

Daily Current Affairs



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10 MCQ QUIZ

A blurred photograph of a modern office interior. In the background, several people are seated around a long wooden table, engaged in a meeting. The scene is brightly lit by large windows, creating a soft, out-of-focus atmosphere. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

Top 10 MCQ from the session for
every exam

- What is the name of the Government of India's flagship deep ocean mission?

भारत सरकार के प्रमुख गहरे महासागर मिशन का नाम क्या है?

- **A. Matsya6000 / मत्स्य6000**
- B. Samudrayaan Mission / समुद्रयान मिशन**
- C. Deep Sea Exploration / गहरे समुद्र की खोज**
- D. Ocean Odyssey / महासागर ओडिसी**

- What material is used to construct the pressure sphere of Matsya6000?
मत्स्य6000 के प्रेशर स्फीयर का निर्माण किस सामग्री से किया गया है?
- **A. Aluminum Alloy / एल्युमिनियम मिश्र धातु**
- **B. Titanium Alloy / टाइटेनियम मिश्र धातु**
- **C. Stainless Steel / स्टेनलेस स्टील**
- **D. Carbon Fiber / कार्बन फाइबर**

- What is the maximum depth Matsya6000 can reach?
मत्स्य6000 अधिकतम कितनी गहराई तक जा सकता है?
- **A. 2,000 meters / 2,000 मीटर**
- **B. 4,000 meters / 4,000 मीटर**
- **C. 6,000 meters / 6,000 मीटर**
- **D. 8,000 meters / 8,000 मीटर**

- What is the key objective of NASA's Parker Solar Probe mission?
नासा के पार्कर सोलर प्रोब मिशन का मुख्य उद्देश्य क्या है?
- **A. To explore Mars / मंगल की खोज करना**
- **B. To study the Sun's corona / सूर्य के कोरोना का अध्ययन करना**
- **C. To monitor asteroids / क्षुद्रग्रहों की निगरानी करना**
- **D. To map the Moon / चंद्रमा का मानचित्रण करना**

- What is the primary focus of the Aditya-L1 mission by ISRO?
इसरो के आदित्य-एल1 मिशन का प्राथमिक उद्देश्य क्या है?
- **A. Observing the Moon / चंद्रमा का अवलोकन करना**
- **B. Studying the Sun / सूर्य का अध्ययन करना**
- **C. Exploring Jupiter / बृहस्पति की खोज करना**
- **D. Monitoring Earth's atmosphere / पृथ्वी के वायुमंडल की निगरानी करना**

- Who is the chairperson of the RBI's committee on ethical AI adoption in the financial sector?
वित्तीय क्षेत्र में नैतिक एआई अपनाने पर आरबीआई समिति के अध्यक्ष कौन हैं?
- **A. Dr. C.N.R. Rao / डॉ. सी.एन.आर. राव**
- **B. Dr. Pushpak Bhattacharyya / डॉ. पुष्पक भट्टाचार्य**
- **C. Dr. Raghuram Rajan / डॉ. रघुराम राजन**
- **D. Dr. Arvind Subramanian / डॉ. अरविंद सुब्रमणियन**

- What was the primary reason for the Internet freedom decline globally in 2023?

2023 में वैश्विक स्तर पर इंटरनेट स्वतंत्रता में गिरावट का मुख्य कारण क्या था?

- **A. Increase in cyberattacks / साइबर हमलों में वृद्धि**
- **B. Government shutdowns and information control / सरकारी शटडाउन और सूचना नियंत्रण**
- **C. Rise in online scams / ऑनलाइन धोखाधड़ी में वृद्धि**
- **D. Lack of infrastructure / बुनियादी ढांचे की कमी**

- Which chess player won the 2024 Women's World Rapid Chess Championship?

2024 महिला विश्व रैपिड शतरंज चैंपियनशिप किसने जीती?

- **A. Koneru Humpy / कोनेरु हम्पी**
- B. Dronavalli Harika / द्रोणवल्ली हरिका**
- C. Irene Sukandar / आइरीन सुकंदर**
- D. Anna Muzychuk / अन्ना मुझिचुक**

- What record was achieved by NASA's Parker Solar Probe in 2024?
2024 में नासा के पार्कर सोलर प्रोब ने कौन सा रिकॉर्ड बनाया?
- **A. Fastest man-made object / सबसे तेज़ मानव निर्मित वस्तु**
- **B. First spacecraft to orbit Jupiter / बृहस्पति की कक्षा में पहला अंतरिक्ष यान**
- **C. First object to reach Mars / मंगल तक पहुंचने वाली पहली वस्तु**
- **D. Longest space mission / सबसे लंबा अंतरिक्ष मिशन**

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By Bhunesh Sir

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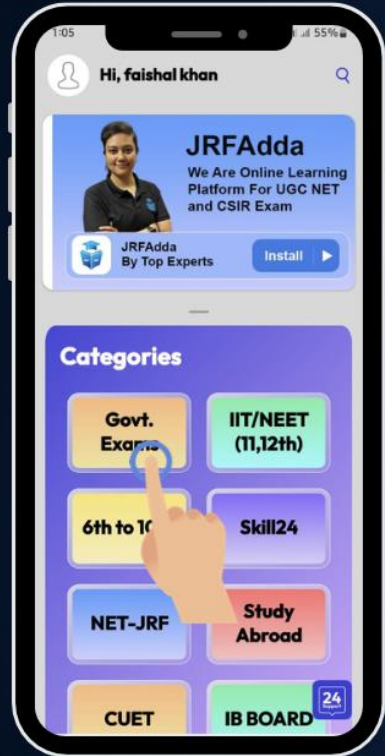


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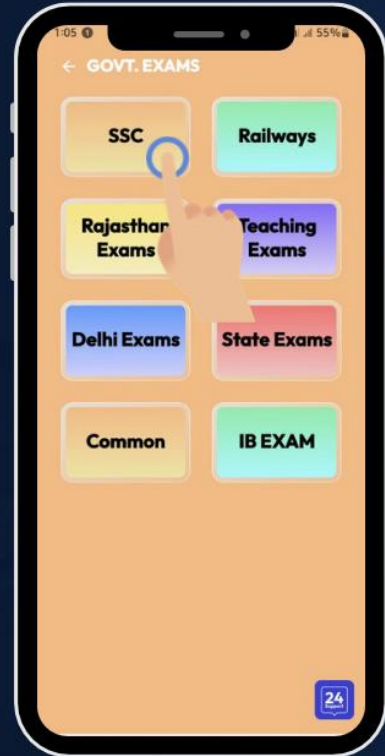
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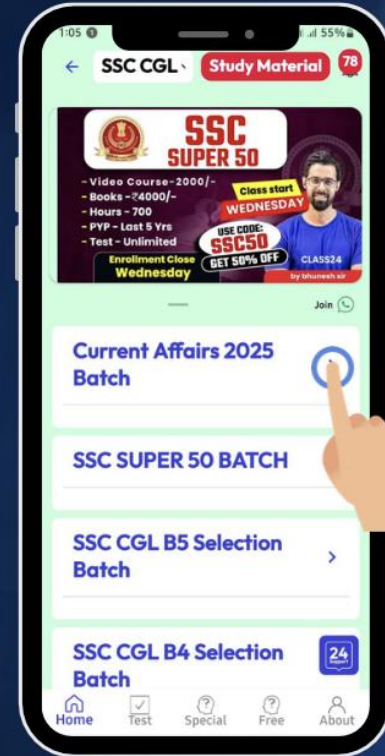
Step 1



Step 2



Step 3

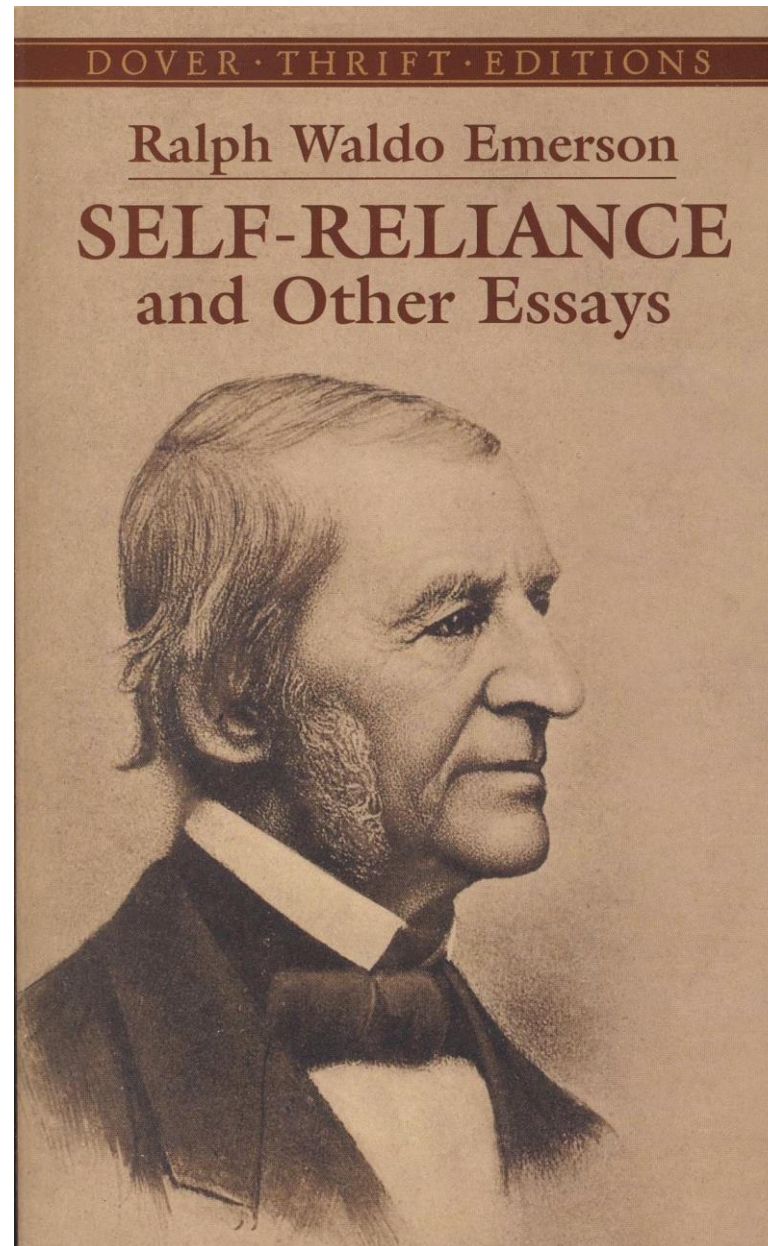


Step 4



Ralph Waldo Emerson,
Self-Reliance

*“To be yourself in a
world that is
constantly trying to
make you something
else is the greatest
accomplishment.” –*



RETIROFITTING SUBSIDIES
Centre to spend ₹2,800 crore on modules, torpedoes
The Centre has reiterated that the Inter-Ministerial Central Team considers the Mysapadi landfills in Wayand of Kerala to be a "disaster of severe nature" for all practical purposes, given the "intensity" of the disaster. » PAGE 4

ISRAEL'S BUILDING SECTOR
Indian workers replace Palestinians
NEWS » PAGE 4

MANMOHAN'S FUNERAL
Ensured privacy of his family at rites: Cong.
NEWS » PAGE 5

CHECKS AND BALANCES
States and the danger of poorly made drugs
Centre must help States to improve drug quality
EDITORIAL » PAGE 8

THUMPING WIN
Australia crushes India in fourth Test
SPORT » PAGE 16

INSIDE

Kerala landslides 'disaster of severe nature': Centre
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
The Centre has reiterated that the Inter-Ministerial Central Team considers the Mysapadi landfills in Wayand of Kerala to be a "disaster of severe nature" for all practical purposes, given the "intensity" of the disaster. » PAGE 4

Seoul officials seek to detain impeached Yoon
SEOUL
South Korean law enforcement officials sought a court warrant on Monday to detain impeached President Yoon Suk Yeol as they probe whether his martial law decree amounted to rebellion. » PAGE 14

Punjab bandh a success, say protesting farmers

Jagjit Singh Dallewal, on a fast unto death, urged Centre to pay attention to their demands which include implementation of legalised minimum support price, loan waiver, withdrawal of cases; Railways cancels one train and regulates five others as complete shutdown reported in the State; Supreme Court set to hear the matter again today

A.M. Bheesh
NEW DELHI
Protesting farmers said the Punjab bandh called by the Supreme Court is hearing the matter again on Tuesday with inputs from the expert committee headed by former Punjab and Haryana High Court judge Justice Nawab Singh, appointed by the Centre to find a solution to the protests.
Mr. Dallewal, in a brief video message, thanked the State's people for making the bandh a "success". He urged the Centre to pay heed to their demands.
Reports suggest, the State witnessed a complete shutdown during the nine-hour bandh. The Railways said in a statement that the Patnaur-Hamamangarh train was cancelled and five trains were regulated. Other modes of public transportation, such as

caul narrowing down further as members of both the umbrella organisations worked together on the ground in favour of the bandh.
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Farmers raise slogans as they block the Golden Gate Highway in Amritsar during the Punjab bandh on Monday. (A)

buses, taxis and autorickshaws, stayed off the roads.
Baldev Singh Sirsa, Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) president and leader of SKM(NP), who has been on a fast unto death since the protest, said the solidarity for Mr. Dallewal was the reason for the success of the bandh.
"All sections of the society - teachers, advocates, workers, street ven-

dores, government employees and agriculture workers - supported our bandh without any campaign," he said.
He said public transport workers during the bandh, the success of the bandh, the demands of Mr. Dalle-

wal were that of all farmers. "We have also been urging Mr. Dallewal to end his fast and join the Joint protests," he said.
The draft agriculture policy of the Punjab government, recently published for public opinion, had recommended establishment of a State Agricultural Costs and Prices Commission to provide return estimates for all crops, dairy products and eggs so that remunerative prices can be given to farmers. "These estimates may also be used for fixation of compensation/relief, credit limits and other related issues. For the betterment of the farm sector, it is significant that a legal guarantee of procurement at MSP should be established. For crop diversification in the State, a comparative returns pattern should also be taken into consideration while fixing

+ ISRO's docking mission on; spacecraft reach right orbit

Hemant C.S.
SRILAKSHOTA
The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) mission on Monday.
The PSLV C60 rocket carrying two small satellites, SIOX1 (Chaser) and SIOX2 (Target), along with 24 payloads, lifted off from the first launchpad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota at 10 p.m.
About 15 minutes after lift-off, the two small spacecraft weighing about 220 kg each were launched into a 475-km circular orbit as intended.
"The rocket has placed the satellites in the right orbit which is into a 475-km circular orbit. The spacecraft's solar panels have been deployed successfully. The two SpaDeX satel-

lites have moved one behind another so during a period of time it will pick up further distance, the distance will increase by 20 km over the next few days and then the rendezvous and docking process will start. The docking process can happen in another one week; the nominal time will be approximately January 7," said ISRO Chairman S. Somnath.
Technology for future
With the SpaDeX mission, the ISRO aims at exhibiting technologies needed for spacecraft rendezvous, docking, and undocking using two small satellites which have been mastered by only an elite group of spacefaring nations.
The demonstration of this technology is essential for futuristic missions, including sending an Indian astronaut to the moon, sampling return from the

moon, and the building and operation of an Indian space station.
ISRO said that the demonstrated precision of the PSLV vehicle would be utilised to give a small relative velocity between the Target and Chaser spacecraft at the time of separation from the launch vehicle.
"This incremental velocity will allow the Target spacecraft to build a 10-20 km inter-satellite separation with respect to the Chaser within a day. At this point, the relative velocity between the Target will be compensated using the propulsion systems of the Target spacecraft," ISRO said.
ISRO added that at the end of this drift arrest manoeuvre, Target and Chaser will be in the same orbit with identical velocity but separated by about 20 km, known as Far Rendezvous.

Great start: The PSLV-C60 craft lifts off from Sriharikota spaceport on Monday night. B. VELANAKANN RAJ

Private Members' Bills get short shrift in both LS and RS

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI
During the five-year term of the 17th Lok Sabha that ended in 2024, only 9.08 hours were spent on Private Members' Bills, while the Rajya Sabha spent 27.01 hours on them during the period, shows an analysis by PRS Legislative Research, an independent research body.
The Lower House spent 16.43 hours on the Upper House 20.78 hours on Private Members' Resolutions.
In the two sessions of the 18th Lok Sabha, 0.15 hours were spent on such Bills, while the Rajya Sabha spent 0.62 hours in this period. The Lower House spent 1.98 hours on resolutions and the Upper House 2.09 hours.
The resolutions are declarations on which the House votes, while the Bills refer to proposed legislation. These are the only instruments available for MP's individual expression without being bound by their party's diktat.
Political messaging
They serve as an important medium for political messaging. For example in 2006, after the sudden death of then Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, the Congress chose Indira Gandhi to replace him. H.V. Kamath, then an MP from the Praja Socialist Party, moved a Private Members' Bill to amend the Constitution to allow gunners laureates to be eligible for the post of Prime Minister. Indira Gandhi was a member of the Rajya Sabha at the time.
The time spent on such Bills for the entire tenure of



Parliament has passed only 14 Private Members' Bills till date and none since 1970. (PI)

the Lok Sabha is a minuscule fraction of the total hours both Houses sit in a single session. Till date, only 14 Private Members' Bills have been passed and received assent. None have been passed in both Houses since 1970.

Jimmy Carter, former U.S. President and global humanitarian, dies at 100

Associated Press
ATLANTA
Jimmy Carter, the peanut farmer who won the presidency in the wake of the Watergate scandal and Vietnam War, endured humbling defeat after one tumultuous term, and then redefined life after the White House as a global humanitarian, died on Sunday. He was 100 years old.
The longest-lived American President died roughly 22 months after entering hospice care, at his home in the small town of Plains, Georgia, where he and his wife, Rosalynn, who died at 96 in November 2023, spent most of their lives.



JIMMY CARTER (1924 - 2024)

the Carter Center said. "Our founder, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, passed away this afternoon in Plains, Georgia," the center said on X. It added in a statement that he died peacefully, surrounded by his family.
As reactions poured in from around the world, mourners gathered to mourned Carter's death, saying the world lost an

"extraordinary leader, statesman and humanitarian" and he lost a dear friend.
'Man of principle'
Mr. Biden cited Carter's work to eradicate disease, forge peace, advance civil and human rights, promote free and fair elections and house the homeless as an example for others.
"To all of the young people in this nation and for anyone in search of what it means to live a life of purpose and meaning, the good life - study Jimmy Carter, a man of principle, faith, and humanity," Mr. Biden said in a statement.
MORE REPORTS ON
» PAGES 4 & 14

After attack, security forces destroy four bunkers in Manipur

Press Trust of India
IMPHAL
Security forces have destroyed four bunkers of gunmen in Manipur's Imphal East and Kangpokpi districts and occupied three others following gunfights last week, the police said on Monday.
"The bunkers were destroyed after operations were conducted in the past two days in several areas bordering Thammakopki and Sanasabi villages where gunfights took place after adjoining hills-based gunmen launched attacks on the low-lying villages," a police statement said.
Four persons were injured on Friday in gun attacks in Thammakopki and Sanasabi villages
"All armed miscreants involved in recent gun incidents have been flushed out. Four illegal bunkers have been destroyed while three other bunkers have been occupied by security forces both in the valley and dominating hill areas," the statement said.
On Friday four persons were injured in gunfights in Thammakopki and Sanasabi villages.

† ISRO's docking mission on; spacecraft reach right orbit

Hemanth C.S.
SRIHARIKOTA

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) mission on Monday.

The PSLV C60 rocket carrying two small satellites, SDX01 (Chaser) and SDX02 (Target), along with 24 payloads, lifted off from the first launchpad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota at 10 p.m.

About 15 minutes after lift-off, the two small spacecraft weighing about 220 kg each were launched into a 475-km circular orbit as intended.

“The rocket has placed the satellites in the right orbit which is into a 475-km circular orbit. The spacecraft's solar panels have been deployed successfully. The two SpaDeX satel-

lites have moved one behind another so over a period of time it will pick up further distance; the distance will increase by 20 km over the next few days and then the rendezvous and docking process will start. The docking process can happen in another one week; the nominal time will be approximately January 7,” said ISRO Chairman S. Somanth.

Technology for future

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The demonstration of this technology is essential for futuristic missions, including sending an Indian astronaut to the moon, sample return from the

moon, and the building and operation of an Indian space station.

ISRO said that the demonstrated precision of the PSLV vehicle would be utilised to give a small relative velocity between the Target and Chaser spacecraft at the time of separation from the launch vehicle.

“This incremental velocity will allow the Target spacecraft to build a 10-20 km inter-satellite separation with respect to the Chaser within a day. At this point, the relative velocity between the Target will be compensated using the propulsion system of the Target spacecraft,” ISRO said.

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Great start: The PSLV-C60 craft lifts off from Sriharikota spaceport on Monday night. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

ISRO'S SPADEX: ROAD TO CHANDRAYAAN-4



- **Mission Overview (मिशन का अवलोकन):**

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the **Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX)** mission on Monday. (भारतीय अंतरिक्ष अनुसंधान संगठन (इसरो) ने सोमवार को स्पेस डॉकिंग एक्सपेरिमेंट (स्पैडेक्स) मिशन को सफलतापूर्वक लॉन्च किया।)
- The PSLV C60 rocket carried two satellites, **SDX01 (Chaser)** and **SDX02 (Target)**, along with 24 other payloads. (PSLV C60 रॉकेट ने दो उपग्रहों SDX01 (चेज़र) और SDX02 (टारगेट) के साथ 24 अन्य पेलोड्स को ले जाया।)

- **Technical Details (तकनीकी विवरण):**

- Both satellites were launched into a **475-km circular orbit** around Earth, weighing approximately 220 kg each. (दोनों उपग्रहों को पृथ्वी के चारों ओर 475-किमी के गोलाकार कक्षा में छोड़ा गया, जिनका वजन लगभग 220 किलोग्राम था।)
- The mission aims to demonstrate **spacecraft rendezvous, docking, and undocking technologies**. (मिशन का उद्देश्य अंतरिक्ष यान की रेंडेजवस, डॉकिंग और अनडॉकिंग तकनीकों का प्रदर्शन करना है।)

Future Applications (भविष्य के अनुप्रयोग):

The SpaDeX technology is crucial for **futuristic missions** such as:

- Sending an Indian astronaut to the Moon. (चंद्रमा पर भारतीय अंतरिक्ष यात्री भेजना।)
- Returning from the Moon. (चंद्रमा से वापसी।)
- Developing an Indian space station. (भारतीय अंतरिक्ष स्टेशन विकसित करना।)

- **Operational Details (परिचालन विवरण):**

- Over the next few days, the satellites will separate by **10-20 km** and undergo rendezvous and docking trials. (अगले कुछ दिनों में, उपग्रह 10-20 किमी की दूरी पर अलग होंगे और रेंडेजवस और डॉकिंग परीक्षणों से गुजरेंगे।)
- The docking process is expected to complete by **January 7**, as per ISRO Chairman S. Somanath. (डॉकिंग प्रक्रिया 7 जनवरी तक पूरी होने की उम्मीद है।)

Technological Milestones (प्रौद्योगिकी उपलब्धियां):

SpaDeX will make India part of an elite group of spacefaring nations with docking capabilities.
(स्पाडेक्स भारत को डॉकिंग क्षमताओं वाले कुछ देशों के समूह का हिस्सा बनाएगा।)

The mission also includes precise **incremental velocity adjustments** for optimal docking.
(मिशन में अनुकूल डॉकिंग के लिए सटीक वेग समायोजन शामिल है।)

- **Historical Context (ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ):**

- This is India's first mission aimed at **mastering docking technology**, which is essential for complex space exploration. (यह भारत का पहला मिशन है जिसका उद्देश्य जटिल अंतरिक्ष अन्वेषण के लिए डॉकिंग तकनीक में महारत हासिल करना है।)
- Only a few nations like the USA and Russia have developed similar technologies historically. (ऐतिहासिक रूप से केवल अमेरिका और रूस जैसे कुछ देशों ने ऐसी तकनीक विकसित की है।)

- **Geographical Context (भौगोलिक संदर्भ):**

- The launch took place at the **Satish Dhawan Space Centre** in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. (लॉन्च आंध्र प्रदेश के श्रीहरिकोटा स्थित सतीश धवन अंतरिक्ष केंद्र से हुआ।)

- **8. Political Context (राजनीतिक संदर्भ):**

- This mission aligns with India's growing ambitions in the **global space race** and self-reliance in space technology under initiatives like "Make in India." (यह मिशन वैश्विक अंतरिक्ष दौड़ में भारत की बढ़ती महत्वाकांक्षाओं और "मेक इन इंडिया" पहल के तहत अंतरिक्ष प्रौद्योगिकी में आत्मनिर्भरता के अनुरूप है।)

Jimmy Carter, former U.S. President and global humanitarian, dies at 100

Associated Press

ATLANTA

Jimmy Carter, the peanut farmer who won the presidency in the wake of the Watergate scandal and Vietnam War, endured humbling defeat after one tumultuous term, and then redefined life after the White House as a global humanitarian, died on Sunday. He was 100 years old.

The longest-lived American President died roughly 22 months after entering hospice care, at his home in the small town of Plains, Georgia, where he and his wife, Rosalynn, who died at 96 in November 2023, spent most of their lives,



JIMMY CARTER (1924 - 2024)

the Carter Center said.

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“extraordinary leader, statesman and humanitarian” and he lost a dear friend.

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Mr. Biden cited Carter’s work to eradicate disease, forge peace, advance civil and human rights, promote free and fair elections and house the homeless as an example for others.

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MORE REPORTS ON

» PAGES 4 & 14

Jimmy Carter

39th U.S. President

Overview

Education

Books



Scott Cunningham/Getty Images



-
- **Jimmy Carter's Presidency** (जिमी कार्टर की राष्ट्रपति काल):
 - Became the U.S. President during the aftermath of the Vietnam War and Watergate scandal.
(वियतनाम युद्ध और वाटरगेट स्कैंडल के बाद अमेरिका के राष्ट्रपति बने।)
 - Served as the 39th President of the United States (1977–1981).
(1977-1981 के दौरान अमेरिका के 39वें राष्ट्रपति रहे।)
 - Lost re-election after one term.
(एक कार्यकाल के बाद दोबारा चुनाव हार गए।)

1. Post-Presidency (राष्ट्रपति पद के बाद का जीवन):

1. Known globally as a humanitarian and peace advocate.
(मानवीय और शांति समर्थक के रूप में विश्व प्रसिद्ध।)
2. Worked on eradicating diseases and promoting human rights.
(बीमारियों के उन्मूलन और मानवाधिकारों को बढ़ावा देने का काम किया।)

• Geographical Context (भौगोलिक संदर्भ):

1. Birth and Residence (जन्म और निवास):

1. Born and spent most of his life in Plains, Georgia.
(जन्म और अधिकांश जीवन जॉर्जिया के प्लेन्स में व्यतीत किया।)

1. Demise Location (निधन स्थान):

1. Passed away at his home in Plains, Georgia, surrounded by family.
(प्लेन्स, जॉर्जिया में अपने घर पर परिवार के बीच निधन हुआ।)

• Political Achievements (राजनीतिक उपलब्धियाँ):

1. Promoted free and fair elections globally.
(दुनिया भर में स्वतंत्र और निष्पक्ष चुनावों को बढ़ावा दिया।)
2. Advocated for civil and human rights.
(नागरिक और मानवाधिकारों के लिए आवाज उठाई।)
3. Launched the Carter Center to continue his global initiatives.
(अपने वैश्विक कार्यों को जारी रखने के लिए कार्टर सेंटर की स्थापना की।)

1. Longevity Record (दीर्घायु का रिकॉर्ड):

1. Longest-living former U.S. President, aged 100.

(100 वर्ष की आयु में सबसे लंबे समय तक जीवित रहने वाले पूर्व अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति।)

• Personal Life (व्यक्तिगत जीवन):

1. Married to Rosalynn Carter, who passed away earlier in November 2023 at the age of 96.

(पत्नी रोसालिन कार्टर का निधन नवंबर 2023 में 96 वर्ष की आयु में हुआ।)

-
- **Indo-U.S. Nuclear Deal (भारत-अमेरिका परमाणु समझौता):**
 - Carter's 1978 visit to India was significant for discussions on the Tarapur Atomic Power Station nuclear fuel supply.
(1978 में कार्टर की भारत यात्रा तारापुर परमाणु ऊर्जा स्टेशन के लिए परमाणु ईंधन आपूर्ति पर चर्चा के लिए महत्वपूर्ण थी।)
 - Despite differences, it was aimed at fostering cooperation.
(भिन्नताओं के बावजूद, यह सहयोग को बढ़ावा देने का प्रयास था।)

-
- **Relationship with India (भारत के साथ संबंध):**
 - Carter's connection was personal and political, partly due to his mother's love for India.
(कार्टर का भारत से संबंध व्यक्तिगत और राजनीतिक था, आंशिक रूप से उनकी मां के भारत प्रेम के कारण।)
 - Attended a public rally with Morarji Desai at Ramlila Maidan.
(रामलीला मैदान में मोरारजी देसाई के साथ एक सार्वजनिक रैली में भाग लिया।)

- **Diplomatic Interactions (कूटनीतिक बातचीत):**

- 1. Warm Reception (गरमजोशी से स्वागत):**

1. Received a standing ovation in Parliament; highlighted democratic parallels between India and the U.S.

(संसद में खड़े होकर स्वागत किया गया; भारत और अमेरिका के लोकतांत्रिक समानताओं को रेखांकित किया।)

2. Referred to as a “great humanist” by Indian President Neelam Sanjiva Reddy.

(भारतीय राष्ट्रपति नीलम संजीव रेड्डी ने उन्हें "महान मानवतावादी" कहा।)

-
- **Focus on Cooperation (सहयोग पर जोर):**
 - Despite disagreements, discussions enhanced U.S.-India relations, particularly in space and agriculture.
(विवादों के बावजूद, चर्चा ने अमेरिका-भारत संबंधों को विशेष रूप से अंतरिक्ष और कृषि में मजबूत किया।)
 - Highlighted the determination of Indian leaders to protect national interests.
(राष्ट्रीय हितों की रक्षा के लिए भारतीय नेताओं के दृढ़ संकल्प को उजागर किया।)



IN BRIEF



U.P. to use AI cameras, RFID wristbands to track pilgrims

The Uttar Pradesh government has planned to use Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled cameras, Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) wristbands and mobile app tracking to track the headcount of pilgrims at the upcoming Mahakumbh starting in Prayagraj on January 13. (The photo shows ongoing preparations for the event.) The government expects footfall of approximately 450 million devotees at the religious carnival, which is recognised by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in which a largest peaceful congregation of pilgrims take a dip in a sacred river. The Mahakumbh will continue for 45 days.

Banks to provide beneficiary account name look-up facility

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has asked the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to develop a facility to allow customers using online fund transfer systems, Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) and National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT), to verify the name of the bank account to which money is being transferred before initiating the transaction to avoid mistakes and prevent frauds. All banks that are direct members or sub-members of RTGS System and NEFT System are advised to offer this facility by April 1, 2025. The RBI said in a circular on Monday. It also said the facility has to be made available to customers without any charge.

Army installs Shivaji statue on Pangong Lake bank; Ladakh councillor, others question its relevance

Dinakar Peri NEW DELHI

The councillor of Chushul in Ladakh has questioned the relevance of a statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj that was installed by the Indian Army on the banks of the Pangong Tso (lake) in eastern Ladakh, a point also raised by several veterans on social media. The incident comes shortly after the controversy over the removal of an iconic painting from the Army chief's lounge earlier this month.

According to defence sources, the statue is within the location of a Maratha unit. It was built with voluntary contributions from serving and retired personnel of the unit. "As a local resident, I must voice my concerns about the Shivaji statue at Pangong. It was erected without local input, and I question its relevance to our unique environment and wildlife. Let's prioritize projects that truly respect and protect our community and nature," Konchok Stanzin, councillor of Chushul, said on X.



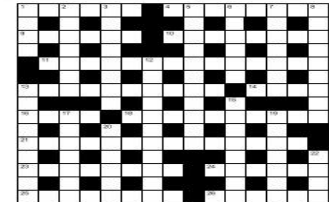
Maratha icon: Army personnel standing next to the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji on the bank of the Pangong Lake. PTI

"The towering symbol of valour, vision and unwavering justice was inaugurated by Lt. Gen. Hitesh Bhalali, General Officer Commanding (GOC), Fire and Fury Corps and Colonel of the Maratha Light Infantry. The event celebrates the unwavering spirit of the Indian ruler,

14,300 feet, the Leh-based Corps said on X on Saturday. "The towering symbol of valour, vision and unwavering justice was inaugurated by Lt. Gen. Hitesh Bhalali, General Officer Commanding (GOC), Fire and Fury Corps and Colonel of the Maratha Light Infantry. The event celebrates the unwavering spirit of the Indian ruler,

Towering symbol On December 26, the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was inaugurated on the banks of Pangong Lake at an altitude of

THE CROSSWORD 14370 (Set by Avtaar)



- Across 1 Recent communication about a missing Earl (6) 4 Agitated swimmer eating constantly (6) 9 Soccer balls near goalpost's end grabbed by linesman from back (6) 10 Difficulty in speech... and 1 capitulate (9) 11 Eggs are string in images of that old European complex (4,2,5)

- 13 Practical test that is included by banks for financial director ahead of court proceeding (5,5) 14 Check by spinning top of turner on TV (4) 15 Unusually rough, the part of a jersey (5) 16 Spies taken in by extremely bright discharged emigrants who frequent upper-class dros (10) 17 A means flirting with sinister manipulation (5,5) 18 Most of our experiment covers onset of Venus' eclipse (8) 19 Bird sighted at first on trek across river (6) 20 Nostalgial habit (8) 21 "Daah" in special font (6) Down 1 Pick up fight after changing sides (4) 2 Old children cutting, say, palm and foot (7) 3 Nuclei of cells modified in degrees after removing infection (8) 5 In the morning, Avtaar visits former kingdom for investigation (11) 6 Get close to target and rip top off (6) 7 Go down supporting popular Conservative ring (7) 8 Condition is almost pathetic after treatment (9) 9 Whimsy of say, ruler with gold skirt reflecting on casing of gemstone (6,5) 12 Eldest brother is new head of family after he goes abroad (5-4) 13 Cool to follow book with cryptic clue of top quality (4-4) 14 Touch of titanium and silver below post (7) 15 Stability in doubt... possibly stay away, after leaving son in capital (7) 16 Cryptically, it's savage (6) 17 Superman's well-known place in England (4)

SUDOKU grid with numbers and solution key below. The grid is a 9x9 square with some numbers pre-filled. The solution key shows the completed grid.

At Khanauri, farmers stand by Dallewal, lend him strength

Aide says the farmer leader is at the risk of 'cardiac arrest or brain haemorrhage'; Dallewal will continue fast until govt. listens, says his sister; protesters make arrangements to beat biting cold

Sandeep Tewari KHANAURI

In a chilly morning at Khanauri, protesting farmers brave the cold and sit around bonfires. Between sips of piping hot tea in the wintry air that prickles the skin and leaves it pale and dry, they discuss the waning health of farmer leader Jagjit Dallewal, who has been on an indefinite fast since November 26 to press the Centre to accept the farmers' demands, including a legal guarantee of minimum support price for crops.



In solidarity: Women prepare food at Khanauri in Sangrur district of Punjab on Monday. SAHSA/PTI

On December 28, the Supreme Court gave the Punjab government time till December 31 to hospitalise Mr. Dallewal even as the Punjab government said that efforts to move the leader to a hospital were met with stiff resistance by farmers. For now, Mr. Dallewal has been shifted to a tent with 24x7 medical aid and has fellow protesters to ensure all his needs are met.

For 35 days now, Mr. Dallewal has not eaten and has lost more than 18 kg. The farmers said they are here to provide him with the courage to continue and have stopped taking medication. The prolonged starvation is concerning, and it can lead to either cardiac arrest or brain haemorrhage," he said. There is also a team of 50 doctors that has found enough space to provide medical treatment to the farmers. Even as Mr. Dallewal continues to fast, local women pitch in to feed the protesters. "Cruelty also encompasses actions that inflict mental pain and suffering that creates a reasonable apprehension of harm or injury to an aggrieved spouse from the conduct of the other spouse so as to make it impossible for them to stay together," Justice Nath explained. The court was hearing the prolonged legal battle between a couple, both engineers with a child, who have lived separately for years. The man has sought divorce on the ground that his estranged wife's conduct, including leaving the matrimonial home and filing criminal complaints against him, amounted to mental cruelty. He said her behaviour had not only strained their relationship but also caused significant damage to his reputation and peace of mind. The Madhya High Court had be-

Association, U.S., who has been taking care of Mr. Dallewal's health needs, said doctors believe that the leader needs to be hospitalised and put on ventilator. "We used to check him every six hours, but now, we are not able to do so. He is not in a condition to stand up. His weight balance is not good. He used to consume only two litres of water, now, even that has reduced," said Mr. Singh. "His blood pressure was last recorded at 85/60 and he is also undergoing cancer treatment and has stopped taking medication. The prolonged starvation is concerning, and it

Another veteran Colonel Sanjay Fande observed that Zorawar Singh went through Pangong Tso to Khurnak Fort, established posts right up to Mansarovar. "He died fighting in Tibet. Leh Fort is called Zorawar Fort... Zorawar Singh fought wars 190 years back. He deserves to be there in a unit and historical relevance of Shivaji in Ladakh. While we respect his legacy, imposing such cultural symbols here is misplaced. We would appreciate the inclusion of statues honouring local historical figures like Khree Sultan Cho or All Sher Khan Annet and Seenge Namgyal. However, even these should not be placed in environmentally sensitive areas like Pangong, which require careful preservation," he said.

Behaviour that causes mental pain to spouse ground for divorce: SC

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has in a judgment held that patterns of behaviour which cause immense emotional distress to a spouse amount to mental cruelty and is a ground for divorce. A Bench headed by Justice Vikram Nath said cruelty was not limited to inflicting physical pain to a spouse. "Cruelty also encompasses actions that inflict mental pain and suffering that creates a reasonable apprehension of harm or injury to an aggrieved spouse from the conduct of the other spouse so as to make it impossible for them to stay together," Justice Nath explained. The court was hearing the prolonged legal battle between a couple, both engineers with a child, who have lived separately for years. The man has sought divorce on the ground that his estranged wife's conduct, including leaving the matrimonial home and filing criminal complaints against him, amounted to mental cruelty. He said her behaviour had not only strained their relationship but also caused significant damage to his reputation and peace of mind. The Madhya High Court had be-

ven the man divorce. She challenged the decree in the Supreme Court. Upholding the High Court decision, the Bench agreed that "sustained emotional torment and loss of trust in the marital relationship constitutes cruelty". The court said cruelty included actions of a spouse which were not just isolated incidents but formed a pattern of behaviour that made cohabitation impossible. Sustained and deliberate acts of cruelty make it unreasonable to expect a spouse to continue living with the other, Justice Nath noted. "Marriage is a relationship built on mutual trust, companionship, and shared experiences. When these essential elements are missing for an extended period, the marital bond becomes a mere legal formality devoid of any substance," he said. The court directed the man to pay his wife a permanent alimony of ₹50 lakh. Justice Nath dismissed the argument that the wife earned well, noting that financial independence cannot be a reason to deny her maintenance post-divorce if it was necessary to secure her dignity, social standing, and financial stability.

Centre inks contracts for AIP, torpedoes for submarines

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Defence Ministry on Monday signed two contracts related to Scorpene-class submarines worth ₹2,867 crore. The first contract is for the construction of the air-independent propulsion module (AIP) developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), and integration aboard. The second contract is for the integration of the electronic location weight torpedo being developed by DRDO.

Towards this, the DRDO has already entered into an agreement with the France-based Naval Group, the original manufacturer of Scorpene-class submarines, and would generate employment of nearly three lakh man days, the Ministry said. The integration of the EHWTT would be a collaborative effort between the Indian Navy, the DRDO, and the Naval Group, the statement added. The submarines have been operating without a dedicated, modern heavy-weight torpedo so far, as the torpedoes meant to be procured from the company were embroiled in a corruption scandal.



Waiting air: An indigenously developed AIP module, after delays, is awaiting fitting on Scorpene submarines. PTI photo

Defence Ministry statement said. An indigenously developed AIP module, after delays, is awaiting fitting on Scorpene submarines. Towards this, the DRDO has already entered into an agreement with the France-based Naval Group, the original manufacturer of Scorpene-class submarines, and would generate employment of nearly three lakh man days, the Ministry said. The integration of the EHWTT would be a collaborative effort between the Indian Navy, the DRDO, and the Naval Group, the statement added. The submarines have been operating without a dedicated, modern heavy-weight torpedo so far, as the torpedoes meant to be procured from the company were embroiled in a corruption scandal.

Enhanced submarines The construction of the AIP Plug and its integration would enhance the endurance of conventional sub-

FAITH Service to God, devotees

Parents will love and affectionately care for their children however they may be. Even for a crow, her chick is golden. The sweet strains from the pipe and saaz (an ancient stringed instrument) cannot stand compared to the sweetness of the rare music in children's practice of soft and melodious word flow (kushal inidhu yach inidhu - kural 60). Thanneerpalli Sri. Krishnan Swamy said in a discourse that we are all God's children, and He is ever willing to extend His blessings. Lord Krishna says there are four types of people: the distressed, the seekers of knowledge, the health seekers, and the men of knowledge (chaturvitha: bhagyante - chapter 7-ukola 16). Of all kinds of men, those who pray with sincere devotion and seek nothing in return except rendering service to Him are called the true devotees. It is good to render poojas to Lord Vishnu, and it is still better to extend service to the Lord's devotees, which makes Him merrier. Those who pray with the sole aim of attaining liberation are known as Janitors. Lord says He is very dear to such janitors. In the eighth pasturam of Tiruppavai, Andhal emphasises unique concepts. She wakes up her friends to worship Lord Narayana, the chief of all celestials. To live happily here and attain the ultimate moksha hereafter, enjoy the divine bliss in the realm of His world permanently, people should serve God and His devotees. It is said that when people go to various places of worship, it is better to go with the devotees of God (bhagavathuz), through whom the Lord is very pleased. Sri Andhal has exhibited this through her own conduct to set an example for us.

Centre inks contracts for AIP, torpedoes for submarines

The Hindu Bureau

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The first contract is for the construction of the air independent propulsion module (AIP) developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), and its integration aboard. The second contract is for the integration of the electronic heavy-weight torpedo being developed by the DRDO.

“The contract for construction of AIP Plug and its integration was inked with Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, Mumbai, [which is] worth around ₹1,990 crore, while the contract for integration of EHWT, being developed by DRDO, was signed with Naval Group, France at an approx. cost of ₹877 crore,” a



Waiting on: An indigenously developed AIP module, after delays, is awaiting fitment on Scorpene submarines. FILE PHOTO

Defence Ministry statement said.

An indigenously developed AIP module, after delays, is awaiting fitment on Scorpene submarines. Towards this, the DRDO has already entered into an agreement with the France-based Naval Group, the original manufacturer of Scorpenes.

Enhanced submarines

The construction of the AIP Plug and its integration would enhance the endurance of conventional sub-

marines, and would generate employment of nearly three lakh man days, the Ministry said. The integration of the EHWT would be a collaborative effort between the Indian Navy, the DRDO, and the Naval Group, the statement added.

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- **Two Contracts Signed** (दो अनुबंधों पर हस्ताक्षर):
- The Defence Ministry signed contracts worth ₹2,867 crore related to Scorpene-class submarines.
(रक्षा मंत्रालय ने स्कॉर्पेन श्रेणी की पनडुब्बियों से संबंधित ₹2,867 करोड़ के अनुबंधों पर हस्ताक्षर किए।)
- First contract: Construction and integration of an Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) module developed by DRDO.
(पहला अनुबंध: डीआरडीओ द्वारा विकसित एयर इंडिपेंडेंट प्रोपल्शन (AIP) मॉड्यूल का निर्माण और एकीकरण।)
- Second contract: Integration of electronic heavyweight torpedoes (EHWT) developed by DRDO.
(दूसरा अनुबंध: डीआरडीओ द्वारा विकसित इलेक्ट्रॉनिक हैवीवेट टॉरपीडो का एकीकरण।)

- **Collaborators (सहयोगी):**

- Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, Mumbai, for AIP integration (₹1,990 crore).

(मझगांव डॉक शिपबिल्डर्स लिमिटेड, मुंबई, के साथ AIP एकीकरण के लिए ₹1,990 करोड़ का अनुबंध।)

- Naval Group, France, for EHWT integration (₹877 crore).

(नौसैनिक समूह, फ्रांस, के साथ EHWT एकीकरण के लिए ₹877 करोड़ का अनुबंध।)

- **Technological Advancements (तकनीकी उन्नति):**

- 1. AIP Module (AIP मॉड्यूल):**

1. Enhances the endurance of conventional submarines by enabling them to operate underwater for longer durations.
(पारंपरिक पनडुब्बियों की क्षमता बढ़ाता है, जिससे वे लंबे समय तक पानी के अंदर काम कर सकती हैं।)
2. Awaiting fitment in Scorpene submarines.
(स्कोर्पेन पनडुब्बियों में फिट होने का इंतजार।)

1. EHWT Integration (EHWT एकीकरण):

1. A collaborative effort between the Indian Navy, DRDO, and the Naval Group.
(भारतीय नौसेना, डीआरडीओ, और नौसैनिक समूह के बीच एक संयुक्त प्रयास।)
2. Addresses the need for modern torpedoes for Scorpene submarines.
(स्कॉर्पीन पनडुब्बियों के लिए आधुनिक टॉरपीडो की आवश्यकता को पूरा करता है।)

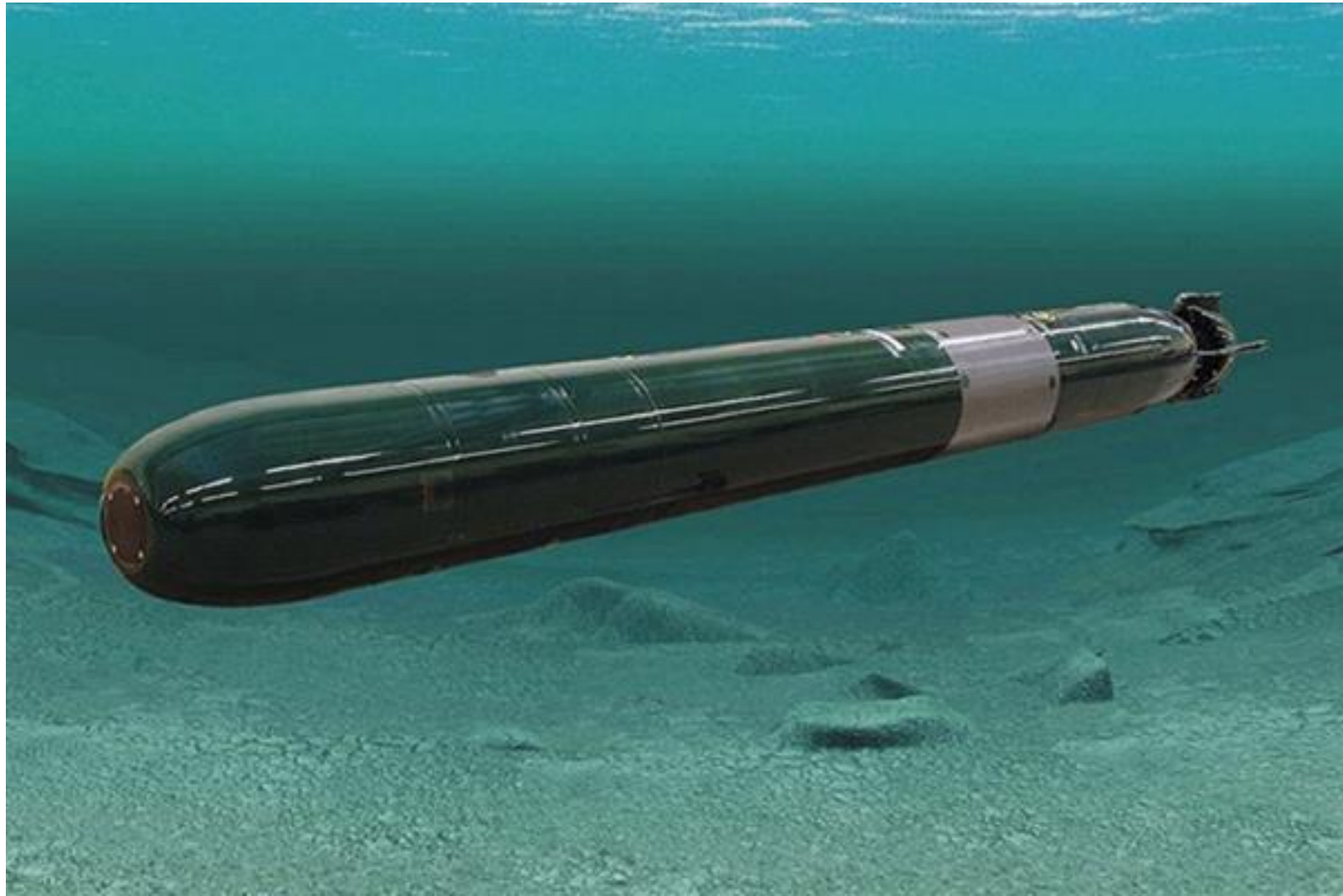
Economic and Employment Impact (आर्थिक और रोजगार प्रभाव):

Economic Investment (आर्थिक निवेश):

- Combined value of contracts: ₹2,867 crore.
(अनुबंधों का कुल मूल्य: ₹2,867 करोड़।)

Employment Generation (रोजगार सृजन):

- Expected to generate approximately three lakh man-days of employment.
(लगभग तीन लाख मानव-दिनों का रोजगार सृजित करने की उम्मीद।)







U.K. to tax private schools



Deep divide: Studies show disparity between private and state schools widened under Conservative rule, Reuters.

Agence France-Presse

LONDON
The UK will end a tax exemption for private schools on Wednesday, the centre-left Labour government has announced, in a move set to raise over £1.5 billion for public education.

After years of worsening educational inequalities, from January 1, private schools will have to pay 20% value added tax on tuition fees, which will be used to fund thousands of new teachers and improve standards in state schools. "It's time things are done differently," finance minister Rachel Reeves said. The funding will "illuminate Gen Z Chinese and the lack of attractive options in the private sector even though local governments are struggling to pay wages."

Klaire, a master's student in Beijing, took the notoriously competitive exam in early December, studying for nine hours a day and spending 980 yuan (\$134) on online tutoring. She cited social prestige and stability as major factors why she is only applying for government or state-owned enterprise (SOE) jobs. Klaire has also seen colleagues get laid off during a previous tech internship. "I only want to pass the exam and not worry about what happens next," said the 24-year-old, withhold-

ing her surname for privacy reasons. "Despite personally knowing civil servants who haven't been paid for months, I still applied because I don't wish to make lots of money." Layoffs are rare in China's civil service, earning it the "iron rice bowl" moniker, though individuals can be dismissed for disciplinary violations. "The current leadership has no intent of reducing the size of public sector workers, who are the backbone of regime stability," said Alfred Wu, associate professor at National University of Singapore. Most civil service openings have an age limit of 35 and offer subsidised housing and social insurance, a major attraction for grad-

Chinese youth flock to civil service, but slow economy puts jobs at risk

Most civil service openings offer subsidised housing and social insurance, a major attraction for graduates disillusioned by the paucity of private sector job opportunities; but widespread bonus reductions and pay cuts this year due to a fiscal crisis have prompted some to consider resigning

NEWS ANALYSIS

Reuters

BEIJING

A record 3.4 million young Chinese flocked to the civil service exam this year, lured by the prospect of lifetime job security and perks including subsidised housing as an economic slowdown batters the private sector and youth unemployment remains high. Applicant numbers, which surged by over 400,000 from last year and have tripled since 2014, reflect the huge demand for stability from disillusioned Gen Z Chinese and the lack of attractive options in the private sector even though local governments are struggling to pay wages.

Klaire, a master's student in Beijing, took the notoriously competitive exam in early December, studying for nine hours a day and spending 980 yuan (\$134) on online tutoring. She cited social prestige and stability as major factors why she is only applying for government or state-owned enterprise (SOE) jobs. Klaire has also seen colleagues get laid off during a previous tech internship. "I only want to pass the exam and not worry about what happens next," said the 24-year-old, withhold-

ing her surname for privacy reasons. "Despite personally knowing civil servants who haven't been paid for months, I still applied because I don't wish to make lots of money." Layoffs are rare in China's civil service, earning it the "iron rice bowl" moniker, though individuals can be dismissed for disciplinary violations. "The current leadership has no intent of reducing the size of public sector workers, who are the backbone of regime stability," said Alfred Wu, associate professor at National University of Singapore. Most civil service openings have an age limit of 35 and offer subsidised housing and social insurance, a major attraction for grad-



Boasted sector: China's civil service jobs swelled from 6.5 million in 2010 to 8 million currently, REUTERS.



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"I feel a strong sense of burnout and don't know what is meaningful" after having their university years dented by pandemic and China's economic slowdown, said a Chinese sociology professor on condition of anonymity. As the present generation of Chinese graduates have not experienced the mass state sector layoffs of the 90s, many have an idealised view of government work, he said.

Youth unemployment rates, which fell slightly in recent months, remain elevated compared to pre-pandemic figures as China's economy struggles to recover amid a prolonged property sector crisis and frayed consumption.

Many Gen Z Chinese consider resigning, while local government austerity drives have led to sporadic staff cuts. Some civil servants say they have been unpaid for months. Others survive on as little as 4,000 yuan (\$550) monthly while supporting families and paying off loans. Many asked for anonymity to avoid retribution. Despite these obvious woes, high nationwide youth unemployment has led strong demand for civil service roles, which have surged from 2019's 14,500 to 30,000 this year.

Katherine Liu quit her civil service job in the southern megacity of Shenzhen in July after her 15,000 yuan (\$2,000) salary dropped by a quarter, bonuses were scrapped, and managers hinted at further downsizing.

"Some departments chose to either cut salaries by 30% or fire people in response to cost-cutting policies," she said. In her housing bureau role, she handled an unprecedented number of migrant worker protests last December, when they normally demand wages before Chinese New Year.

Another civil servant in rural Guangdong province said his salary of 4,000 yuan (\$550) as "starving" after monthly bonuses of 1,000 yuan (\$140) stopped in June.

in Shandong, civil servants complained on social media in September about being paid only one month per quarter, part of a policy called "guarantee four (months' salary), strive for six."

Beijing has long faced calls to reform its bloated state sector. Despite repeated downsizing campaigns, China's civil service jobs swelled from 6.5 million in 2010 to 8 million currently, with at least a further 31 million public employees such as school and hospital workers who have fewer employment protections than civil servants.

China's provinces have quietly cut tens of thousands of public sector positions since 2020, mostly through hiring reductions and attrition.

Wage arrears are "systematic and universal across the country, and are impossible to solve substantially in the short term," said a governance professor at an elite Chinese university on condition of anonymity, adding that this could increase corruption as officials supplement their salaries through bribes, as well as increased administrative fines for citizens. "The most pressing issue now is social stability," said the professor. "Therefore the lesser of two evils will cause the expansion of civil service hiring and the neglect of institutional reforms."

Grounded in reality



Under a cloud: A Volocopter VoloCity air taxi is seen during a demonstration flight at the Saint-Cyr-Ecolle airfield in France, to mark the inauguration of the first 'vertiport', a take-off and landing runway for flying taxis. Flying taxi start-up Volocopter said it was filing for insolvency, days after fellow German company in the field, Lilium, was saved from a collapse. "Despite recent intensive fundraising efforts, finding a viable solution to maintain regular operations outside of insolvency proceedings has not been possible," Volocopter said, AFP.

Top five contrarian commodity scenarios for 2025

Chloe Russell

LONDON

It may pay to be a contrarian in 2025, as the upcoming year has the potential to be one of the most volatile in recent memory, particularly in commodities.

There is the return of U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, who is threatening to disrupt global trade flows with a wall of tariffs on imports into the United States. There is also still considerable uncertainty over the economic trajectory of China, the world's largest producer of commodities. And the future of the global energy transition has become hazier due to Mr. Trump's climate change scepticism.

Some of the above could create an environment in

which contrarian ideas turn into realities. Below I outline five such scenarios.

1. Trump is way better than expected. In this scenario, virtually everything goes right for the incoming Trump administration. The threat of tariffs is enough to force concessions from major trading partners, resulting in the threat of disruptive global trade flows with a wall of tariffs on imports into the United States. There is also still considerable uncertainty over the economic trajectory of China, the world's largest producer of commodities. And the future of the global energy transition has become hazier due to Mr. Trump's climate change scepticism.

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Some of the above could create an environment in



Bumpy year: 2025 has the potential to be one of the most volatile years in recent memory, Reuters.

struggle from too much supply and demand. If U.S. producers increase output significantly as Mr. Trump is demanding.

2. Trump is way worse than feared. The new Trump administration follows through on his most extreme threats, erecting massive trade barriers and withdrawing from, or un-

dermining, international trade agreements. If this happens, expect the global economy to suffer as countries battle to re-order trade flows and sup-

ply chains. Inflation would probably rise globally, and monetary policy may be tightened in many major economies as a result.

3. China comes roaring back. Mr. Trump's policies now hold the view that China is the sick man of Asia, meaning a rebound in its economy would be a boon for commodities such as copper, iron and oil, which would weaken. It is also likely that bond vigilantes would punish Treasuries in response to Mr. Trump's policies.

4. OPEC+ starts to fracture. The remarkable cohesion of OPEC and its allies, the group known as OPEC+, has been a defining feature of crude oil markets in recent years. This collective export body has used output cuts to anchor crude prices in a range around \$75 a barrel for the past two years. However, the ongoing U.S. output may place more pressure on the bloc's unity. Some members may take the view that it is best

President Trump's first actions and job data to test market in January

Reuters

NEW YORK

After closing the books on a banner year for U.S. stocks, investors expect to ride seasonal momentum into mid-January when a slew of economic data and a transition of power in Washington could send markets surging.

The S&P 500 rose roughly 25% in 2024, while the technology-heavy Nasdaq gained more than 30%.

On Friday, stocks sold off amid some profit taking and questions about how markets could perform in January, according to analysts and traders.

There are concerns that more than half of (next) year can involve some reduction of funds and those that are trading today and next week are probably just trying to get a



Wait and watch: Monthly employment data on Jan. 10 should give investors a fresh view into the health of the U.S. economy, REUTERS.

phenomenon dubbed the Santa Claus rally, which has driven S&P gains of an average of 1.3% since 1969, according to the Stock Trader's Almanac.

Despite the Friday sell-off, for the last five trading sessions, the S&P rose 1.77%, while the Nasdaq was up 1.8%.

Just how long upward momentum lasts will depend on forces that could help drive markets in 2025. Monthly U.S. employment data on Jan. 10 should give investors a fresh view into the health and strength of the U.S. economy. Job growth rebounded in November following hurricane- and strike-related setbacks earlier in the year.

Robert Pavlik, senior portfolio manager at Dakota Wealth, said stocks tend to do well in the last five trading days of December and into the first two days of January, a

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U.K. to tax private schools



Deep divide: Studies show disparity between private and state schools widened under Conservative rule. REUTERS

Agence France-Presse

LONDON

The UK will end a tax exemption for private schools on Wednesday, the centre-left Labour government has announced, in a move set to raise over £1.5 billion for public education.

After years of worsening educational inequalities, from January 1, private schools will have to pay 20% value added tax on tuition fees, which will be used to fund thousands of new teachers and improve standards in state schools.

“It’s time things are done differently”, finance minister Rachel Reeves said. The funding will “go towards our state schools where 94% of children are educated”, she said. The policy was promised by Labour in its election campaign and laid out in its inaugural budget in October. It hopes the move will bring in £1.5 billion for the 2025/2026 school year and rise to £1.7 billion a year by 2029/2030, which will be used to fund 6,500 new teachers in the public sector.

Tuition fees in private schools already average £18,000 a year, according to the Independent Schools Council, which represents private schools. That figure is set to rise, with the government estimating that tuition fees will increase by around 10%, with schools taking on part of the additional cost.

Opponents of the reform say state school enrolment will explode if the private sector is lost, increasing the cost to the government. But studies contradict this. The Institute for Fiscal Studies calculated that the number of children in state schools will actually fall by 2030 due to a projected population decline. Several research centres also point out that the disparity between private and state schools widened sharply under the 14-year Conservative rule.

'World population will be 8.09bn on New Year's Day; 71m spike in 2024'



New York: The world population increased by more than 71 million people in 2024 and will be 8.09 billion people on New Year's Day, according to US Census Bureau estimates released Monday. The 0.9% increase in 2024 was a slight slowdown from 2023, when the world population grew by 75 million people. In Jan 2025, 4.2 births and 2.0 deaths were expected worldwide every second, according to the estimates.

The US grew by 2.6 million people in 2024, and the US population on New Year's Day will be 341 million people, according to the Census Bureau. The US was expected to have one birth every 9 seconds and one death every 9.4 seconds in January 2025.

International migration was expected to add one person to the US population every 23.2 seconds. The combination of births, deaths and net international migration will increase the US population by one person every 21.2 seconds, the Census Bureau said. AP

Intangible Cultural Heritage



- 
- The recognition of Bosnia's Sevdalinka, also known as "**Balkan Blues**," as part of UNESCO's National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage highlights global efforts to preserve and celebrate diverse cultural traditions.
- 

A man with short dark hair and a beard, wearing a dark blue button-down shirt, is shown from the chest up. He is holding a long-necked, fretless stringed instrument, likely a Sevdalinka, and has his eyes closed as if singing. The background consists of white curtains with red horizontal stripes. The lighting is soft and indoor.

Balkan Blues


Bosnia's UNESCO-Recognized Sevdalinka

- About UNESCO's National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage:
- Established in: Adopted in 2003, came into force in 2006 under the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- Aim: To safeguard cultural practices, expressions, and knowledge systems endangered by globalization, ensuring respect for community heritage.






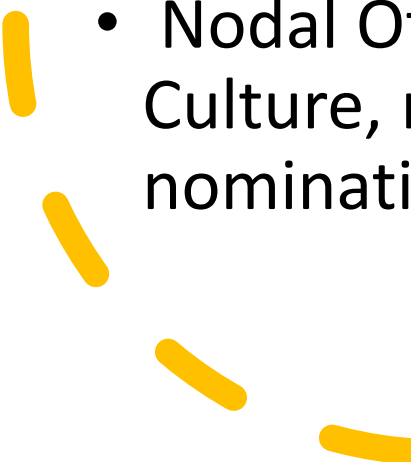
- **Criteria:**


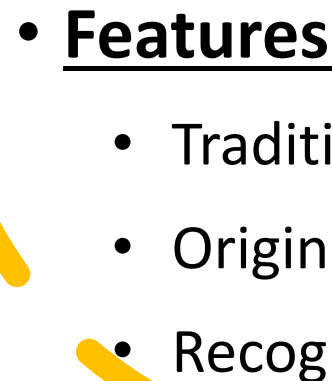
- Must demonstrate the importance of the practice for cultural identity.
 - Should involve active community participation.
 - Must align with the principles of human rights and sustainable development.
- 

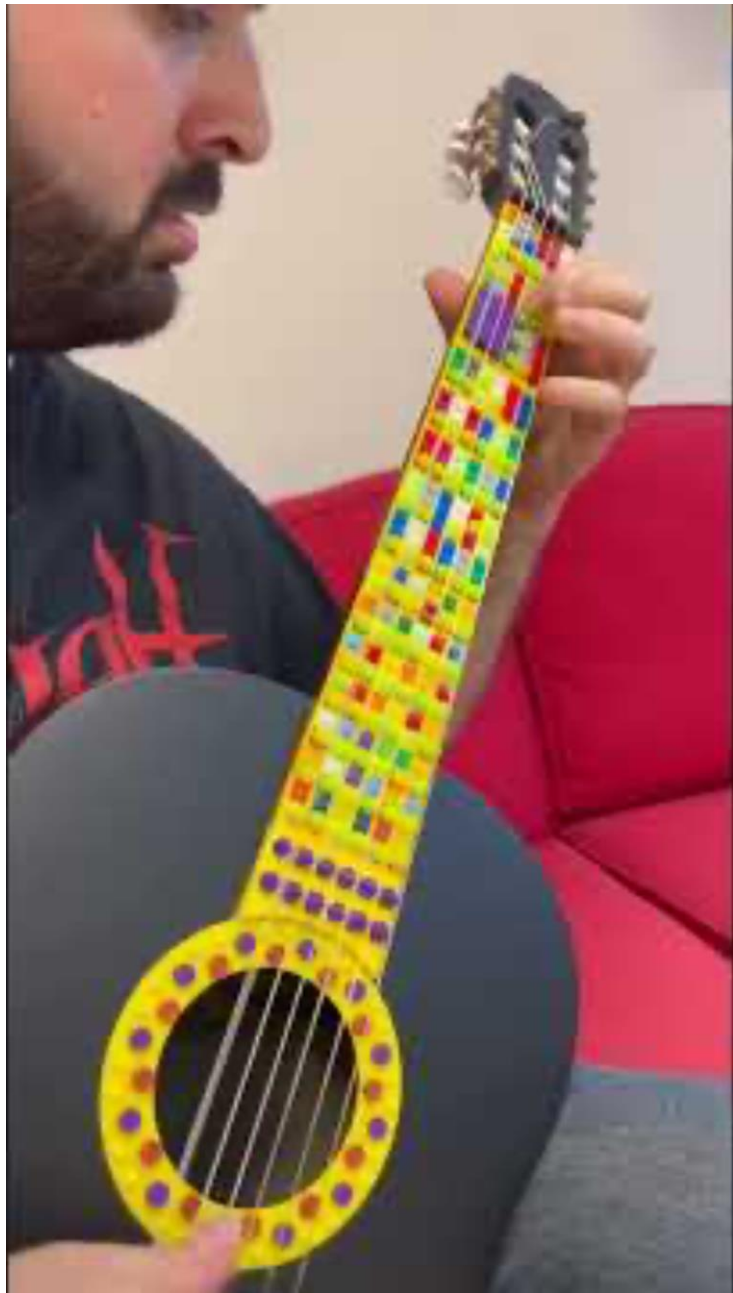


- **Types of Lists:**

- Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
- List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.
- Register of Good Safeguarding Practices

- 
- India and UNESCO: UNESCO Committees Membership: India is a member of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Committee (2022–2026) and the World Heritage Committee (2021–2025).
 - Previous Tenures: India served on the ICH Committee from 2006–2010 and 2014–2018.
 - Nodal Office: The Sangeet Natak Akademi, under the Ministry of Culture, manages intangible cultural heritage matters and prepares nomination dossiers for UNESCO's Representative List.
- 

- 
- **About Balkan Blues (Sevdalinka):**
 - **What it is:** A melancholic urban love song blending South Slavic oral poetry and Ottoman music, often referred to as the "Balkan Blues."
 - **Nation:** Bosnia.
 - **Features:**
 - Traditionally performed a cappella or with instruments like the saz (lute).
 - Originates from the 16th century, carrying themes of love and melancholy.
 - Recognized as a cultural symbol of Bosnia's history and identity.
- 



S.No.	Intangible Cultural Heritage Element	Year of Inscription
1.	Kutiyattam, Sanskrit Theater	2008
2.	Tradition of Vedic Chanting	2008
3.	Ramlila, the Traditional Performance of the Ramayana	2008
4.	Ramman, Religious Festival and Ritual Theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas, India	2009
5.	Chhau Dance	2010
6.	Kalbelia Folk Songs and Dances of Rajasthan	2010
7.	Mudiyettu, Ritual Theatre and Dance Drama of Kerala	2010
8.	Buddhist Chanting of Ladakh: Recitation of Sacred Buddhist Texts in the Trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir, India	2012
9.	Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur	2013
10.	Traditional Brass and Copper Craft of Utensil Making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab, India	2014
11.	Nowruz	2016
12.	Yoga	2016
13.	Kumbh Mela	2017
14.	Durga Puja in Kolkata	2021
15.	Garba of Gujarat	2023

$$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{d^2}$$

$$i\hbar \frac{\partial}{\partial t} \psi = \hat{H} \psi$$



$$\phi(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi\sigma}} e^{-\frac{(x-\mu)^2}{2\sigma^2}}$$

$$F - E + V = 2$$

Sanskrit Inscriptions

$$\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial t^2} = c^2 \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial x^2}$$

$$\frac{df}{dt} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(t+h) - f(t)}{h}$$

- 
- A recent discovery of an ancient Sanskrit inscription in Gilgit, Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir was decoded by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).
- 





About Sanskrit Inscription:

Location Found:

Gilgit, Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir –
Written in Brahmi script, 4th century CE.

Near Peshawar, Pakistan – Written in
Sharada script, 10th century CE.

About the Inscription:

Gilgit Inscription:

- Mentions "**Pushpasingha,**" who installed a Mahesvaralinga for his guru's merit.
- Written in **Brahmi script.**



- **Peshawar Inscription:**

- Fragmentary, engraved on a slab.
- Written in **Sharada characters**.
- Refers to Buddhist **Dharini (chants)** in line six.

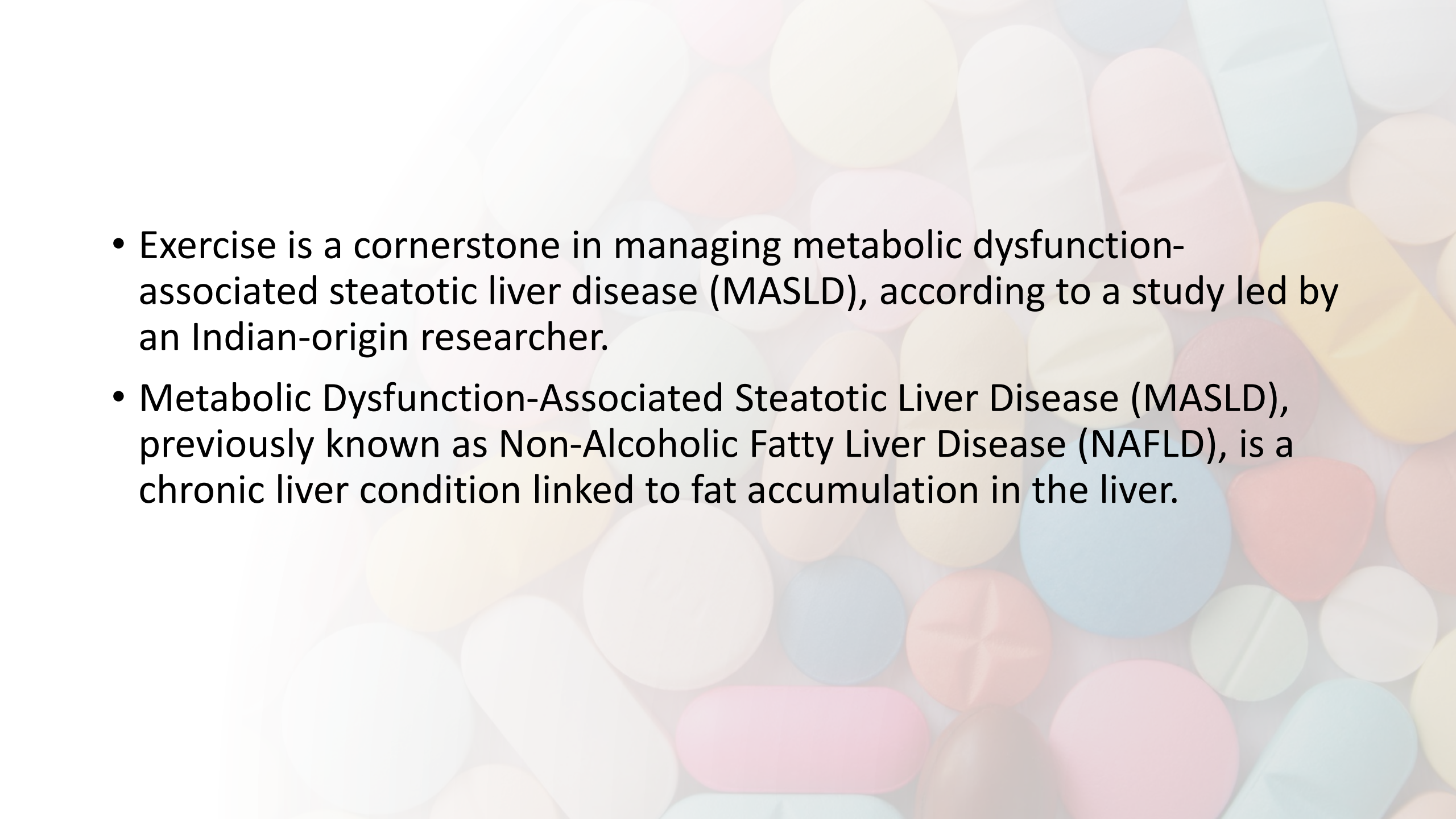
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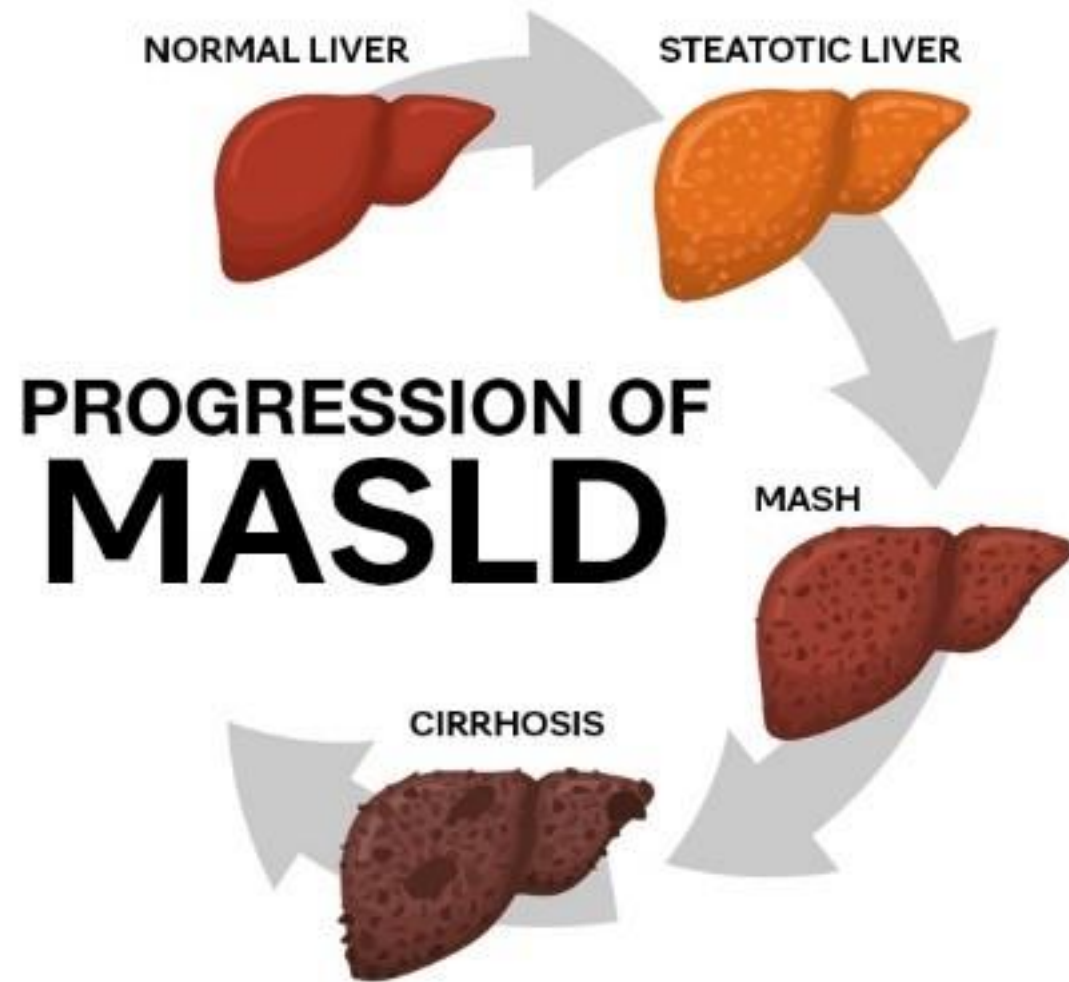


Aspect	Brahmi Script	Sharada Script
Time Period	3rd century BCE to 5th century CE	8th century CE to present (in limited use)
Origin	Considered the earliest Indian script; precursor to many Indian scripts.	Evolved from the Gupta script in Northern India.
Region	Widespread in ancient India, including Ashokan inscriptions.	Mainly used in Kashmir and parts of Himachal Pradesh.
Writing Direction	Left to right	Left to right
Purpose	Used for writing inscriptions, Buddhist texts, and early Indian literature.	Used for Sanskrit manuscripts, particularly religious texts.
Characteristics	- Simpler geometric forms.\n- Basis for modern scripts like Devanagari, Tamil, and Bengali.	- More angular and ornate forms.\n- Distinct calligraphic style.
Modern Influence	Foundation for almost all modern Indian scripts.	Limited modern use, mainly for religious purposes.
Script Type	Abugida (symbols represent consonants with inherent vowels).	Abugida (similar structure with inherent vowels).
Notable Examples	Ashoka's Edicts, ancient Buddhist texts.	Manuscripts of Kalhana's Rajatarangini, religious texts.

Metabolic Dysfunction- Associated Steatotic Liver Disease



- 
- Exercise is a cornerstone in managing metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD), according to a study led by an Indian-origin researcher.
 - Metabolic Dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease (MASLD), previously known as Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD), is a chronic liver condition linked to fat accumulation in the liver.



- About Metabolic Dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease (MASLD):
- What it is: MASLD is a liver disease caused by excessive fat build-up in the liver, often linked to metabolic dysfunction.
- It can progress to inflammation (MASH) and severe complications like liver fibrosis or cirrhosis.
- Causes: Obesity (BMI \geq 30). Insulin resistance leading to poor blood sugar management. Type 2 diabetes. Dyslipidemia (high cholesterol and lipids).



- **Symptoms:**

- Fatigue and weakness.

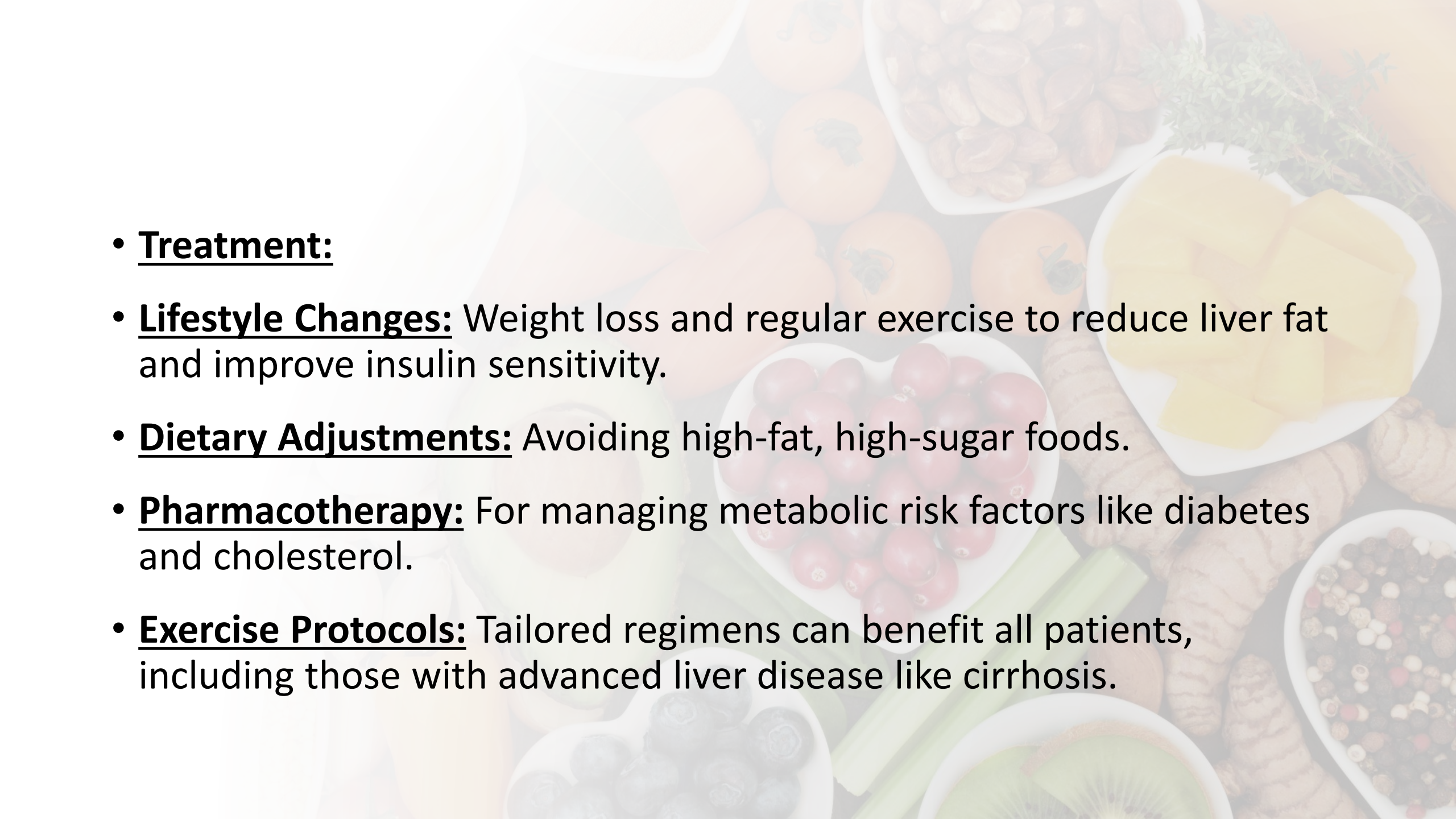
- Right upper abdominal ache.

- Swollen belly and yellowing skin (in advanced cases).



- Severe cases may lead to cirrhosis or liver cancer.

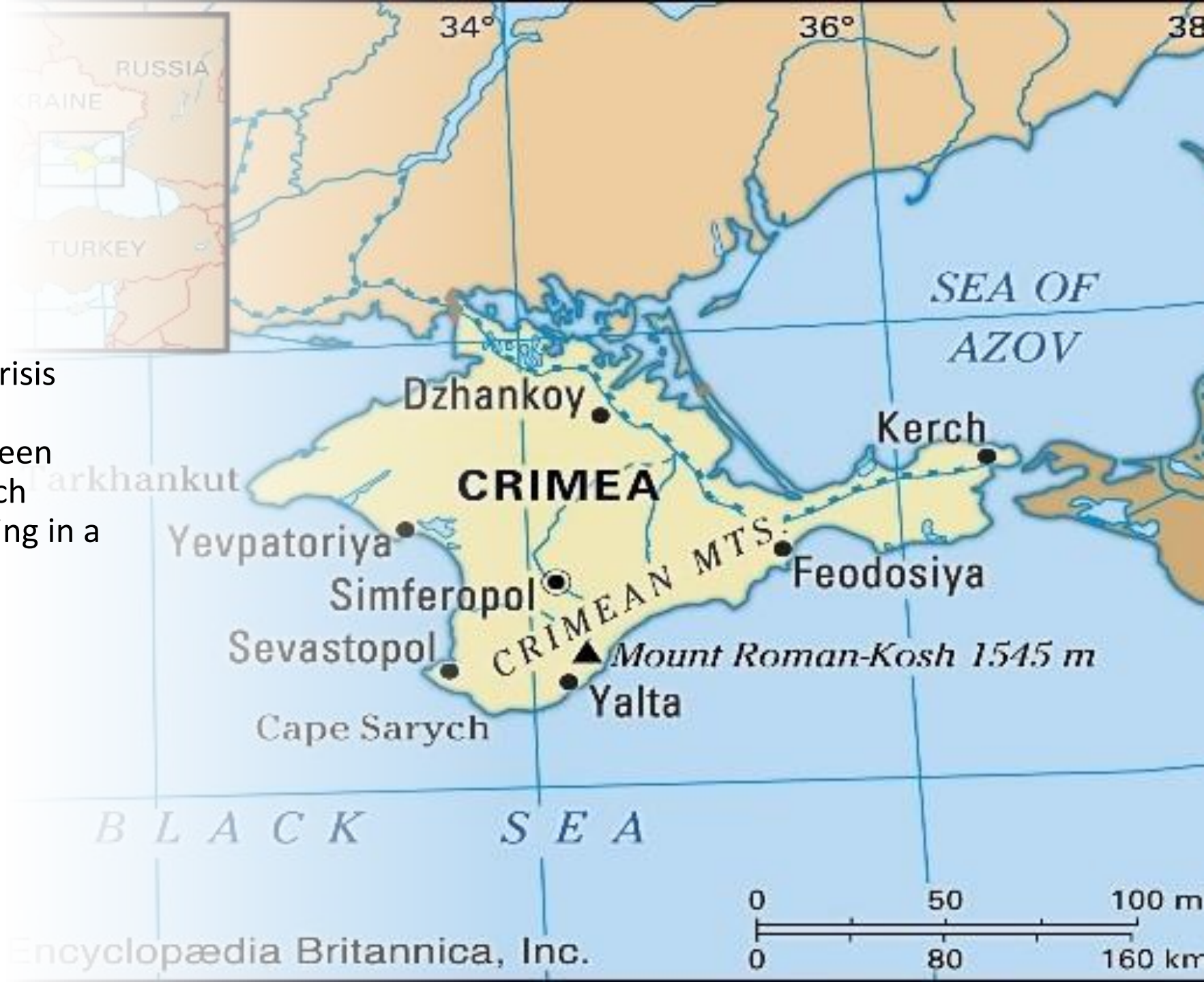



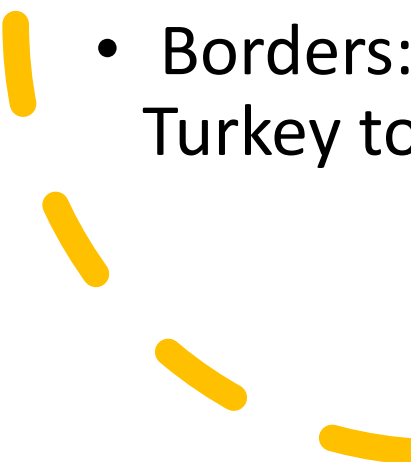
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- **Treatment:**
 - **Lifestyle Changes:** Weight loss and regular exercise to reduce liver fat and improve insulin sensitivity.
 - **Dietary Adjustments:** Avoiding high-fat, high-sugar foods.
 - **Pharmacotherapy:** For managing metabolic risk factors like diabetes and cholesterol.
 - **Exercise Protocols:** Tailored regimens can benefit all patients, including those with advanced liver disease like cirrhosis.

Crimea



- A severe environmental crisis unfolded in the Black Sea following a collision between two oil tankers in the Kerch Strait near Crimea, resulting in a major oil spill.



- 
- About Crimea Peninsula:
 - Location: Located in Eastern Europe, Crimea is almost entirely surrounded by the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.
 - It connects to mainland Ukraine via the Isthmus of Perekop and to Russia via the Crimean Bridge over the Kerch Strait.
 - Borders: Shares maritime proximity with Romania to the west and Turkey to the south across the Black Sea.
- 

Historical Significance: Known as the **Tauric Peninsula** in early modern history, it has been under Russian occupation since 2014 after annexation.

Geological Features:

- **Mountains:** The **Crimean Mountains** dominate the southern region, with Ai-Petri being a notable peak.
- **Rivers:** Includes small rivers like **Salhir and Alma**.
- **Coastal Features:** The **Arabat Spit** separates the Syvash lagoons from the Sea of Azov.

A blurred photograph of a modern office interior. In the background, several people are seated around a long wooden table, engaged in a meeting. The scene is brightly lit by large windows, creating a bokeh effect with soft, out-of-focus light spots. The overall atmosphere is professional and collaborative.

Top 10 MCQ from the session for
every exam

- What is the primary objective of the **SpaDeX Mission** launched by ISRO?
इसरो द्वारा लॉन्च किए गए **स्पाडेक्स मिशन** का मुख्य उद्देश्य क्या है?
- **A. To study Mars' atmosphere / मंगल के वायुमंडल का अध्ययन करना**
- **B. Demonstrate spacecraft docking technologies / अंतरिक्ष यान डॉकिंग तकनीकों का प्रदर्शन करना**
- **C. Launch satellites for weather monitoring / मौसम निगरानी के लिए उपग्रह लॉन्च करना**
- **D. Test reusable rocket technology / पुनः प्रयोज्य रॉकेट तकनीक का परीक्षण करना**

- . The SpaDeX mission involved which launch vehicle?
स्पाडेक्स मिशन में कौन सा लॉन्च वाहन शामिल था?
- **A. PSLV C60 / पीएसएलवी सी60**
- **B. GSLV Mk III / जीएसएलवी एमके III**
- **C. ASLV / एसएलवी**
- **D. SLV-3 / एसएलवी-3**

- Where was the SpaDeX mission launched from?
स्पाडेक्स मिशन कहाँ से लॉन्च किया गया?
- **A. Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre / विक्रम साराभाई अंतरिक्ष केंद्र**
- **B. Satish Dhawan Space Centre / सतीश धवन अंतरिक्ष केंद्र**
- **C. Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station / थुंबा भूमध्य रॉकेट प्रक्षेपण स्टेशन**
- **D. Chandipur Integrated Test Range / चांदीपुर एकीकृत परीक्षण रेंज**

- What is the historical significance of SpaDeX for India?
स्पाडेक्स का भारत के लिए ऐतिहासिक महत्व क्या है?
- **A. India's first mission for Mars exploration / भारत का मंगल अन्वेषण के लिए पहला मिशन**
- **B. India's first mission to master docking technology / डॉकिंग तकनीक में महारत हासिल करने के लिए भारत का पहला मिशन**
- **C. India's first satellite communication experiment / भारत का पहला उपग्रह संचार प्रयोग**
- **D. India's first reusable rocket test / भारत का पहला पुनः प्रयोज्य रॉकेट परीक्षण**

- The SpaDeX mission satellites, SDX01 and SDX02, were placed in which orbit?
स्पाडेक्स मिशन के उपग्रह SDX01 और SDX02 को किस कक्षा में स्थापित किया गया?
- **A. Geostationary orbit / भूस्थैतिक कक्षा**
- **B. Polar orbit / ध्रुवीय कक्षा**
- **C. Circular orbit at 475 km / 475 किमी की गोलाकार कक्षा**
- **D. Low Earth orbit at 200 km / 200 किमी की निम्न पृथ्वी कक्षा**

- What advanced module was signed under the defense contract related to Scorpene submarines?
स्कोर्पीन पनडुब्बियों से संबंधित रक्षा अनुबंध के तहत किस उन्नत मॉड्यूल पर हस्ताक्षर किए गए?
- **A. Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) module / एयर इंडिपेंडेंट प्रोपल्शन (AIP) मॉड्यूल**
- B. Heavyweight electronic torpedoes / भारी इलेक्ट्रॉनिक टॉरपीडो**
- C. Nuclear propulsion module / परमाणु प्रोपल्शन मॉड्यूल**
- D. Advanced navigation system / उन्नत नेविगेशन प्रणाली**

- The integration of electronic heavyweight torpedoes is in collaboration with which country?

इलेक्ट्रॉनिक भारी टॉरपीडो का एकीकरण किस देश के साथ सहयोग में है?

- **A. Russia / रूस**
- B. France / फ्रांस**
- C. USA / अमेरिका**
- D. Israel / इज़राइल**

- What is **Sevdalinka**, recently recognized by UNESCO?
हाल ही में यूनेस्को द्वारा मान्यता प्राप्त सेवडलिनका क्या है?
- **A. A cultural dance form from India / भारत की सांस्कृतिक नृत्य शैली**
- **B. A melancholic urban love song from Bosnia / बोस्निया का उदास शहरी प्रेम गीत**
- **C. A traditional tribal art from Africa / अफ्रीका की पारंपरिक जनजातीय कला**
- **D. A martial art from Japan / जापान की एक मार्शल आर्ट**

- What is the purpose of UNESCO's National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage?
यनेस्को की अमूर्त सांस्कृतिक विरासत की राष्ट्रीय सूची का उद्देश्य क्या है?
- **A. To safeguard endangered cultural practices / संकटग्रस्त सांस्कृतिक प्रथाओं की रक्षा करना**
- B. To promote global tourism / वैश्विक पर्यटन को बढ़ावा देना**
- C. To establish global trade agreements / वैश्विक व्यापार समझौतों को स्थापित करना**
- D. To ensure environmental sustainability / पर्यावरणीय स्थिरता सुनिश्चित करना**

- What are the main symptoms of Metabolic Dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease (MASLD)?
मेटाबोलिक डिसफंक्शन-संबंधित स्टीयोटिक लिवर डिजीज (MASLD) के मुख्य लक्षण क्या हैं?
- **A. Fatigue and right upper abdominal ache / थकान और दाहिनी ऊपरी पेट में दर्द**
- **B. Yellowing skin and swelling / पीली त्वचा और सूजन**
- **C. Advanced cases may lead to cirrhosis / उन्नत मामलों में सिरोसिस हो सकता है**
- **D. All of the above / उपरोक्त सभी**

Word of the day

Expedient:

a means to an end not necessarily a principled or ethical one; serving to promote your interest; appropriate to a purpose; practical

Usage: *In the circumstances, it was expedient to express loyalty.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/expedientpro

International Phonetic


Alphabet: /ɪk'spi:di.ənt/

Fun Fact

Myth 1: Diamonds are indestructible.

- **Truth:** Diamonds are the hardest natural substance, but they are not indestructible. They can be chipped, scratched by other diamonds, or even burned at extremely high temperatures.



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 low, creating a warm and intimate atmosphere. There are some red dots and an orange bar in the top left corner, which appear to be decorative elements.

Thank you
guys.
