

# Daily Current Affairs



जनसत्ता



The Indian EXPRESS

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2  
**Financial Express**



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10 MCQ QUIZ

Top 10 MCQ from  
today's session

- According to the Global Drowning Statistics 2021, what percentage of drowning deaths occurred in low and middle-income countries?  
वैश्विक डूबने के आँकड़े 2021 के अनुसार, डूबने से होने वाली कितने प्रतिशत मौतें निम्न और मध्यम आय वाले देशों में हुईं?
- **A. 75%**
- **B. 80%**
- **C. 85%**
- **D. 92%**

- What percentage of child drowning deaths occurred among children aged under 5 in 2021?

2021 में 5 साल से कम उम्र के बच्चों में डूबने से कितने प्रतिशत मौतें हुईं?

- **A. 20%**
- B. 24%**
- C. 30%**
- D. 35%**

- What is the maximum penalty under Section 69 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita for making false promises of marriage?  
भारतीय न्याय संहिता की धारा 69 के तहत शादी के झूठे वादे करने के लिए अधिकतम सजा क्या है?
- **A. 5 years imprisonment or fine / 5 साल की कैद या जुर्माना**
- **B. 7 years imprisonment or fine / 7 साल की कैद या जुर्माना**
- **C. 10 years imprisonment or fine / 10 साल की कैद या जुर्माना**
- **D. 12 years imprisonment or fine / 12 साल की कैद या जुर्माना**

Which sculptor was awarded the contract to build the 60-foot bronze statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj?

60 फीट ऊंची छत्रपति शिवाजी महाराज की कांस्य प्रतिमा बनाने का ठेका किस मूर्तिकार को दिया गया?

- A. Anish Kapoor / अनीश कपूर
- B. Ram Sutar / राम सुतार
- C. Subodh Gupta / सुबोध गुप्ता
- D. Jaideep Apte / जयदीप आप्टे



- Switzerland suspended the Most-Favoured Nation (MFN) clause with India effective from which date?

स्विटजरलैंड ने भारत के साथ सर्वाधिक अनुकूल राष्ट्र (MFN) खंड को किस तारीख से प्रभावी रूप से निलंबित कर दिया?

- **A. January 1, 2024 / 1 जनवरी 2024**
- **B. January 1, 2025 / 1 जनवरी 2025**
- **C. March 1, 2024 / 1 मार्च 2024**
- **D. March 1, 2025 / 1 मार्च 2025**

What is the estimated cost of the new 60-feet statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj?

छत्रपति शिवाजी महाराज की नई 60 फीट ऊंची प्रतिमा की अनुमानित लागत कितनी है?

- A. ₹15 crore
- B. ₹18 crore
- C. ₹20 crore
- D. ₹22 crore

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The Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2024 noted that what percentage of victims detected in 2022 were female?  
व्यक्तियों की तस्करी पर वैश्विक रिपोर्ट 2024 में कहा गया कि 2022 में कितने प्रतिशत पीड़ित महिलाएं थीं?

---

- A. 50%**
- B. 55%**
- C. 61%**
- D. 65%**

- Which exercise involving India, France, and the UAE aims to enhance trilateral defense cooperation?  
भारत, फ्रांस और यूएई की कौन सी सैन्य अभ्यास त्रिपक्षीय रक्षा सहयोग को मजबूत करने का लक्ष्य रखती है?
- **A. Desert Knight / डेजर्ट नाइट**
- **B. Blue Flag / ब्लू फ्लैग**
- **C. Shakti / शक्ति**
- **D. Varuna / वरुणा**

- According to the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2024, which continent's victims are trafficked to the highest number of destinations globally?

व्यक्तियों की तस्करी पर वैश्विक रिपोर्ट 2024 के अनुसार, किस महाद्वीप के पीड़ितों को वैश्विक स्तर पर सबसे अधिक स्थानों पर तस्करी किया जाता है?

- **A. Africa / अफ्रीका**
- B. Asia / एशिया**
- C. Europe / यूरोप**
- D. South America / दक्षिण अमेरिका**

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## chemistry CI-1

2024-12-13 at 11:30 AM

Starts In: 04:37:22

Coming Soon!

## Electricity and Magnetism

2024-12-13 at 9:00 AM

Starts In: 02:07:22

Coming Soon!





– Toni Morrison, *Beloved*

*“You are your best thing.”*

### FROM DEHRADUN TO EGMORE **The mega Indian railway makeover**

Is the Railways' ₹24,500-cr. modernisation project signalling the end of the country's landmark heritage structures?

MAGAZINE PAGE 3



### INSIDE

#### Police use water cannons, tear gas on farmers

**CHANDIGARH**  
The Haryana Police on Saturday used tear gas and water cannons to disperse farmers and farm-labourers after they attempted to enter the State as part of their 'Delhi Chalo' march in support of their demands. **» PAGE 3**

#### Protests return to Kolkata streets over R.G. Kar case

**KOLKATA**  
Protest demonstrations and rallies seeking justice for the doctor raped and murdered at the R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital returned to Kolkata on Saturday a day after a court gave bail to two accused in the case. **» PAGE 3**

#### Georgia chooses far-right loyalist as new President

**TBILISI**  
Georgia's ruling party on Saturday installed Mikheil Kavelashvili, a far-right loyalist, as President, amid deepening constitutional crisis that broke out since the Georgian Dream Party claimed victory in polls held in October. **» PAGE 12**

## Cong. should justify leadership role in INDIA bloc as there is 'disquiet': Omar

**Press Trust of India**

**NEW DELHI**  
Acknowledging growing discontent among INDIA bloc partners with the Congress, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has asked the party to justify its leadership role in the alliance. In an interview with PTI, he emphasised that leadership "has to be earned" and could not be taken for granted. He suggested that the party raise the issue of restoration of Statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

"By virtue of being the single-largest party in Parliament, and also having the positions of Leader of Opposition in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, the fact that they have a pan-India footprint, which no other party can lay claim to, they are natural sort of leaders of an Opposition movement," he said. Yet there is a sense of disquiet among some of



**OMAR ABDULLAH**  
Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister

**Our INDIA bloc's existence can't just be about six months before Parliament elections. The last time we met was when the Lok Sabha results had only just come out. There has been no formal or informal sort of work that has been done for the INDIA bloc**

the allies because they feel the Congress is "not doing enough to justify it or to earn it or to keep it the position of leading the INDIA bloc." "That's something the Congress might wish to consider," he said. Mr. Abdullah stressed the need for sustained internal work that has been done for the INDIA bloc," he said. Mr. Abdullah's comments suggest underlying

tensions within the Opposition alliance, indicating that frequent meetings could potentially magnify minor disagreements. "If we had a more regular process of interaction, perhaps these smaller irritants wouldn't assume larger proportions," he said. He praised former Congress president Sonia Gandhi, describing her as a leader of unparalleled stature within the Opposition alliance. "She plays an important leadership role," he said.

Mr. Abdullah chose not to give a direct answer to a question on the statements made by some leaders including Sharad Pawar and Lala Yadav, in favouring West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee as the better leader, but highlighted the INDIA bloc's lack of consistent engagement, warning that the coalition risked becoming a mere election-time convenience.

## Prime Minister says Congress subverted spirit of Constitution

During Lok Sabha debate on 75 years of the Constitution, Modi accuses the Nehru-Gandhi family of subversion attempts; Constitution is 'basis of our unity', BJP-led government's amendments only strengthened the spirit of the Statute, he says

**Nistala Hebbar**

**NEW DELHI**  
The Constitution is the "basis of our unity", Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in the Lok Sabha on Saturday, accusing the Congress and its past governments of attempting to subvert its spirit. Speaking for over an hour and 45 minutes at the end of a two-day debate on the 75-year journey of the Indian Constitution, the Prime Minister emphasised that unlike past Congress governments, any amendments made by his government and the previous NDA governments had been done to strengthen the spirit of the Constitution.

Mr. Modi said that former Congress Prime Ministers had repeatedly raised objections to amendments for marginal communities, while his government had extended it to the economically weaker sections (EWS) with "no objections" from any section of society. Significantly, a major plank of the Opposition during the recent Lok Sabha election was the accusation that the BJP-led government was seeking to subvert the Constitution through a big majority, reversing a Supreme Court verdict on jobs and educational



**Sharp words** Narendra Modi speaks in the Lok Sabha during the discussion on the 'glorious journey' of the Constitution. **PTI**

### 'Your supreme leader preferred Manusmriti'

**The Hindu Bureau**

**NEW DELHI**  
Hindutva ideologue Vinayak Damodar Savarkar believed that there was "nothing Indian" about the

maintenance for Muslim women; and the setting up of the National Advisory Council under the UPA government which he said asserted the power of the Congress president Sonia Gandhi over then-Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. "He claimed that the Congress was fond of the 'word jumble', especially the slogan "Gandhi Hridayam (remove poverty)", which

Constitution of India and preferred the religious text Manusmriti, Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi said in the Lok Sabha. **FULL REPORT ON » PAGE 4**

had brought them to power though the situation of the poor remained the same. "Their next generation is also into the same game," he said. Without naming the Congress, he said that an "arrogant" person had torn up the decision of the Cabinet when the Manmohan Singh-led UPA govern-

## Commission accuses Sheikh Hasina of forced disappearances in Bangladesh

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**

**NEW DELHI**  
In a new turn of events, the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearance set up by the interim government of Bangladesh filed a report on Saturday stating that it found the involvement of Ex-PM Sheikh Hasina in enforced disappearances of individuals during her tenure. The report recommended disbanding the anti-terror outfit Rapid Action Battalion in that was instrumental in crackdown against terror suspects and was accused of human rights abuse. The commission said it has recorded 1,676 cases of disappearances and that the total number of such cases during the Hasina-era could cross 3,500. **REUTERS**

Earlier in the day, the authorities arrested four persons in connection with attacks against Hindu-owned businesses and places of worship. Those



**Brassing lee** The commission said the total number of cases of disappearances during the Hasina-era could cross 3,500. **REUTERS**

came days after the Indian Foreign Secretary visited Dhaka and urged the authorities to "acknowledge" the attacks on minorities in Bangladesh. The case of violence against Hindus involved a social media post by one Akash Das which created controversy in Sunamganj district, leading to attacks against Hindu-owned businesses and places of worship. Those

## S. Korean President Yoon impeached over martial law bid

**Agence France-Presse**

**SEOUL**

South Korean lawmakers on Saturday impeached President Yoon Suk Yeol over his failed martial law bid, with the Opposition declaring a "victory of the people".

The vote capped more than a week of intense political drama in the democratic South following Mr. Yoon's failed attempt to impose martial law on December 3.

Hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets of the capital Seoul in rival rallies for and against Mr. Yoon on Saturday.

In a televised address following the vote, the impeached Mr. Yoon said he would "step aside" but did not apologise for his botched bid to impose martial law.

Out of 300 lawmakers, 204 voted to impeach the President on allegations of insurrection while 85 voted against it. Three abstained, whereas eight votes were nullified.

Mr. Yoon has now been suspended from office while South Korea's Constitutional Court deliberates on the vote.

The court has 180 days to rule on Mr. Yoon's future and Chief Justice Moon Hyeon-choo vowed to hold "a swift and fair trial". Two hundred votes were needed for the im-

**Rain ruins day one of third Australia-India Test in Brisbane**  
**SPORT » PAGE 13**



**Sanjay Malhotra: The new boss at Mint Street**  
**PROFILES » PAGE 9**

**What lies ahead for Syria after President Assad's exit?**  
**FAQ » PAGE 8**



**Protesters gather** outside the National Assembly in Seoul on Saturday. **AP**

peachment to pass, and opposition lawmakers needed to convince at least eight parliamentarians from Mr. Yoon's conservative People Power Party (PPP) to switch sides.

**'Betrayal of values'**  
PPP lawmaker Kim Sang-wook told broadcaster JTBC that Mr. Yoon had "completely betrayed the values of conservatism". "That is why we, as ruling party lawmakers, have decided to remove him ourselves," he said.

Prime Minister Han Duck-soo — now the nation's interim leader — said in an address to the nation that he "deeply acknowledges the heavy responsibility for the current situation" and "sincerely apologises to the people".

ficials of security forces and her government, including her defence adviser, Major General (ret.) Tariq Ahmed Siddique, in the "enforced disappearances".

The commission said that it would bring out another interim report in March and would require another year to complete the scrutiny of all the complaints received so far.

Apart from Ms. Hasina and Mr. Siddique, the commission also found the involvement of former director general of the National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre and sacked Major General Zaid Ahsan, senior police officers Monir Islam and Md. Harun-Or-Rashid with "several incidents of enforced disappearances".

Submitting the report, the commission's chairman said it had detected a "systematic design" to avoid detection of the cases of enforced disappearances.

# Top 100 defaulters accounted for 43% of total NPAs, over ₹4 lakh crore in total

DHEERAJ MISHRA  
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 14

OVER 43 PER CENT of the total non-performing assets (NPA) till March 2019 — Rs 4.02 lakh crore — was accounted for by just 100 companies and 30 of these borrowers accounted for over 30 per cent of the gross NPAs — Rs 2.86 lakh crore, an investigation by *The Indian Express* has revealed.

India's scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) had gross NPAs worth Rs 9.33 lakh crore as of March 31, 2019, the second highest ever bad loan amount recorded after 2018 in the history of India's banking system.

The investigation further shows that the top 100 bank defaulters, which includes some of the country's biggest companies from across sectors run by prominent industrialists, had a total debt of Rs 8.44 lakh crore till March 31, 2019 and out of this nearly half was declared as bad loans, or NPA.

A closer look at the list of the top defaulters also shows just 15 companies of three sectors — manufacturing, energy and construction — accounted for over 50 per cent (Rs 4.58 lakh crore) of the total debt on these 100 companies.

For the first time ever, the list of top 100 bank defaulters has been accessed by *The Indian Express* under the Right To Information Act. This list came after knocking at the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) doors through multiple RTI applications and appeals over a four year period since 2019. The matter reached up to the Central Information Commission (CIC) and after multiple hearings, the central bank disclosed the information in November 2023, and that also only partially.

The total NPAs rose from Rs 3.23 lakh crore as on March 31, 2015 to Rs 10.36 lakh crore as on March 31, 2018, which was the highest ever. It then came down

## SECTOR-WISE TOP 5 DEFAULTERS

### ENERGY/POWER

- KSK Mahanadi Power Company Limited
- Prayagraj Power Generation Company Limited
- Jaiprakash Power Ventures Limited
- Rattan India Power Limited
- Lanco Amarkantak Power Limited

### MANUFACTURING

- Bhushan Power & Steel Limited
- Essar Steel India Limited
- Videocon Industries Limited
- Alok Industries Limited
- ABG Shipyards Limited

### REAL ESTATE/ CONSTRUCTION

- Jaiprakash Associates Limited
- Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Service Limited
- EPC Constructions India Limited
- ERA Infra Engineering Limited
- IL&FS Transportation Networks Limited

### TELECOM

- Reliance Communications Limited
- Dishnet Wireless Limited
- AIRCEL Limited
- Videocon Telecommunication Limited
- GTL Limited

As on March 31, 2019  
Source: RTI reply of RBI,  
Company's Annual  
Report, ROC filings



in 2019, and further down to Rs 5.71 lakh crore as on March 2023, partly on account of writedowns undertaken by lenders.

The data accessed under the RTI Act also shows that top 100 bank defaulters, which may have changed since 2019, accounted for an NPA amount of Rs 1.07 lakh crore as on March 31, 2024.

The country's top business giants from across the sectors — manufacturing, energy, construction, real estate, telecom, banking or financial intermediation — constitute the top 100 list of NPAs or bank defaulters.

In the first part of the investigation, *The Indian Express* revealed that a total of 82 entities in the list are at different stages of bankruptcy proceedings, with roughly about a third having gone the liquidation route, meaning that banks would have got very little money back in these cases.

According to the RBI data,

## YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW AN EXPRESS RTI APPLICATION

Reliance Communication Limited, ship building company Reliance Naval & Engineering Limited and at least two subsidiary companies of Reliance Group, Jaypee Group's Jaiprakash Associates Limited, Jaiprakash Power Venture Limited and Jaypee Infratech Limited, Infrastructure finance company IL&FS's IL&FS Financial Services Limited, IL&FS Tamil Nadu Power Company Limited, IL&FS Transportation Networks Limited & IL&FS Energy Development Company Ltd., Jet Airways, Ruchi Soya Industries (now Patanjali Foods), two companies of the Videocon group, Jindal India Thermal Power, four

companies of Essar group, five companies of infrastructure group LANCO, Mehul Choksi's Gitanjali Gems, are among the companies on the list.

While a maximum — 34 companies belong to the energy sector, 32 companies are from the manufacturing sector, 20 construction or real estate companies, five telecom companies and nine companies belong to other sectors.

### Quantum of debt

Bhushan Power & Steel Limited tops the list with an outstanding debt of Rs 41,400 crore as on March 2019. Essar Steel India Limited is in second position, with an outstanding debt of Rs 69,360 crore. The company was later acquired by Arcelormittal Nippon Steel India Limited in 2019. The other companies in top 10 are Videocon Industries Limited with a debt of Rs 58,052 crore, VOVL Limited (Rs

1,189 crore debt), Jaiprakash Associates Limited (debt of Rs 36,591 crore), KSK Mahanadi Power Company Limited (debt of Rs 21,390 crore), Reliance Communications Limited (debt of Rs 46,659 crore), Alok Industries Limited (debt of Rs 29,569 crore), Prayagraj Power Generation Company Limited (debt of Rs 13,767 crore) and Jaiprakash Power Ventures Limited with a debt of Rs 23,193 crore.

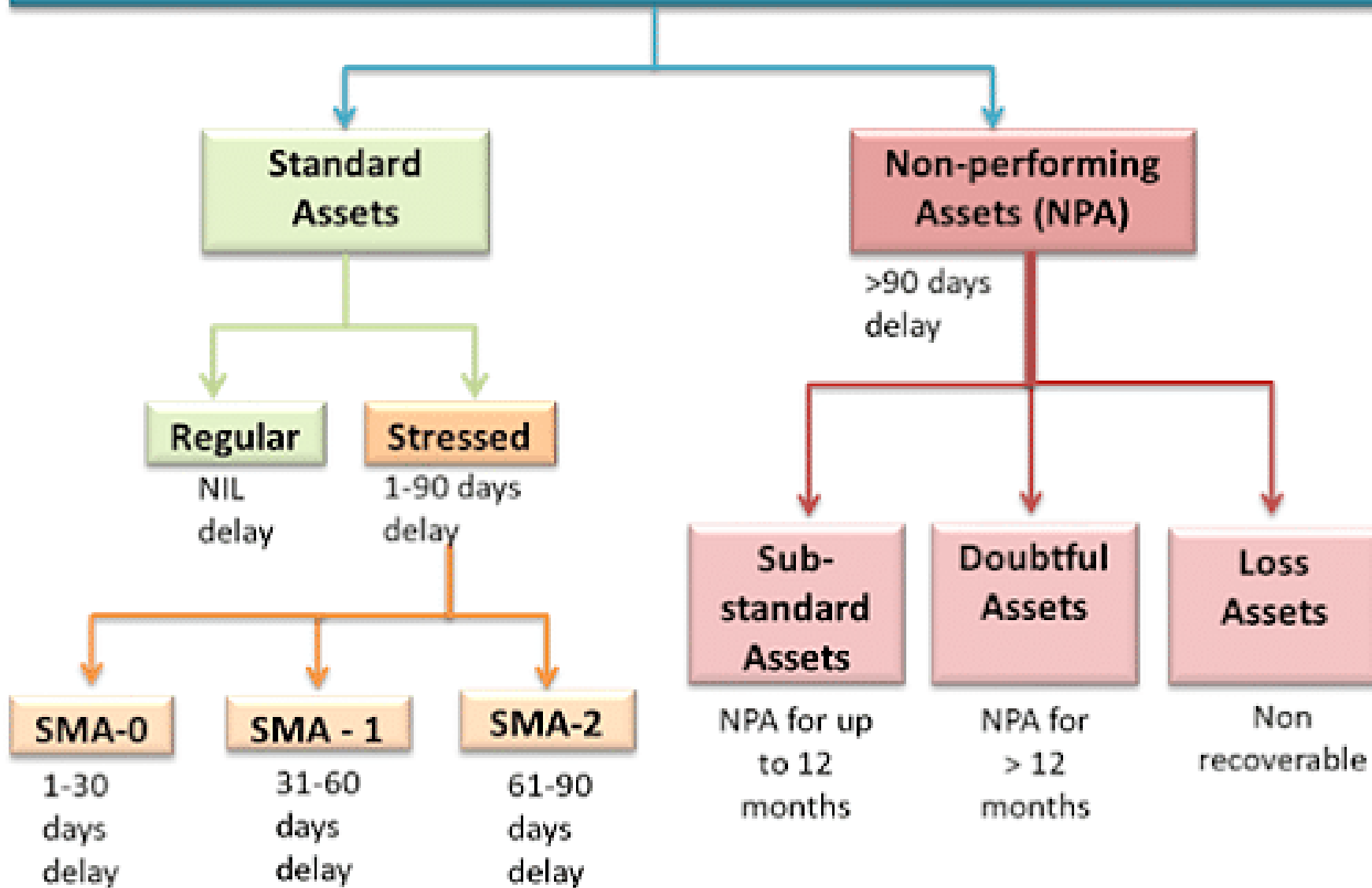
The top 100 bank defaulters are listed according to their outstanding NPAs. In the list, companies having higher borrowings may reflect a lower NPA amount.

Other known companies such as Gitanjali Gems Limited is on 13th number, Dishnet Wireless Limited on 14th position, AIRCEL Limited on 16th, Jindal India Thermal Power Limited on 18th, Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services Limited (IL&FS) on 21st, Ruchi Soya Industries Limited on 26th number, Reliance Naval and Engineering Limited on 30th number, Essar Power Gujarat Limited on 35th number, Lanco Amarkantak Power Limited on 40th number, Rotomac Global Private Limited on 70th number, Mumbai Metro one Private Limited on 79th number, Nakshatra Brands Limited on 86th number, Visa Power Limited on 95th number, Rapid Metro rail Gurgaon South Ltd on 99th and Gammon India Limited is on the 100th number in the list.

These companies are involved in multiple important projects such as extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas, thermal and hydro power generation, coal mining, oil & gas exploration, ship building, fertilisers etc. An analysis of 2023 debt status of these 100 companies through their annual reports and Annual Returns filed with Registrar of Companies shows that a total of 51 companies, of which records are available, still had a debt to Rs 3.58 lakh crore by the end of FY23.

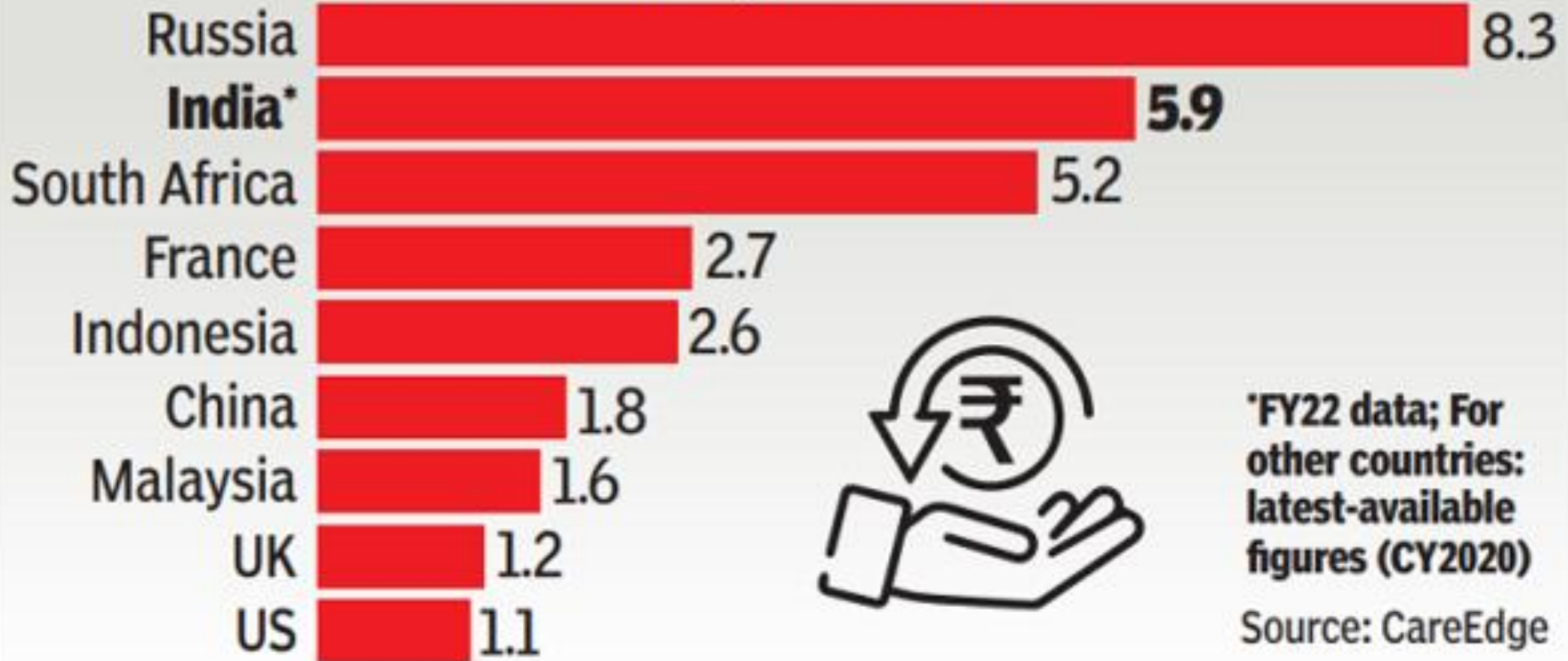
# Loans/Advances given by Banks/FIs

(assets for banks/FIs)



# WHERE INDIA STANDS IN BAD LOANS

NPA as % of loans (gross NPA ratio)



# Why NPAs occur?

## Bad Lending Practices

When banks neglect basic factors like repaying capacity etc.



## Competition

When banks compete amongst themselves and provide unsecured loan



## Incremental Components

When internal bank management like credit policy etc. is affected



## Overhang Components

When environmental factors are the cause



## Crisis

When banking sector witness a lower than average rate of revenues and profits

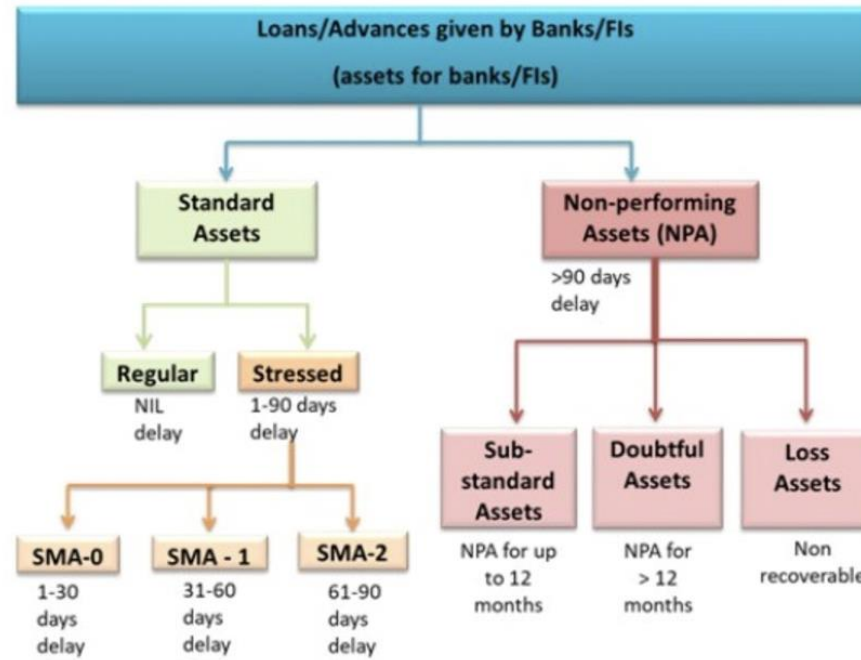


## What are NPA/ Bad loans?

A non-performing asset (NPA) is a loan or advance for which the **principal or interest payment** remained overdue for a period of 90 days.

## What are Writing off of Bad loans/NPA?


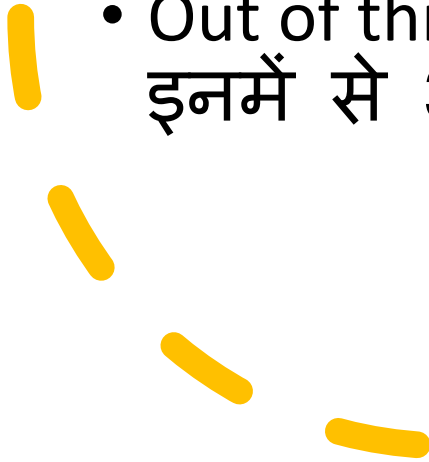
Writing off of a loan essentially means it will **no longer be counted as an asset**. Banks generally do it to reduce the level of non-performing assets (NPAs) on its books.



## Why do banks write off?

- If there is **very very low chance of recovery** of loan, banks write off the loan.
- After the write-off, the lender moves the defaulted loan, or NPA, **out of the assets side and reports the amount as a loss**.
- After the write-off, banks are supposed to **continue their efforts to recover the loan** using various options.
- They have to **make provisioning** as well.
- An additional benefit is that the amount so written off **reduces the bank's tax liability**
- **Write off is different from loan waiver (full cancellation of loan)**

Year	Fig in ₹ cr		
	NPA recovery	Recovery in Written-off NPAs	Total Recovery
2014-15	42,387	5,461	47,848
2015-16	40,903	8,096	48,999
2016-17	53,250	8,680	61,930
2017-18	67,107	10,456	77,563
2018-19	102,009	19,067	121,076
2019-20	84,633	24,002	108,635
2020-21	58,495	24,781	83,276
2021-22	68,387	24,130	92,577
<b>Total</b>	<b>517,171</b>	<b>124,674</b>	<b>641,897</b>

- 
- **43% of Total NPAs / कुल NPA का 43%:**
  - **Top 100 defaulters** accounted for **₹4.02 lakh crore**, representing **43%** of the total NPAs as of **March 2019**.  
शीर्ष 100 डिफॉल्टरों का कुल ₹4.02 लाख करोड़ का कर्ज था, जो मार्च 2019 तक कुल NPA का 43% है।
  - Out of this, **30 borrowers** contributed to over **50%** of the gross NPAs.  
इनमें से 30 कर्जदारों का कुल NPA में 50% से अधिक का हिस्सा था।
- 





- **Sector-Wise Top 5 Defaulters / क्षेत्रवार शीर्ष 5 डिफॉल्टर:**

- **Energy/Power Sector**

- **KSK Mahanadi Power Company Limited**


- **Prayagraj Power Generation Company Limited**


- **Lanco Amarkantak Power Ventures Limited**


- **Rattan India Power Limited**

- **Lanco Anpara Power Limited**

एनर्जी/पावर क्षेत्र में ये प्रमुख कंपनियां डिफॉल्टर हैं।



- 
- **Manufacturing Sector**
  - **Bhushan Power & Steel Limited**
  - **Essar Steel India Limited**
  - **Videocon Industries Limited**
  - **Alok Industries Limited**
  - **ABC Shipyard Limited**



मैन्युफैक्चरिंग क्षेत्र में ये शीर्ष कंपनियां NPA में शामिल हैं।

- 
- **Real Estate/Construction Sector**
  - **Jaiprakash Associates Limited**
  - **Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Service Limited (IL&FS)**
  - **EPC Constructions India Limited**
  - **ERA Infra Engineering Limited**
  - **IL&FS Transportation Networks Limited**
- रियल एस्टेट/निर्माण क्षेत्र में बड़े डिफॉल्टर शामिल हैं।
- 

## 2. Telecom Sector

2. Reliance Communications Limited
  3. Dishnet Wireless Limited
  4. Aircel Limited
  5. Videocon Telecommunications Limited
  6. GTL Limited
- टेलीकॉम क्षेत्र में भी कई कंपनियां शामिल हैं।



### 3. Quantum of Debt / कर्ज का स्तर:

3. The largest debt was held by **Bhushan Power & Steel Limited**, with outstanding loans of **₹44,400 crore**.

सबसे अधिक कर्ज भूषण पावर एंड स्टील लिमिटेड पर था, जो ₹44,400 करोड़ था।

4. Other major defaulters include **Essar Steel** and **Alok Industries**.

अन्य प्रमुख डिफॉल्टरों में एस्सार स्टील और अलोक इंडस्ट्रीज शामिल हैं।

## 4. Investigative Findings / जांच के निष्कर्ष:

4. Most defaults stemmed from **manufacturing, energy, and construction sectors**, accounting for **over 50%** of the total NPAs.

अधिकांश डिफॉल्ट मैन्युफैक्चरिंग, ऊर्जा, और निर्माण क्षेत्रों से हुए, जो कुल NPA का **50% से अधिक** है।

5. Multiple companies face inquiries for alleged mismanagement and misuse of funds.

कई कंपनियों पर धन के दुरुपयोग और कुप्रबंधन की जांच चल रही है।

# Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw gets Jamsetji Tata Award

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
Bengaluru, December 14

**BIOCON GROUP CHAIRPERSON** Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw was conferred the prestigious Jamsetji Tata Award by the Indian Society for Quality (ISQ) on Saturday for pioneering the biosciences movement in India.

"This award holds a very special meaning to me as it is named after one of India's greatest visionaries — a man whose legacy of excellence, innovation, and nation-building continues to inspire us all. Jamsetji Tata's commitment to quality and his belief in the transformative power of industry to serve society resonate deeply with my own journey," said Mazumdar-Shaw.

The Jamsetji Tata Award, instituted in 2004 by ISQ recognises business leaders who have made significant contributions to Indian society.

The Award was announced at the ISQ Annual Conference



Biocon Group chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw being honored by ISQ with Jamsetji Tata Award

2024, held in Bengaluru.

Mazumdar-Shaw received the award from Janak Kumar Mehta, President of ISQ and Chairman and Managing Director, TQM International.

"This Lifetime achievement award is being presented to Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw for being a pioneer in the bioscience movement in India since 1978, a first-gen-

eration entrepreneur to establish Biocon Limited and associated companies to serve customers in India and across the world," said Mehta.

Other dignitaries present at the event were B Muthuraman, former Vice Chairman of Tata Steel and K N Subramanya, Principal of RV College of Engineering and President of ISQ's Bengaluru Chapter.

## Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw



Mazumdar-Shaw in 2014

<b>Born</b>	Kiran Mazumdar 23 March 1953 (age 71) Bangalore, Mysore State, India
<b>Alma mater</b>	Bangalore University (B.Sc.) Melbourne University (M.S.)
<b>Occupation</b>	Founder & chairperson of Biocon
<b>Spouse</b>	John Shaw (m. 1998; died 2022) <sup>[1][2]</sup>
<b>Awards</b>	Padma Shri (1989) Padma Bhushan (2005) Othmer Gold Medal (2014)

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## 1. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw Receives Jamsetji Tata Award / किरण मजुमदार-शाँ को जमशेदजी टाटा पुरस्कार मिला

1. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, **Biocon Group Chairperson**, received the **Jamsetji Tata Award** for her pioneering contributions to the **biosciences movement** in India. बायोकाँन समूह की चेयरपर्सन किरण मजुमदार-शाँ को भारत में बायोसाइंसेज आंदोलन में उनके अग्रणी योगदान के लिए जमशेदजी टाटा पुरस्कार से सम्मानित किया गया।



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## 2. Award Significance / पुरस्कार का महत्व

2. The award is named after **Jamsetji Tata**, one of India's greatest visionaries, and honors leaders who have made significant contributions to society and industry.  
यह पुरस्कार **जमशेदजी टाटा** के नाम पर रखा गया है, जो भारत के महान दूरदर्शियों में से एक थे, और यह समाज और उद्योग में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान देने वाले नेताओं को सम्मानित करता है।
3. The award reflects **innovation, quality, and a commitment to serving society**, values upheld by Jamsetji Tata.  
यह पुरस्कार **नवाचार, गुणवत्ता और समाज सेवा के प्रति प्रतिबद्धता** को दर्शाता है, जो जमशेदजी टाटा के आदर्श हैं।

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### 3. Mazumdar-Shaw's Contribution / मजुमदार-शाँ का योगदान

3. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw was recognized for her leadership in the **biosciences industry** since 1978 and for establishing **Biocon Limited** to serve customers in India and globally.

किरण मजुमदार-शाँ को बायोसाइंसेज उद्योग में 1978 से उनके नेतृत्व और भारत व वैश्विक स्तर पर ग्राहकों की सेवा के लिए बायोकाँन लिमिटेड की स्थापना के लिए सम्मानित किया गया।


4. The award was presented at the **ISQ Annual Conference 2024** in **Bengaluru**.

यह पुरस्कार ISQ वार्षिक सम्मेलन 2024 में बेंगलुरु में प्रदान किया गया।

- **Event Details / कार्यक्रम की जानकारी** The award was handed over by **Janak Kumar Mehta**, President of ISQ and Managing Director of TQM International.

परस्कार जनक कुमार मेहता, ISQ अध्यक्ष और TQM इंटरनेशनल के प्रबंध निदेशक, द्वारा प्रदान किया गया।


- Dignitaries included **B. Muthuraman** (former Vice Chairman of Tata Steel) and **K.N. Subramanya** (Principal of RV College of Engineering).  
कार्यक्रम में **बी. मथुरमन** (पूर्व उपाध्यक्ष, टाटा स्टील) और **के.एन. सुब्रमण्या** (RV कॉलेज ऑफ इंजीनियरिंग के प्राचार्य) जैसे गणमान्य व्यक्ति उपस्थित थे।



- **Quotes / प्रमुख विचार**

- Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw expressed her gratitude, saying the award holds special meaning as it reflects **Jamsetji Tata's legacy of innovation, nation-building, and service.**

किरण मजमदार-शाँ ने आभार प्रकट करते हुए कहा कि यह पुरस्कार नवाचार, राष्ट्र निर्माण, और सेवा की जमशेदजी टाटा की विरासत को दर्शाता है।





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### INSIDE



**Dissanayake kicks off 3-day Indian visit**

**NEW DELHI**  
Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on Sunday held "fruitful" discussions with Indian leaders shortly after kick-starting a three-day visit. » PAGE 4

**Russian tanker splits, spilling oil into Kerch Strait**

**MOSCOW**  
A Russian oil tanker carrying tonnes of oil products split apart during a heavy storm on Sunday, spilling oil into the Kerch Strait. » PAGE 14

### River sutra



Mela floats: Ahead of the Maha Kumbh Mela, sadhus hold a procession on a pontoon bridge laid across the Ganga for the festival in Prayagraj on Sunday. AFP

## Israel to double population in occupied Golan Heights

**Reuters**  
JERUSALEM

Israel agreed on Sunday to double its population on the occupied Golan Heights while saying threats from Syria remained despite the moderate tone of rebel leaders who ousted President Bashar al-Assad a week ago.

Strengthening the Golan is strengthening the State of Israel, and it is especially important at this time. We will continue to hold onto it, cause it to blossom, and settle in it," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement.



Israel captured most of the strategic Golan Heights from Syria in the 1967 Six-Day War, annexing it in 1981. AFP

In 2019, then-President Donald Trump declared U.S. support for Israeli sovereignty over the Golan, but the annexation has not been recognised by most countries. Mr. Netanyahu's office said the government approved a more than 40-million-shekel (\$11 million) plan to encourage demographic growth in the Golan.

## Bhujba out, Shelar in: 39 Ministers take oath of office as Fadnavis expands Maharashtra Cabinet

**Abhinav Deshpande**  
MUMBAI

After days of friction and wrangling, the Devendra Fadnavis government in Maharashtra was expanded with 39 Ministers on Sunday, bringing the Cabinet strength to 42. The Cabinet includes 19 Ministers from the BJP, 11 from the Shiv Sena, and nine from the NCP. There are four women.



Gov. C.P. Radhakrishnan administered the Oath of Office and secrecy to the new Ministers at the Raj Bhavan in Nagpur, and Dilip Walse Patil of the NCP, and Sudhir Mungantiwar and Vijay Kumar Gavit of the Shiv Sena were among those who did not get the call.

Mr. Pawar said those excluded would be considered for appointment in the government's five-year tenure. "We have decided to allow others for two-and-a-half years, ensuring more regions and districts get representation," he said, addressing NCP workers in Nagpur ahead of the expansion.

### The Hindu Bureau

**NEW DELHI**  
The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Sunday released its fourth and final list of 38 candidates for the Delhi Assembly election.

Party chief Arvind Kejriwal will contest from the New Delhi constituency, while Chief Minister Atishi has been repeated from Kalkaji.

A keen contest is on the cards in New Delhi, where the Congress has fielded former MP Sandeep Dikshit, former Delhi Chief Minister. BJP leader Parvesh Verma, son of former Delhi CM Sahib Singh Verma, has announced that he is contesting the seat too.

The AAP has now announced candidates for all 70 seats. In 2020, it had



Battle ready: The AAP has now announced candidates for all 70 seats for the Delhi Assembly election. PTI

won 62 of the 70 seats it contested. There was no change in the constituencies of several senior leaders of the party. Gopal Rai will be contesting from Babarpur constituency, Saurabh Bhargava from Greater Kailash, Raghavender Shokeen from Nangloi, Mukesh Kumar Ahlawat from Sultanpur, Amanullah Khan from Okhla, and former Health Minister Satyendar Jain from Shakur Basti.

In AAP's second list, former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia was fielded from Jangpura, instead of Patparganj, lead-

ing to speculation that other senior leaders may also move to different constituencies.

The final list also includes the name of Posh Balyan, who will fight the polls from Uttam Nagar. Balyan is the wife of MLA Naresh Balyan, who is currently in judicial custody in a case lodged under the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA). Ramesh Pehlwan, who joined the AAP from the BJP on Sunday, is the AAP candidate from Kasturba Nagar, replacing sitting MLA Madan Lal.

Talking to X after the release of the list, Mr. Kejriwal said that the party is contesting the election with full confidence and preparation and took a dig at the BJP.

# Simultaneous polls Bill not in LS list for today

The Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill were earlier listed for Monday in the Lok Sabha, but dropped from revised list of business; government likely to introduce the Bills after concluding discussion on the Constitution and financial business; RS to begin with discussion on supplementary grants

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The Union government has not included the Constitution amendment Bill on holding simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and Assemblies in the revised list of business for Monday, indicating that the Bill could be delayed.

The Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill were earlier listed for Monday in the Lok Sabha.

Indications are that the Centre will bring the Bills once the Rajya Sabha completes the discussion on the Constitution and after the passage of supplementary demands for grants in the Lok Sabha. Now, if the

Centre wants to bring the Bills on Monday, permission from Speaker Om Birla is necessary to introduce a supplementary list of business. The members received both Bills after the Union Cabinet cleared them last week.

## 'Exception not rule'

In the statement on objects and reasons, Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal has said the general elections to the House of the People and all State Assemblies were held simultaneously in 1951-52, 1957, 1962 and 1967.

However, due to premature dissolution of some Assemblies in 1968 and 1969, the cycle of holding polls simultaneously with the House of the People was disrupted.



Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar has invited Mallikarjun Kharge for discussions on Monday to end the impasse. ANI

He said the Law Commission, in its 170th report, suggested that holding separate elections for State Assemblies should be an exception rather than the rule.

"There is an imperative need for holding of simultaneous elections, given

that elections have become expensive and time-consuming," he said, adding that a high-level committee under the chairmanship of former President Ram Nath Kovind too recommended that the polls be held simultaneously.

In Monday's revised list

of business in the Rajya Sabha, the first item on the agenda after the question hour and zero hour is discussion and voting on Supplementary Demands for Grants – First Batch for 2024-2025.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will also move two Appropriation Bills along with the Supplementary Grants.

Another Bill listed for Monday is the Readjustment of Representation of Scheduled Tribes in Assembly Constituencies of the State of Goa Bill, 2024. Mr. Meghwal will move the Bill.

The Bill enables reservation of seats in accordance with Article 332 of the Constitution for "effective democratic participation of members of Scheduled

Tribes and to provide for the readjustment of seats" in the Goa Assembly.

## Kharge invited for talks

In the Rajya Sabha, Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar has invited Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge for another round of discussions to end the impasse.

The Opposition has moved a no-confidence motion against Mr. Dhankhar alleging that he is chairing the proceedings in a partisan manner. The House did not transact major business last week as the BJP members protested against the alleged links of the Congress with U.S. billionaire George Soros.

The Upper House has listed a debate on the "Glorious Journey of 75 years of

the Constitution of India" for Monday. Union Home Minister Amit Shah is likely to speak on the matter then.

## Not consulted: BJD

In Odisha, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) has decided not to support the no-confidence motion proposed by the INDIA bloc against Mr. Dhankhar.

BJD Rajya Sabha member Niranjan Bisi said the regional party was not consulted by the INDIA bloc regarding the motion and, therefore, would abstain from the process.

Former Chief Minister and BJD supremo Naveen Patnaik had recently emphasised that the party would take appropriate steps only after assessing the situation.

- **Bill Dropped from LS List / लोकसभा सूची से बिल हटाया गया:**
- The **Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill** and the **Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill** were earlier scheduled for Monday in the **Lok Sabha** but were removed from the revised list of business.  
संविधान (129वां संशोधन) विधेयक और केंद्र शासित प्रदेश कानून (संशोधन) विधेयक को सोमवार के लिए सूचीबद्ध किया गया था लेकिन संशोधित सूची से हटा दिया गया।
- The **government is likely to introduce the Bills** after completing discussions on the Constitution and supplementary financial grants.  
सरकार इन विधेयकों को संविधान पर चर्चा और वित्तीय अनुदानों को पारित करने के बाद पेश कर सकती है।



## 2. 'Exception Not Rule' / 'नियम नहीं, अपवाद':

2. Law Minister **Arjun Ram Meghwal** emphasized that simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies were previously held in **1951-52, 1957, 1962, and 1967.**

विधि मंत्री **अर्जुन राम मेघवाल** ने बताया कि लोकसभा और राज्य विधानसभाओं के **समान चुनाव** पहले **1951-52, 1957, 1962 और 1967** में हुए थे।

3. Due to **premature dissolutions** of Assemblies in **1968-69**, the practice of simultaneous polls was disrupted.

**1968-69 में विधानसभा के समयपूर्व विघटन** के कारण यह परंपरा टूट गई।

- **Law Commission's Recommendation / विधि आयोग की सिफारिश:** The 170th report of the Law Commission highlighted the need for simultaneous elections to reduce expenses and save time. विधि आयोग की 170वीं रिपोर्ट में चुनावी खर्च और समय बचाने के लिए समानांतर चुनाव की आवश्यकता पर जोर दिया गया।
- A high-level committee under **former President Ram Nath Kovind** has also suggested the implementation of this idea. पूर्व राष्ट्रपति **रामनाथ कोविंद** की अध्यक्षता में गठित उच्चस्तरीय समिति ने भी समानांतर चुनाव कराने की सिफारिश की।

## 4. Rajya Sabha Discussions / राज्यसभा चर्चा:

4. Discussions will begin on **Supplementary Demands for Grants** for the financial year 2024-2025.

2024-2025 वित्तीय वर्ष के लिए अनुदान की पूरक मांगों पर राज्यसभा में चर्चा शुरू होगी।

5. Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** will introduce two Appropriation Bills.  
वित्त मंत्री **निर्मला सीतारमण** दो विनियोग विधेयक पेश करेंगी।

- **Opposition's Stance / विपक्ष का रुख:** Leader of Opposition **Mallikarjun Kharge** has been invited for talks by Rajya Sabha Chairman **Jagdeep Dhankhar**.  
राज्यसभा के सभापति **जगदीप धनखड़** ने विपक्ष के नेता **मल्लिकार्जुन खड़गे** को बातचीत के लिए आमंत्रित किया है।
- The **BJD** has decided not to support the **no-confidence motion** against Mr. Dhankhar, claiming they were not consulted.  
**बीजेडी** ने श्री धनखड़ के खिलाफ **अविश्वास प्रस्ताव** का समर्थन न करने का निर्णय लिया क्योंकि उन्हें इसमें शामिल नहीं किया गया।

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## 6. Next Steps / आगे की प्रक्रिया:

6. The Bills will likely be introduced after concluding **constitutional and financial discussions**.

विधेयकों को **संवैधानिक और वित्तीय चर्चा** के बाद लोकसभा में पेश किया जाएगा।

7. Discussions regarding the feasibility, **financial implications**, and legal framework of simultaneous polls are expected to continue.

समानांतर चुनाव की व्यवहार्यता, **वित्तीय प्रभाव** और कानूनी ढांचे पर चर्चा जारी रहने की उम्मीद है।

## AIADMK appeals to Centre to cancel nod for mining tungsten

The Hindu Bureau  
CHENNAI

At a meeting of its general and executive councils on Sunday, the AIADMK criticised the DMK government on multiple fronts, including the alleged lack of preparation in tackling Cyclone Fengal, inadequate relief efforts, and the law and order situation.

The party alleged that the DMK government with failing to maintain water-bodies for storage, and scheduled it for not having taken steps to realise the Godavari-Cauvery link proposal, the Parambikulam Aiyar project and the Pandiyar and Punnamsazh project.

The AIADMK stressed the "drama" being staged by the DMK government's efforts to seek exemption from the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test. It also stilled the DMK meeting, chaired by AIADMK president chairman A. Tamizhavelu Husain, adopted 16 resolutions, one of which criticised M.K. Stalin-led DMK government over the alleged lack of Scheduled Castes, to provide food and water to the people affected by the natural disaster.

**'DMK deceiving people'**  
It also condemned the government over the alleged deterioration of law and or-

der; and the hike in the electricity tariff, property tax, stamp duty, and the price of milk. The party said the DMK government was deceiving the people by not fulfilling the electoral promises made to government employees, teachers, doctors, nurses, farmers, labourers, fishermen, and weavers.

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The party condoled the death of senior Congress leader E.V.R.S. Elangovan, former Karnataka Chief Minister S. Krishna, Communist leaders Buddadeb Bhattacharjee and Sitaram Vechary, among others.

## Committed to eliminating Naxalism in Chhattisgarh by 2026, says Amit Shah

Union Home Minister lauds the State govt. and Chhattisgarh Police's efforts in the past year in the fight against Naxalism, urges Naxals to join the mainstream and contribute to nation-building

Shubhenshu Saha  
RAIPUR

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said that a change in government in Chhattisgarh had provided momentum to the war against Naxalism, even as he reiterated that the insurgency would be completely eradicated by 2026.

Addressing the President's Police Colour Award function at the Police Parade Ground here, he lauded the State government's efforts as well as the achievements of the security forces in the past year, even as he provided a slew of statistics to highlight some of these breakthroughs.

"The Chhattisgarh Police have secured a significant achievement in the fight against Naxalism in the past one year. 287 Naxalites were neutralised, around 1,000 were arrested and 837 surrendered in the past one year in the State, which reflects the momentum added to the fight against Naxalism. Fourteen top cadres of



Lauding efforts: Amit Shah during the presentation of President's Colour to the Chhattisgarh Police in Raipur on Sunday. PTI



The Chhattisgarh Police have secured significant achievement in the fight against Naxalism. AMIT SHAH, Home Minister

Naxalites were neutralised in the past one year in the State," he said. "The State leadership, the Chief Minister, the Home Minister of the State have taken a pledge and

the Government of India is also committed to your pledge. Together, we will completely eradicate Naxalism from Chhattisgarh before March 31, 2026. We are committed to free Chhattisgarh from the clutches of Naxalism by the end of the year, and the Home Minister had earlier said.

On the significance of the event and the President's insignia being bestowed upon the Chhattisgarh Police, Mr. Shah pointed out how the force

receiving it in less than 25 years was a departure from the usual trend. He said that in 1951, the first President's Police Colour was awarded to the Navy and a minimum of 25 years of service was required to be eligible for this award. "Chhattisgarh, which was formed on November 1, 2000, has received this award before the completion of its 25 years. I would like to thank the President for honouring Chhattisgarh's police's dedication, sacrifice and courage," he said.

**'Best surrender policy'**  
At the Rajghat event, and later at the closing ceremony of the Bastar Olympics in Jagdalpur, Mr. Shah urged remaining Naxals to lay down arms, join the mainstream, and contribute to nation-building.

At the Bastar event, he also interacted with former Naxals who had surrendered, and heard their stories of reintegrating into society.

## Dissanayake holds 'fruitful' talks with Jaishankar, Doval



Face to face: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake in New Delhi on Sunday. ANI

Press Trust of India

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on Sunday held "fruitful" discussions with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, shortly before kick-starting a three-day visit to India.

It is Mr. Dissanayake's first foreign trip after assuming charge as the President. He will hold wide-ranging talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday that is expected to focus on boosting bilateral engagement in areas of trade, investment, energy and maritime security.

In his separate discussions with Mr. Jaishankar and Mr. Doval, issues relating to overall bilateral ties and ways to expand

strategic ties between the two neighbouring nations are believed to have figured.

New Delhi has been maintaining that the developments with the two countries are "interwined", and that it is necessary to work together, keeping in mind each other's security interests and sensitivities. "Held fruitful discussions tonight with @DrJaishankar and Shri Ajit Doval on matters of mutual interest," Mr. Dissanayake said in a post on X.

In the delegation-level talks between Mr. Modi and Mr. Dissanayake, the Indian side is also likely to convey to the Sri Lankan leader New Delhi's expectations from Colombo to fulfil the aspirations of the Tamil community in the island nation.

## Morocco welcomes Indian defence companies to set up production units

Dinakar Perri  
NEW DELHI

Morocco is emerging as a springboard for India's ambitions to expand its footprint in Africa for defence exports. Pitching Morocco as a gateway to Africa and Europe for Indian companies, Abdelatif Loudiyi, Morocco's Minister Delegate for the Ministry of the Government, and in-charge of Administration of National Defence, said they would like "to offer state-of-the-art environment, but bureaucracy, and profitability for Indian defence companies".

"Morocco and India enjoy excellent bilateral relations based on mutual respect, and have every chance to meet to factor that positive momentum in various fields, including defence," Mr. Loudiyi said, addressing the India-Morocco defence industry seminar held in Rabat on December 9 and 10, and jointly organised by the Defence Ministries of the



Stronger ties: Officials at the first edition of the India-Morocco defence industry seminar held in Rabat, yesterday.

two countries, the Indian Embassy in Morocco, and the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers. "We want you in Morocco; we will support you," he said. This seminar can only strengthen the historic ties between Morocco and India, two emerging economies with growing strategic cooperation in the defence sector, the Minister observed.

Mr. Loudiyi said the launch of the strategic defence industry project placed Morocco at the

centre of attention as a defence development hub, and opened up promising prospects for investors interested in the defence and high-tech sectors, as demonstrated by the new strategic partnership signed between the National Defence Administration and the Tata Group, aimed at local production of the WBAP 888 ground combat vehicle. "The partnership between ADN and TASM is part of a broader drive to develop Morocco's defence industry, with the

aim of gradually building strategic autonomy," he observed.

The seminar offered opportunities for joint ventures, technology sharing, and procurement potential for Indian defence companies in Morocco, officials said.

"Presentations by Moroccan officials emphasised the country's investor-friendly climate; free zones, including the Atlantic Free Zone; and incentives for foreign investments."

The Indian delegation also visited the Atlantic Free Zone, gaining a comprehensive understanding of Morocco's industrial landscape. The Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers said on social media that the visit to Morocco was approximately \$4.1 billion in 2023, with major exports from India including refined petroleum, vehicles and various chemicals. India is the largest buyer of phosphate from Morocco.

## Facing flak, West Bengal Minister says he is secular

The Hindu Bureau  
KOLKATA

Under fire for his remarks that Muslims will become majority, West Bengal Minister Firhad Hakim said on Sunday that he is a secular person and will remain so till death.

"I am a secular person and will die as a secular person," Mr. Hakim said in a video in which he is heard saying "Muslims will become majority" and "I am a secular person and will die as a secular person".

Mr. Hakim's remarks evoked strong reactions from not only Opposition but also from members of the Trinamool Congress. Senior party leader Ghosh said that the defence of the party could collapse as teachers' leaders "misinterpreted and twisted" his remarks. Mr. Ghosh said Mr. Hakim was speaking about uplift

Firhad Hakim

of Muslims so that they could join the mainstream of society.

Two Muslim leaders of the Trinamool Congress criticised Mr. Hakim. Former IPS officer and Debra MLA Humayun Kabir said that "quality should be given importance over quantity". "Instead of having five children to become rickshaw pullers, van drivers, vegetable sellers, pushers, migrant workers, hawkers, it is better to have two children as teachers and doctors. Wouldn't it be better to be a police officer like me?" he said.

Another Trinamool

Congress leader going by the same name and MLA from Bharatpur Humayun Kabir said that "Koran and Hadis".

"Which community will be majority and which will be a minority depends on the will of Allah and it is stupid of either of Firhad Hakim and Humayun Kabir to comment on such matters," the Bharatpur MLA said.

Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said two Muslim leaders who suited the attempt at polarisation which the Trinamool and the BJP have been trying to create in the State as a part of a "settling" between the two parties.

"The Trinamool will polarise Muslim votes and BJP Hindu votes, and the political status quo will continue in West Bengal," the Congress leader said. CPIM state secretary Md. Salim said that Mr. Firhad Hakim's remarks were an attempt at "creating 'majoritarianism'".

## 'Manmohan Singh believed India would never accept a Sikh PM'

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Six years before taking oath of office, Manmohan Singh believed that the country would never accept a Sikh as Prime Minister, Congress veteran Mani Shankar Aiyar has revealed in his memoir.

In the second volume of his memoir *A Maverick in Politics*, published by Juggernaut Books, Mr. Aiyar recalls the time when he tried to persuade Dr. Singh to join the Trinamool Congress.

In January 1998, during Mr. Aiyar's brief stint with the Trinamool, he suggested to Trinamool veteran Manmata Banerjee that he induct Dr. Singh, who had earlier expressed his "huge dissatisfaction" with the

Congress under the late Sitaram Keerti.

"Manmata enthusiastically endorsed my proposal that I meet Doctor Manmohan Singh Sahib in Delhi to make to him the offer of the seat (Calcutta North-west) on behalf of the Trinamool Congress," Mr. Aiyar writes, adding, he had Ms. Banerjee's authority to offer Dr. Singh the Prime Ministership. "If confusion prevailed in the country again".

"My expectation was that he would probably say 'no', but there was an off chance that he might say 'yes'. But nothing prepared me for the answer I actually received. After listening to me patiently, he shook his head and almost mournfully replied, 'This country will never accept a

Sikh as prime minister.' It was a reflection of the long-lasting trauma inflicted on the Sikh community by the country's armed action in the sacred premises of the Golden Temple and the Sikh pogrom in Delhi and elsewhere during the first Congress government's premiership," Mr. Aiyar notes.

**'Pranab as PM'**  
The Congress veteran recalls his early years in politics, negotiating through the tenure of late Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, his close equations with the Gandhis, especially Rahul Gandhi, and eventually fading out from the party (the phase from 2016-2024). Talking about the "trais in governance" during the



In his memoir, Mani Shankar Aiyar recalls the time when he tried to persuade Manmohan Singh to join the Trinamool Congress in 1998.

never quite recovered physically, it showed him down, and this showed up in governance. As for the party, there was no official change. He quotes Mukherjee as saying in his memoir that

while Ms. Gandhi was "on holiday in the hills", she had given the "vague impression" that she was considering the return of Dr. Singh the "presidential" candidate. "The choice of Rashtrapati: Manmohan Singh or Pranab Mukherjee? Personally, I was of the view that Pranab Mukherjee should be the choice of the government and Dr. Singh should be the choice of the President of India when the office of Rashtrapati was created in June 2012," Mr. Aiyar writes. He also mentions that his wife Sumeet's meltdown in the wake of a series of alleged scams during the tenure of his own assessment of the Singh government's mismanagement challenges, particularly the An-

## Justice Yadav may appear before SC Collegium

Press Trust of India  
NEW DELHI

Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav, who allegedly made controversial statements at a Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) function, is likely to appear before the Supreme Court Collegium soon to explain his stand on the controversy.

The top court on December 10 took note of news reports and sought a report from the Allahabad High Court.

Supreme Court sources said Justice Yadav is likely to be asked to appear and put forward his version as per established practices.

# Morocco welcomes Indian defence companies to set up production units

**Dinakar Peri**

NEW DELHI

Morocco is emerging as a springboard for India's ambitions to expand its footprint in Africa for defence exports. Pitching Morocco as a gateway to Africa and Europe for Indian companies, Abdeltif Loudyi, Morocco's Minister Delegate to the Head of the Government, and In-Charge of Administration of National Defence, said they would like "to offer state-of-the-art environment, zero bureaucracy, and profitability for Indian defence companies".

"Morocco and India enjoy excellent bilateral relations based on mutual respect, and have every potential to pursue their positive momentum in various fields, including defence," Mr. Loudyi said, addressing the India-Morocco defence industry seminar held in Rabat on December 9 and 10, and jointly organised by the Defence Ministries of the



**Stronger ties:** Officials at the first edition of the India-Morocco Defence industry seminar held in Rabat. X@SIDMINDIA

two countries, the Indian Embassy in Morocco, and the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers. "We want you in Morocco; we will support you," he said.

This seminar can only strengthen the historic ties between Morocco and India, two emerging economies with growing strategic cooperation in the defence sector, the Minister observed.

Mr. Loudyi said the launch of the strategic defence industry project placed Morocco at the

centre of attention as a defence development hub, and opened up promising prospects for investors interested in the defence and high-tech sectors, as demonstrated by the new strategic partnership signed between the National Defence Administration and the Tata Group, aimed at local production of the WhAP 8x8 ground combat vehicle. "The partnership between ADN and TASM is part of a broader drive to develop Morocco's defence industry, with the

aim of gradually building strategic autonomy," he observed.

The seminar offered opportunities for joint ventures, technology sharing, and procurement potential for Indian defence companies in Morocco, officials said.

"Presentations by Moroccan officials emphasised the country's investor-friendly climate; free zones, including the Atlantic Free Zone; and incentives for foreign investments. The Indian delegation also visited the Atlantic Free Zone, gaining a comprehensive understanding of Morocco's industrial landscape," the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers said on social media platform X.

Bilateral trade between India and Morocco was approximately \$4.1 billion in 2023, with major exports from India including refined petroleum, vehicles, and various chemicals. India is the largest buyer of phosphate from Morocco.



PORTUGAL

SPAIN

MADEIRA ISLANDS  
(PORTUGAL)  
Funchal

CANARY ISLANDS  
(SPAIN)

WESTERN  
SAHARA

MOROCCO

ALGERIA

MALI

Libreville

Rabat

Fes

Casablanca

Marrakech

Agadir







PORTUGAL

SPAIN

RABAT

MOROCCO

TUNISIA

ALGERIA

LIBYA

WESTERN  
SAHARA

MAURITANIA

MALI

NIGER

ATLANTIC  
OCEAN

<b>Capital</b>	Rabat <div><div><div><div><span></span><div><div><span><span></span></span></div></div></div><div><div>34°02′N 6°51′W</div></div></div></div></div>
<b>Largest city</b>	Casablanca <div><div><div><div><span></span><div><div><span><span></span></span></div></div></div><div><div>33°32′N 7°35′W</div></div></div></div></div>
<b>Official languages</b>	Arabic · Tamazight
<b>Spoken languages</b> (2014) <sup>[2]</sup>	92% Arabic <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>91% Moroccan Arabic</li><li>0.8% Hassaniya Arabic</li></ul> 26.0% Berber languages <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>14.1% Tashelhit</li><li>7.9% Tamazight</li><li>4.0% Tarifit</li></ul>
<b>Foreign languages</b>	French <sup>[b]</sup> · English · Spanish <sup>[5]</sup>
<b>Ethnic groups</b>	See Ethnic groups
<b>Religion</b> (2020) <sup>[3][6]</sup>	99.6% Islam (official) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>99.23% Sunni</li><li>0.45% Shia</li></ul> 0.3% Others <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>0.13% Agnostics</li><li>0.10% Bahá'ís</li><li>0.09% Christians</li><li>0.01% Jews</li></ul>
<b>Demonym(s)</b>	Moroccan
<b>Government</b>	Unitary parliamentary semi-constitutional monarchy <sup>[7]</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• King Mohammed VI</li><li>• Prime Minister Aziz Akhannouch</li></ul>
<b>Legislature</b>	Parliament <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Upper house House of Councillors</li><li>• Lower house House of Representatives</li></ul>

<b>Establishment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Idrisid dynasty 788</li><li>• 'Alawi dynasty 1631 (current dynasty)</li><li>• Protectorate established 30 March 1912</li><li>• Independence 7 April 1956</li></ul>
<b>Area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Total 446,550 km<sup>2</sup> (172,410 sq mi)<sup>[c]</sup> (57th)</li><li>• Water (%) 0.056 (250 km<sup>2</sup>)</li></ul>
<b>Population</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2024 estimate 37,493,183<sup>[9]</sup> (38th)</li><li>• 2024 census 36,828,330<sup>[10]</sup></li><li>• Density 79.0/km<sup>2</sup> (204.6/sq mi)</li></ul>
<b>GDP (PPP)</b>	2024 estimate <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Total <span>▲</span> \$396.685 billion<sup>[11]</sup> (56th)</li><li>• Per capita <span>▲</span> \$10,615<sup>[11]</sup> (120th)</li></ul>
<b>GDP (nominal)</b>	2024 estimate <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Total <span>▲</span> \$157.087 billion<sup>[11]</sup> (61st)</li><li>• Per capita <span>▲</span> \$4,203<sup>[11]</sup> (124th)</li></ul>
<b>Gini</b> (2015)	40.3 <sup>[12]</sup> medium inequality
<b>HDI</b> (2022)	<span>▲</span> 0.698 <sup>[13]</sup> medium (120th)
<b>Currency</b>	Moroccan dirham (MAD)

## 1. Morocco as a Strategic Gateway / मोरक्को एक रणनीतिक गेटवे के रूप में:

1. Morocco is positioning itself as a **hub** for Indian defence exports, acting as a **springboard** to Africa and Europe.

मोरक्को ने भारतीय रक्षा निर्यात के लिए अफ्रीका और यूरोप के प्रवेश द्वार के रूप में अपनी भूमिका स्थापित की है।

2. Morocco aims to provide a **state-of-the-art environment**, zero bureaucracy, and **profitability** for Indian companies.

मोरक्को ने आधुनिक सुविधाएं, न्यूनतम नौकरशाही और लाभदायक वातावरण प्रदान करने का प्रस्ताव रखा है।

## 2. India-Morocco Defence Relations / भारत-मोरक्को रक्षा संबंध:

2. Moroccan Minister Delegate **Abdelfit Loudyi** highlighted the importance of strategic cooperation in **defence**.

मोरक्को के मंत्री अब्देलफित लौदी ने रक्षा में रणनीतिक सहयोग के महत्व पर जोर दिया।

3. The seminar, held in **Rabat** (December 9-10), was organized by the Moroccan Defence Ministries, Indian Embassy, and the **Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM)**.

रबात में आयोजित इस सेमिनार को मोरक्को रक्षा मंत्रालय, भारतीय दूतावास और भारतीय रक्षा निर्माता सोसाइटी (SIDM) द्वारा संयुक्त रूप से आयोजित किया गया।

- **Technology Sharing and Production Units / तकनीकी साझेदारी और उत्पादन इकाइयाँ:** Morocco invited Indian companies to **set up local production units and share technology** to boost defence cooperation. मोरक्को ने भारतीय कंपनियों को **स्थानीय उत्पादन इकाइयाँ स्थापित करने और तकनीकी साझेदारी** के लिए आमंत्रित किया।
- **WHAP 8x8 combat vehicles** will be produced locally through a partnership with the **National Defence Administration and Tata Group**. **WHAP 8x8 कॉम्बैट वाहन** का उत्पादन स्थानीय स्तर पर **नेशनल डिफेंस एडमिनिस्ट्रेशन और टाटा समूह** के साथ साझेदारी में किया जाएगा।

## 4. Investment-Friendly Climate / निवेश के अनुकूल वातावरण:

4. Moroccan officials emphasized the investor-friendly climate with **free zones** like the **Atlantic Free Zone** and incentives for foreign investments.

मोरक्को के अधिकारियों ने **अटलांटिक फ्री जोन** जैसे क्षेत्रों और विदेशी निवेश के लिए प्रोत्साहनों पर जोर दिया।

5. Bilateral trade between India and Morocco stood at **\$1.4 billion in 2023**, with India importing **phosphates**, petroleum, vehicles, and chemicals.

भारत और मोरक्को के बीच द्विपक्षीय व्यापार **2023 में \$1.4 बिलियन** रहा, जिसमें भारत ने **फॉस्फेट, पेट्रोलियम, वाहन और रसायन** आयात किए।

## 5. Future Prospects / भविष्य की संभावनाएँ:

5. Morocco's strategic initiative is expected to open **new opportunities** for Indian companies in the **defence and high-tech sectors**.

मोरक्को की रणनीतिक पहल भारतीय कंपनियों के लिए रक्षा और हाई-टेक क्षेत्रों में नए अवसर प्रदान करेगी।

6. The partnership aims to create a **defence development hub** in Morocco, enhancing local production capabilities.

साझेदारी का उद्देश्य मोरक्को में एक रक्षा विकास केंद्र बनाना और स्थानीय उत्पादन क्षमताओं को मजबूत करना है।



# 'Manmohan Singh believed India would never accept a Sikh PM'

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Six years before taking oath of office, Manmohan Singh believed that the country would never accept a Sikh as Prime Minister, Congress veteran Mani Shankar Aiyar has revealed in his memoir.

In the second volume of his memoir *A Maverick in Politics*, published by Juggernaut Books, Mr. Aiyar recalls the time when he tried to persuade Dr. Singh to join the Trinamool Congress.

In January 1998, during Mr. Aiyar's brief stint with the Trinamool, he suggested to Trinamool supremo Mamata Banerjee that she induct Dr. Singh, who had earlier expressed his "huge dissatisfaction" with the

Congress under the late Sitaram Kesri.

"Mamata enthusiastically endorsed my proposal that I meet Doctor (Manmohan Singh) Sahib in Delhi to make to him the offer of the seat (Calcutta North-west) on behalf of the Trinamool Congress," he writes, adding, he had Ms. Banerjee's authority to offer Dr. Singh the Prime Ministership, "if confusion prevailed in the country again".

"My expectation was that he would probably say 'no', but there was an off chance that he might say 'yes'. But nothing prepared me for the answer I actually received. After listening to me patiently, he shook his head and almost mournfully replied, "This country will never accept a

Sikh as prime minister.' It was a reflection of the long-lasting trauma inflicted on the Sikh community by the country's armed action in the sacred premises of the Golden Temple and the Sikh pogrom in Delhi and elsewhere during the first few days of Rajiv's (Gandhi) premiership," Mr. Aiyar notes.

## 'Pranab as PM'

The Congress veteran recounts his early years in politics; negotiating through the tenure of late Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao; his changing equations with the Gandhis, especially Rahul Gandhi; and eventually fading out from the party (the phase from 2016-2024).

Talking about the "stasis in governance" during the



In his memoir, Mani Shankar Aiyar recalls the time when he tried to persuade Manmohan Singh to join Trinamool Congress. M. SRINATH

United Progressive Alliance-II government, the 83-year-old says he believes Dr. Singh should have been elevated to the role of President of India in 2012, and Pranab Mukherjee should have been made the Prime Minister.

"In 2012, the Prime Minister (Dr. Singh) underwent operations for multiple coronary bypasses. He

never quite recovered physically. It slowed him down and this showed up in governance. As for the party, there was no official announcement about the Congress president's (Sonia Gandhi) health when she took ill at about the same time as the Prime Minister," Mr. Aiyar notes.

He quotes Mukherjee as saying in his memoir that

while Ms. Gandhi was "on holiday in the Kausambi hills", she had given the "vague impression" that she was considering making Dr. Singh the "presidential nominee".

"The choice of Rashtrapati: Manmohan Singh or Pranab Mukherjee. Personally, I was of the view that Pranab Mukherjee should have been given the reins of the government and Dr. Manmohan Singh elevated to President of India when the office of Rashtrapati presented an opening in 2012," Mr. Aiyar writes.

From talking about his wife Suneet's meltdown in the wake of a series of alleged scams during UPA-II to his own assessment of the Singh government's mishandling of the challenges, particularly the An-

na Hazare-led agitation under the banner of 'India Against Corruption', Mr. Aiyar's book is an insider's account of the political turbulence the Congress encountered between 2009 and 2014.

"The Minister of Home Affairs, PC (P. Chidambaram) who initially refused Anna Hazare permission to conduct his fast in the Ram Lila grounds, eventually caved in and the Ram Lila grounds became 'ground zero' for a much-publicized agitation. I think the lowest point in UPA-II's reign was when three Union Ministers went to Delhi airport to receive the private aircraft of Baba Ramdev, the highly controversial 'godman' who was supporting Anna Hazare," Mr. Aiyar writes.

## 1. Manmohan Singh's Belief / मनमोहन सिंह की धारणा:

1. Six years before becoming Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh believed that **India would never accept a Sikh** as PM.  
प्रधानमंत्री बनने से छह साल पहले, मनमोहन सिंह को विश्वास था कि **भारत कभी सिख प्रधानमंत्री को स्वीकार नहीं करेगा।**
2. This belief was shaped by the **trauma** following the events like the **Golden Temple incident** and anti-Sikh riots in **Delhi** during the 1980s.  
यह धारणा **स्वर्ण मंदिर घटना** और 1980 के दशक में **दिल्ली में सिख विरोधी दंगों** के परिणामस्वरूप बनी थी।

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## 2. Proposal to Join Trinamool Congress / तृणमूल कांग्रेस में शामिल होने का प्रस्ताव:

2. In **1998**, Congress veteran **Mani Shankar Aiyar** proposed Manmohan Singh's name to join Mamata Banerjee's **Trinamool Congress**.

1998 में, कांग्रेस नेता **मणि शंकर अय्यर** ने ममता बनर्जी की **तृणमूल कांग्रेस** में मनमोहन सिंह को शामिल होने का प्रस्ताव दिया।

3. Dr. Singh expressed **huge dissatisfaction** at the time and remarked, "*India would not accept a Sikh PM.*"

डॉ. सिंह ने उस समय **असंतोष** व्यक्त करते हुए कहा था, "*भारत कभी सिख प्रधानमंत्री को स्वीकार नहीं करेगा।*"

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### 3. Pranab Mukherjee as PM Candidate / प्रणब मुखर्जी प्रधानमंत्री पद के उम्मीदवार:

3. Aiyar writes about the Congress's **internal discussions** regarding choosing Pranab Mukherjee over Dr. Singh during critical political periods (2012).

अय्यर ने लिखा कि कांग्रेस में कई बार प्रणब मुखर्जी को प्रधानमंत्री पद के उम्मीदवार के रूप में चुनने की चर्चा हुई।

4. Pranab Mukherjee was considered a strong choice to **lead the government**, especially when Manmohan Singh's health slowed him down.

प्रणब मुखर्जी को सरकार का नेतृत्व करने के लिए एक मजबूत उम्मीदवार माना गया था, खासकर जब मनमोहन सिंह की सेहत पर असर पड़ा।

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#### 4. UPA-II Challenges and Criticism / यूपीए-द्वितीय कार्यकाल की चुनौतियाँ:

4. Aiyar reflects on the **political turbulence** faced by the Congress between 2009-2014, including the **Anna Hazare agitation**.

अय्यर ने 2009-2014 के बीच कांग्रेस सरकार के सामने आई राजनीतिक चुनौतियों का जिक्र किया, जिसमें **अन्ना हजारे आंदोलन** शामिल था।

5. He cites the handling of incidents such as **Baba Ramdev's protest** as low points of governance during UPA-II.

उन्होंने बाबा रामदेव के प्रदर्शन जैसे घटनाक्रमों को यूपीए-द्वितीय के कार्यकाल का कमजोर पक्ष बताया।

## IN BRIEF



## Lok Sabha defeats Rajya Sabha in cricket match

In a friendly cricket match organised to create awareness of tuberculosis, Lok Sabha Speaker XI defeated Rajya Sabha Chairman XI by 73 runs in New Delhi on Sunday. BJP MP Amarraj Thakur was the man of the match, scoring an unbeaten 111 runs from 59 balls. Speaker XI set a target of 251 runs after losing seven wickets in 20 overs. Chairman XI scored 178, losing eight wickets. Former cricketer Mohammad Asharuddin scored 74 runs off 42 balls for the Rajya Sabha team. He and Minister Rammoohan Naidu won the best batter award. Lok Sabha members Deshpender Hooda and Nishikant Dubey got the prizes for best bowler and best fielder, respectively.

## India seeks strong subsidy rules for high seas fishing

India has pitched at the World Trade Organization (WTO) for stricter regulations on subsidies granted by countries that are engaged in high seas fishing activities, an official said. An Indian document submitted at the WTO has noted that it provides a modest \$35 per fisher annually, compared to subsidies as high as \$76,000 per fisher per year in some European nations. India also suggested that historical subsidies should seek permission of the Committee on Fisheries Subsidies for grant of subsidies in future. The country has made these remarks in the meetings in the Negotiating Group on Rules (Fisheries subsidies), which are going on in Geneva. —

## Jaishankar thanks Moldova for helping Indians during the Ukraine crisis

Kallol Bhattacharjee  
NEW DELHI

India on Sunday expressed appreciation for the support that Moldova extended in airlifting stranded Indian nationals who had to be evacuated when the war in Ukraine broke out in February 2022. A press release issued here, where the Embassy of Moldova was officially inaugurated in the presence of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Moldova Mihail Popoi.



S. Jaishankar and Mihail Popoi during the joint inauguration of the Embassy of Republic of Moldova, in New Delhi. —

Moldova extended crucial help during the Operation Ganga to evacuate the very large number of stranded Indian students during the Ukraine crisis. Mr. Jaishankar said acknowledging Moldova's support to the Indian citizens in Ukraine who faced a se-

rious threat when Russian forces began the "special military operation" against Ukraine. Operation Ganga was started to airlift Indian students and professionals from eastern Europe, to Ukraine. At least 20,000 Indian citizens in Ukraine were evacuated with the help of neighbouring Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Moldova and Hungary.

Mr. Jaishankar also an-

nounced that India would open an embassy in Moldova in "not so distant future". He said India and Moldova, which is located in a strategically important part of eastern Europe, have a "shared vision of the world that values peace, understanding and cooperation".

The Embassy of Moldova has been operating out of New Delhi for around a

year but Mr. Jaishankar and Mr. Popoi on Sunday unveiled the official insignia, thereby formally inaugurating it.

Addressing the event, Mr. Popoi said the inauguration of the Embassy of Moldova is a special moment in the relation between the two sides. "We conducted second round of foreign office consultation after a gap of 21 years reaffirming political engagement. The first official visit of our minister of education happened just two weeks ago. This year we launched a scholarship programme for Indian students and we will expand this initiative," said Mr. Popoi.

"Despite geographical distance and different traditions, Moldova and India have always maintained a bond of mutual respect and understanding," he said.

## Listening to music helps us discover the art within: Justice Muralidhar

Carnatic vocalist T.M. Krishna presented with *The Hindu Sangita Kalanidhi M.S. Subbulakshmi Award* at the annual Conference and Concerts of the Music Academy; singer says award is a blessing, and carries with it a responsibility

The Hindu Bureau  
CHENNAI

Justice S. Muralidhar (retired), former Chief Justice of the Orissa High Court, on Sunday said that to discover the art "within each of us, we must be prepared to let the music unfold the layers below which it lies hidden and allow our artistic self to introduce itself to us".

"It can happen if the music is listened to, not just heard or watched. And it can happen if we don't let our knowledge of music come in the way of our enjoying it in the present moment," he said.

Speaking at the inauguration of the 98th annual Conference and Concerts of the Music Academy here, he said that the 2024 Sangita Kalanidhi-designated, Carnatic vocalist T.M. Krishna, had made his choices clear — musically and politically. He was prepared to face the consequences of such choices. He had a precedent in "MS Amma, who also made clear and courageous choices," Justice Muralidhar said.

Her opting to sing *Tanizhai* earned her a five-year ban from this Acad-



High honours: Justice S. Muralidhar (retired), former Chief Justice of the Orissa High Court, presents *The Hindu Sangita Kalanidhi M.S. Subbulakshmi Award* to Carnatic vocalist T.M. Krishna at the Music Academy in Chennai on Sunday. N. Murali, President, Music Academy, and Carnatic singers Bombay Jayashri Ramnathi and S. Sowmya are present. —

my. Thankfully, it made amends and honoured her with the Sangita Kalanidhi in 1998, he recalled.

Mr. Krishna, who was presented with *The Hindu Sangita Kalanidhi* award, said, "I was blessed to receive an award instituted in her memory."

"For a singer like me to receive an award instituted in her memory is not just a signal honour but a blessing. Even more, it carries with it a responsibility that I sing not just with my trained voice, not just with a concentrating mind, but

at various stages in their musical career. The smaller sabhas help them gain experience, receive constructive feedback from ruzikas and rise in the profession. This network was weakened and this should worry all of us," he said.

N. Murali, President of the Music Academy, said that Justice Muralidhar was widely respected for his integrity, forthrightness, erudition, incisiveness, discipline and above all, a self-effacing nature.

He was a keen and ardent ruzika and a connoisseur of Carnatic music and

had made time to attend concerts during the season.

On Mr. Krishna, he said that the singer gave his first concert at the age of 12 in 1958 during the Academy's Spirit of Youth series.

His musical career had been truly a voyage of exploration and within the confines of the Carnatic tone, he added.

Carnatic vocalist Bombay Jayashri and S. Sowmya graced the occasion.

The Sangita Kalanidhi Award would be presented to Mr. Krishna at the *Sadas* on January 1.

## Ram temple gets award from British Safety Council

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Ram Temple project in Ayodhya bagged the Sword of Honour award from the British Safety Council, said Nripendra Mishra, chairman of the construction committee of Shri Ram Jambhoomi Teerth Rajmurti Trust, on Sunday.

Mr. Mishra said the Sword of Honour is one of the prestigious accolades in safety management, which is given after the British Safety Council conducts the audit of the process and practices, and finally does an on-site activity assessment.

Only those who achieve a five-star assessment are eligible to enter for the Sword of Honour award contest. Earlier M/s Larsen & Toubro responsible for the construction of the temple were also awarded "Golden Trophy" by the National Safety Council for safety measures taken in the construction of Ram Temple.

Mr. Mishra said the construction of the first and second floors, including the "Shikhar" (top), of the temple along with other significant temples has entered the last phase.

The construction is likely to be completed by June 2025.

## Centre launches Jalvahak scheme for cargo movement via inland waterways

Dinakar Peri  
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Sunday launched the Jalvahak scheme to boost long-haul cargo movement via inland waterways.

The scheme incentivises cargo transport on National Waterways 1 (Ganga), 2 (Brahmaputra), and 16 (Bharati) and provides an opportunity for the trade interests to explore movement of cargo via waterways with positive economic value proposition, Union Minister for Ports, Shipping, and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal said.

He flagged off cargo ships *MV AAJ*, *MV Horni Bhada*, and *MV Trishul* along with two dumb barges *Ajay* and *Taru* from the G.R. Jetty in Kolkata.

This marks the beginning of fixed scheduled sailing service of cargo vessels from Haldia for NW-1



New network: Sarbananda Sonowal, Minister for Ports, Shipping, and Waterways, flags off cargo vessels in Kolkata on Sunday. —

(Ganga) and NW-2 (Brahmaputra), the Ministry said in a statement.

"With its advantage of being an economical, ecologically sound, and efficient mode of transportation, we want to boost cargo movement via waterways to decongest railways and roadways," Mr. Sonowal said.

Further, the regular scheduled freight service,

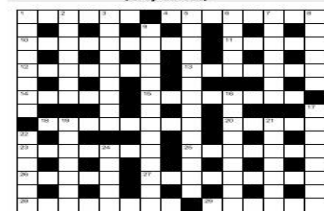
operators, the scheme encourages cargo owners to hire vessels owned or operated by government entities.

The incentive scheme is ideal for major shipping companies, freight forwarders, trade bodies and associations that handle bulk and containerised cargo. By opting for the scheme, it provides them an opportunity to optimise their supply chain network. The scheme is initially valid for three years.

The fixed day scheduled sailing service will ply via the route between Kolkata-Patna-Yamunanadi-Patna-Kolkata stretch of NW-1 and between Kolkata and Pandu in Guwahati on NW-2 via Indo-Bangladesh Protocol Route (IBPR), the Ministry said.

UltraTech Cement said it became the first cement company to leverage NW-1 for gypsum transport at scale.

## THIRU CROSSWORD 14357



- Across**
- Default career. "Green Energy" (6)
  - End of hapless anthers in spool (8)
  - Dirty cat's home filled with basically ugly whiskers (9)
  - Expand novel about capturing maiden's heart (5)
  - A friend initially moves ASAP possibly (7)
  - Ordinary vehicle with poor acceleration (7)

To solve this puzzle online, get access to our crossword solver at [www.thirucrossword.com](http://www.thirucrossword.com).

- Down**
- Say, perfect partners splitting the fee regularly (5)
  - Part of group accepting Republican (8)
  - Stall near house finally sheltering animal (8)
  - Most online claims rejected. "incorrect" (3, 2)
  - Principal setter's collection of documents (7)
  - Americans in civil war are these getting pulled? (7)
  - Add digits without mistake essentially (5)
  - King inviting help of excavators near a pit to have another look (2-7)
  - Oscar led child away, leaving cold, walled city in India (5, 5)
  - Customs in America taking a very long time (6)
  - Vagrant man in tears, getting leftovers (8)
  - Different route connecting North and South of Rajasthan - it's free of charge (7)
  - Printer to remove contents of book in comic genre (5)
  - Very gentle woman losing ring, made a courtroom drama (6, 5, 3)
  - Horse circling white tree (5)
  - Spanish gentleman concealed devious goal (7)
  - Breakfast dish with base mostly extremely hot (6)
  - Horrible people face home truths unhappily (4, 2, 3, 5)
  - Engineer says "Brief Note: no unknown, new tools" (5, 4)
  - Lady with family members heads off for noont (8)
  - Up brewing iced tea, mostly around 10 (7)
  - Spooner's conference is packed with people (7)
  - Hide in shadows (6)
  - Paper missing the first edition (5)

## SUDOKU

8				6				
	3		9	1		6	8	
9	7		3	8	5			
	1							
5	4					3	6	
							9	
2	7	4	2	8		6	7	
			1	5		9		
			6					4

**DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★**

**Solution to previous puzzle**

7	9	2	3	5	6	8	1	4
8	6	3	9	4	1	5	2	7
9	7	4	3	8	5			
	1							
5	4					3	6	
							9	
2	7	4	2	8		6	7	
			1	5		9		
			6					4

**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

7	9	2	3	5	6	8	1	4
8	6	3	9	4	1	5	2	7
9	7	4	3	8	5			
	1							
5	4					3	6	
							9	
2	7	4	2	8		6	7	
			1	5		9		
			6					4

## FAITH

## Ramana Maharshi's reach

The guidance of a guru is paramount for anyone at any stage in life. It is only under the tutelage of a saintly person who has detached himself from material life that an ordinary person learns to navigate life. From learning all that one can to leading a virtuous life, realising god and attaining moksha, the role of a guru is immeasurable, said P. Swaminathan in a discourse.

One such persona who made a huge difference in the lives of many struggling to strike the mid-path between materialistic pursuits and spiritual goals is Bhagawan Ramana Maharshi. He abhorred false piety. Once, when a devotee prostrated before him over 106 times, the puzzled saint asked him what he was doing. When he replied saying he was paying his pranams to him, Ramana Maharshi said, in an easy tone, "Why did you have to trouble yourself physically to this extent? You could have simply greeted me with joined palms!" This paring to the bone of ariety and dispensing with false narratives was his hallmark which drew countless devotees to him.

Born in December, 1873 at Tiruchuzhi in Tamil Nadu, when the family moved to Madurai, he visited the Madurai Meenakshi Amman temple often and stationing himself in front of the statues of Arubathimoorar (63 Nayanmars), the young man became consumed by devotion of the Lord. One day, he "borrowed" a few rupees from his brother and journeyed to Tiruvannamalai. After praying at Arunachaleswarar samadhi, he renounced everything and attained yogic state. His teachings resonated with the crowds that grew with each passing day. He lived as he preached: with utter simplicity and zero acquisition.

# Centre launches Jalvahak scheme for cargo movement via inland waterways

**Dinakar Peri**

NEW DELHI

The Centre on Sunday launched the Jalvahak scheme to boost long-haul cargo movement via inland waterways.

The scheme incentivises cargo transport on National Waterways 1 (Ganga), 2 (Brahmaputra), and 16 (Barak) and provides an opportunity for the trade interests to explore movement of cargo via waterways with positive economic value proposition, Union Minister for Ports, Shipping, and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal said.

He flagged off cargo ships *MV AAI*, *MV Homi Bhaba*, and *MV Trishul* along with two dumb barges Ajay and Dikhu from the G.R. Jetty in Kolkata.

This marks the beginning of fixed scheduled sailing service of cargo vessels from Haldia for NW-1



**New network:** Sarbananda Sonowal, Minister for Ports, Shipping, and Waterways, flags off cargo vessels in Kolkata on Sunday. PTI

(Ganga) and NW-2 (Brahmaputra), the Ministry said in a statement.

“With its advantage of being an economical, ecologically sound, and efficient mode of transportation, we want to boost cargo movement via waterways to decongest the railways and roadways,” Mr. Sonowal said.

Further, the regular scheduled freight service,

which began from Kolkata, will ensure that the cargo is transported and delivered within a stipulated time frame, he said.

## **35% reimbursement**

The Jalvahak scheme offers reimbursement of up to 35% of the total operating expenditure incurred, the Ministry said.

To encourage the business proposition of vessel

operators, the scheme encourages cargo owners to hire vessels owned or operated by government entities. “The incentive scheme is ideal for major shipping companies, freight forwarders, trade bodies and associations that handle bulk and containerised cargo. By opting for the scheme, it provides them an opportunity to optimise their supply chain network. The scheme is initially valid for three years.”

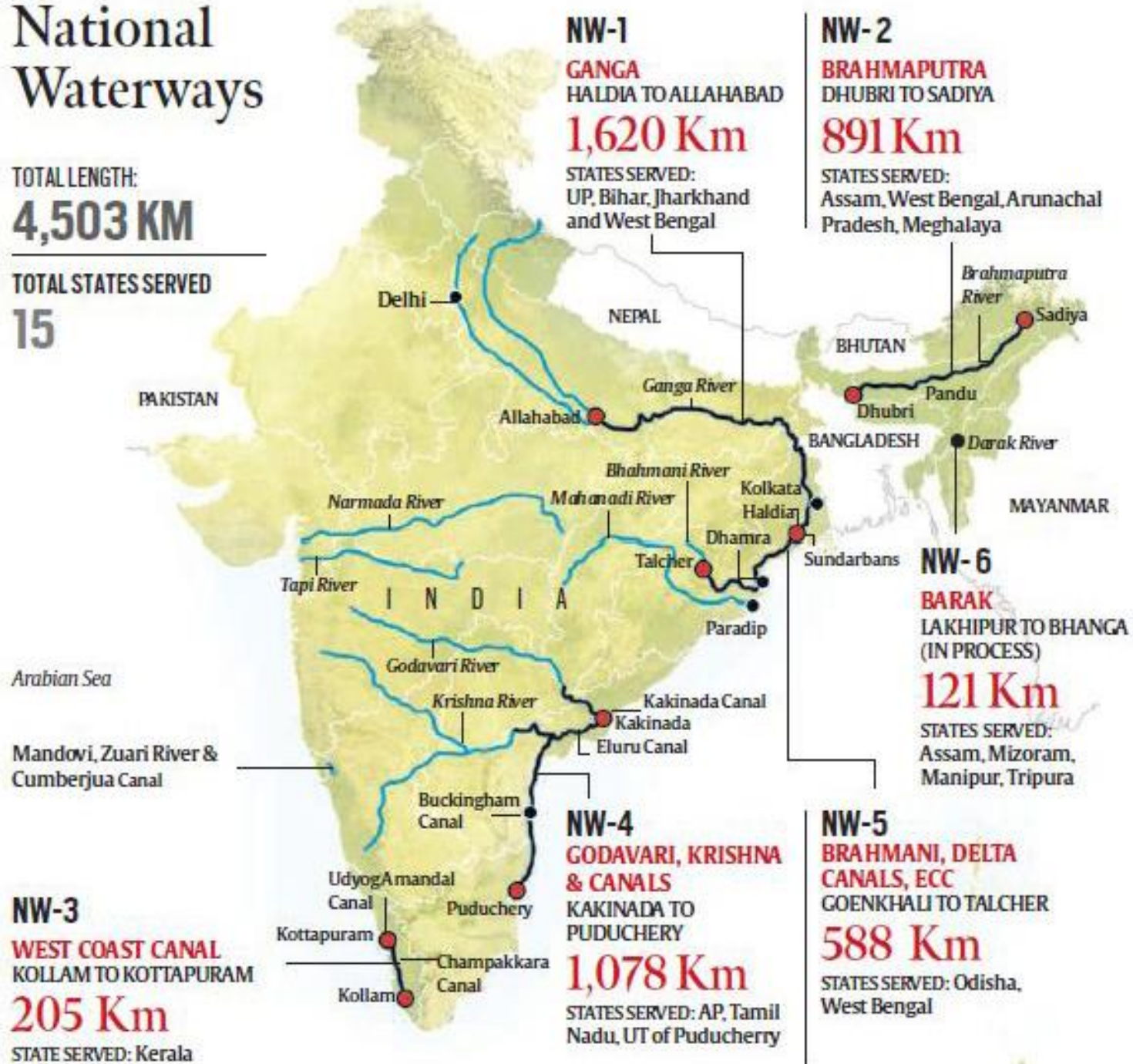
The fixed day scheduled sailing service will ply vessels between Kolkata-Patna-Varanasi-Patna-Kolkata stretch of NW-1 and between Kolkata and Pandu in Guwahati on NW-2 via Indo Bangladesh Protocol Route (IBPR), the Ministry said.

UltraTech Cement said it became the first cement company to leverage NW-1 for gypsum transport at scale.

# National Waterways

TOTAL LENGTH:  
**4,503 KM**

TOTAL STATES SERVED  
**15**





## THE 13 NATIONAL WATERWAYS NOW IN OPERATION



## THE LINKS AND THE LENGTHS

NW-1	Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly (Haldia-Allahabad)	1,620 km
NW-2	Brahmaputra river	891 km
NW-3	West Coast Canal-Champakara Canal-Udyogmandal Canal	205 km
NW-4	Krishna (Muktiyala-Vijayawada)	82 km
NW-10	Amba river	45 km
NW-83	Rajpuri Creek	31 km
NW-85	Revadanda Creek-Kundalika river	31 km
NW-91	Shastri river-Jaigad Creek System	52 km
NW-68	Mandovi river (Usgaon Bridge-Arabian Sea)	41 km
NW-111	Zuari river (Sanvordem Bridge-Marmugao Port)	50 km
NW-73	Narmada river	226 km
NW-100	Tapi river	436 km
NW-97	Sunderbans Waterways	172 km

# WATER TRANSPORT



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## 1. Launch of Jalvahak Scheme / जलवाहक योजना की शुरुआत

1. The Centre launched the Jalvahak scheme to promote long-haul cargo transport via inland waterways.

केंद्र ने लंबी दूरी के कार्गो परिवहन को प्रोत्साहित करने के लिए जलवाहक योजना शुरू की।

2. The scheme focuses on **National Waterways**:

योजना मुख्य रूप से निम्नलिखित राष्ट्रीय जलमार्गों पर लागू होगी:

1. NW-1: Ganga / गंगा

2. NW-2: Brahmaputra / ब्रह्मपुत्र

3. NW-16: Barak / बाराक

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**Objective of the Scheme / योजना का उद्देश्य** The scheme aims to encourage **cargo movement** through waterways to provide an **economical** and **eco-friendly** alternative to rail and road transport.

यह योजना जलमार्गों के माध्यम से कार्गो परिवहन को **आर्थिक** और **पर्यावरण के अनुकूल** विकल्प के रूप में बढ़ावा देने के लिए शुरू की गई है।

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Fixed scheduled services have been launched to ensure timely delivery.

निश्चित अनुसूचित सेवाएँ शुरू की गई हैं ताकि समय पर डिलीवरी सुनिश्चित हो सके

- **Key Features / मुख्य विशेषताएँ**


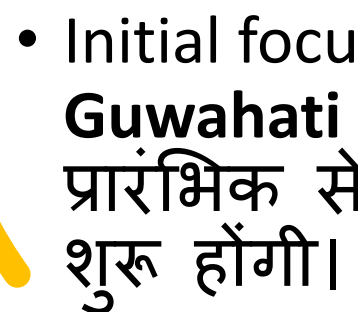
- **Incentives to cargo owners:**

- Operators are encouraged to use government-owned or operated vessels for bulk and containerized cargo.

**कार्गो मालिकों के लिए प्रोत्साहन:** सरकार के स्वामित्व वाली जहाजों के उपयोग को प्रोत्साहित किया गया है।

- **35% Reimbursement:** The scheme offers **up to 35% reimbursement** of the total operating cost for the cargo operators.

**35% की प्रतिपूर्ति:** यह योजना कार्गो ऑपरेटरों को कुल परिचालन लागत का 35% तक प्रतिपूर्ति प्रदान करती है

- 
- **Economic and Supply Chain Benefits / आर्थिक और आपूर्ति श्रृंखला लाभ** By using waterways, the scheme will help **decongest railways and roadways** and optimize supply chain networks for major shipping companies.  
जलमार्गों का उपयोग करके, योजना रेलवे और सड़कों के दबाव को कम करेगी और प्रमुख शिपिंग कंपनियों के लिए आपूर्ति श्रृंखला को बेहतर बनाएगी।
  - Initial focus includes regular **Kolkata-Patna-Varanasi** and **Kolkata-Guwahati** cargo routes.  
प्रारंभिक सेवाएं **कोलकाता-पटना-वाराणसी** और **कोलकाता-गुवाहाटी** मार्ग पर शुरू होंगी।
- 

## 5. Participation of Companies / कंपनियों की भागीदारी

5. UltraTech Cement became the first company to utilize NW-1 for gypsum transport at scale.

अल्टाटेक सीमेंट एनडब्ल्यू-1 का उपयोग करने वाली पहली कंपनी बनी जो जिप्सम परिवहन कर रही है।



ELITE COMPANY

Smith joins Root for most Test centuries against India



Steve Smith netched up a couple of milestones on his way to the 33rd Test century on Sunday. With his 10th three-figure knock, he joined England's Joe Root for most Test centuries against India and also moved past Steve Waugh in the list of most tons for Australia in Tests to be second after Ricky Ponting (41).

MASTERPLAN

Morkel reveals bowlers' strategy against a rampant Head



Indian bowling coach Morne Morkel discussed the strategy devised to counter Australian batter Travis Head during the second day of the ongoing Brisbane Test at the Gabba on Sunday. "Our plan for Travis in this game was to bowl over the wicket and target a straight line. We felt he handled it well in Adelaide," Morkel said.

HIGH PRAISE

Akash Deep has got some skill for sure, feels Smith



India pacer Akash Deep may not have entered the wickets column on the second day of Test but his ability to make the ball talk earned him high praise from Australian batting maestro Steve Smith. "I thought Akash bowled really nicely, particularly that first spell. He was getting the ball to move with pretty significant movement," he said.

FLASHBACK

When he's in the zone, I almost go unnoticed: Head on Smith



Travis Head said that he enjoys batting with Steve Smith and hilariously noted that whenever the 35-year-old bats, he goes in with high praise from Australian batting maestro Steve Smith. "I thought Akash bowled really nicely, particularly that first spell. He was getting the ball to move with pretty significant movement," he said.

Head at it again and Smith finds his feet as Aussies rule the day

The left-hander's blistering 152 and Smith's 101 send Rohit's men on a leather hunt as Cummins' side finishes day two at 405 for seven; Bumrah shines again, returns with a five-wicket haul; Jadeja struggles to make an impact

INDIA IN AUS

K.C. Vijaya Kumar, BRISBANE

A batter enjoying a rich vein of form and a legend searching for runs joined forces as Australia rebuffed a perfect Sunday here at the Gabba. With the series level at 1-1, the hosts get an opportunity to press ahead even as the threat of rain lingers.

In his previous three Test knocks at this venue, Travis Head, with three ducks, never troubled the scorers. However, this time around, he kept the number-crunchers busy.

Just like Zaheer Abbas and Graham Gooch, classy batters of the past, the Australian southpaw too revealed a voracious appetite for Indian bowling. His 152, a follow-up to the 140 at Adelaide, ensured that the host sat pretty on the second day of the third Test.

Head found an ally in Steve Smith, who in his previous 24 innings in Tests, failed to score a ton. Amends were finally made and as Smith, scratchy to start with and magisterial later, scored 101, it proved to be a key component for Australia to post an unflinching first innings score of 405 for seven at close, with a belligerent Alex Carey and Mitchell Starc at the crease.

Earlier, Smith and Head combined once Marcus Labuschagne fell. It was an alibi of contrasts. Head slotted the fifth gear, Smith, meanwhile, survived lbw appeals and play-and-miss routines. The duo found the post-lunch phase to be productive and when Ravindra Jadeja came on, Head tucked into some freebies.

Smith, found his voice too, driving Akash Deep into Mohammed Siraj with slashes and pulls. Nitish Kumar found the batters 20 intimidating and soon



Brisbane heats Head's blazing knock put the Indians on the back foot.

Head reached his inevitable ton. After tea, Head daltied with Nitish on 112 but the edge proved tough for a diving Rohit Sharma at first slip.

Soon Smith etched his hundred and the belated post-celebratory swing of the bat reflected his tremendous relief. He fell edging Jasprit Bumrah and Kohli plucked a fine catch but by then the 241-run fourth-wicket partnership had placed Australia on a strong pedestal. With the new ball, Bumrah (five for

72) continued to strike; and scalped Mitchell Marsh and Head.

Early strikes In the morning, openers Usman Khawaja and Nathan McSweeney strived to extend the overnight score of 28 for no loss. But Bumrah had a contrarian idea and lured edges from the duo. The host struggled at 38 for two with Labuschagne and Smith at the crease. The latter had an exaggerated trigger moment, moving across the

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SCOREBOARD

AUSTRALIA - 1ST INNINGS Usman Khawaja c Pant b Bumrah 21 (50b, 44), Nathan McSweeney c Kohli b Bumrah 9 (49b, 14), Marcus Labuschagne c Kohli b Nitish 22 (55b), Steve Smith c Rohit b Bumrah 101 (250b, 124), Travis Head c Pant b Bumrah 152 (260b, 126), Mitchell Marsh c Kohli b Bumrah 15 (28b), Alex Carey (batting) 45 (47b, 54), Pat Cummins c Pant b Siraj 20 (33b, 14), Mitchell Starc (batting) 7 (7b). Extras (lb-17, nb-5, w-11): 33. Total (for seven wickets, in 101.1 overs): 405.

INDIA BOWLING Bumrah 25-7-72-5, Siraj 22-2-47-1, Akash 4-5-75-0, Nitish 13-1-65-1, Jadeja 16-2-76-0.

stumps a touch more than usual just at the release-point of the delivery.

There was a spot of gameness as Siraj swapped the balls and Labuschagne reversed the change. Perhaps it distracted the batter as he reached out to a Nitish delivery and the edge flew to try Ravindra Khawaja.

It was a requirement that found an immediate response as Head swatted Nitish and drove Bumrah. Australia moved to 104 for three at lunch, a total that gained heft as the day wore on.

Morkel backs the bowlers, says tough to counter Head



Lone-ranger Bumrah's lion-hearted effort couldn't stop the marauding Aussies. (AP/ICC)

K.C. Vijaya Kumar, BRISBANE

After a long day for his wards in the park, Morne Morkel strode into the press conference hall. A hat-tip to centurions Travis Head and Steve Smith, and a fair assessment of the Indian attack were par for the course as the Indian bowling coach dealt with the media at the Gabba here on Sunday.

Morkel admitted that it was tough to counter Head. "He is in pretty good form, playing back-to-back innings, we can only give a lot of credit. For us with the ball, if you look at it from overs 50 to 80, it is where we sort of fall short, leaking a little bit, so that is one area we need to get better at. Steve Smith, who knows, is a guy that can bat back and score runs, and they put a partnership and put us under pressure with a softer ball."

Doing a report card on his bowlers during the course of the third Test, Morkel said: "Akash (Deep) did well, bowled his heart out, same for (Mohammed) Siraj, he cramped early on in the day, so for him to still run in today and bowl, was great. (Jasprit) Bumrah is the number one bowler in the world and you need somebody to back him up but honestly I can't fault the effort of the other seamers."

And about Ravindra Jadeja, who had a rough outing, Morkel added: "Jaddu, coming into this match didn't have a lot of game time, but he is also a guy who has taken a lot of Test wickets. We wanted to bring in the left-arm option, he is also a guy, who can offer us a lot with the back and score runs, and they put a partnership and put us under pressure with a softer ball."

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Got a bit of luck early, admits Smith

K.C. Vijaya Kumar, BRISBANE

A sense of relief was palpable as Steve Smith sat down for his media interaction at the Gabba here on Sunday. The cap low-slung on him, eyes blinking a bit to adjust to the light, and a half-smile crossing his face, the former Australia captain expressed his satisfaction about the century and his contribution to the team.

Discussing his knock, Smith said: "It was nice to get to three figures. It has been a while. It was cool to contribute to the team. It has been tricky in the first couple of games. Had a couple of nice balls and got strangled down the leg-side in Adelaide. I have been batting well the last month. I was sticking to my guns, trusting that things will turn around. I got a bit of luck early on and made the most of it."

As for his aggressive fellow-centurion Travis Head, Smith said: "If we can sort of get to 30-odd overs when Travis comes in, it makes a big difference to the team. I think the seamers probably start to settle around 30, 40 overs and the ball stays quite hard. And you see guys batting at five, six and seven are able to get value for their shots."

What about the change in his stance? "I have changed my set-up in pretty much every game I have played for the last five years. I figure the best way to play on each surface. This one is a pretty bouncy track. So I was batting out of my crease a bit, trying to get at the bowler, going across my stance, but leaving my left leg a little bit open."

Doing a report card on his bowlers during the course of the third Test, Morkel said: "Akash (Deep) did well, bowled his heart out, same for (Mohammed) Siraj, he cramped early on in the day, so for him to still run in today and bowl, was great. (Jasprit) Bumrah is the number one bowler in the world and you need somebody to back him up but honestly I can't fault the effort of the other seamers."

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If you start with a reverse, you quickly wake up from the dream: Gajewski

P.K. Aith Kumar, SINGAPORE

After D. Gukesh lost his 12th game in the World Chess Championship to Ding Liren, he made peace with himself. He told his coach Grzegorz Gajewski, "I am feeling fine, I am ready to fight him and for the tiebreaks."

That was the moment Gajewski realised that he did not need to be worried about his ward. "He said all those things to me without hesitation," the Polish Grandmaster, who headed the 18-year-old's formidable support staff, tells The Hindu.

"He finally made his peace with the fact that his opponent is a World champion and he also wants to win."

He says he was not concerned after Gukesh's de-



Among the elites Gajewski believes Gukesh is one of the best calculators after Anand, and is also a little like a young Caruana. (FIDE)

feat in the opening game. In his regard, I am very happy that he started with a loss," says the coach who has been part of the West-Bridge Anand Chess Academy.

deny. "Because, if you start with a loss, you quickly wake up from the dream." Gajewski prepared Gukesh for the best version of

Ding, not the one who had been going through poor form and who had gone on record about his mental health issues. "I told him that the man became the World champion, and it was not a coincidence," he says. "He might have a difficult period, but he will bring his very best for the match. And he will fight like crazy. That is exactly what happened."

About Gukesh rejecting virtual offers of draw, Gajewski says that was how he thought the opponent, "he would be won." "That was the overall strategy, to exhaust the opponent," he explains.

Gajewski says calculation and deep knowledge are the major strengths of Gukesh. "He is one of the best calculators after Anand, who is the best player in that department," he says. "And he is also a bit like a young Fabiano Caruana."

Nidhi stands tall as India retains women's Asia Cup



Continental champs: India overcame China in a shootout. (THE HINDU/ANIPA)

HOCKEY Press Trust of India, MUSCAT

India's goalkeeper Nidhi stole the limelight in the 30th minute, making three sensational saves to help India overcome three-time champion China 3-2 (1-1) and clinch its second consecutive women's junior Asia Cup hockey title.

Nidhi's heroics capped a stellar performance, having already stood tall during

regulation time by thwarting multiple attempts from the Chinese forwards as Australia entered in a nerve-wracking 11th stalemate.

While skipper Jinzhuang Tan scored for China in the 30th minute, Kanika Sen's strike early in the second half (41st minute) brought India back into the game in an intense battle for supremacy.

Sabali Khanave India a perfect start in the shootout by converting the first attempt, while Nidhi denied China's opener.

China fought back as Hao Guoqing equalised, and after misses from Mumtaz Khan and Kanika, it was Ishika's top-corner strike that kept India level at 2-2.

Mumbai City found the net in the 48th minute as Mumbai City raised its tally to 17 points from 11 matches and moved to seventh.

Suffering its seventh loss in eight games, Mohammedan remains at bottom with five points from 11 matches.

MCFC cashes in on a man advantage against MSC

Amitabha Das Sharma, KOLKATA

Mumbai City FC returned to winning ways with a 1-0 result over a 10-man Mohammedan Sporting SC in the ISL here on Sunday.

Vikram Pratap Singh found the net in the 48th minute as Mumbai City raised its tally to 17 points from 11 matches and moved to seventh.

Suffering its seventh loss in eight games, Mohammedan remains at bottom with five points from 11 matches.

Mumbai City found the break thanks to a faulty clearance by Mohammedan goalkeeper Bhaskar Roy that released Vikram Pratap and he made no mistake with his powerful shot.

The result: Mohammedan SC 0 lost to Mumbai City FC 1 (Vikram Pratap Singh 48).

The result: India 1 (Kanika Sen 41) drew with China 1. (Jinzhuan Tan 30). India won 3-2 via penalty shootout.



# Nidhi stands tall as India retains women's Asia Cup



**Continental champs:** India overcame China in a shootout. @THEHOCKEYINDIA

## HOCKEY

### **Press Trust of India**

MUSCAT

India's goalkeeper Nidhi stole the limelight in the penalty shootout, making three sensational saves to help India overcome three-time champion China 3-2 (1-1) and clinch its second consecutive women's junior Asia Cup hockey title here on Sunday.

Nidhi's heroics capped a stellar performance, having already stood tall during

regulation time by thwarting multiple attempts from the Chinese forwards as the four quarters ended in a nerve-wracking 1-1 stalemate.

While skipper Jinzhuang Tan scored for China in the 30th minute, Kanika Siwach's strike early in the second half (41st minute) brought India back into the game in an intense battle for supremacy.

Sakshi Rana gave India a perfect start in the shootout by converting the first attempt, while Nidhi denied China's opener.

China fought back as Hao Guoting equalised, and after misses from Mumtaz Khan and Kanika, it was Ishika's top-corner strike that kept India level at 2-2.

Nidhi's heroics in the final two attempts, blocking shots from Li Jingyi and Zuo Dandan, set the stage for Sunelita Toppo, who sealed the win with a composed finish to seal a memorable victory for India.

**The result:** India 1 (Kanika Siwach 41) drew with China 1 (Jinzhuang Tan 30). (India won 3-2 via penalty shootout).

- **India Retains Women's Asia Cup Title / भारत ने महिला एशिया कप का खिताब बरकरार रखा** India defeated **China 3-2** in a penalty shootout after a thrilling **1-1 draw** in regulation time. भारत ने रोमांचक मुकाबले में चीन को **3-2** से पेनल्टी शूटआउट में हराकर खिताब जीता।
- This is India's **second consecutive title** in the **Women's Junior Asia Cup Hockey**. यह भारत का लगातार दूसरा खिताब है महिला जूनियर एशिया कप हॉकी में।



## 2. Nidhi's Heroics in Goalkeeping / निधि का शानदार गोलकीपिंग प्रदर्शन

2. **Goalkeeper Nidhi** made **three sensational saves** in the shootout to lead India to victory.

गोलकीपर **निधि** ने शूटआउट में तीन शानदार बचाव किए और भारत को जीत दिलाई।

3. Nidhi's efforts during the regulation time kept Chinese forwards from scoring multiple times.

**निधि** के प्रयासों ने नियमित समय में चीनी आक्रमण को कई बार नाकाम किया।

- 
- **Key Match Moments / मैच के मुख्य क्षण** China took the lead in the **30th minute** through Jinzhhuang Tan.  
चीन ने **30वें मिनट** में जिन्झुआंग टैन के गोल से बढ़त बनाई।
  - **Kanika Siwach** equalized for India in the **41st minute**.  
कनिका सिवाच ने भारत के लिए **41वें मिनट** में बराबरी का गोल किया।
  - **Ishika's** strike brought the score to **2-2** before the shootout.  
इशिका के शानदार शॉट से स्कोर **2-2** हो गया।
- 



- **Conclusion / निष्कर्ष**

- India's victory in the Women's Asia Cup highlights their **resilience**, excellent **teamwork**, and **Nidhi's heroic goalkeeping** under pressure. भारत की यह जीत उनकी **संघर्ष क्षमता**, उत्कृष्ट **टीमवर्क**, और **निधि** के **शानदार प्रदर्शन** का प्रमाण है।
- 

**BUSINESS AS USUAL**



**EXPRESS NETWORK**

**TABLA MAESTRO ZAKIR HUSSAIN IN ICU WITH HEART PROBLEMS** PAGE 7

**Kerala fitness course under fire as CPM, BJP tie it to 'Islamic nation' plot**

**SHAJU JHILIP**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DECEMBER 15

A PHYSICAL fitness programme that has become popular in north Kerala has run into controversy after a CPM (Communist Party of India) leader alleged that the Jamaat-e-Islami and the SDPI, the political wing of the banned Popular Front of India, were using the platform to further their political agenda. Even as the BJP latched on to the comments to target the Pinarayi Vijayan government, a Congress MP and a Left ally defended the fitness initiative and the CPM leader who triggered the row, P Mohanan, softened

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

**MAHARASHTRA CABINET EXPANSION: SHINDE SAYS PERFORM OR PERISH**  
**Fadnavis Govt inducts 39 ministers, mid-term review to decide their tenure**

**BJP gets largest share of 19 berths, Sena 11, NCP 9**

**ALOK DESHPANDE**  
NAGPUR, DECEMBER 15

THE MUCH-AWAITED Cabinet expansion of the BJP-led government in Maharashtra took place Sunday with Governor C P Radhakrishnan administering the oath of office to 39 ministers at Raj Bhavan in Nagpur. But the ministers were inducted with a rider: Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said their tenure will be for two-and-a-half years, and their continuance will depend on a review of their in-



Maharashtra Governor C P Radhakrishnan, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Deputy Chief Ministers Ajit Pawar and Eknath Shinde at Raj Bhavan in Nagpur on Sunday. **PTI**

dividual performances. Many in the ruling alliance feel this will not only fix accountability and put pressure on the ministers to perform consider-

"We in the BJP are going to have a performance audit of every minister. Where it is found that the minister is not working as per expectations, there will be change," Fadnavis said at a press conference, flanked by Deputy Chief Ministers Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar, after the oath-taking ceremony. "We three have told the ministers that every minister will face the performance audit," he said, adding that portfolios will be allotted in next two days. Shinde said, "Many people are capable of becoming ministers. We as a party have decided to give ministerial posts for two-and-a-half years. Many more will get an opportunity because of this. This is like perform or perish."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

**EXPANDED**  
**E** Mid-term test, hope for others

WITH PRESSURE to deliver on people's expectations after a huge mandate, the ruling Mahayuti leaders have devised a novel idea of appointing ministers for two-and-a-half years. While this is expected to put pressure on the ministers to stand up to the task, it will also give hope to those who missed out this time around. The Mahayuti won 230 of the 288 seats in the recent elections.

**'Can't tax upper middle class more if very top not taxed at higher rate'**

**P. VAIDYANATHAN IYER**  
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 15

DESCRIBING INDIA'S decision to impose a wealth tax way back in 1957 as trying "to do too much too fast", French economist Thomas Piketty, regarded most for his passionate advocacy of taxing the wealth of billionaires to reduce inequalities, says there's no way the government can increase tax on the upper middle class and middle Indian entrepreneurs un-



less it demonstrates people at the top pay a higher tax rate.  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

**'Tsar-era facility with Lenin past has an India plan: Vande Bharat coaches**

**DHEERAJ MISHRA**  
MOSCOW, ST PETERSBURG, DECEMBER 15

IN THE heart of St Petersburg, the cultural capital of Russia, lies a locomotive manufacturing factory with a nearly 200-year history. The plant, which had its genesis in the rule of the Tsars and was later named after the October Revolution, is now the base for expansion of Russia's largest rolling stock manufacturing company, Transmashholding (TMH), with ambitious plans to produce India's ultramodern



At Oktyabrsky Electric Car Repair Plant in St Petersburg. **Economic Times**

Vande Bharat sleeper trains, meant for long-distance overnight journeys. Spread over 42 hectares, the Oktyabrsky Electric Car Repair **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

**SRI LANKA PRESIDENT'S VISIT**  
**Dissanayake reaches Delhi, his first foreign trip after coming to power, pacts readied**  
**Will hold talks with Prime Minister Modi today to deepen bilateral ties**

**SHUBHAJIT ROY**  
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 15

INDIA AND Sri Lanka are expected to sign four pacts, including one on cybersecurity, after President Anura Kumara Dissanayake meets Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday.

Dissanayake, who arrived in New Delhi on Sunday evening, is on a State visit to India from December 15 to 17, it's his first overseas visit after being elected President in September.

"This will be the first visit of President Dissanayake to India after the recently concluded presidential and parliamentary elections in Sri Lanka," Randhir Jaiswal, spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs, said. During the visit, President Dissanayake will meet President Droupadi Murmu and hold discussions with Prime Minister Modi on "bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual



Sri Lanka President Anura Kumara Dissanayake with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday. **PTI**

interest", Jaiswal said. Dissanayake will be participating in a business event in New Delhi and will also visit Kochi, Goa.

"The visit of President Dissanayake to India shall further strengthen the bilateral ties between the two countries," **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

**IDEA EXCHANGE**  
"Nidhis get everyone together... but there was no movement, the kind envisioned by him, in INDIA alliance"  
**SANJAY JHA**, VP & NATIONAL MANAGER (RECENT OF 2024)  
PAGE 13

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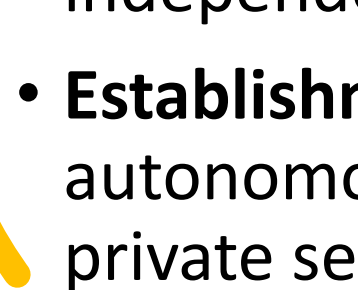
**Group Tour** **Customized Holidays** Private holidays tailored-made for you!

An aerial photograph of a blue train crossing a large, multi-arched stone viaduct. The train is moving from the top left towards the bottom right. The surrounding area is a dense, lush green forest with many tall trees. The viaduct is made of weathered stone and has several large arches. The train consists of several blue passenger coaches. The text "Lok Sabha Passes Railways (Amendment) Bill, 2024" is overlaid in white on the image.

# Lok Sabha Passes Railways (Amendment) Bill, 2024

- 
- **Key Objectives of the Bill**
  - **Simplification of Legal Framework:** Merges the Indian Railway Board Act, 1905, with the Railways Act, 1989.
  - **Statutory Backing to Railway Board:** It amends the Railways Act, 1989, to provide legal sanction to the Railway Board.
- 



- 
- The statutory powers seek to enhance the functioning and independence of the Railway Board.
  - **Decentralisation of Powers:** Grants greater autonomy to railway zones to manage budgets, infrastructure, and recruitment independently.
  - **Establishment of an Independent Regulator:** Introduces an autonomous body to regulate tariffs, ensure safety, and facilitate private sector participation.
- 



- **About Railway Sector**

- India has one of the **world's largest rail networks** in terms of passenger traffic.
- India has the **4th largest railway system** in the world, behind only the **US, Russia and China**.
- The Indian Railways consists of a total track length of **126,366 km** with 7,335 stations.
  - **5100 km** of track length was achieved during **2023-24**.

- 





- **Challenges in Railway Sector**

- **Aging Infrastructure:** Much of the railway infrastructure, including tracks, stations, and signaling systems, is outdated and prone to accidents.
- **Financial Sustainability:** Indian Railways suffers from high operational costs and declining freight revenues, leading to financial stress.



**Safety Concerns:** Despite improvements, railway accidents due to human error, derailments, and collisions remain a major challenge.



**Capacity Constraints:** Overcrowding and delays are frequent on high-density routes, impacting passenger satisfaction.

**Lack of Private Participation:** Limited participation of private players restricts investment and technological advancements.



# Commissioning of Nirdeshak

- 
- The Indian Navy is set to commission the latest survey ship, Nirdeshak, at Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam.
  - **About**
  - **Nirdeshak** is the **second** ship of the **Survey Vessel (Large) Project** and is **built** at GRSE Kolkata.
  - **Purpose:** It is designed to conduct hydrographic surveys, aid in navigation, and support maritime operations.
- 



- 
- **Design:** The **110-meter**-long vessel, with a displacement of approximately **3800 tons**, is powered by **two diesel engines** and is equipped with **state-of-the-art Hydrographic and Oceanographic Survey Equipment**.
    - The ship has an endurance of over **25 days** at sea and a top speed exceeding **18 knots**.
- 

A collection of colorful geometric shapes including a blue circle, a green triangle, a yellow dashed line, an orange semi-circle, a blue circle, a green square, a large orange circle with yellow dashed lines, and a green square.

# EMBO Global Investigator Network



- 
- Dr. Prem Kaushal and Dr. Rajender Motiani, from the regional center for Biotechnology, has been selected for the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO) Global Investigator Network.
  - **About**
  - **The EMBO Global Investigator Network** supports young group leaders in **Chile, India, Singapore and Taiwan.**
    - The group leaders in the early stages of setting up their independent laboratories.
  - The new EMBO Global Investigators receive financial support for **four years.**
  -

- 
- **Regional Center for Biotechnology (RCB)**
  - **RCB is established by the Department of Biotechnology**, with regional and global partnerships synergizing with the programmes of UNESCO as a Category II Centre.
  - It aims to provide world class education, training and conduct innovative research at the interface of multiple disciplines.
  - **In 2016**, RCB was recognised as an **Institution of National Importance** by the Parliament of India.
- 

Rajmarg Saathi



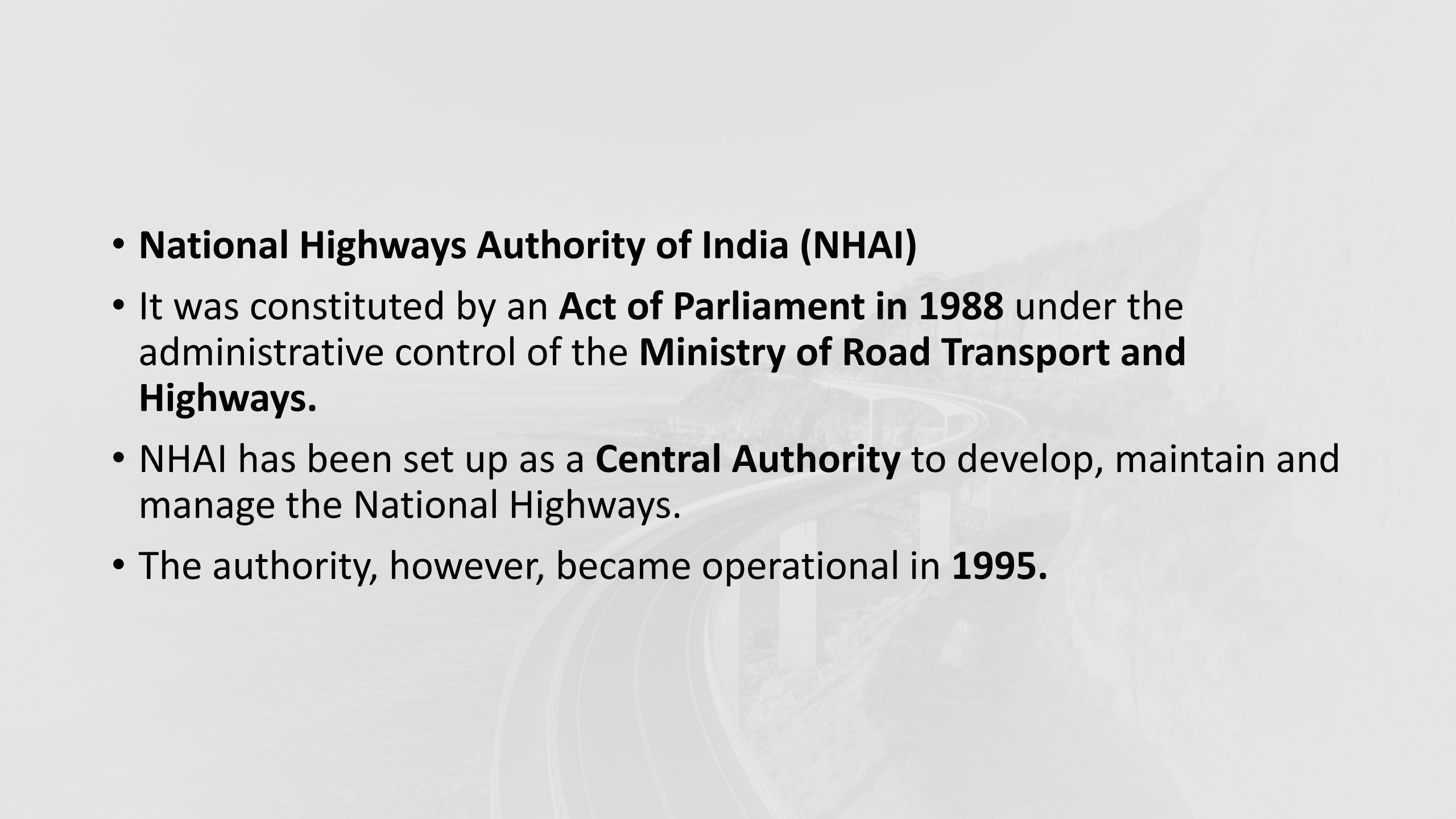
- National Highways Authority of India has updated specifications for new Route Patrolling Vehicles (RPVs) named '**Rajmarg Saathi**'.
- **About**
- The RPVs conduct inspection of National Highway **stretches to monitor and respond to emergency situations.**
-



- **Rajmarg Saathi:**

- It has the Provision for dashboard camera equipped with **'AI video analytics'** to capture and identify cracks & potholes.
- The data/ video footage shall be collected on weekly basis by NHAI and shall be integrated with NHAI One application for more efficient maintenance of roads.

- 
- Equipped with the advanced communication and safety tools, these vehicles will be useful in **minimizing traffic disruptions, improving road safety and enhancing overall road user experience along the National Highways.**

- 
- **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)**
  - It was constituted by an **Act of Parliament in 1988** under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways**.
  - NHAI has been set up as a **Central Authority** to develop, maintain and manage the National Highways.
  - The authority, however, became operational in **1995**.

An aerial photograph of a large, irregularly shaped ice floe in the center of a dark blue sea. The floe is surrounded by numerous smaller, broken pieces of ice scattered across the water's surface. The text "First ice-free day in the Arctic: Study" is overlaid in white, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

# First ice-free day in the Arctic: Study







# Over the top





# THE BIG CHILL

The Arctic ocean is part of the "GLOBAL COMMONS" but there is no treaty to check its exploitation

The region may hold over **40%** of the current global reserves of oil and gas. There may also be significant reserves of coal, zinc and silver

Now a tourist destination  
In 2010, over **50,000** tourists sailed the pristine waters of a hitherto forbidden zone

**Power lines**  
If the shipping routes through the Arctic become more dense, the countries that lie astride these routes, will gain in importance

The strategic chokepoints of the Panama Canal, the Suez Canal, the Bosphorous and the Malacca Straits, would lose much of their economic importance

Existing sea route from East Asia to Europe

As the ice melts, a new sea route, with tremendous consequences, is emerging



The Arctic Circle encloses

21 million Sq.km of land

13 million Sq.km of mostly ice-bound seas

India's total land area

3.3 million Sq.km

Nations claiming territory around the Arctic Ocean

THE U.S. | CANADA | DENMARK | NORWAY | RUSSIA

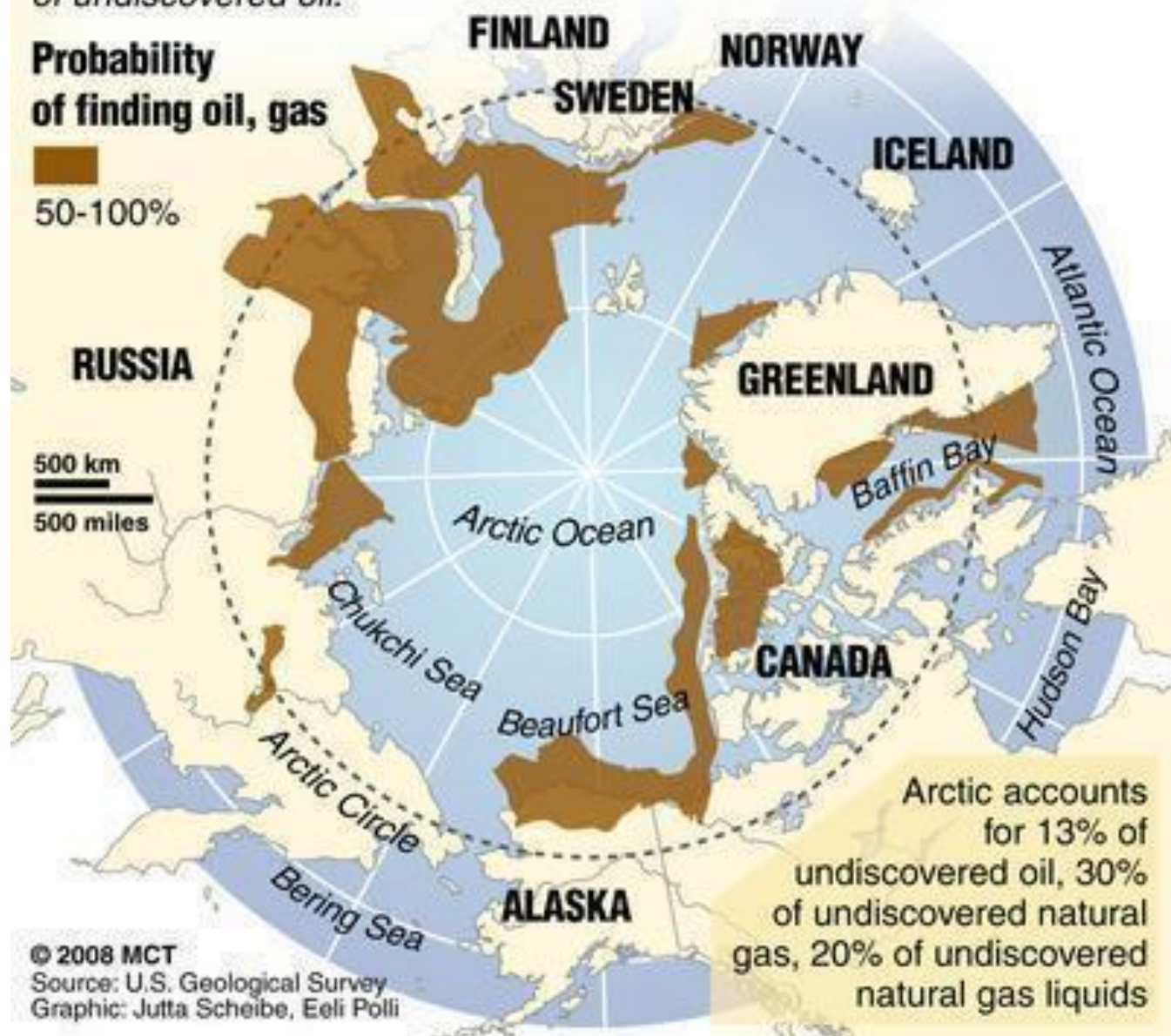


# Oil and gas in the Arctic

Area north of the Arctic Circle has an estimated 90 billion barrels of undiscovered oil.

Probability  
of finding oil, gas

50-100%




© 2008 MCT  
Source: U.S. Geological Survey  
Graphic: Jutta Scheibe, Eeli Polli

Arctic accounts  
for 13% of  
undiscovered oil, 30%  
of undiscovered natural  
gas, 20% of undiscovered  
natural gas liquids



- **Context**


- The Arctic Ocean may see its first ice-free day — when its waters have less than one million square kilometres of sea ice — by 2030, or sooner than previously expected, according to a new study.
- 



- **About the study**

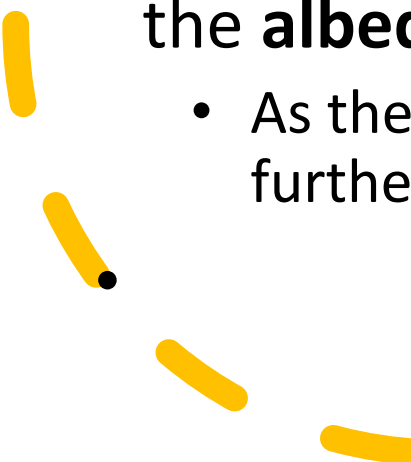
- The study, **'The first ice-free day in the Arctic Ocean could occur before 2030'**, was published in the journal **Nature Communications**.

- **Major Predictions:**

- The **first ice-free day** in the Arctic would be witnessed **within seven to 20 years** even if humans drastically cut **greenhouse gas emissions** in the following years.
  - The ice-free period can last between 11 and 53 days. This means that the Arctic can also witness the **first ice-free month**.
- 



- **Significance of Ice in Arctic Ocean**

- The ice plays a critical role in regulating **ocean and air temperatures**, supporting marine habitats, and driving ocean currents that distribute heat and nutrients worldwide.
  - The sea ice reflects sunlight back into space, a process known as the **albedo effect**.
    - As the ice melts, it exposes darker waters, which absorb more solar radiation, further accelerating warming in the region.
- 


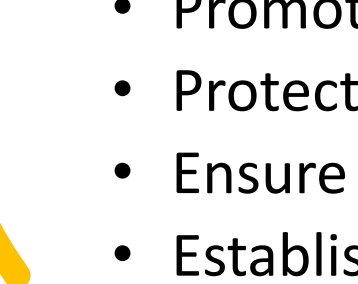


# Competition Commission of India (CCI)




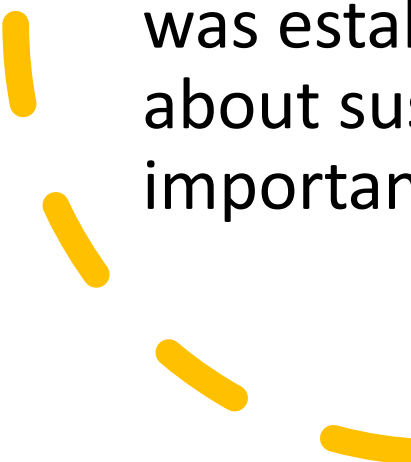
- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) passed an order under the Competition Act, 2002 (Act) against the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) and its affiliate bodies.
- **About**
- The **TT Friendly Super League Association** has alleged that TTFI and its affiliates are using anti-competitive practices.

- The Commission found that the TTFI and its affiliates violated **the Act** by restricting table tennis tournaments and preventing players from participating through WhatsApp advisories, public notices, and anti-competitive bye-laws.
- **Competition Commission of India (CCI)**
- It is a **statutory body** established in 2009 by the Government of India under the **Competition Act, 2002**.

- 
- The composition of the Commission consists of a **Chairperson** and not less than two and not more than six other members.
  - It operates under the **Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA)** with the following objectives:
    - Eliminate practices having adverse effect on competition,
    - Promote and sustain competition,
    - Protect the interests of consumers
    - Ensure freedom of trade in the markets of India
    - Establish a robust competitive environment.
- 



International Mountain Day 2024

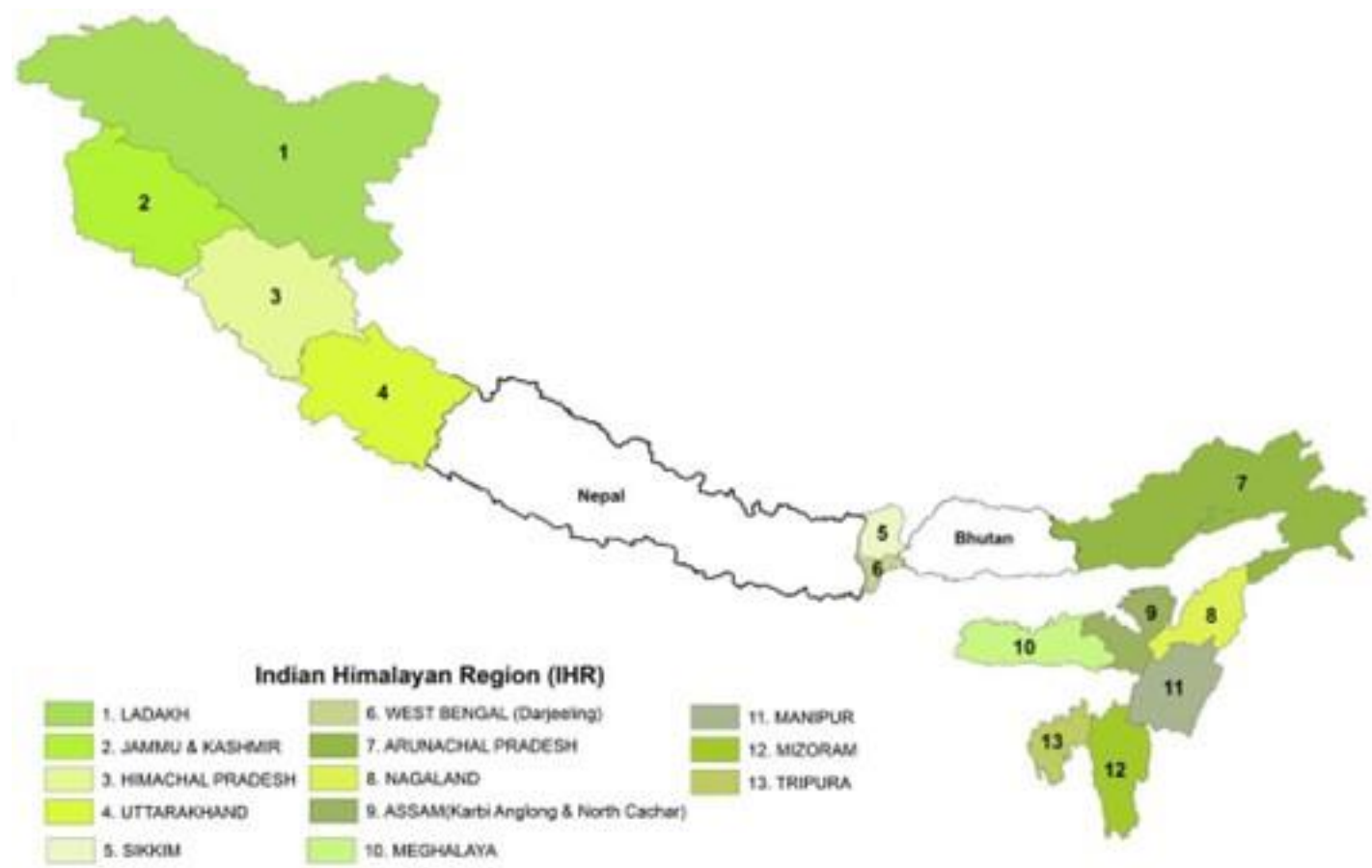
- 
- Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change observed International Mountain Day 2024 (11th December) to highlight the need to protect the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR).
  - What is International Mountain Day?
  - History: International Mountain Day, observed on 11th December, was established by the United Nations in 2003 to raise awareness about sustainable development in mountains and their vital importance to life.
- 

**Theme 2024: *Mountain solutions for a sustainable future – innovation, adaptation and youth.***

**Importance of Mountains:** Mountains cover about **one-fifth of the Earth's surface** and are home to **15% of the world's population** and host half of the world's biodiversity hotspots.

- 
- What are the Key Facts About Indian Himalayan Region (IHR)?
  - **Geographical Extent:** The IHR stretches across **13 Indian states/Union Territories**, including Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, and parts of West Bengal, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and Meghalaya.
    - It spans a distance of approximately **2,500 km** from west to east.





---



- **When you travel in Himalayas, you will see the following: (2012)**

1. Deep gorges
2. U-turn river courses
3. Parallel mountain ranges
4. Steep gradients causing land sliding

- **Which of the above can be said to be the evidence for Himalayas being young fold mountains?**
- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1, 2 and 4 only
- (c) 3 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

A stylized winter scene featuring a dark, leafless tree in the center. The ground is covered in snow, with several dark, pointed shapes resembling rocks or small plants. In the background, there are several rounded, brown hills. The sky is a dark blue-grey color, filled with numerous small white dots representing snow or stars. Three larger, white, six-pointed snowflake icons are scattered across the sky. The text "Under the Sal Tree" Theatre is written in a white, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

“Under the Sal Tree” Theatre

- 
- The “Under the Sal Tree” Theatre Festival, held annually in Rampur, Assam, promotes eco-friendly and sustainable practices in theatre while showcasing rich cultural diversity.
  - **Under the Sal Tree Theatre Festival**
  - **What it is:** An open-air theatre festival promoting carbon neutrality and eco-conscious practices in theatre, hosted by Badungduppa Kalakendra in Rampur, Assam.
- 

Top 10 MCQ from  
today's session

- What percentage of India's **total NPAs** was attributed to the top 100 defaulters as of March 2019?  
मार्च 2019 तक भारत के कुल **NPA** का कितने प्रतिशत शीर्ष 100 डिफॉल्टरों के कारण था?
- **A. 33%**
- **B. 40%**
- **C. 43%**
- **D. 50%**

- The **Jalvahak Scheme** aims to promote long-haul cargo transport through which of the following?

जलवाहक योजना लंबी दूरी के कार्गो परिवहन को प्रोत्साहित करने के लिए किसके माध्यम से लागू होती है?

- A. Railways / रेलवे
- B. Roadways / सड़क मार्ग
- C. Inland waterways / अंतर्देशीय जलमार्ग
- D. Air cargo / हवाई मालवाहक

- . India retained the **Women's Asia Cup Title 2024** by defeating which country in the final?  
भारत ने **महिला एशिया कप 2024** का खिताब फाइनल में किस देश को हराकर जीता?
- **A. Japan / जापान**
- **B. China / चीन**
- **C. South Korea / दक्षिण कोरिया**
- **D. Malaysia / मलेशिया**



- The **Rajmarg Saathi vehicles** are equipped with which advanced technology for highway maintenance?

राजमार्ग साथी वाहन राजमार्ग रखरखाव के लिए किस उन्नत तकनीक से सुसज्जित हैं?

- A. AI video analytics / एआई वीडियो एनालिटिक्स
- B. Satellite navigation / उपग्रह नेविगेशन
- C. Infrared cameras / इन्फ्रारेड कैमरे
- D. GPS tracking / जीपीएस ट्रैकिंग

- What is the displacement of the **Nirdeshak**, the latest survey ship commissioned by the Indian Navy?  
भारतीय नौसेना द्वारा कमीशन किए गए नवीनतम सर्वेक्षण जहाज निर्देशक का विस्थापन कितना है?
- **A. 2,500 tons**
- B. 3,800 tons**
- C. 4,200 tons**
- D. 5,000 tons**

- The **first ice-free day in the Arctic Ocean** is expected by which year according to recent studies?  
हालिया अध्ययन के अनुसार आर्कटिक महासागर का पहला बर्फ-मुक्त दिन किस वर्ष तक हो सकता है?
- **A. 2025**
- B. 2030**
- C. 2040**
- D. 2050**

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) operates under which ministry?  
भारतीय प्रतिस्पर्धा आयोग (CCI) किस मंत्रालय के तहत कार्य करता है?
- **A. Ministry of Corporate Affairs / कॉर्पोरेट मामलों का मंत्रालय**
- B. Ministry of Finance / वित्त मंत्रालय**
- C. Ministry of Commerce and Industry / वाणिज्य और उद्योग मंत्रालय**
- D. Ministry of Law and Justice / कानून और न्याय मंत्रालय**

- The **Indian Himalayan Region (IHR)** spans across how many Indian states and Union Territories?

**भारतीय हिमालय क्षेत्र (IHR)** भारत के कितने राज्यों और केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों में फैला हुआ है?

- **A. 10**
- B. 12**
- C. 13**
- D. 15**

- The **Women's Asia Cup 2024** showcased exceptional performances from which Indian goalkeeper?  
**महिला एशिया कप 2024** में भारत के किस गोलकीपर ने शानदार प्रदर्शन किया?
- **A. Nidhi / निधि**
- B. Savita Punia / सविता पुनिया**
- C. Kanika Siwach / कनिका सिवाच**
- D. Ishika Chauhan / इशिका चौहान**

- Which international organization launched the **Under the Sal Tree Theatre Festival** in Rampur, Assam?  
अंतर्राष्ट्रीय संगठन ने असम के रामपुर में अंडर द सैल ट्री थिएटर फेस्टिवल का आयोजन किया?
- **A. UNESCO**
- B. Badungduppa Kalakendra / बडुंगदुप्पा कलाकेंद्र**
- C. ICCR / भारतीय सांस्कृतिक संबंध परिषद**
- D. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

---

# Word of the day

## **Rime:**

ice crystals forming a white deposit (especially on objects outside); correspondence in the sounds of two or more lines (especially final sounds); be similar in sound, especially with respect to the last syllable

---

**Synonyms:** frost, hoar, rhyme

---

**Usage:** *The rime was thick and crisp on the grass.*

---

**Pronunciation:** [newsth.live/rimepro](http://newsth.live/rimepro)

---

**International Phonetic**

**Alphabet:** /ɹaɪm/

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Fun Fact

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**Myth:** The appendix is useless.

- **Burst:** Once thought to be a vestigial organ, the appendix is now believed to play a role in immune function and gut health, especially early in life.

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Starts In: 04:37:22


Coming Soon!

## Electricity and Magnetism

2024-12-13 at 9:00 AM

Starts In: 02:07:22

Coming Soon!



Thank you  
guys.

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