
- ⇒ World Lion Day (10th August)



Scientific Name: *Panthera leo persica*

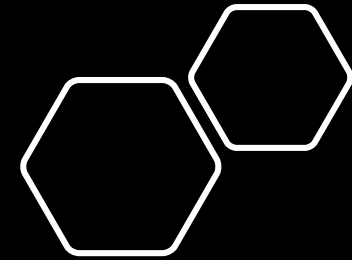
Weight: Male: 150-250 kg
Female: 120-180 kg

Length (head and body): Male: 1.7-2.5 m
Female: 1.4-1.75 m

Birth Interval: 18-26 Months

Typical Diet: Carnivorous

Lifespan: 16-18 Years





FUN FACTS

- Lions live in large groups called prides.
- Male lions can weigh over 500 pounds and grow up to eight feet in length.
- Known as the “King of the Jungle,” lions live in grasslands and plains, not jungles.
- Female lions and their sisters live together for life, while males stay with the pride until they reach maturity.
- A lion’s roar can be heard from up to five miles away.
- Lions spend about 20 hours a day resting or sleeping.
- Male lions patrol their territories regularly.
- Lions prefer to hunt at night, making it easier to catch prey.

The image features a solid orange background. A large white circle is centered on the page. The text "Nankai Trough" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font in the center of the white circle. On the left side of the white circle, there is a dashed yellow arc. At the bottom right edge of the white circle, there is a small, solid blue circle.

Nankai Trough

Recently, Japan issued its first-ever 'megaquake advisory' of strong shaking and large tsunamis on the Nankai Trough, a subduction zone.

It is an **underwater subduction zone**, is characterised by subduction of multiple geological units of the **Philippine Sea Plate** (the Kyushu-Palau Ridge, the Shikoku Basin, the Kinan Seamount Chain, and the Izu-Bonin Arc) **beneath the Eurasian Plate** in the southwest of Japan.

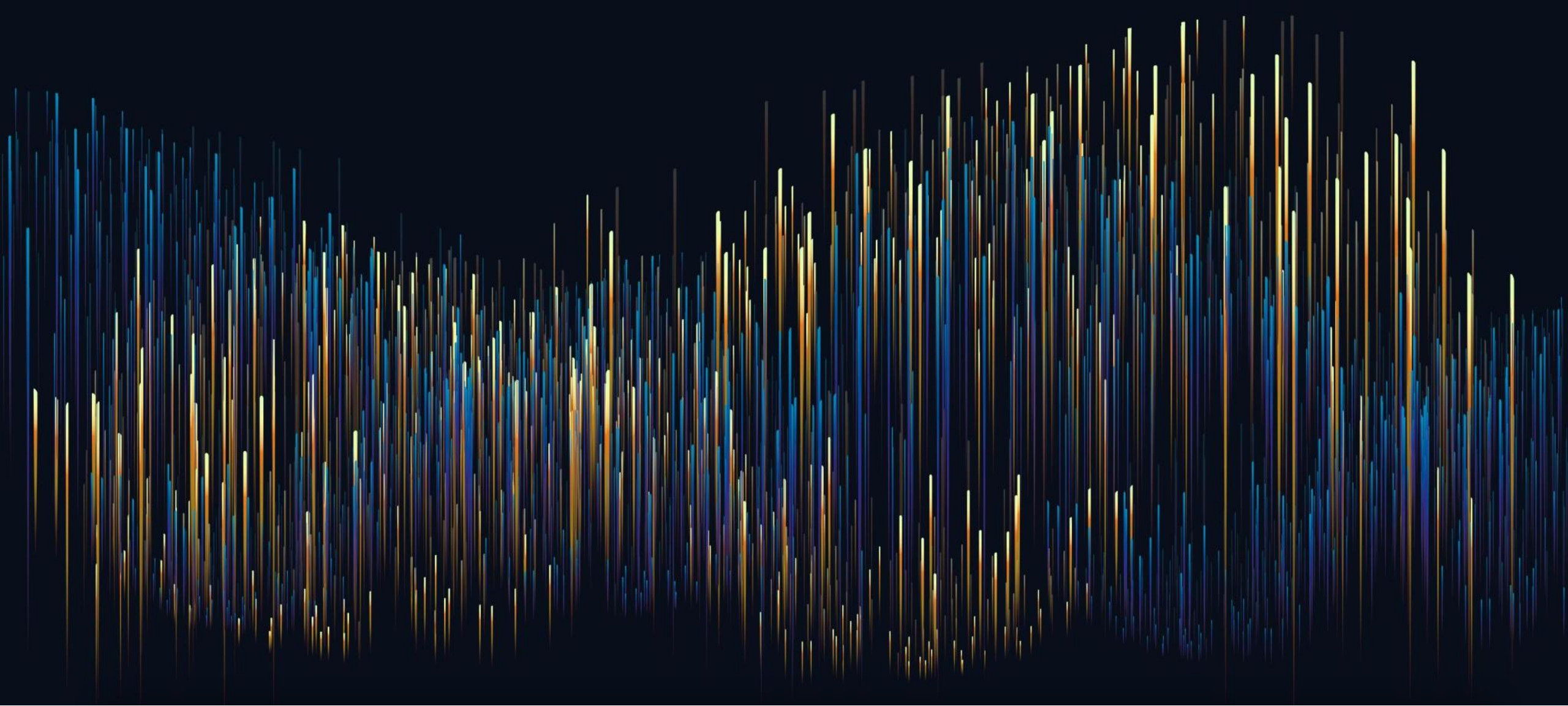
- It accumulates tectonic stress which can cause a megaquake — an earthquake with a magnitude larger than 8.



Nankai Trough has a **history of producing such megaquakes** roughly every 100 to 150 years. They **often come in pairs**.

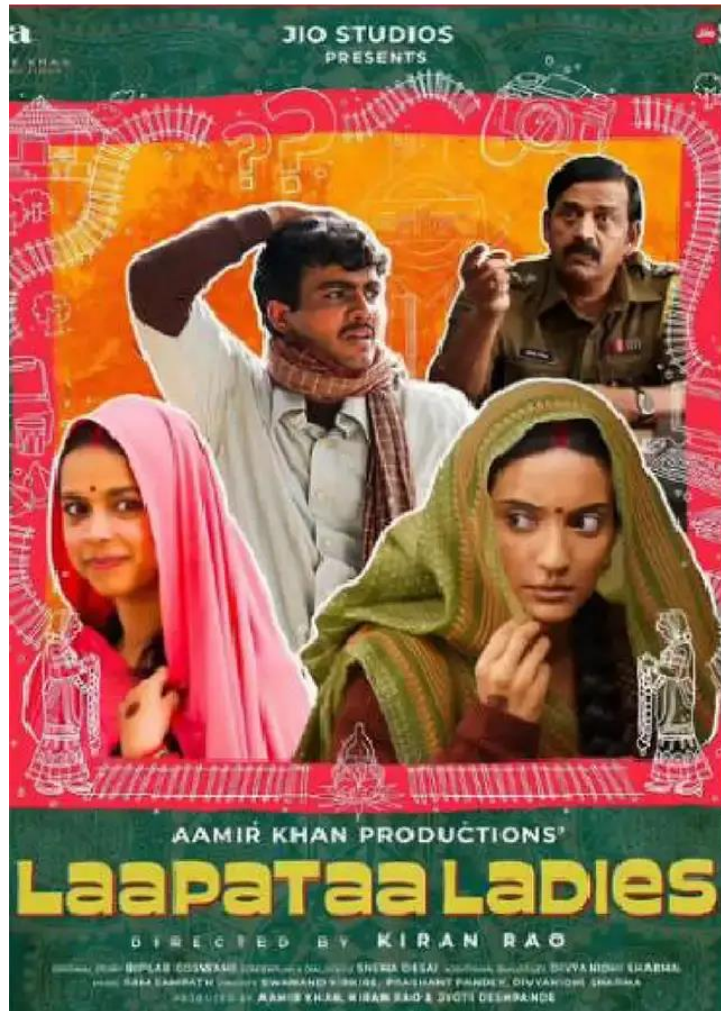
- The **second quake**, following the first, tends to rupture within the subsequent two years. The last **'twin'** earthquakes occurred back in 1944 and 1946.

Japan is a country used to earthquakes. It sits on the Ring of Fire and, as a result, experiences about 1,500 earthquakes a year.



Exercise Udara Shakti

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) contingent returned to India after successfully participating in the **Exercise Udara Shakti 2024**.
- **About**
- The joint air exercise was conducted in collaboration with the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) at Kuantan, Malaysia.
- The primary focus of the exercise was to bolster operational efficiency and enhance the technical expertise of both air forces.
-




Movie
Laapataa
Ladies
Screened at
Supreme
Court

- 
- **Kiran Rao's film Laapataa Ladies** was screened at the Supreme Court of India recently.
 - **Laapataa Ladies, set in 2001**, follows the story of two brides swapped in a train.
 - **Laapataa Ladies explores several ethical aspects through its narrative, including:**
- 


1. **Gender Equality**: The film addresses the issues of gender roles and expectations in society, challenging traditional norms and advocating for equality between men and women.
2. **Human Rights**: The storyline highlights the basic rights of individuals, particularly women, emphasizing their right to make choices about their lives and bodies.
3. **Social Justice**: The film sheds light on the marginalization and exploitation of women, urging for a more just and fair society where everyone has equal opportunities.

-


Cultural Sensitivity: By setting the story in a fictitious state, the film draws attention to the **cultural nuances and the ethical treatment** of individuals within different societal structures.



Moral Responsibility: The characters in the film face moral dilemmas, particularly in dealing with the consequences of the bride swap, raising questions about responsibility and ethical decision-making.



Empathy and Compassion: The narrative encourages viewers to empathize with the characters' situations, promoting understanding and compassion for those facing challenging circumstances.



Individual Autonomy: The film touches on the importance of personal autonomy and the right to self-determination, especially for women in a patriarchal society.

- **Ameliorate (verb)**

Definition: To make something bad or unsatisfactory better.

Example sentence: The government introduced new policies to ameliorate the effects of the economic crisis on low-income families.



Fun fact

Fun fact



- **The Most Decorated Olympian:** American swimmer Michael Phelps holds the record for the most Olympic medals won by an individual, with 28 medals, including 23 golds, earned between 2004 and 2016.

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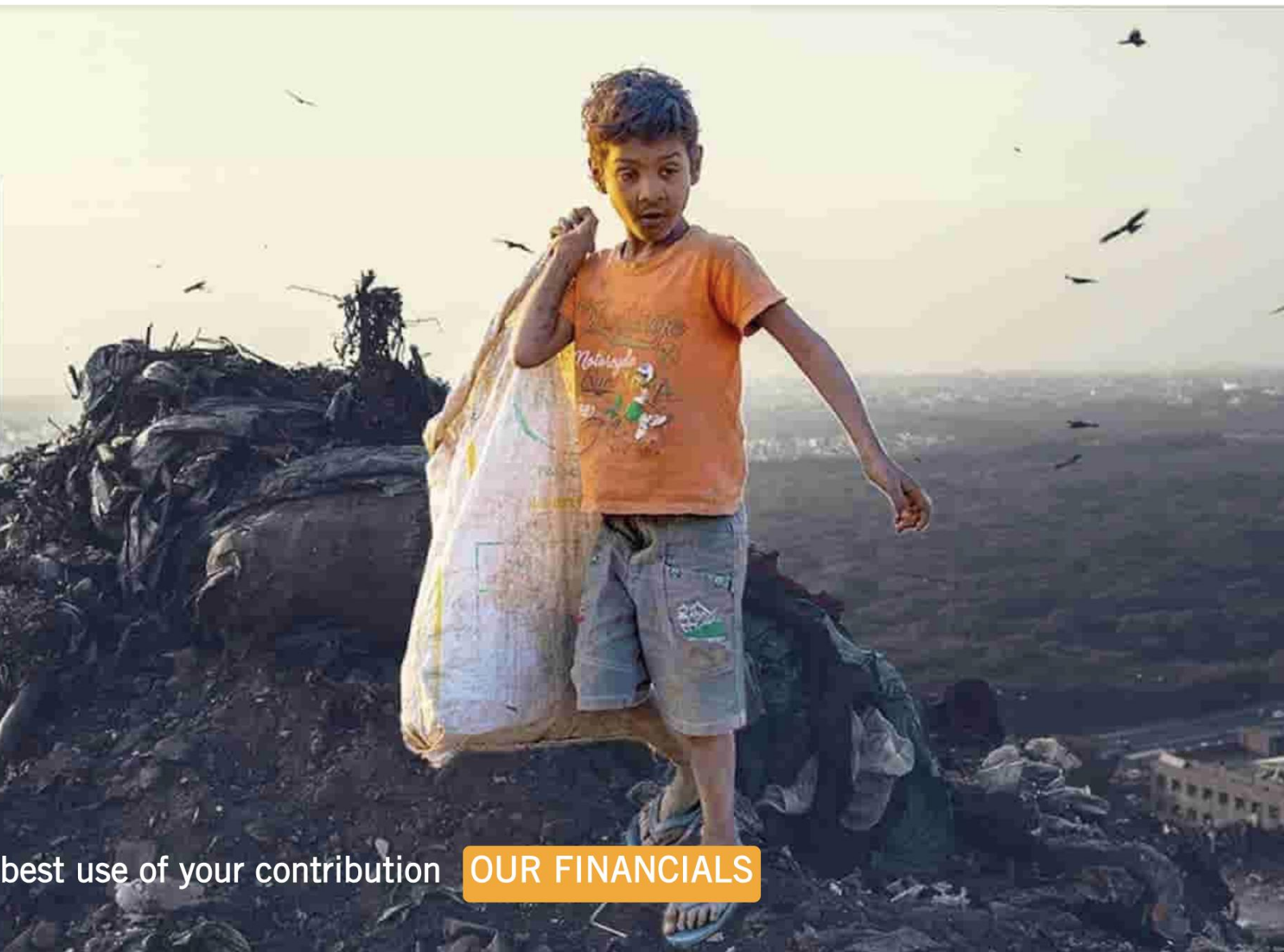
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GIVE A CHILD THE GIFT OF EDUCATION TODAY

Join Hands



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, 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.

Thank you
guys.
