

Daily Current Affairs



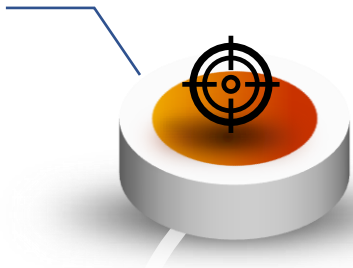
जनसक्ता

The Indian EXPRESS

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

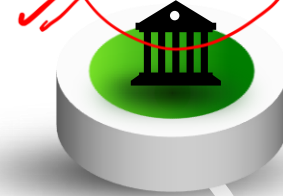


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8

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PIB, PRS & Other newspaper

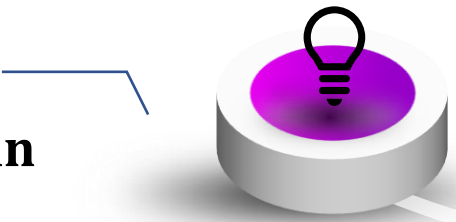
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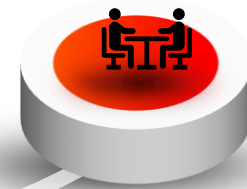
The Indian Express

3



Financial Express

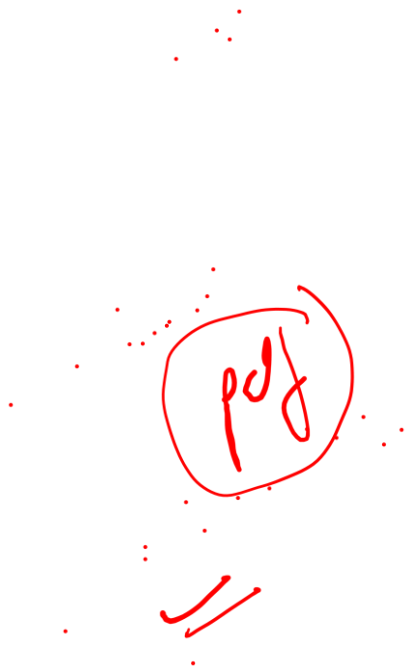
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Jansatta

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10 MCQ QUIZ

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10 MCQ from the session

India recently became the fourth country to achieve satellite docking and undocking after which nations?

भारत उपग्रह डॉकिंग और अनडॉकिंग को सफलतापूर्वक पूरा करने वाला चौथा देश बना। इससे पहले कौन-कौन से देश इसे उपलब्धि को प्राप्त कर चुके हैं?

- ~~A. U.S., Russia, China / अमेरिका, रूस, चीन~~
- B. U.K., France, Germany / यू.के., फ्रांस, जर्मनी
- C. Japan, Israel, South Korea / जापान, इज़राइल, दक्षिण कोरिया
- D. Brazil, Canada, Australia / ब्राजील, कनाडा, ऑस्ट्रेलिया

What was the altitude and inclination at which ISRO conducted the undocking operation of SpaDex satellites?

इसरो ने स्पा-डेक्स उपग्रहों की अनडॉकिंग किस ऊंचाई और झुकाव पर की?

- A. 400 km, 30-degree inclination
- B. 460 km, 45-degree inclination
- C. 500 km, 50-degree inclination
- D. 600 km, 60-degree inclination

What is the main objective of the SpaDex mission?

स्पा-डेक्स मिशन का मुख्य उद्देश्य क्या है?

- A. To improve remote sensing technology / रिमोट सेंसिंग तकनीक में सुधार करना
- B. To develop spacecraft rendezvous, docking, and undocking technology / अंतरिक्ष यान की मुलाकात, डॉकिंग और अनडॉकिंग तकनीक विकसित करना
- C. To launch reusable satellite systems / पुनः उपयोग योग्य उपग्रह प्रणाली लॉन्च करना
- D. To test interplanetary travel techniques / अंतरग्रहीय यात्रा तकनीकों का परीक्षण करना

Why is Starlink struggling to compete in the Indian market?

स्टारलिंग भारत में प्रतिस्पर्धा करने में क्यों संघर्ष कर रहा है?

• A. It has slow internet speeds compared to Jio and Airtel / इसकी इंटरनेट स्पीड जियो और एयरटेल की तुलना में धीमी है

B. Its pricing is 10-14 times higher than local broadband providers / इसकी कीमत स्थानीय ब्रॉडबैंड प्रदाताओं की तुलना में 10-14 गुना अधिक है

C. It lacks government approval for operations / इसे संचालन के लिए सरकारी मंजूरी नहीं मिली है

D. Both B and C / बी और सी दोनों

In which country did Starlink reduce its prices to \$10/month to attract users?

किस देश में स्टारलिनक ने उपयोगकर्ताओं को आकर्षित करने के लिए अपनी कीमतें \$10/महीना कर दीं?

- A. India / भारत
- ~~• B. Kenya / केन्या~~
- C. Thailand / थाईलैंड
- D. Indonesia / इंडोनेशिया

58 / month

What major change did Tamil Nadu's government make in its 2025-26 budget?

तमिलनाडु सरकार ने अपने 2025-26 के बजट में कौन सा बड़ा बदलाव किया?

- A. Introduced new taxes on IT companies / आईटी कंपनियों पर नए कर लगाए
- ~~• B. Replaced the rupee symbol with the Tamil letter 'ரூ' (ru) / रुपये के प्रतीक को तमिल अक्षर 'ரூ' (रु) से बदल दिया~~
- C. Implemented a Tamil-only official language policy / केवल तमिल को आधिकारिक भाषा के रूप में लागू किया
- D. Declared Tamil Nadu a 'Digital Economy Hub' / तमिलनाडु को 'डिजिटल अर्थव्यवस्था हब' घोषित किया

What was the Centre's reaction to Tamil Nadu's rupee symbol change?

तमिलनाडु द्वारा रुपये के प्रतीक में किए गए बदलाव पर केंद्र सरकार की प्रतिक्रिया क्या थी?

- **A. It supported the move / इसने इस कदम का समर्थन किया**
- B. It called the move 'absurd' and 'against national unity' / इसे 'मूर्खतापूर्ण' और 'राष्ट्रीय एकता के खिलाफ' कहा**
- C. It proposed a nationwide adoption of the Tamil rupee symbol / इसने तमिल रुपये के प्रतीक को राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर अपनाने का प्रस्ताव दिया**
- D. It remained neutral / इसने तटस्थ रुख अपनाया**

What does Holika Dahan symbolize in Indian tradition?

भारतीय परंपरा में होलिका दहन किसका प्रतीक है?

- A. Victory of evil over good / बुराई पर अच्छाई की जीत
- ~~B. Victory of good over evil / अच्छाई पर बुराई की जीत~~
- C. Harvest season celebration / फसल उत्सव का प्रतीक
- D. Transition from monsoon to winter / मानसून से सर्दी के बदलाव का प्रतीक

What is the main principle behind a ~~polygraph~~ (lie-detector) test?

पॉलीग्राफ (झूठ पकड़ने वाली मशीन) परीक्षण का मुख्य सिद्धांत क्या है?

• A. Detecting changes in voice tone / आवाज़ के स्वर में बदलाव को पकड़ना

~~B. Measuring physiological responses like heartbeat and sweating /~~
~~हृदय गति और पसीना जैसे शारीरिक प्रतिक्रियाओं को मापना~~

C. Scanning brain activity to detect lies / मस्तिष्क गतिविधि को स्कैन कर झूठ पकड़ना

D. Using AI to analyze verbal responses / मौखिक उत्तरों का विश्लेषण करने के लिए एआई का उपयोग करना

What did the Supreme Court rule in the 'Selvi vs. State of Karnataka' (2010) case regarding lie-detector tests?

'सेल्वी बनाम कर्नाटक राज्य' (2010) मामले में सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने झूठ पकड़ने वाली मशीनों पर क्या फैसला दिया?

- ~~A~~ Lie-detector test results are legally valid as confessions / झूठ पकड़ने वाली मशीन के परिणाम कानूनी रूप से स्वीकार्य हैं
- ~~B~~ Lie-detector test results cannot be considered as confessions / झूठ पकड़ने वाली मशीन के परिणाम को स्वीकारोक्ति नहीं माना जा सकता
- C. Lie-detector tests are banned in India / भारत में झूठ पकड़ने वाले परीक्षणों पर प्रतिबंध है
- D. Lie-detector tests are mandatory for criminal investigations / आपराधिक जांचों में झूठ पकड़ने वाले परीक्षण अनिवार्य हैं

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16 marks

17/17

3

30

New Len

“

Handwritten note: "Handwritten text in a box, possibly 'Handwritten Panopano'." The text is written in red ink and is enclosed in a red rectangular box with a diagonal line through it.

Handwritten note: "Punish" circled in red.

Handwritten note: "God" circled in red.

Handwritten note: "Karni" circled in red.

When a deep injury is
done to us, we never
recover until we forgive.

ALAN PATON

Handwritten note: "Zero Limit" in a red box.

Woman can opt for surrogacy till 51: HC

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court has held that the eligibility of a woman intending to avail of surrogacy services extends throughout the 50th year of age and she becomes ineligible on the day she turns 51 under Section 4(iii)(c)(I) of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021.

A Bench comprising Chief Justice Nitin Jamdar and Justice S. Manu made the ruling on Friday while allowing an appeal filed by a woman against a single judge's verdict refusing her permission to go for surro-

gacy on the ground that she became ineligible on turning 50. The Bench said the question in the appeal is whether she is entitled to avail of surrogacy till the beginning of the 50th year or at the end of it.

The court said the intention of the Act is to ensure ethical and legal safeguards. The provision on age eligibility should be understood in a way that ensures ethical surrogacy practices rather than creating unnecessary restrictions. The court said in this case, what is at stake is the permanent loss of the opportunity to become a mother.

Women
- (51) till
- SR Act 2021
- (50+)
- till

Exclude
Unmarried women
Single men

humanity

family
Mini

Many barriers

The Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 was introduced to curb unethical practices related to issues such as sex selection and exploitation of surrogate mothers, with provisions for jail term in case of violations



■ Under the Act, a couple can opt for surrogacy only on medical grounds and should produce certificates of eligibility

■ The couple should have been married for five years and not have a living child

■ The surrogate mother

has to be a close relative of the couple, a married woman with a child of her own and aged between 25 and 35

■ Though the law allows a single woman to resort to surrogacy, she has to be a widow or a divorcee between the age of 35 and 45

■ Single men are not eligible

Living relationship
Same sex couple

51

56 274



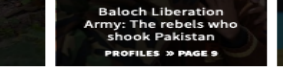
NASA-SPACEX MISSION 4 astronauts take off for International Space Station

This will pave the way for the return of astronauts Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams, stuck in ISS for nine months

WORLD » PAGE 13



Why has India got yet another tiger reserve?
FAQ » PAGE 8



Baloch Liberation Army: The rebels who shook Pakistan
PROFILES » PAGE 9



Mumbai Indians pips Delhi Capitals, regains WPL crown
SPORT » PAGE 13

INSIDE

Ukraine presses allies for security guarantees

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Saturday he had urged Kyiv's Western allies to give "a clear position" on security guarantees including about foreign troop contingent on Ukrainian soil with U.S. backdrop » PAGE 12

Two mega deals with France wait for panel nod

Two mega defence deals with France — for 26 Rafale-M fighter jets and three additional Scorpene-class conventional submarines — worth close to \$11 billion are now awaiting final approval by the Cabinet Committee on Security » PAGE 3

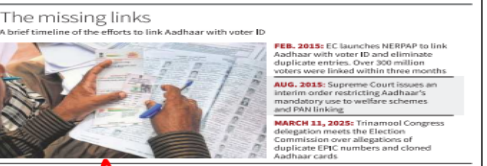
'Congress-scarred Assam rebuilt with Modi's help'

GUWAHATI Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday during his three-day tour of North-east India said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had helped a "Congress-scarred" Assam rebuild by restoring peace and ensuring unprecedented development » PAGE 4

EC revisits EPIC-Aadhaar link plan after 2015 halt

Chief Election Commissioner calls meeting with Home Secretary, Legislative Secretary and UIDAI official, days after Opposition alleged duplication in EPIC numbers and manipulation in voter lists

Sheeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI



The missing links
A brief timeline of the efforts to link Aadhaar with voter ID

Amid Opposition allegations of manipulation of voters' lists, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar has called a meeting with the Union Home Secretary, Legislative Secretary and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) to explore linking of voter ID with Aadhaar.

EC sources on Saturday said that Mr. Kumar will meet the officials on Tuesday. It had also assured parties that voters with same EPIC numbers registered in different States could still vote using their domicile documents. This had promised to resolve the issue in the next few months. The Election Commission first tried to link Aadhaar voter ID linking in February 2015 which it launched the National Electoral Purification and Authentication Programme (NERPAP) to address the duplication of EPIC numbers. It had linked more than 300 million voters in a span of three months. However, the Supreme Court, in an interim order in August 2015, held that the mandatory use of Aadhaar should only be for

welfare schemes and PAN linking. Following this order, the NERPAP exercise was discontinued. The Centre has informed Parliament that the Aadhaar voter ID seeding exercise was "provisional" and no target or timelines have been set for the proposed linking. It has also clarified that the names of those who do not link their Aadhaar details with their voter IDs will not be struck off the electoral rolls. "Face-saving measure" According to section 23 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, as amended by the Election Laws (Amendment) Act in 2021, electoral registration officers are required to ask existing or prospective voters to provide their Aadhaar number for establishing

India plans to entirely fence its 1,643-km-long border with Myanmar in 10 years

Vijaiata Singh
NEW DELHI



The 1,643-km-long border with Myanmar will be entirely ringed with an "anti-cut, anti-climb" fence in the next 10 years, according to government officials and a parliamentary panel report. The fencing project was announced by Union Home Minister Amit Shah in February 2024 and the work has gathered pace in the past three or four months, officials said. From April 1-December 31, 2024, an amount of ₹14,09 crore has been spent on constructing the fence and the company operating bases (COBs) in Manipur had been the Assam Rifles, which is responsible for guarding the Myanmar border. The technology is entirely India's own engineers. It has anti-cut and anti-climb features that will deter illegal infiltration," said a senior official of the Assam Rifles. Free Movement Regime India and Myanmar have an unfenced border, which runs along the Indo-Myanmar border. The CS granted in-principle approval for construction of fence and 64 border roads. Construction of fence and road of 1,610.2 km along IMB in 10 years and its maintenance for five years, at cost of ₹20,264.4 crore; construction of 58 roads (1,677.5 km) to connect the



Indian soldiers patrol the Indo-Myanmar border. FILE PHOTO attributed the ongoing ethnic violence to the unguarded movement of people across the border. "In last year, only 10 km of the border near Moreh in Manipur had been fenced. A March 10 parliamentary panel report said that the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) had in March 2024, approved a proposal worth ₹31,000 crore to fence the Indo-Myanmar border and to construct roads to provide better connectivity to company-operating bases (COBs) of the Assam Rifles. "For creating infrastructure along the Indo-Myanmar border, the CCS granted in-principle approval for construction of fence and 64 border roads. Construction of fence and road of 1,610.2 km along IMB in 10 years and its maintenance for five years, at cost of ₹20,264.4 crore; construction of 58 roads (1,677.5 km) to connect the

U.S. planning to issue travel restrictions on 41 nations

Reuters
WASHINGTON

The Trump administration is considering issuing sweeping travel restrictions for the citizens of dozens of countries, including a new ban, according to sources familiar with the matter and a report seen by Reuters. The memo lists a total of 41 countries, which are to be divided into three separate groups. The first group of 10 countries, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Cuba and North Korea, would be subject to a full visa suspension. In the second group, five nations — Eritrea, Haiti, Laos, Myanmar and South Sudan — would face partial suspensions that would impact tourist and student visas as well as other immigrant visas, with some exceptions. In the third group, a total of 26 countries, including

Belarus, Pakistan and Turkmenistan, would be considered for a partial suspension of U.S. visa issuance if their governments "do not make efforts to address deficiencies within 60 days," the memo said. Changes expected A U.S. official speaking on the condition of anonymity said that there could be changes on the list and that it was yet to be approved by the administration, including U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio. The New York Times first reported on the list of countries. The move harkens back to President Donald Trump's first term ban on travellers from seven majority-Muslim nations, a policy that went through several iterations before it was upheld by the Supreme Court in 2018. The U.S. President issued an executive order on January 20 requiring intensified security vetting of foreign travellers, including a mission to the U.S. to detect national security threats. That order had directed several cabinet members to submit by March 21 a list of countries from which travel should be partly or fully suspended because their "vetting and screening information is so deficient."

'Super afraid of retaliation,' says Indian Ph.D. candidate who 'self-deported' from the U.S.

Kaloli Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

An Indian Ph.D. candidate at the prestigious Columbia University in the U.S., who was accused of being a "pro-Hamas sympathiser," narrated how the U.S. immigration and customs enforcement agents raided her apartment in the campus housing and she had to seek help from immigrants in the United States after her visa was temporarily taken refuge in Canada. Speaking to The Hindu in an online interview, Ranjani Srinivasan, who is in her fifth year of Ph.D., said she is "super afraid of retaliation" and that she is not yet aware of what specific charges were brought against her by the American authorities that led to her being "disenrolled" from the university just six months before she was to complete her thesis. "My flatmates and my

friends started helping me and I felt that the Columbia housing was unsafe. I moved to another place to stay with some people who could support me. The move happened on Friday when I was the first disappearance from the Columbia campus. Mahmoud alhabib is detained and disappeared — I became extremely "cared," she said speaking from an undisclosed location in Canada saying that it took her several days to understand the extent that the U.S. authorities would go to deport her. Ms. Srinivasan had "self-deported" or voluntarily left the United States after her visa was revoked for allegedly "advocating for violence and terrorism" and involvement in activities supporting the Palestinian group Hamas. She said that last Sunday evening around 5 p.m., her service as a Teaching Assistant and her 120 visa were

"My lawyers tell me very frankly that this is unpredictable. There are so many facets of the FI visa over which the Department of State has full discretion. So, we don't really know what they are charging me with but it seems like they will charge me with something," said Ms. Srinivasan adding that "there is no de-escalation" from the office of the U.S. authorities. Expressing apprehensions about the "charge" with something," she said that she is "super afraid of retaliation at this point." Ms. Srinivasan said that over the past week and a half, she had heard of several students facing similar charges of activism and being similarly deported. She said she wants to come back to India from Canada. "I have not slept in almost a week. I thought it would be easier to negotiate with Columbia from here. But it is obviously not the case," said Ms. Srinivasan. "Columbia itself has a long history of dissent. That is the case with most universities in the U.S. The issue here is that some of these conversations started devolving into some kind of violent responses, which we should stay away from," explained Ms. Srinivasan. "I have done nothing wrong. I was a Fulbright scholar, I was at Harvard and now I am in Columbia. I have no criminal record. I do not have a criminal past. I do feel like that if it can happen to someone who does not have the markings of someone who is usually targeted, then it could really happen to anyone with an FI visa," said Ms. Srinivasan seeking help from the Government of India to support her in getting the FI visa so that she could complete her Ph.D. thesis.

EC revisits EPIC-Aadhaar link plan after 2015 halt

Chief Election Commissioner calls meeting with Home Secretary, Legislative Secretary and UIDAI official, days after Opposition alleged duplication in EPIC numbers and manipulation in voter lists

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

Amid Opposition allegations of manipulation of voters' lists, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar has called a meeting with the Union Home Secretary, the Legislative Secretary and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) to explore linking of voter ID with Aadhaar.

Election Commission (EC) sources on Saturday said that Mr. Kumar will meet the officials on Tuesday.

Trinamool complaint

The move comes close on the heels of the ruling Trinamool Congress in West Bengal, where the Assembly election is due in 2026, flagging the issuance of same elector photo identity card (EPIC) numbers to voters in different States. Opposition parties have raised the matter in Parliament and outside. The Leader of the Opposition, Rahul Gandhi took it up in the Lok Sabha.

Earlier, the Congress had alleged manipulation of voters' lists during the Maharashtra Assembly election.

The Election Commission had clarified that the duplication had occurred due to manual errors be-

The missing links

A brief timeline of the efforts to link Aadhaar with voter ID



FEB. 2015: EC launches NERPAP to link Aadhaar with voter ID and eliminate duplicate entries. Over 300 million voters were linked within three months

AUG. 2015: Supreme Court issues an interim order restricting Aadhaar's mandatory use to welfare schemes and PAN linking

MARCH 11, 2025: Trinamool Congress delegation meets the Election Commission over allegations of duplicate EPIC numbers and cloned Aadhaar cards

fore the ERONET digital platform for voter enrollment was introduced.

It had also assured parties that voters with same EPIC numbers registered in different States could still vote using their domicile documents. The EC had promised to resolve the issue in the three months.

The Election Commission first tried the Aadhaar-voter ID linking in February 2015 when it launched the National Electoral Rolls Purification and Authentication Programme (NERPAP) to address the duplicate entries in electoral rolls.

It had linked more than 300 million voters in a span of three months.

However, the Supreme Court, in an interim order in August 2015, held that the mandatory use of Aadhaar should only be for

welfare schemes and PAN linking.

Following this order, the NERPAP exercise was discontinued.

The Centre has informed Parliament that the Aadhaar-voter ID seeding exercise was "process-driven" and no target or timelines have been set for the proposed linking. It has also clarified that the names of those who do not link their Aadhaar details with their voter IDs will not be struck off the electoral rolls.

'Face-saving measure'

According to section 23 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, as amended by the Election Laws (Amendment) Act in 2021, electoral registration officers are required to ask existing or prospective voters to provide their Aadhaar number for establish-

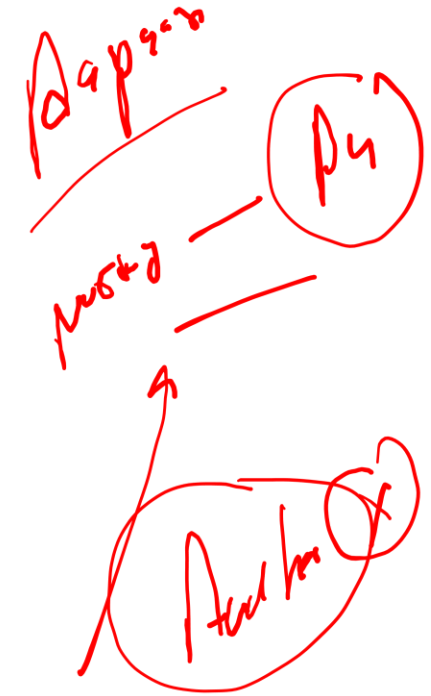
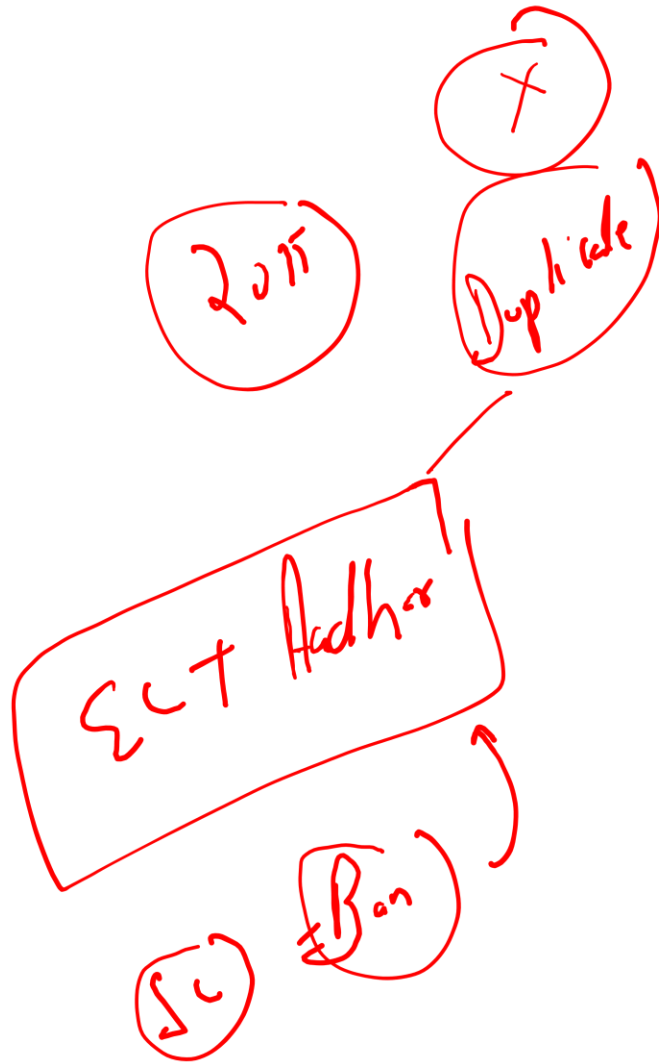
ing their identity on a voluntary basis.

Meanwhile, the Trinamool Congress on Saturday said the meeting convened by the CEC was a "face-saving measure".

"First, three statements. Now this meeting. This is just a face-saving measure. We will keep a hawk-eye vigil till the elections," Sagarika Ghose, deputy leader of the Trinamool Congress in the Rajya Sabha, said.

A 10-member delegation of the party met the full Election Commission bench on March 11 over the issue of duplicate EPIC numbers.

In a memorandum to the EC, the party had also said that there had been "credible allegations of Aadhaar cards being cloned and the use of these cloned Aadhaar cards to facilitate fake voter registrations".



10 Digit



EPIC Number

Explained

EC Reconsiders EPIC-Aadhaar Linkage | चुनाव आयोग ने EPIC-आधार लिंकिंग पर पुनर्विचार किया

- The Election Commission (EC) is ~~reconsidering~~ linking voter ID (EPIC) with Aadhaar after a 2015 halt.

चुनाव आयोग (EC) 2015 में रोक के बाद फिर से मतदाता पहचान पत्र (EPIC) को आधार से जोड़ने पर विचार कर रहा है।

- EPIC refers to the Electors Photo Identification Card,

10 Digi

- Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar called a meeting with key government officials.

मुख्य चुनाव आयुक्त ज्ञानेश कुमार ने प्रमुख सरकारी अधिकारियों के साथ बैठक बुलाई।

- The move comes after Opposition parties alleged voter list manipulation and duplicate EPIC numbers.

यह कदम विपक्षी दलों द्वारा मतदाता सूची में गड़बड़ी और डुप्लीकेट EPIC नंबर के आरोपों के बाद आया है।



EC's Previous Attempt to Link Aadhaar | चुनाव आयोग का आधार लिंक करने का पूर्व प्रयास

- In February 2015, the EC launched the **NERPAP** program to eliminate ~~duplicate entries.~~

फरवरी 2015 में, चुनाव आयोग ने डुप्लीकेट प्रविष्टियों को समाप्त करने के लिए NERPAP कार्यक्रम शुरू किया।

- ~~Over 300 million voters were linked to Aadhaar within three months.~~
तीन ~~महीनों~~ के भीतर 30 करोड़ मतदाताओं को आधार से जोड़ा गया।

3.4

- **However, the Supreme Court's August 2015 interim order restricted Aadhaar's mandatory use.**

हालांकि, सुप्रीम कोर्ट के अगस्त 2015 के अंतरिम आदेश ने आधार के अनिवार्य उपयोग पर रोक लगा दी।

- **The linking process was halted, and NERPAP was discontinued.**

लिंकिंग प्रक्रिया रोक दी गई और NERPAP कार्यक्रम बंद कर दिया गया।

Current Status and Government Stand | वर्तमान स्थिति और सरकार का रुख

- **The Centre told Parliament that Aadhaar-voter ID linking is voluntary.**
केंद्र सरकार ने संसद में बताया कि आधार और मतदाता पहचान पत्र को जोड़ना स्वैच्छिक है।
- **Names of voters who do not link Aadhaar will not be removed from voter lists.**
जो मतदाता आधार से लिंक नहीं करते, उनके नाम मतदाता सूची से नहीं हटाए जाएंगे।
- **No deadline or mandatory target has been set for the linking process.**
लिंकिंग प्रक्रिया के लिए कोई समयसीमा या अनिवार्य लक्ष्य निर्धारित नहीं किया गया है।

Social Aspects | सामाजिक पहलू

- Ensuring clean voter lists can strengthen democracy by preventing fraud.

स्वच्छ मतदाता सूची सुनिश्चित करना धोखाधड़ी को रोककर लोकतंत्र को मजबूत कर सकता है।

- However, concerns over privacy and misuse of Aadhaar data remain.

हालांकि, आधार डेटा की गोपनीयता और दुरुपयोग को लेकर चिंताएं बनी हुई हैं।

Economic Aspects | आर्थिक पहलू

- Aadhaar linkage can reduce election fraud costs and streamline voter verification.

आधार लिंकिंग चुनावी धोखाधड़ी की लागत को कम कर सकती है और मतदाता सत्यापन को सरल बना सकती है।

- However, implementing such a large-scale project requires significant financial and technical resources.

हालांकि, इतने बड़े पैमाने की परियोजना को लागू करने के लिए पर्याप्त वित्तीय और तकनीकी संसाधनों की आवश्यकता होगी।

10-10-2024

India plans to entirely fence its 1,643-km-long border with Myanmar in 10 years

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The 1,643-km-long border with Myanmar will be entirely ringed with an "anti-cut, anti-climb" fence in the next 10 years, according to government officials and a parliamentary panel report.

The fencing project was announced by Union Home Minister Amit Shah in February 2024 and the work has gathered pace in the past three or four months, officials said.

From April 1-December 31, 2024, an amount of ₹114.09 crore has been spent on constructing the fence and the company operating bases (COBs) for the Assam Rifles, which is responsible for guarding the Myanmar border. "The technology is entirely indigenous and developed by our own engineers. It has anti-cut and anti-climb features that will deter illegal infiltration," said a senior official of the Assam Rifles.

Free Movement Regime
India and Myanmar share an unfenced border, which runs along four States. Both countries have a unique arrangement called the Free Movement Regime (FMR), which allows people to visit families residing within 10 km on both sides of the border without visas or a passport.

Former Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh had



Jawans patrol the India-Myanmar border. FILE PHOTO

attributed the ongoing ethnic violence to the unregulated movement of people from across the border.

Till last year, only 10 km of the border near Moreh in Manipur had been fenced.

A March 10 parliamentary panel report said that the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) had in March 2024, approved a proposal worth ₹31,000 crore to fence the Indo-Myanmar border and to construct roads to provide better connectivity to company operating bases (COBs) of the Assam Rifles.

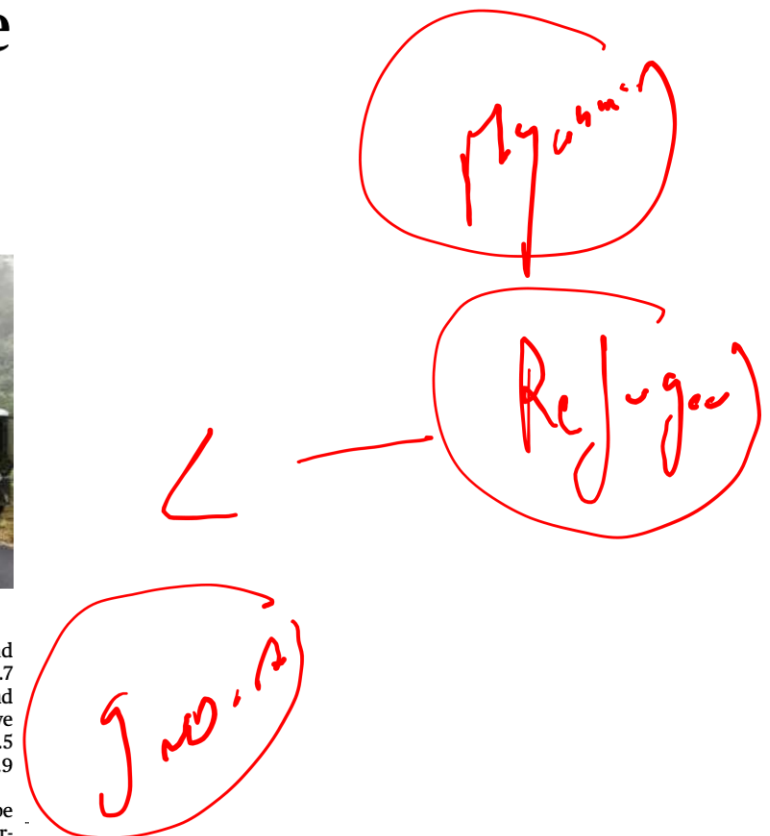
"For creating infrastructure along the IMB (India-Myanmar Border), the CCS granted in-principle approval for construction of fence and 64 border roads. Construction of fence and road of 1,610.2 km along IMB in 10 years and its maintenance for five years, at cost of ₹20,264.4 crore; construction of 58 roads (1,467.5 km) to connect the

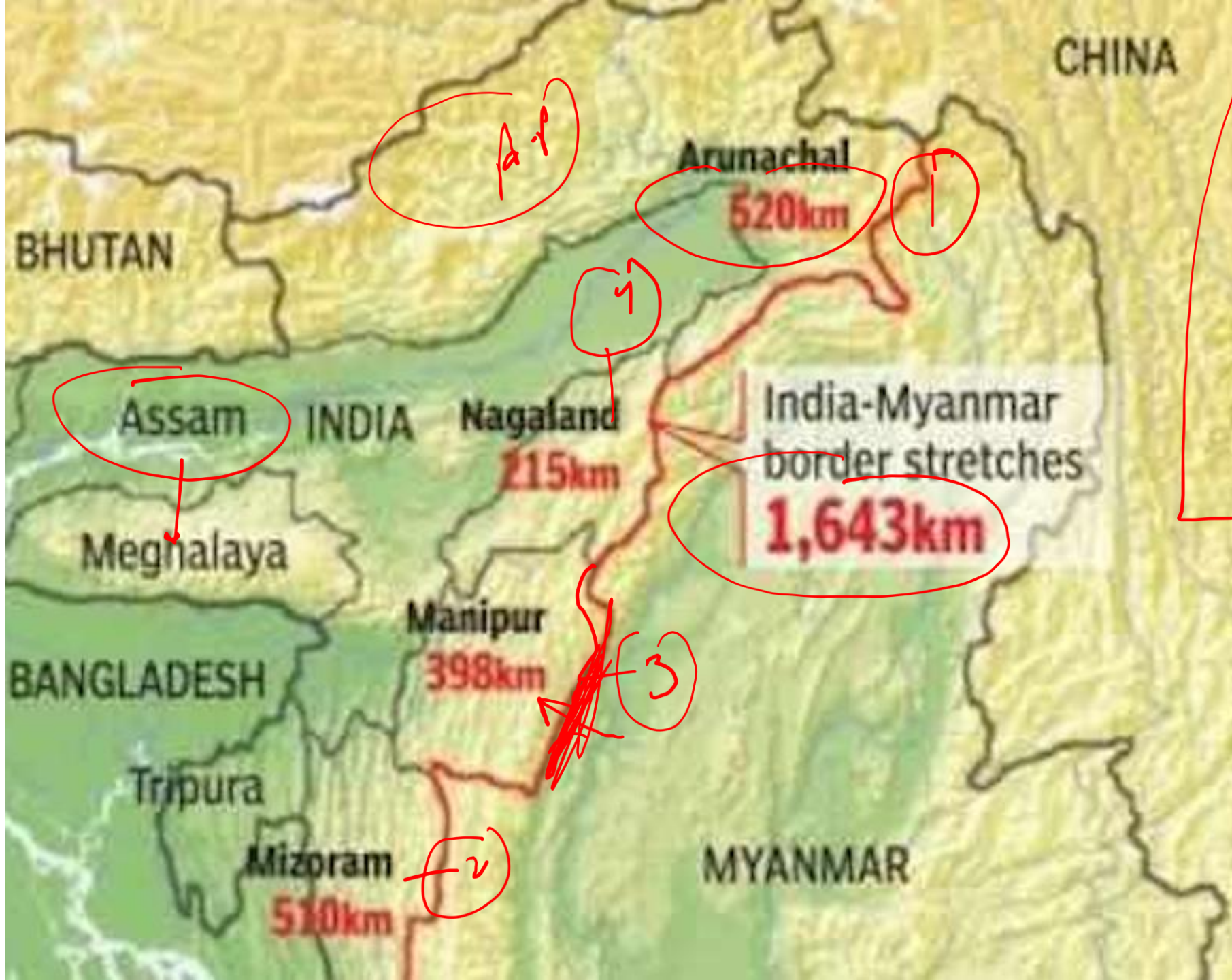
COBs of Assam Rifles and six approach roads (78.7 km) to IMB in 10 years and its maintenance for five years, at cost of ₹10,767.5 crore (total cost ₹31,031.9 crore)," the report said.

The model is likely to be replicated along the international border with Pakistan and Bangladesh, the official said.

The fencing proposal has faced stiff opposition from Naga and Kuki-Zo bodies, who say that it will disrupt ethnic and familial ties for people living on both sides of the border.

"Surveillance cameras will also be placed along the fence to monitor the area better. The border gates and the fencing will ensure that people who cross the border are accounted for. So far around 9,000 people have used the border gates to enter Manipur. There have been very few cases of overstaying," said another government official.





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. **India's Plan to Fence the Myanmar Border | भारत का म्यांमार सीमा पर बाड़ लगाने का निर्णय**

• **India will completely fence its 1,643 km-long border with Myanmar within 10 years.**

भारत अगले ~~10 वर्षों~~ में म्यांमार के साथ अपनी 1,643 किमी लंबी सीमा पर पूरी तरह बाड़ लगाएगा।

- **The fence will be designed with 'anti-cut' and 'anti-climb' technology to prevent illegal infiltration.**

यह बाड़ 'एंटी-कट' और 'एंटी-क्लाइंब' तकनीक से बनाई जाएगी ताकि अवैध घुसपैठ को रोका जा सके।

- **The project was announced by Home Minister Amit Shah in February 2024.**

इस परियोजना की घोषणा गृह मंत्री अमित शाह ने फरवरी 2024 में की थी।

Current Status and Budget Allocation | मौजूदा स्थिति और बजटीय प्रावधान

- From April 1 to December 31, 2024, ₹114.09 crore has been spent on fencing and constructing Company Operating Bases (COBs).
1 अप्रैल से 31 दिसंबर 2024 तक, बाड़ और कंपनी ऑपरेटिंग बेस (COBs) के निर्माण पर ₹114.09 करोड़ खर्च किए गए हैं।

- **As of last year, only 10 km of the border near Moreh (Manipur) had been fenced.**

पिछले वर्ष तक, मणिपुर के मोरेह के पास केवल 10 किमी सीमा पर बाड़ लगाई गई थी।

- **A March 10 parliamentary report approved ₹31,000 crore for fencing and roads along the border.**

10 मार्च की संसदीय रिपोर्ट में सीमा पर बाड़ और सड़कों के लिए ₹31,000 करोड़ को मंजूरी दी गई।

Free Movement Regime (FMR) and Its Impact | फ्री मूवमेंट रीजीम (FMR) और इसका प्रभाव

- India and Myanmar currently have an FMR arrangement, allowing people within 10 km of the border to travel visa-free.

भारत और म्यांमार के बीच वर्तमान में एक फ्री मूवमेंट रीजीम (FMR) व्यवस्था है, जिससे सीमा के 10 किमी के भीतर लोग बिना वीजा के यात्रा कर सकते हैं।

- **Former Manipur CM N. Biren Singh linked ongoing ethnic violence to unregulated border movement.**

मणिपुर के पूर्व मुख्यमंत्री एन. बीरेन सिंह ने चल रही जातीय हिंसा को बिना नियंत्रण वाली सीमा पार आवाजाही से जोड़ा।

- **Opposition from Naga and Kuki-Zo communities, who fear the fence will disrupt ethnic and familial ties.**

नागा और ककी-जो समुदायों ने इसका विरोध किया, क्योंकि उन्हें डर है कि यह बाड़ जातीय और पारिवारिक संबंधों को बाधित करेगी।

Infrastructure Plans Along the Border | सीमा पर बुनियादी ढांचे की योजनाएँ

- **The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) approved fencing and 64 border roads.**
कैबिनेट कमेटी ऑन सिक्योरिटी (CCS) ने बाड़ लगाने और 64 सीमा सड़कों को मंजूरी दी।
- **1,610.2 km of fence and roads will be built in 10 years, costing ₹20,264.4 crore.**
1,610.2 किमी की बाड़ और सड़कें 10 वर्षों में बनाई जाएंगी, जिसकी लागत ₹20,264.4 करोड़ होगी।
- **Another 1,467.5 km of roads will be built to connect COBs and improve connectivity.**
COBs को जोड़ने और संपर्क सुधारने के लिए 1,467.5 किमी अतिरिक्त सड़कें बनाई जाएंगी।

Security Measures and Monitoring | सुरक्षा उपाय और निगरानी

- **Surveillance cameras will be placed along the fence to monitor illegal crossings.**
अवैध सीमा पार करने की निगरानी के लिए बाड़ के साथ निगरानी कैमरे लगाए जाएंगे।
- **Border gates will track individuals crossing, and ensure accountability.**
सीमा द्वार पार करने वाले व्यक्तियों को ट्रैक किया जाएगा और उनकी जिम्मेदारी तय की जाएगी।
- **So far, 9,000 people have legally crossed into Manipur using border gates.**
अब तक 9,000 लोग सीमा द्वारों का उपयोग करके कानूनी रूप से मणिपुर में प्रवेश कर चुके हैं।

U.S. planning to issue travel restrictions on 41 nations

41
193
Travel Ban

Security Concerns

Rec

Reuters

WASHINGTON

The Trump administration is considering issuing sweeping travel restrictions for the citizens of dozens of countries as part of a new ban, according to sources familiar with the matter and an internal memo seen by Reuters.

The memo lists a total of 41 countries divided into three separate groups.

The first group of 10 countries, including Afghanistan, Iran, Syria, Cuba and North Korea among others, would be set for a full visa suspension.

In the second group, five nations – Eritrea, Haiti, Laos, Myanmar and South Sudan – would face partial suspensions that would impact tourist and student visas as well as other immigrant visas, with some exceptions.

In the third group, a total of 26 countries, includ-

No entry

1 Citizens of 10 countries, including Afghanistan, Iran, Syria, Cuba and North Korea, will be totally barred from entering U.S.

2 Five countries, including Eritrea, Laos and Myanmar, will face partial visa suspension

3 Twenty-six nations, including Pakistan, whose citizens will have 60 days to address U.S. concerns

ing Belarus, Pakistan and Turkmenistan, would be considered for a partial suspension of U.S. visa issuance if their governments “do not make efforts to address deficiencies within 60 days”, the memo said.

Changes expected

A U.S. official speaking on the condition of anonymity said that there could be changes on the list and that it was yet to be approved

by the administration, including U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

The New York Times first reported on the list of countries.

The move harkens back to President Donald Trump’s first-term ban on travellers from seven majority-Muslim nations, a policy that went through several iterations before it was upheld by the Supreme Court in 2018.

The U.S. President issued an executive order on January 20 requiring intensified security vetting of any foreigners seeking admission to the U.S. to detect national security threats.

That order had directed several cabinet members to submit by March 21 a list of countries from which travel should be partly or fully suspended because their “vetting and screening information is so deficient.”

PROPOSED TRAVEL BAN LIST

RED

All travel banned

- Afghanistan
- Bhutan
- Cuba
- Iran
- Libya
- North Korea
- Somalia
- Sudan
- Syria
- Venezuela
- Yemen



Sub



ORANGE

Visas sharply restricted

- Belarus
- Eritrea
- Haiti
- Laos
- Myanmar
- Pakistan
- Russia
- Sierra Leone
- South Sudan
- Turkmenistan

Rb

Source: NYT

• **Countries Given a 60-Day Deadline** | 60-दिन की समय सीमा पाने वाले देश

- **26 nations, including Pakistan, Belarus, and Turkmenistan, have been given 60 days to address U.S. security concerns.**
पाकिस्तान, बेलारूस और तुर्कमेनिस्तान सहित 26 देशों को अमेरिकी सुरक्षा चिंताओं को दूर करने के लिए 60 दिन का समय दिया गया है।
- **If these countries fail to meet U.S. security standards, visa issuance will be partially or fully suspended.**
यदि ये देश अमेरिकी सुरक्षा मानकों को पूरा करने में विफल रहते हैं, तो उनके लिए वीजा जारी करने की प्रक्रिया आंशिक या पूरी तरह से निलंबित कर दी जाएगी।

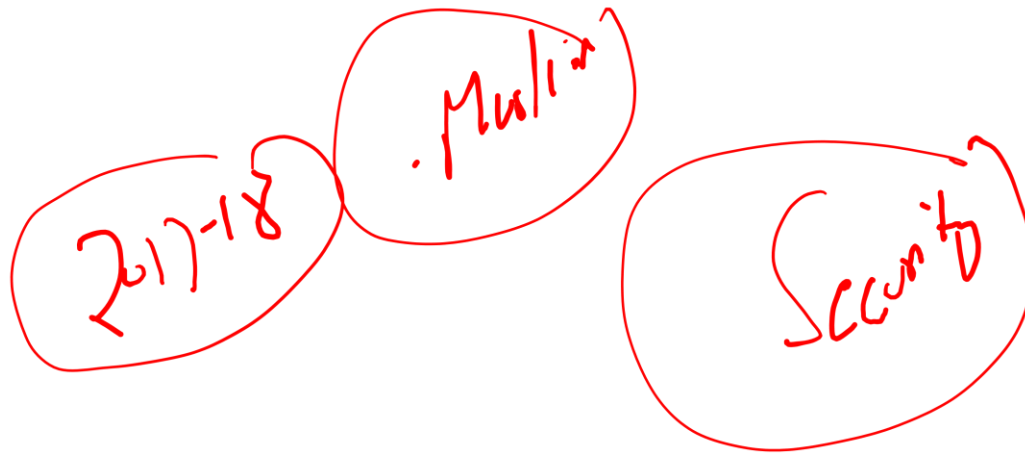
Social Aspects | सामाजिक पहलू

- The travel restrictions could impact families, students, and professionals from affected countries.

यात्रा प्रतिबंधों से प्रभावित देशों के परिवारों, छात्रों और पेशेवरों पर प्रभाव पड़ सकता है।

- It may also lead to protests from immigrant communities within the U.S.

यह अमेरिका के भीतर अप्रवासी समुदायों के विरोध को जन्म दे सकता है।



The militant group, which has overshadowed the traditional nationalist movements of Pakistan's restive province, mobilised thousands of fighters and stepped up operations in recent months, says 'Free Balochistan is our only demand'

Kallol Bhattacharjee

October 18, 2018 came bearing bad news for the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA). On that day, across the Afghan-Pakistan border, Kandahar's police chief Gen. Abdul Raziq Achakzai was assassinated by the Taliban, who were still three years away from capturing Kabul. Raziq was known for his brutal tactics in dealing with the Taliban but his assassination in the house of the Kandahar Governor Zalmay Wesa, who was also critically wounded, left lingering questions about the fate of the BLA because among many things, Raziq also handled the movement of Baloch militants within the Af-Pak territory.

The BLA suffered another setback when its top commander Aslam Baloch was killed in a blast three months later, in December 2018. Weeks earlier, the BLA had attacked the Chinese consulate in Karachi where two policemen and four cadre were killed. After the targeted assassinations of Raziq and Aslam, there were signs that the BLA's logistical network would be disturbed. The next big setback was the U.S. designation of the BLA as a terrorist outfit, on July 2, 2019.

However, the BLA carried out some more daring attacks, including the May 2019 attack on the Pearl Continental Hotel in Gwadar, the newest port of Pakistan which is also vital for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. It was the last major attack by the group which came under pressure after the Taliban took over Kabul on August 15, 2021. But the calm did not last long.

On March 11, 2025, the BLA carried out its biggest attack in its nearly 25 years of operation against the Pakistani state when its militants assaulted the Quetta-Peshawar Jaffar Express.

The latest attack, executed through a series of actions spread across a vast area interspersed with mountain tunnels, has indicated that the BLA has bounced back from the setbacks of 2018-21, and highlighted the souring state of relationship between Pakistan and the Taliban.

Months before the Jaffar Express attack, the BLA had been expanding



A special train to transport the people rescued from a passenger train attacked by the BLA arrives in Much, Balochistan, on Wednesday. AP

the footprint of its firepower. A survey of its claims of attacks shows that the Jaffar Express attack came after nearly two years of escalation during which it carried out an exhaustive series of operations across Balochistan. The BLA claimed to have carried out attacks almost every week in 2024.

Support base

On October 7, 2024, the BLA claimed responsibility for a blast that targeted Karachi's airport road, killing two Chinese nationals and injuring 10 Pakistani nationals. The blast revived fears about the BLA. The group rose out of the Baloch nationalist movement, which was traditionally dominated by the Baloch nawabs or sardars belonging to the Bizenjos, Bugti and other clans.

The BLA does not possess a formal structure like other armed nationalist groups in South Asia and West Asia. The total strength of the group is believed to be around 6,000 cadre, though the number of sympathisers to the Baloch cause is much higher. The new generation of young social media savvy Baloch university graduates is

the main support base of the group, and the Majeed Brigade, the wing of the BLA that carried out the attack on the train, has been consistently at the forefront of violent operations.

The Baloch nationalist movement sprang from the dispute of sovereignty in the princely states in the region that were to join Pakistan. However, the armed struggle under the 21st century BLA is markedly different from the tradition of armed militants who were earlier indirectly supported by the Marri, Bugti, Mengal and other dominant clans or tribes. A dispute over sovereignty at the end of the British colonial rule, coupled with negation of the federal spirit in military-dominated Pakistan, has been the driving force for the Baloch nationalist movement.

A major element of the Baloch nationalist struggle, which was parallel to the linguistic nationalism of Bengali-speaking East Pakistan, was that it unfolded during the Cold War era. The Baloch movement was influenced by the Soviet Union and radical Marxist ideology in the past, and Moscow trained many radical

Baloch figures during the period of 1950s to 1970s. Long before the BLA, in 1964, the Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) was launched by Jumma Khan but that outfit is now completely overshadowed by the BLA.

The BLA rebels claim that Pakistan has been exploiting the rich resources of the province without giving due share to the indigenous people and the tribes. In recent years, the BLA has emerged as a movement with a wide network in both urban and rural areas of Balochistan that has carved a space for itself away from the traditional hold of the sardars or tribal chieftains. BLA rebels claim that they are aiming for both freedom from Pakistan and internal reform of Baloch society.

After the death of Aslam Baloch, the BLA suffered from lack of coordination and internal controversies.

For example, the June 29, 2020 attack by the BLA on the Karachi Stock Exchange created an internal problem for the organisation, after Majeed Brigade claimed that it was carried out by Tasleem Baloch, Shehzad Baloch, Salman Hammal and Siraj Kungur. The claim immediately triggered a protest

from the BLA spokesperson Azad Baloch, who claimed that the four were already expelled from the group. His statement indicated that the attack was part of an Iranian effort to malign the group because it had not compromised with Iran. Baloch nationalist sentiment is prevalent both in Balochistan of Pakistan as well as Sistan-Balochistan, the easternmost province of Iran.

Voice of the rebels

Traditional Baloch sardars have been cautious and refused to acknowledge any link with the BLA, but the London-based pro-independence leader Hyrbair Marri is generally considered to be an overground voice of the group.

Following the Jaffar Express attack, in which, according to the Pakistani military, 31 people, including five civilian passengers, were killed, Mr. Marri said: "We are Baloch and we reject Pakistan's flag. Remove it. We have our own. Free Balochistan is our only demand."

By drawing in India, Pakistan has highlighted an old link between Baloch nationalist leaders and India. Non-violent Baloch nationalist leaders and human rights activists like Mama Qadeer and Naela Qadri visited India several times in the past. In the last decade, there were instances when BLA commanders visited India ostensibly to seek medical treatment.

It is said, the slain Aslam Baloch had visited India under an assumed identity provided by the intelligence agency of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (before the 2021 Taliban takeover). After the train attack, Pakistan pointed fingers at India. However, India "strongly rejected the baseless allegations", and asked Pakistan "to look inwards".

With the BLA gaining strength in Balochistan and the Pakistani Taliban stepping up attacks in the tribal region, Islamabad-Rawalpindi is once again facing multi-pronged security challenges, at a time when the country's economy is struggling to stabilise itself amid unresolved political tensions between the military backed government and the jailed former Prime Minister, Imran Khan.

THE GIST

▼ The Baloch nationalist movement sprang from the dispute of sovereignty in the princely states in the region that were to join Pakistan

▼ Long before the BLA, in 1964, the Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) was launched by Jumma Khan but that outfit is now completely overshadowed by the BLA

▼ The BLA rebels claim that Pakistan has been exploiting the rich resources of the province without due share to the indigenous people and the tribes

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KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

Peshawar

ISLAMABAD

FEDERALLY ADMINISTERED TRIBAL AREAS

Lahore

PUNJAB

Quetta

IRAN

BALOCHISTAN

SINDH

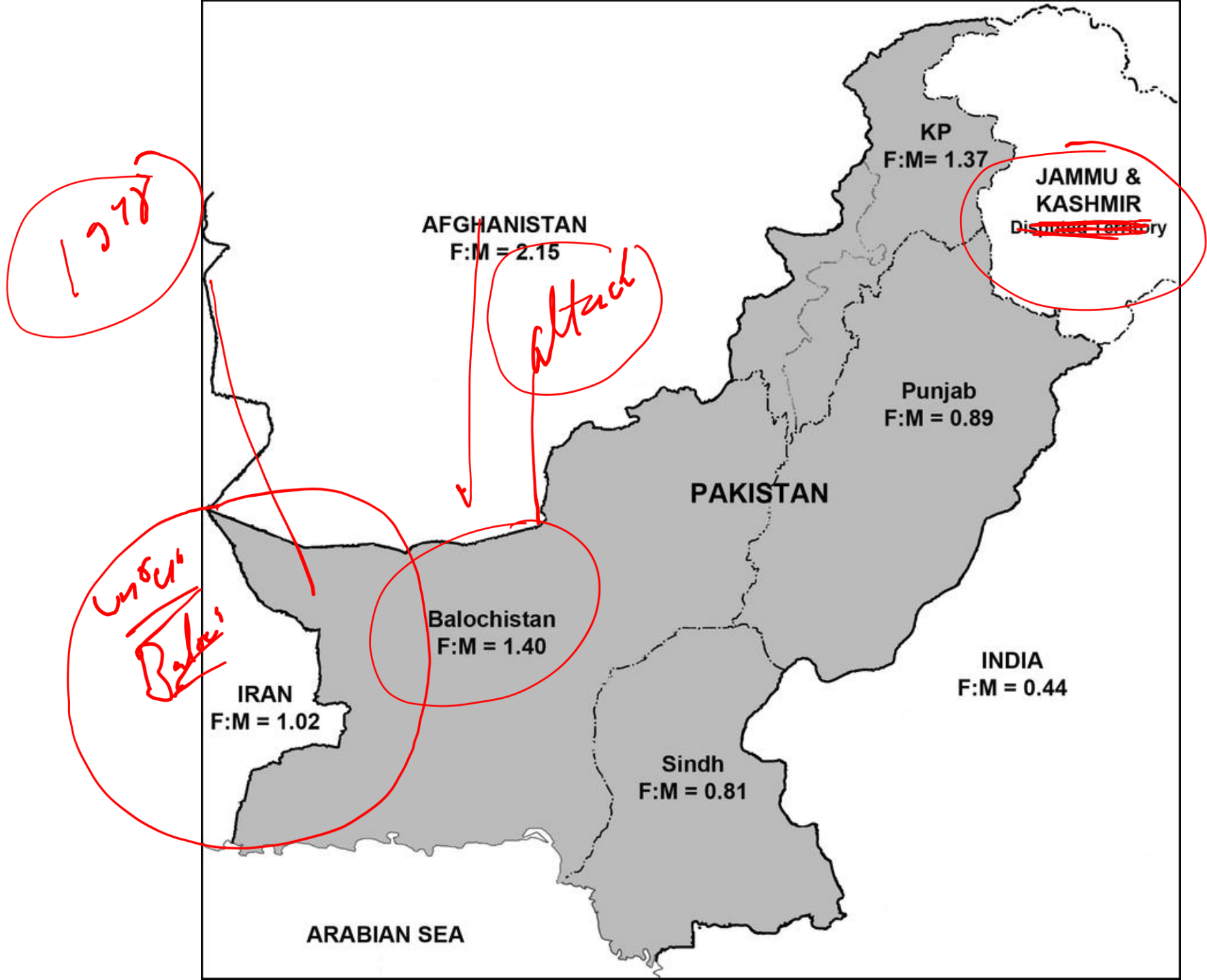
INDIA

Karachi

Arabian Sea

0 50 100 150 200 Miles
0 50 100 150 200 Kilometers

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Rise of the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) | बलूच लिबरेशन आर्मी (BLA) का उदय

- **The Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) has overshadowed traditional nationalist movements in Balochistan.**

बलूच लिबरेशन आर्मी (BLA) ने बलूचिस्तान में पारंपरिक राष्ट्रवादी आंदोलनों को पीछे छोड़ दिया है।

- **BLA has mobilized thousands of fighters and intensified operations against the Pakistani state.**

BLA ने हजारों लड़ाकों को संगठित किया है और पाकिस्तानी राज्य के खिलाफ अपने हमलों को तेज किया है।

- **The militant group's primary demand is "Free Balochistan."**

इस उग्रवादी समूह की ~~मुख्य~~ मांग "मुक्त बलूचिस्तान" है।

BLA's Major Attacks and Setbacks | BLA के प्रमुख हमले और झटके

- BLA has carried out high-profile attacks, including the 2018 Chinese Consulate attack in Karachi.

BLA ने कई हाई-प्रोफाइल हमले किए हैं, जिनमें 2018 में कराची में चीनी वाणिज्य दूतावास पर हमला शामिल है।

- In March 2024, the BLA targeted the Quetta-Peshawar Jaffer Express, killing 31 people.

मार्च 2024 में, BLA ने क्वेटा-पेशावर जाफर एक्सप्रेस को निशाना बनाया, जिसमें 31 लोग मारे गए।

- **Despite setbacks such as the 2019 designation of BLA as a terrorist group by the U.S., it has rebounded strongly.**

2019 में अमेरिका द्वारा BLA को एक आतंकवादी संगठन घोषित किए जाने के बावजूद, यह समूह फिर से सक्रिय हो गया है।

- **BLA leaders such as Aslam Baloch and Abdul Razzaq Achakzai have been assassinated, but the group continues operations.**

असलम बलूच और अब्दुल रज़ाक अचकज़ई जैसे BLA नेताओं की हत्या कर दी गई, लेकिन समूह अभी भी सक्रिय है।

BLA's Support Base and Recruitment Strategy | BLA का समर्थन आधार और भर्ती रणनीति

- **BLA recruits from Baloch nationalist movements, particularly among university students.**

BLA बलूच राष्ट्रवादी आंदोलनों से भर्ती करता है, विशेष रूप से विश्वविद्यालय के छात्रों के बीच।

- **The group claims to be fighting for Baloch rights, opposing Pakistan's exploitation of Balochistan's resources.**

यह समूह बलूच अधिकारों के लिए लड़ने और बलूचिस्तान के संसाधनों के पाकिस्तानी दोहन का विरोध करने का दावा करता है।

- **BLA has a well-structured network with hideouts in the South and West Asian regions.**

BLA का एक संगठित नेटवर्क है, जिसमें दक्षिण और पश्चिम एशिया के क्षेत्रों में ठिकाने हैं।

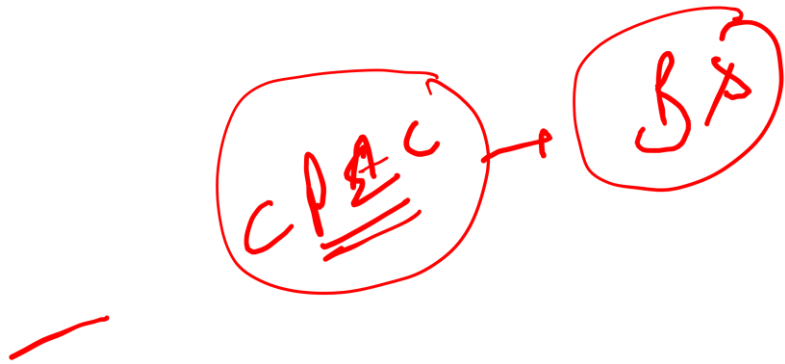
- **The group has also engaged in information warfare and media outreach to gain support.**

यह समूह सूचना युद्ध और मीडिया अभियानों के माध्यम से समर्थन हासिल करने की कोशिश करता है।

Pakistan's Response and Security Challenges | पाकिस्तान की प्रतिक्रिया और सुरक्षा चुनौतियाँ

- **Pakistan considers BLA a major security threat and has intensified counterterrorism efforts.**
पाकिस्तान BLA को एक प्रमुख सुरक्षा खतरा मानता है और आतंकवाद विरोधी अभियानों को तेज कर रहा है।
- **BLA attacks have strained Pakistan-China relations, as China has major investments in Balochistan.**
BLA के हमलों ने पाकिस्तान-चीन संबंधों को तनावपूर्ण बना दिया है, क्योंकि चीन का बलूचिस्तान में भारी निवेश है।

- **Pakistan has accused India of supporting the BLA, a claim India denies.**
पाकिस्तान ने भारत पर BLA का समर्थन करने का आरोप लगाया है, जिसे भारत ने खारिज किया है।
- **There is increasing cooperation between the Pakistani military and the Taliban to counter BLA operations.**
BLA के खिलाफ अभियान चलाने के लिए पाकिस्तानी सेना और तालिबान के बीच सहयोग बढ़ रहा है।



International and Regional Implications | अंतरराष्ट्रीय और क्षेत्रीय प्रभाव

- **BLA's actions have drawn attention from global security agencies.**
BLA की गतिविधियों ने वैश्विक सुरक्षा एजेंसियों का ध्यान आकर्षित किया है।
- **Iranian Baloch nationalists in Sistan-Baluchestan province have shown solidarity with the BLA.**
ईरान के सिस्तान-बलूचिस्तान प्रांत के बलूच राष्ट्रवादियों ने BLA के प्रति समर्थन दिखाया है।
- **The growing insurgency complicates Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan and Iran.**
बढ़ते विद्रोह से पाकिस्तान के अफगानिस्तान और ईरान के साथ संबंध जटिल हो गए हैं।
- **The instability in Balochistan could impact China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects in the region.**
बलूचिस्तान में अस्थिरता से चीन की बेल्ट एंड रोड इनिशिएटिव (BRI) परियोजनाओं पर प्रभाव पड़ सकता है।

Historical Aspects | ऐतिहासिक पहलू

- **Balochistan has a long history of demanding autonomy since it was annexed by Pakistan in 1948.**

बलूचिस्तान में 1948 में पाकिस्तान द्वारा विलय के बाद से स्वायत्तता की मांग का एक लंबा इतिहास है।

- **The Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) was the first nationalist movement in 1964, later overshadowed by BLA.**

1964 में बलूच लिबरेशन फ्रंट (BLF) पहला राष्ट्रवादी आंदोलन था, जिसे बाद में BLA ने पीछे छोड़ दिया।

Social Aspects | सामाजिक पहलू

- Balochistan remains one of the most underdeveloped regions in Pakistan.

बलूचिस्तान पाकिस्तान के सबसे अविकसित क्षेत्रों में से एक है।

- Human rights groups have accused Pakistan of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings of Baloch activists.

मानवाधिकार संगठनों ने पाकिस्तान पर बलूच कार्यकर्ताओं के अपहरण और गैर-न्यायिक हत्याओं का आरोप लगाया है।

oil, natural gas,
Minerals
] → Underdeveloped

Economic Aspects | आर्थिक पहलू

- **Balochistan is rich in natural resources, including gas, minerals, and coal, but locals see little benefit.**
बलूचिस्तान प्राकृतिक संसाधनों, जैसे गैस, खनिज और कोयले से समृद्ध है, लेकिन स्थानीय लोगों को इनका लाभ नहीं मिलता।
- **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects in Balochistan have faced attacks from BLA militants.**
चीन-पाकिस्तान इकोनॉमिक कॉरिडोर (CPEC) की बलूचिस्तान में परियोजनाएं BLA के हमलों का शिकार हुई हैं।

Trial
↓
Good (New)
73%

Response
rate

CLINICAL TRIAL RESULTS

India's CAR T-cell therapy for cancer patients shows 73% response rate: Lancet

Also warns of high incidence of complication affecting immune cells

ANONNA DUTT
NEW DELHI, MARCH 15

THE CLINICAL trial results of India's first CAR T-cell therapy, published in *The Lancet*, showed a 73 per cent "response rate" in patients suffering from specific types of blood cancer. However, the results also pointed to the "challenge for broader clinical adoption" due to the high incidence of a known complication of CAR T-cell therapies, where the immune cells get overactive, leading to hyper-inflammation and organ failure.

Response rate refers to the percentage of patients who responded to the treatment — cases

in which the progression of cancer was either halted or reduced.

The results — from the Phase I and II trials, where researchers assessed safety and effectiveness against a given condition — are significant as this is the first clinical trial of CAR T-cell therapy from India to be published in an international journal.

CAR T-cell therapy, or chimeric antigen receptor T-cell therapy, trains the body's immune cells to identify and destroy cancer cells. This treatment is designed for specific types of blood cancer, and is given in cases where cancer has relapsed or there has been no response to first-line treatment.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

● 73% response rate to India's CAR T-cell therapy for cancer: Lancet report

Based on unpublished, yet-to-be peer-reviewed results, India's drug regulator had granted approval for this therapy in 2023. It is now available at several hospitals across the country, including Apollo, Fortis, Amrita and Max, among others.

Given that the treatment is novel and intended for cancer patients who have exhausted other options, the regulator allowed the company which developed the therapy to forgo a Phase III clinical trial to demonstrate its efficacy in a broader population. However, the company — a start-up incubated at IIT-Bombay — must follow up with all patients who receive the therapy for 15 years.

According to *The Lancet* report, while a total of 64 patients participated in the Phase 1 and II trials, another 79 were administered the therapy after the government's approval.

The findings

Along with a response rate of 73%, the study reported an average six months survival without any progression in acute lymphoblastic leukaemia patients and four months in lymphoma

patients.

While the response rate was found to be similar to other therapies approved across the world, a commentary published alongside the report highlighted a high incidence of haemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis — a serious but known complication of CAR T-cell therapies, where the immune cells get overactive, leading to hyperinflammation and organ failure.

This complication was seen in 12% of the study participants, leading to the death of at least one patient. "...persistently high incidence of IEC-HS seen in this Phase 1/2 study as well as a real-world analysis poses a challenge for broader clinical adoption," it said.

The study reported another treatment-related death caused by bleeding in the lungs and multi-organ failure.

The most common side effects reported were anaemia in 61% participants, thrombocytopenia (low platelet count increasing the risk of bleeding) in 65% patients, neutropenia (low count of white blood cells) in 96% patients, and febrile neutropenia (neutropenia along with fever) in 47% of the pa-

tients. To be sure, these were cancer patients who had failed to respond to other treatments.

The therapy

A patient's T-cells (types of immune cells) are collected and genetically modified into potent cancer fighters known as CAR T-cells so that they express chimeric antigen receptors (CARs) specific to cancer cells. The modified CAR T-cells are then multiplied in the laboratory before being infused back into the patient. Once in the body, these engineered cells recognise and attack cancer cells, with a focus on B-cell cancers, thus offering a targeted and potent immunotherapy.

The treatment developed in India is meant for patients with two types of blood cancers that affect the B-cells — acute lymphoblastic leukaemia and large B-cell lymphoma.

The significance

Access to cutting-edge cancer treatment like CAR T-cell therapy remains restricted to a handful of countries owing to technological challenges and associated costs. "The only countries or regions

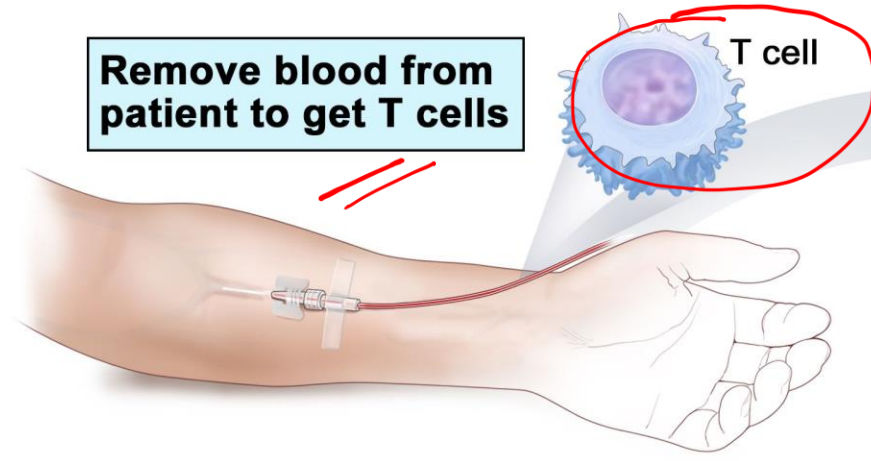
with access to at least one anti-CD19 CAR T-cell product are the USA, EU, UK, Japan, Australia, Singapore, Israel, Switzerland, Brazil, South Korea, Canada and China," the report said.

The therapy, developed by researchers from IIT-Bombay and Tata Memorial Hospital and marketed by the start-up ImmunoAct, is the first to be approved for use in India. Besides bringing the technology to the country, it also costs less than similar therapies available globally. "Approved CAR T-cell products cost US\$ 373,000-475,000, and clinical care and possible relocation expenses bring the total treatment cost to over US\$1,000,000... (This therapy) was marketed at a relatively low cost of approximately US\$30,000," the report said.

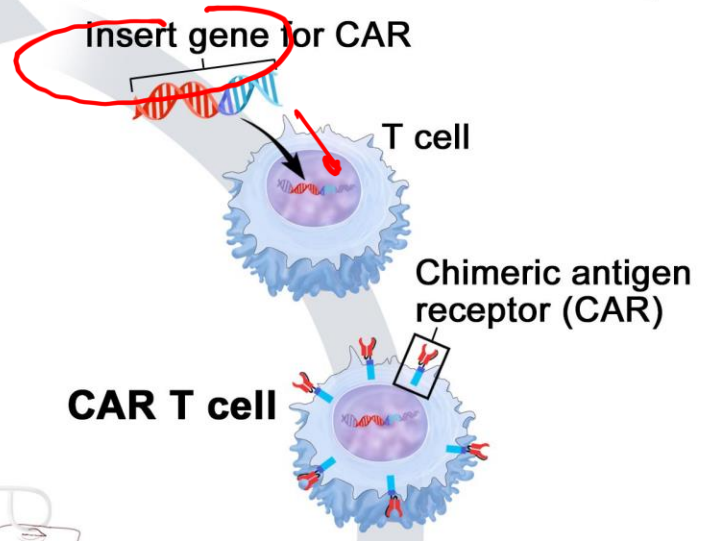
"This is really a world class innovation done within the country. The treatment has been found to be comparable to others approved globally and the cost is 1/20th of those therapies. This will improve access and affordability of such high-end cancer treatments," Rahul Purwar, founder and CEO of ImmunoAct, told *The Indian Express*.

CAR T-cell Therapy

Remove blood from patient to get T cells

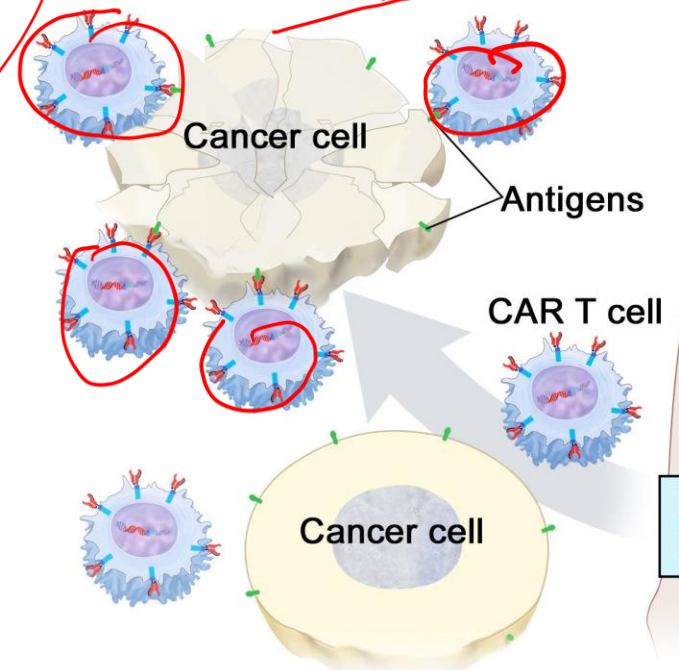


Make CAR T cells in the lab

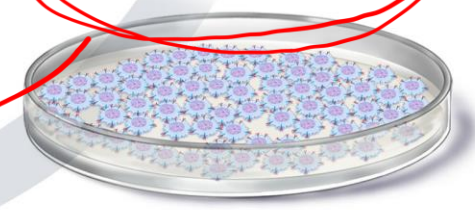


CAR T cells bind to cancer cells and kill them

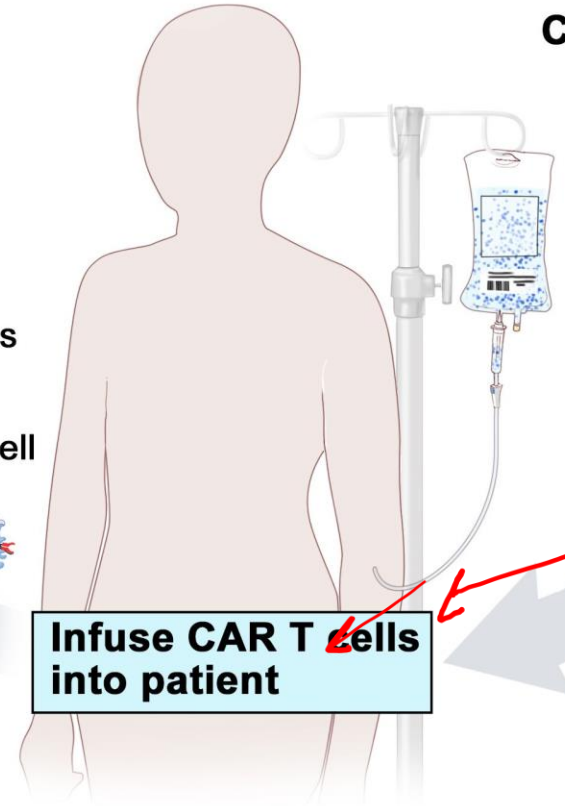
grow



Grow millions of CAR T cells



Infuse CAR T cells into patient



India's CAR T-Cell Therapy Shows 73% Response Rate | भारत की CAR T-सेल थेरेपी में 73%
प्रतिक्रिया दर दर्ज



India's first CAR T-cell therapy for cancer, developed by IIT-Bombay and Tata Memorial Hospital, has shown a 73% response rate.

आईआईटी-बॉम्बे और टाटा मेमोरियल अस्पताल द्वारा विकसित भारत की पहली CAR T-सेल थेरेपी ने 73% प्रतिक्रिया दर दिखाई है।

- **The treatment is now available in hospitals like Apollo, Fortis, Amrita, and Max.**

यह उपचार अब अपोलो, फोर्टिस, अमृता और मैक्स जैसे अस्पतालों में उपलब्ध है।

- **It is primarily intended for patients with acute lymphoblastic leukemia and large B-cell lymphoma who have exhausted other options.**

यह मुख्य रूप से तीव्र लिम्फोब्लास्टिक ल्यूकेमिया और बड़े बी-सेल लिम्फोमा से पीड़ित मरीजों के लिए है, जिनके लिए अन्य विकल्प उपलब्ध नहीं हैं।

Findings from The Lancet Report | द लांसेट रिपोर्ट के निष्कर्ष

- **The Phase 1 and 2 trials included 64 participants, and after government approval, 79 more patients received the therapy.**
पहले और दूसरे चरण के परीक्षणों में 64 प्रतिभागी शामिल थे, और सरकारी मंजूरी के बाद 79 और मरीजों को यह थेरेपी दी गई।
- **Patients with leukemia showed an average survival of six months without disease progression.**
ल्यूकेमिया के मरीजों में छह महीने तक बिना बीमारी बढ़े जीवित रहने की औसत दर्ज की गई।
- **Lymphoma patients showed four months of progression-free survival.**
लिम्फोमा के मरीजों में चार महीने तक बिना बीमारी बढ़े रहने की अवधि दर्ज की गई।

Side Effects and Risks | दुष्प्रभाव और जोखिम

- Common side effects include anemia (61% cases), thrombocytopenia (65%), and neutropenia (96%).

आम दुष्प्रभावों में एनीमिया (61% मामलों में), थ्रोम्बोसाइटोपेनिया (65%) और न्यूट्रोपेनिया (96%) शामिल हैं।

- A serious but known complication, haemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis, was observed in 12% of participants.

एक गंभीर लेकिन ज्ञात जटिलता, हीमॉफेगोसाइटिक लिम्फोहिस्टियोसाइटोसिस, 12% प्रतिभागियों में देखी गई।

- At least one treatment-related death occurred due to lung bleeding and multi-organ failure.

कम से कम एक मरीज की मौत फेफड़ों में रक्तस्राव और बहु-अंग विफलता के कारण हुई।

lung ab

How the Therapy Works | यह थेरेपी कैसे काम करती है

- Patient's T-cells are collected and genetically modified to express cancer-fighting antigen receptors (CARs).

मरीज के टी-सेल्स को इकट्ठा करके आनुवंशिक रूप से संशोधित किया जाता है ताकि वे कैंसर-रोधी एंटीजन रिसेप्टर्स (CARs) व्यक्त कर सकें।

- The modified CAR T-cells are multiplied in the lab and reinfused into the patient.

संशोधित CAR T-सेल्स को प्रयोगशाला में बढ़ाया जाता है और फिर मरीज में पुनः डाला जाता है।

- These engineered cells recognize and attack B-cell cancers, making the treatment highly targeted.

ये अनकलित कोशिकाएं बी-सेल कैंसर को पहचानकर उन पर हमला करती हैं, जिससे उपचार अधिक प्रभावी होता है।

9 Lakh

10 Lakh

15 Lakh

Cost and Global Comparison | लागत और वैश्विक तुलना

- **Globally, CAR T-cell therapies cost between \$373,000 to \$475,000, with additional costs exceeding \$1 million.**
वैश्विक स्तर पर, CAR T-सेल थेरेपी की लागत \$373,000 से \$475,000 तक होती है, और कुल खर्च \$1 मिलियन से अधिक हो सकता है।
- **India's CAR T-cell therapy is available at approximately \$30,000, making it 1/20th the cost of international treatments.**
भारत में यह थेरेपी लगभग \$30,000 में उपलब्ध है, जो अंतरराष्ट्रीय उपचारों की तुलना में 1/20वां खर्च है।
- **The affordability makes it accessible to a larger population in India.**
यह ~~किफायती~~ दर इसे भारत में अधिक लोगों के लिए सुलभ बनाती है।

Significance of This Development | इस विकास का महत्व

- **India joins an elite group of countries with approved CAR T-cell therapies, including the U.S., U.K., Japan, and China.**

भारत उन चनिंदा देशों में शामिल हो गया है जहां CAR T-सेल थेरेपी को मंजूरी मिली है, जिसमें अमेरिका, यूके, जापान और चीन शामिल हैं।

- **This innovation highlights India's growing capabilities in cutting-edge cancer research.**

यह नवाचार भारत की उन्नत कैंसर अनुसंधान क्षमताओं को दर्शाता है।

- **The therapy is expected to improve cancer treatment accessibility in low and middle-income countries.**

यह थेरेपी निम्न और मध्यम आय वाले देशों में कैंसर उपचार की उपलब्धता में सुधार कर सकती है।

Historical Aspects | ऐतिहासिक पहलू

- **CAR T-cell therapy was first approved in the U.S. in 2017 for blood cancers.**

CAR T-सेल थेरेपी को पहली बार 2017 में अमेरिका में रक्त कैंसर के लिए मंजूरी दी गई थी।

- **India's approval of its first CAR T-cell therapy marks a major milestone in cancer treatment.**

भारत में पहली CAR T-सेल थेरेपी की मंजूरी कैंसर उपचार में एक महत्वपूर्ण उपलब्धि है।

India may face AI talent shortage of 1 mn by '27

Job openings in India's AI sector could surpass 2.3 million by 2027, even as its talent pool is expected to grow to around 1.2 million, says a Bain & Co report

■ AI-related job postings have exploded since 2019, posting a 21 per cent annual increase

■ Compensation for these roles has risen by 11 per cent each year since 2019

■ The supply of qualified AI professionals has not kept pace with the demand, creating a widening talent gap that risks slowing down AI adoption across industries, according to the study.

■ Absence of in-house AI expertise is a major obstacle to



implementing generative AI technologies, say executives surveyed globally

■ AI-trained staff shortage is projected to persist through at least 2027

How to address AI talent shortage

Addressing the AI talent

shortage requires a multi-pronged approach. Companies must move beyond traditional hiring practices. They must prioritise continuous upskilling initiatives to cultivate internal talent, according to the report.

Source: PTI/ Bain & Company study

(10 lakh short)

- 2027
- AI Trained

- fill

Mumbai's Kaur and Kerr deliver to clinch title; third heartbreak for DC

SYNOPSIS

Mumbai Indians won their 2nd WPL title, riding on clutch performances from their star players, led by a Harmanpreet Kaur special. For Delhi Capitals, three straight final defeats.

VINAYAKK MOHANARANGAN

MARCH 15

MEG LANNING'S Delhi Capitals faced yet another final heartbreak after having made it to three finals in three Women's Premier League editions. Once again – as in the last two editions – it was their batting that let them down, as they fell short in the final hurdle at the Brabourne Stadium. Mumbai Indians clinched their second title, winning by 8 runs while defending 149/7, riding on match-winning performances from their star players. Leading the charge was Harmanpreet Kaur, the captain playing a sensational knock under pressure that proved to be the difference in the end.

Harmanpreet steps up

Before the tournament began, in the captain's press meet, a question was posed whether we will finally see the first cen-

tury in WPL this season. Meg Lanning predicted it would happen and three Australian batters, including the former Aussie captain, came close in Lucknow. Harmanpreet Kaur then chimed in with a prediction on who it might be, she put her own name up. It wasn't quite a ton on the big night, but Harmanpreet's 44-ball 66 is worth more than any century.

When she came into bat, MI were 14/2 in the 5th over. At the other end of the powerplay, the scoreboard read 20/2. DC couldn't have possibly dreamt of a better start. In the Eliminator, she had to come in late after a huge partnership and blasted her way to a 12-ball 36. But here, she had to dig in. Unsurprisingly, she played a few pre-meditated sweeps for singles to steady the ship, moving to 11 off 15 balls at the end of the 9th over. Then came the acceleration, as she welcomed Annabel Sutherland with a six over square leg. That was followed by a gorgeous off-drive past mid-off for a four. In the 11th over, she hit Jess Jonassen for a hat-trick of fours, manipulating the field expertly on the offside. Even when she was evidently starting to struggle with a leg issue, she cleared the field on the leg side off Jonassen for a huge six. Her last 55 runs came off just 29 balls.

At one point, when the stadium DJ was asking the crowd to chant her name, her teammates from the dugout joined in too, it was that sort of an innings.



Harmanpreet Kaur slammed 66 runs at a strike rate of 150 to take Mumbai to a first-innings total of 149, which they defended to win the WPL final. Amit Chakravarty

Mumbai-Kerr magic

Her scores with the bat this season read: 9, 19, 2, 17, 10, 5, 9, and 2 in the final. Amelia Kerr is a much better batter than those numbers suggest and it was yet another disappointing effort from someone

who sets high standards for herself. But that is the beauty of having an allrounder as elite as Kerr, because she can deliver on the other two skills.

With the ball, she picked up 2/25, with two big breakthroughs. DC had managed

to score 37/2 in the powerplay despite early setbacks, miles ahead of 20/2 from MI. But Kerr struck right after the 6-over mark to dismiss Jonassen, who had won a couple of matches for DC when promoted to bat at No 3.

Then came perhaps a bigger turning point. Jemimah Rodrigues was looking determined to finish a lean season on a high and hit Kerr for back-to-back fours at the start of the 11th over.

Then Kerr threw one up slowly outside off, to draw a false shot from Rodrigues, following that up with her trademark wrong-un. Rodrigues could only get a leading edge, and there was Kerr, ready to show her fielding skills, sprinting forward in the follow-through and diving forward to take a brilliant return catch. Kerr finished the season with 18 wickets, joint top with Hayley Matthews.

NSB, the MVP

She became the first batter to score 1,000 runs in the history of WPL, and also crossed 500+ in a single season. But Nat Sciver-Brunt's most significant contributions came with the ball in hand, in the company of retired South African legend Shabnim Ismail.

Despite a decent comeback with the bat, Lanning's team would have taken 150 as a target to chase in a ground conducive to boundary hitting. With Shafali Verma

and Meg Lanning at the top of the order who have scored more than 1000 runs together, MI desperately needed a good start Sciver-Brunt produced the first breakthrough to get one through Lanning's defence and then Ismail bowled one of her expert off-cutters with the new ball, trapping Shafali plumb in front. Ismail finished with figures of 1/15 in her four overs.

Then, at the death, Sciver-Brunt came back to pick up the big wicket of Marizanne Kapp, who was playing her best innings of the season. Batting on 40 off 25 balls, the South African tried to hit one on the up down the ground but Hayley Matthews completed the catch. Shikha Pandey was bowled the next ball.

And with 14 needed off 6 balls, she calmly delivered a final over with her cutters proving near impossible to put away for Delhi's lower order. With figures of 3/31 in 4 overs – on a night when she couldn't quite go big with the bat – Nat Sciver-Brunt signed off an incredible season with a clutch performance. By some distance, the WPL's Most Valuable Player.

BRIEF SCORES: Mumbai Indians 149 for 7 in 20 overs (Harmanpreet Kaur 66, Nat Sciver-Brunt 30; Jess Jonassen 2/26, Shree Charani 2/43) defeated Delhi Capitals 141 for 9 in 20 overs (Marizanne Kapp 40, Jemimah Rodrigues 30; Nat Sciver-Brunt 3/30) by eight runs.



WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE

Countries	India
Administrator	Board of Control for Cricket in India
Headquarters	Cricket Centre, Churchgate, Mumbai, Maharashtra
Format	Twenty20 cricket
First edition	2023
Latest edition	2025
Next edition	2026
Tournament format	Double round-robin Playoffs
Number of teams	5
Current champion	Mumbai Indians (2nd title)
Most successful	Mumbai Indians (2 titles)
Most runs	Nat Sciver-Brunt (1,027)
Most wickets	Hayley Matthews (41)

2023 = MI

2024 = R.B

2025 = MI

Chennai • Coimbatore • Bangalore • Hyderabad • Bhopal • Mysore • Pune • Kolkata • Lucknow • Patna • Guwahati • Dispur • Imphal • Thiruvananthapuram • Port Blair • Agartala • Gangtokh • Kohima • Dibrugarh • Dispur • Imphal • Thiruvananthapuram • Port Blair • Agartala • Gangtokh • Kohima • Dibrugarh

DRUG BUST
MDMA worth ₹75 cr. seized in Bengaluru
STATES » PAGE 5

RESCUE MISSION
SpaceX crew docks with ISS
WORLD » PAGE 24

MANICRAN TAGORE INTERVIEW
'We oppose gunpoint imposition of policies'
NEWS » PAGE 5

DATA POINT
Ukraine's main backer, U.S., changes stance
Move leaves a void in its defence against Russia
OPINION » PAGE 9

PERFECT START
Norris wins a chaotic Australian Grand Prix
SPORT » PAGE 16

INSIDE



Bodo accord proved Cong. wrong; Shah
GWAHAATI Union Home Minister Amit Shah said in Assam on Sunday that the Congress had mocked him after he signed the third Bodo Peace Accord, but it had sustained to prove the accord wrong. He was speaking at a conference of the All Bodo Students' Union. » **PAGE 2**



Spy chiefs from across the globe converge in Delhi
NEW DELHI Global challenges and intelligence-sharing systems, immigration and extradition, were among the issues discussed at a conference of global intelligence and security chiefs hosted by National Security Adviser Ajit Doval on Sunday. » **PAGE 4**

Uttarakhand Minister quits over remarks
NEW DELHI Weeks after his controversial remarks against pariahs, Uttarakhand Finance and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Premchand Aggarwal submitted his resignation to Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Sunday. » **PAGE 5**

New Zealand and India resume FTA talks after decade
NEW DELHI After a gap of about 10 years, India and New Zealand on Sunday announced resumption of negotiations for a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) to boost economic ties. Disparity in tariffs may pose a major challenge to talks. » **PAGE 6**

Trump, Putin to discuss Ukraine truce this week
WASHINGTON U.S. President Donald Trump and Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin are expected to speak this week, officials said on Sunday, as Washington and Kyiv's European allies press Moscow to accept a ceasefire in the war now in its fourth year. » **PAGE 14**

U.S. strikes on Yemen kill 31; Houthis hit back

The rebels say their armed forces launched an attack on a U.S. carrier in the Red Sea 'hell will rain down upon' the militant group and Iran, its main backer, warns President Trump; Pentagon chief vows 'unrelenting' campaign until Houthi attacks on shipping stops; Tehran slams Washington, says it had 'no authority' to dictate Iran's foreign policy

Agence France-Presse Associated Press SANA'A
The first U.S. strikes against Yemen's Houthis since Donald Trump took office killed 31 people on Saturday evening, the rebels said, with the United States President warning 'hell will rain down upon' the Iran-backed group if it did not stop attacking shipping.
The Houthis said they launched an attack on a U.S. carrier in the Red Sea on Sunday, hours after the deadly strikes.
In response to this (U.S.) aggression, the armed forces conducted a military operation... targeting the US aircraft carrier USS Harry Truman and its accompanying warships," the group said in a statement. "The operation had launched 18 missiles and a drone. There was no im-

mediate comment from the United States about the claim.
Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abbas Araghchi condemned the deaths, and said Washington had "no authority" to dictate Tehran's foreign policy.
The Houthis, who have attacked Israel and Red Sea shipping throughout the Gaza war, said children were among those killed. "Attacks on Sana'a, as well as on areas in Saada, al-Bayda and Rada'a, killed at least 31 people and wounded 100. Most of whom were children and women", Houthi Health Ministry spokesperson Ahmad Ashabi said.

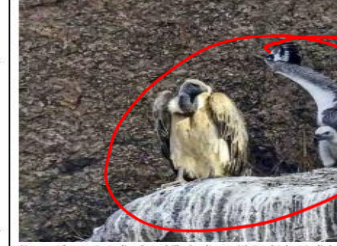


Deadly hit: Smoke rises from a location reportedly hit by U.S. strikes in Sana'a, Yemen, on Saturday. AP

'Iran accountable'
The airstrikes "actually targeted multiple Houthi leaders and took them out," U.S. National Security Adviser Michael Waletzki told ABC News. He added that the U.S. "will hold not only the Houthis accountable, but we're going to hold Iran, their backers, accountable as well."
Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth echoed that message on Sunday, vowing an "unrelenting" missile campaign until the Houthi attacks stop. "I want to be very clear, this campaign is

"strongly condemned the brutal air strikes" in a statement, denouncing them as a "gross violation of the principles of the UN Charter."
'Appropriate responses'
The head of the country's Revolutionary Guards, Hossein Salami, said: "Iran will not wage war, but if anyone threatens, it will give appropriate, decisive and conclusive responses."
He also denied his country's involvement in the Houthis' attacks, saying it plays no role in setting the national or operational policies of the militant group, which is allied with across the region, according to state-run TV.
The Houthis' political bureau said its "forces are fully prepared to confront IMMEDIATELY" he said, adding it would be held "fully accountable" for any continued threats.
In its response, Iran

Taking wing



Moscow hopes an Indian long-billed vulture with India's only vulture sanctuary, Ramadevarabetta in Karnataka on Sunday. The season marks the fourth consecutive year of successful breeding at the sanctuary, a sign of hope for the endangered species. K. MURUKUMAR

'Co' made into news by those who dislike Tamil: Stalin

The Hindu Bureau CHENNAI
Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Sunday contended that incorporating the Tamil letter 'o' in the logo for the State Budget 2025-26 was to assert the State government's language policy.
He said it was made into 'big news' by "those who did not like the Tamil language."
"That was nothing. I had released the logo for the Budget. We incorporated 'o' to show how assertive we are in our language policy. That was it. But, those who did not like Tamil, they made it into big news," Mr. Stalin said.
In a video clip of the *Uzavai Ozuvai* Q&A, posted on his social media handle, he recalled having pleaded with the Centre over several demands, including releasing of funds towards



Tamil Nadu CM M. K. Stalin with Finance Minister Thangam Thennarasu ahead of the State Budget for 2025-26, Thursday.

Secretary to finalise the State Budget for 2025-26, he said.
'Receiving feedback'
Citing the Budget coverage reports of many newspapers, including *The Hindu* and *The Hindu Business Line*, Mr. Stalin said feedback from various sections of society underline the

same in Tamil Nadu too and that is how we decided to induct them in the Home Guards."
Receiving criticism from various Opposition parties, Mr. Stalin said: "If the criticism is not constructive, we can consider it. If they are making criticism with only negativity, it only shows their angst against the government."
Pointing out that the debts were increasing between 2011 and 2021, Mr. Stalin said it had come down since 2021. Borrowing was inevitable for any government, he contended and further said his government was using it as an investment for future generations.
As for what he plans to do next, Mr. Stalin said he would debate Ministers and officials to ensure that the announcements in the Budget were implemented on time.

Wanted LeT terrorist Abu Qatal killed in Pakistan

Press Trust of India NEW DELHI
Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commander, wanted by Indian security agencies since 2009, was killed in an attack in Pakistan, officials said on Sunday.
Zia-un-Nahyan, alias Naseem, alias Abu Qatal was killed in the Jehlum area of Punjab on Saturday evening, officials said, quoting information received from Pakistan.

FULL REPORT ON » PAGE 4

Every peace move met with hostility by Pakistan: Modi

Press Trust of India NEW DELHI
Noting that all of India's attempts to foster peace with Pakistan have been met with hostility and betrayal, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed hope that wisdom will prevail on the leadership in Islamabad to improve bilateral relations.
In a three-hour conversation with American scientist and podcaster Lex Fridman, who released the episode on Sunday, Mr. Modi emphasised the similarities to U.S.-Pakistan President Donald Trump, noting that Mr. Trump seems to have a clearer road map for his second term.
With regard to China, he cited the return to normalcy on the border as evidence of the power of dialogue over discord and disrepair for the neighbours to cooperate in the interest of global stability and prosperity.
Recalling his own swearing-in ceremony in 2014, Mr. Modi said he had specially invited his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif with the hope that the two countries could turn over a new leaf.
"This sent a clear message to the world about India's commitment to peace and harmony, but we

didn't get the desired outcome... Yet, every noble attempt at fostering peace was met with hostility and betrayal. We sincerely hope that wisdom prevails upon them and they choose the path of peace."
Dialogue over discord
Despite past tensions with China, Mr. Modi said he favours dialogue over discord. "Differences are natural. When two neighbouring countries exist in occasional disagreements are bound to happen... but our effort is to ensure that the differences do not turn into discord. We emphasised that stronger cooperation between the two neighbours is also key to global stability and prosperity, drawing on historical examples. "Since the 21st century is Asia's century, we want India and China to compete in a healthy and natural way. Competition is not a bad thing, but it should never turn into conflict," he said.
Mr. Modi said he shares a bond of mutual trust with Mr. Trump and they connect well because they believe in putting their respective national interests above everything else.

U.S. strikes on Yemen kill 31; Houthis hit back

The rebels say their armed forces launched an attack on a U.S. carrier in the Red Sea; 'hell will rain down upon' the militant group and Iran, its main backer, warns President Trump; Pentagon chief vows 'unrelenting' campaign until Houthi attacks on shipping stops; Tehran slams Washington, says it had 'no authority' to dictate Iran's foreign policy

Agence France-Presse
Associated Press
SANAA

The first U.S. strikes against Yemen's Houthis since Donald Trump took office killed 31 people on Saturday evening, the rebels said, with the United States President warning "hell will rain down upon" the Iran-backed group if it did not stop attacking shipping.

The Houthis said they launched an attack on a U.S. carrier in the Red Sea on Sunday, hours after the deadly strikes.

"In response to this (U.S.) aggression, the armed forces conducted a military operation... targeting the US aircraft carrier USS Harry Truman and its accompanying warships," the group said in a statement, adding it had launched 18 missiles and a drone. There was no im-

mediate comment from the United States about the claim

Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abbas Araghchi condemned the deaths, and said Washington had "no authority" to dictate Tehran's foreign policy.

The Houthis, who have attacked Israel and Red Sea shipping throughout the Gaza war, said children were among those killed.

Attacks on Sanaa, as well as on areas in Saada, Al-Bayda and Radaa, killed at least 31 people and wounded 101, "most of whom were children and women", Houthi Health Ministry spokesperson Anis Al-Asbahi said.

'Iran accountable'

The airstrikes "actually targeted multiple Houthi leaders and took them out," U.S. National Security Advisor Michael Waltz told ABC News. He added that the U.S. "will hold not only



Deadly hit: Smoke rises from a location reportedly hit by U.S. strikes in Sanaa, Yemen, on Saturday. AP

the Houthis accountable, but we're going to hold Iran, their backers, accountable as well."

Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth echoed that message on Sunday, vowing an "unrelenting" missile campaign until the Houthi attacks stop. "I want to be very clear, this campaign is

about freedom of navigation and restoring deterrence," Mr. Hegseth said in a televised Fox Business interview.

Mr. Trump, in a post on social media, vowed to "use overwhelming lethal force" to end the Houthi attacks, which the rebels say are in solidarity with Pales-

tinians amid the Gaza war.

Mr. Trump also issued a stern warning to the group's main backer. "To Iran: Support for the Houthi terrorists must end IMMEDIATELY!" he said, adding it would be held "fully accountable" for any continued threats.

In its response, Iran

"strongly condemned the brutal air strikes" in a statement, denouncing them as a "gross violation of the principles of the UN Charter".

'Appropriate responses'

The head of the country's Revolutionary Guards, Hossein Salami, said: "Iran will not wage war, but if anyone threatens, it will give appropriate, decisive and conclusive responses."

He also denied his country's involvement in the Houthis' attacks, saying it "plays no role in setting the national or operational policies" of the militant groups it is allied with across the region, according to state-run TV.

The Houthis' political bureau said its "forces are fully prepared to confront escalation with escalation".

The rebels, who have controlled much of Yemen for more than a decade,

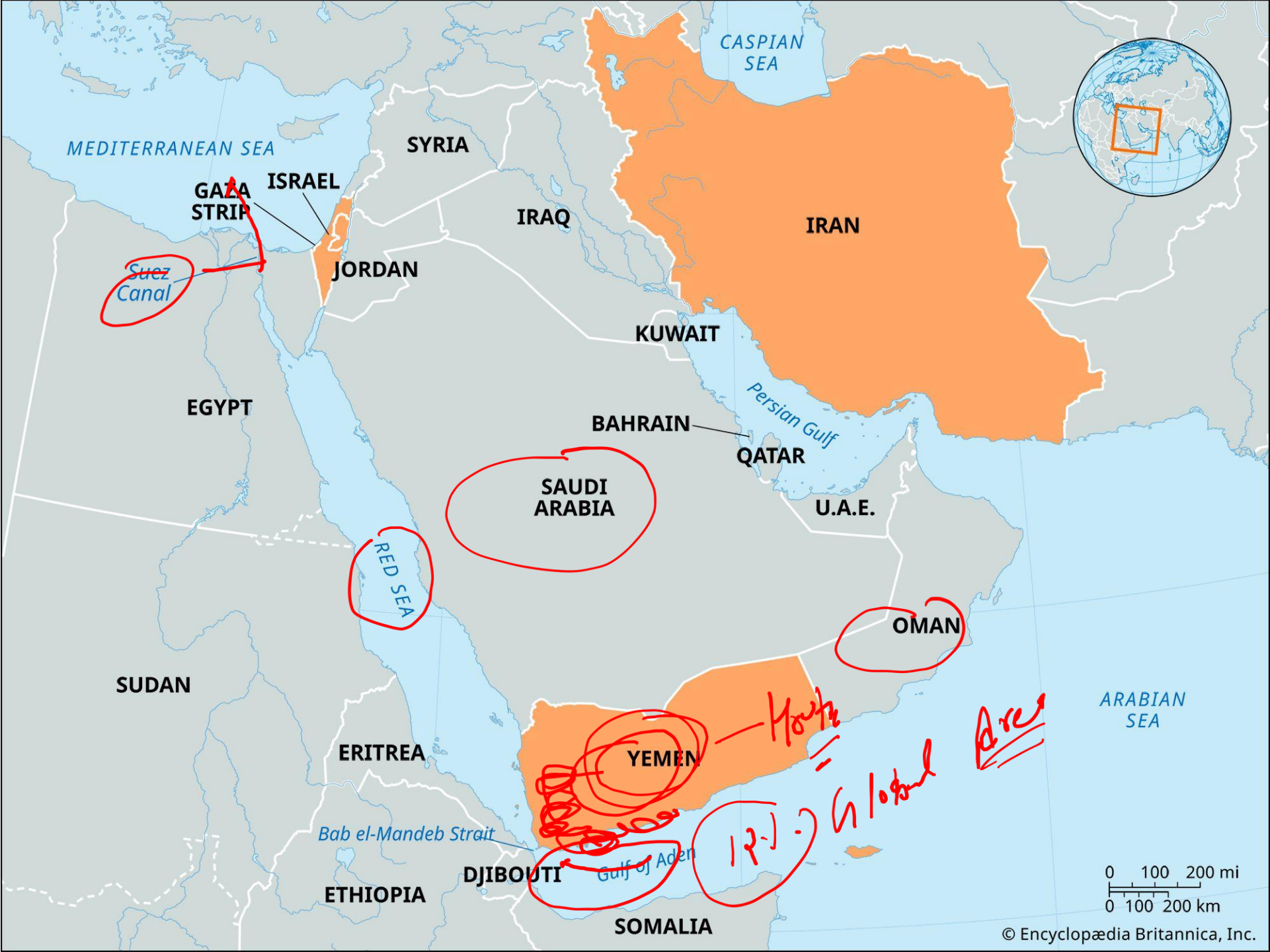
are part of the "axis of resistance" of pro-Iran groups staunchly opposed to Israel and the United States.

They have launched scores of drone and missile attacks on ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

Pentagon spokesperson Sean Parnell said the Houthis had "attacked U.S. warships 174 times and commercial vessels 145 times since 2023".

The campaign put a major strain on the vital route, which normally carries about 12% of world shipping traffic, forcing many companies to take a costly detour around southern Africa.

The Palestinian group Hamas, which has praised the Houthi support, lashed out at the U.S. strikes, branding them "a stark violation of international law and an assault on the country's sovereignty and stability".



YEMEN

Humanitarian situation

The UN has estimated the war has killed 377,000 people by the end of 2021, both directly and indirectly through hunger and disease. Children account for 70 percent of deaths.

30

million population

20

million in need of humanitarian assistance

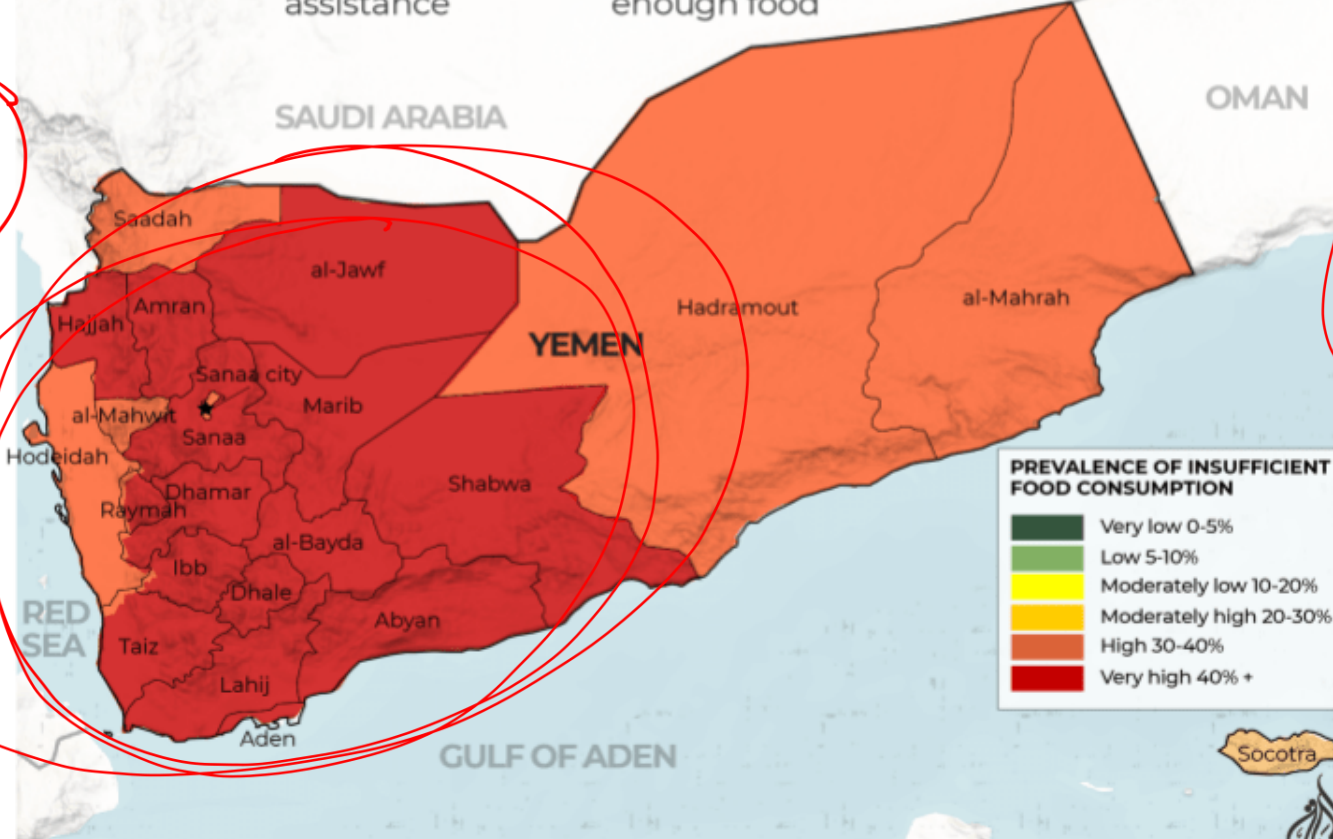
14.5

million do not have enough food

4

million displaced

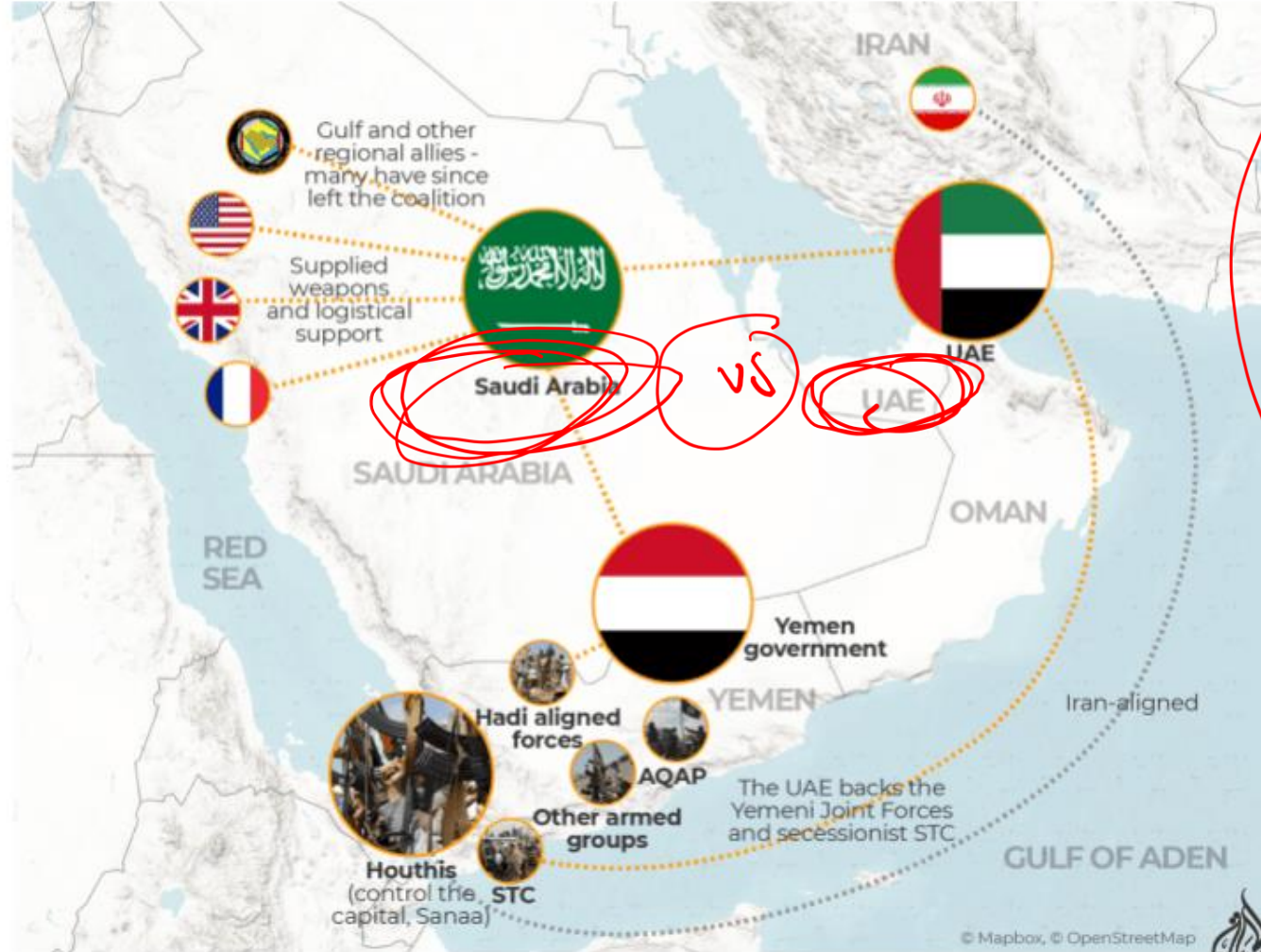
Handwritten notes in red circles: "30", "20", "14.5", "4", "no food", "1.5%".



YEMEN

Key players in the conflict

In March 2015, a **Saudi-led coalition** – backed by the **US** – intervened militarily in Yemen in a bid to **fight the Houthis, restore Hadi's government**, and reverse what they say is growing **Iranian influence in the region**.



Yemen Gov
Saudi Arabia

L Gulf

+ USA

+ EU

+ UK

+ France

Houthi Rebel




Iran

UAE

YEMEN

Saudi and Emirati military capabilities

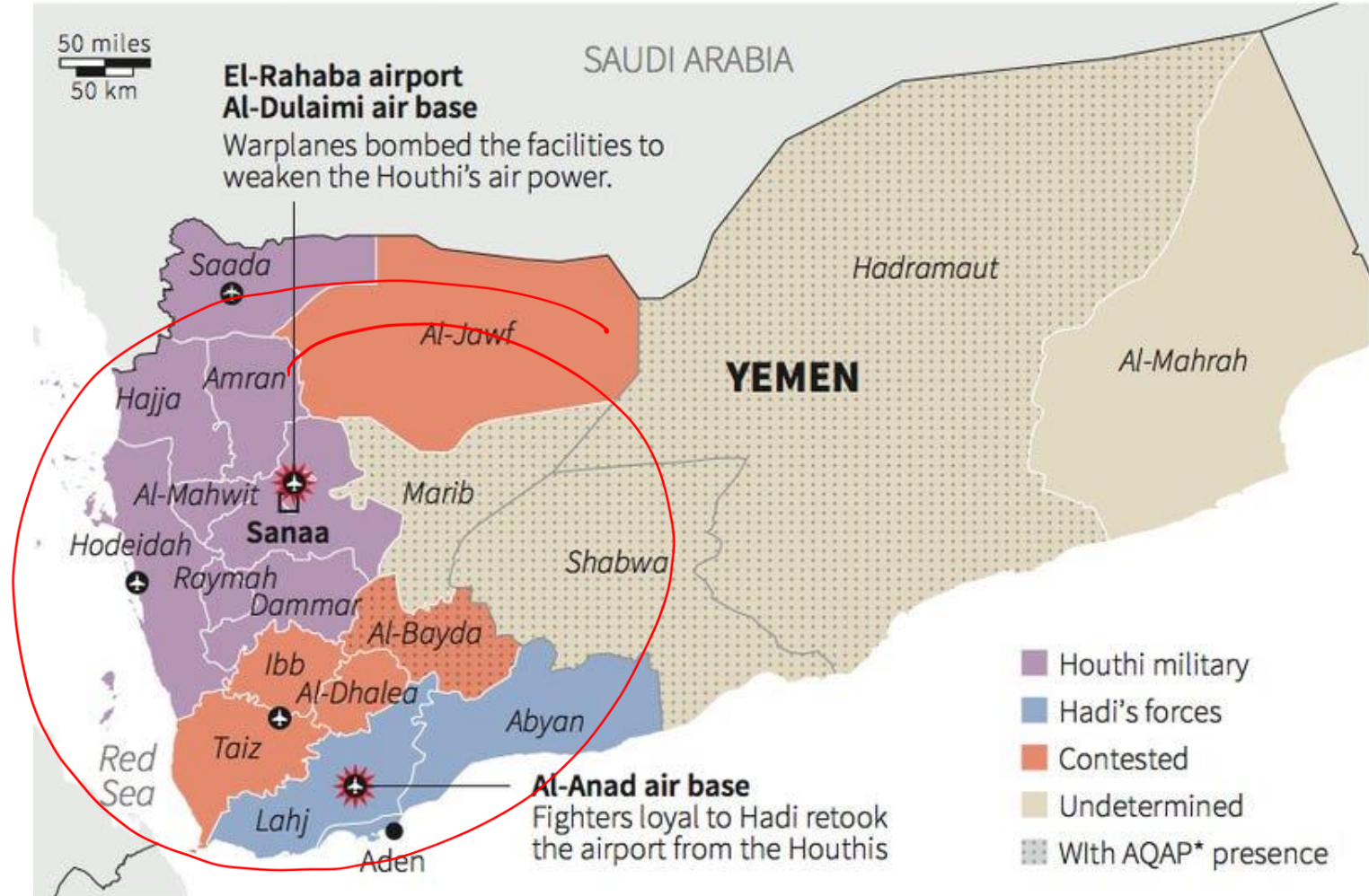
The UAE and Saudi Arabia have both **purchased multibillion-dollar** missile defense systems **from the US** to intercept missiles fired by Houthi rebels.

 Saudi Arabia		 UAE
225,000	Active personnel	65,000
6,202	Armoured vehicles	9,255
1,062	Tanks	354
897	Total aircraft strength	554
\$48.5bn (2020)	Defence budget	\$19.8bn (2020)
Surface-to-air missiles (SAM) 817+	Air and missile defence	Surface-to-air missiles (SAM) 42+
Patriot PAC-2/-3 108 launchers in service		Patriot PAC-3 unknown number of launchers in service
THAAD 44 launchers on order		THAAD 12 launchers in service

Battle for Yemen

Warplanes from Saudi Arabia and Arab allies launched air strikes in Yemen on Thursday to stop the advance of the Iran-allied Houthi militia towards President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi's southern refuge.

TERRITORIAL CONTROL



Source: Reuters. *Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula

1. U.S. Strikes on Yemen Kill 31; Houthis Retaliate | यमन पर अमेरिकी हमलों में 31 की मौत; हौथियों ने जवाबी हमला किया

- The U.S. launched its first airstrikes against Yemen's Houthis since Donald Trump took office.

अमेरिका ने डोनाल्ड ट्रंप के कार्यकाल के दौरान पहली बार यमन के हौथियों पर हवाई हमले किए।

- **The strikes killed 31 people, including civilians and children, according to Houthi sources.**
हौथी स्रोतों के अनुसार, इन हमलों में 31 लोग मारे गए, जिनमें नागरिक और बच्चे भी शामिल थे।
- **U.S. President Trump warned that 'hell will rain down' if the Houthis continue attacking Red Sea shipping.**
अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति ट्रंप ने चेतावनी दी कि यदि हौथी रेड सी में जहाजों पर हमले जारी रखते हैं, तो उन पर 'भयावह हमला' होगा।

2. Houthi Retaliation | हौथियों की जवाबी कार्रवाई

- The Houthis claimed they attacked a U.S. aircraft carrier, USS Harry Truman, in the Red Sea on Sunday.

हौथियों ने दावा किया कि उन्होंने रविवार को रेड सी में अमेरिकी एयरक्राफ्ट कैरियर 'यूएसएस हैरी ट्रूमैन' पर हमला किया।

- They launched ~~18~~ missiles and a drone in response to the airstrikes.

जवाबी कार्रवाई में हौथियों ने 18 ~~मिसाइलें~~ और एक ड्रोन दागे।

- Iran condemned the U.S. strikes, calling them a violation of international law.

ईरान ने अमेरिकी हमलों की निंदा की और इसे अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून का उल्लंघन बताया।

5. Strategic and Economic Impact | रणनीतिक और आर्थिक प्रभाव

- Houthi attacks on ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden have disrupted global shipping routes.**
रेड सी और अदन की खाड़ी में हौथी हमलों ने वैश्विक शिपिंग मार्गों को बाधित कर दिया है।
- Around 12% of global shipping traffic uses this route, forcing companies to take a costly detour around Africa.**

The conflict increases tensions between the U.S., Iran, and its allies, impacting oil prices and regional stability.

यह संघर्ष अमेरिका, ईरान और उनके सहयोगियों के बीच तनाव बढ़ा रहा है, जिससे तेल की कीमतों और क्षेत्रीय स्थिरता पर असर पड़ सकता है।

Historical Aspects | ऐतिहासिक पहलू

- **The U.S. and Houthis have been in conflict since 2015 when the Saudi-led coalition intervened in Yemen.**
अमेरिका और हौथी 2015 से संघर्ष में हैं, जब सऊदी गठबंधन ने यमन में हस्तक्षेप किया था।
- **Houthis claim their attacks are in solidarity with Palestine against Israel.**
हौथी दावा करते हैं कि उनके हमले फिलिस्तीन के समर्थन में इज़राइल के खिलाफ हैं।

Taking wing



S vents

Ramadevarabetta

Vulture

Nascent hope: An Indian long-billed vulture with its chick at India's only vulture sanctuary, Ramadevarabetta in Karnataka on Sunday. The season marks the fourth consecutive year of successful breeding at the sanctuary, a sign of hope for the endangered species. K. MURALI KUMAR

IN BRIEF

'Grenade-like object' hurled at YouTuber's house in Punjab

A Pakistani gangster has claimed responsibility after a "grenade-like object" was hurled at the residence of Jalandhar-based YouTuber Razer Sandhu on Sunday. Two videos have emerged since the incident, one in which a Pakistani gangster, Shahzad Bhatti, purportedly claims that he carried out the attack against the YouTuber for allegedly using derogatory language against the Muslim community. However, the "grenade" did not explode, and the house was not damaged, the police said.

Seven policemen injured in spate of mob attacks in Bihar

Seven policemen were injured in three incidents of mob attacks in Bihar, officers said on Sunday. These attacks happened in Bhagalpur, Madhubani, and Nawada districts on Saturday, and were similar in nature - police visiting an area on receiving information about a fight and getting assaulted by a mob, they said. Two more such incidents happened in the State in the last five days. While an Assistant Sub-Inspector died on Saturday after he was killed in a gangster district, another policeman of the same rank died in Araria district on Wednesday.

Mann will complete 5 years as CM; drugs, graft main issues: Kejriwal

Press Trust of India CHANDIGARH

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday asserted that Bhupendra Mann would complete his five-year term as Punjab CM, trashing Opposition parties' claims that he would be removed from the post. However, Mr. Kejriwal also said drugs and corruption were the "biggest problems in the State where AAP under Mr. Mann has been in power for the last three years. The AAP chief and Mr. Mann offered prayers at the Golden Temple in Amritsar on Sunday.



Arvind Kejriwal with Bhupendra Mann at the Golden Temple in Amritsar on Sunday.

Speaking to reporters in Amritsar, Mr. Kejriwal said, "Today, the biggest problems in Punjab are drugs and corruption. Three crore people of Punjab have come together to wage war against drugs and corruption - the battle for naya (justice)."

"Will fulfil promise" Meanwhile, Mr. Mann told reporters on Sunday that the ruling party had pledged to make Punjab a "drug-free State" (sans dawa) and his government was working towards fulfilling this promise.

Bodo Peace Accord proved Cong. wrong; Shah in Assam

Pact brought peace, development in region, says Union Home Minister at annual conference of the All Bodo Students' Union; adds that PM Modi freed Northeast from bandhs and blockades

The Hindu Bureau GUWAHATI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Assam on Sunday said the Congress had mocked him after he signed the third Bodo Peace Accord, but it had sustained to prove the party wrong.



Amit Shah plays a traditional drum at the 57th annual conference of the All Bodo Students' Union in Kokrajhar, Assam, on Sunday.

Mr. Shah took a swipe at the Congress while addressing the 57th annual conference of the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) at Dotma near Kokrajhar, headquarters of the 8,970-sq.-km. Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), where tribal council elections are due in December.

The BTR is ruled by the United People's Party Liberal (UPPLA) in alliance with the BJP. The Congress is likely to be the only mainstream party to challenge them in the elections.

"The Congress made fun of me when the BTR peace agreement was signed. They said there will be no peace in Bodoland and this agreement will turn out to be a joke. Today, the accord has

brought peace and development in a region where discussions once revolved around conflict and bloodshed," he said.

Lauds ABSU's role

The Minister lauded the ABSU for its big role in the prevailing peace and development in the BTR, which comprises five districts.

"There would have been no peace in Bodoland without the union's involvement," he said, adding that the government had provided 1,500 crore for the development of the BTR administered by the autonomous Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC).

Prohibit 'non-Hindus' from Char Dham Yatra route: Kedarnath MLA

The Hindu Bureau LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh Police have registered FIRs against 219 students in Azamgarh district who were drawing government funds for the Education Department out that non-Hindus are deliberately doing certain activities that are hurting the sentiments of Hindu pilgrims. They demanded a check on it," she said.

According to sources, local businessmen had complained about the sale of non-vegetarian food and its sale on the route.

11 arrested in M.P. for killing ASI; ex gratia of ₹1 cr. for kin: CM

The Hindu Bureau BHOPAL

At least 11 people have been arrested in connection with the murder of a Madhya Pradesh Police Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) and another person in Maunagar district a day earlier, said a senior officer on Sunday even as Chief Minister Mohan Yadav announced an ex gratia of ₹1 crore for the family of the slain policeman, Kamcharan Gautam.

The Chief Minister said Gautam will be accorded the status of a "martyr" as he was killed in the line of duty. One of the family members of the deceased will get a government job, Mr. Yadav added.

A group of tribal people on Saturday allegedly abducted and killed a man, said Deputy Inspector General (Dewas) Saket Pandey. He said, adding that the search parties were constituted for a combing operation in and around the Gadara village, where the



One of the persons injured in the attack in Maunagar being shifted to a hospital.

incident took place. It is located nearly 25 km from the Maunagar district headquarters.

"Some suspects are believed to be fleeing the village, so we have expanded our search area. We have also deployed forces in and around the village to ensure law and order," he said, adding that the situation is returning to normalcy.

Attacking the ruling BJP over the "law and order collapse", Congress State Minister Patwarji said, "The police committed atrocities on tribals in Maunagar, who retaliated and attacked the police."

219 non-existent madrasas face FIRs for drawing U.P. govt. aid

The Hindu Bureau LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh Police have registered FIRs against 219 students in Azamgarh district who were drawing government funds for the Education Department out that non-Hindus are deliberately doing certain activities that are hurting the sentiments of Hindu pilgrims. They demanded a check on it," she said.

"A total of 219 cases have been registered across 22 police stations in the district," said Hemraj Meena, superintendent of the Bodoes.

Cases registered in Azamgarh district after EOW found irregularities during its investigation

Azamgarh. The EOW probe was conducted following allegations that government money was being siphoned off in the name of madrasas through forged documents. The FIRs were filed in the last two months at police stations in Azamgarh, including kandharapur, Noida, Kotwali, and

hari, and Mubarakpura. Uttar Pradesh's madrasa education system has been in the news for the last two years after the government announced a 'survey' to map unrecognised madrasas. Multiple investigations by the Education Department and the police were conducted to check the funding of these institutions. The continuous probe drew flak from Muslim groups and Opposition parties, which asked the government to "take action against illegal madrasas but not terrorise the Muslim community."

T.N.'s mangrove cover has doubled between 2021 and 2024: report

The Hindu Bureau CHENNAI

The mangrove forest cover in Tamil Nadu has almost doubled in the last few years, expanding from 4,500 ha in 2021 to 9,039 ha in 2024.

The increase can be attributed to both new mangrove plantations and the preservation of existing ones across several districts, according to a report by the Centre for Climate Change and Disaster Management, Anna University.



Ecologically crucial: Some of the key districts contributing to the State's mangrove cover, include Cuddalore and Nagapattinam, with 1,117 ha and 1,021 ha, respectively. FILE PHOTO

The report, titled 'Carbon Monitors', says Mangroves of Tamil Nadu also have substantial carbon storage capacities, with total carbon stocks of 249 tonnes/ha, 145 tonnes/ha, and 77.5 tonnes/ha, respectively. High carbon stocks are beneficial as they absorb carbon from the atmosphere and store it in carbon pools such as soil, organic matter, or biomass. Mangrove areas with lower density, such as those in Vilukuram (2.59 tonnes/ha) and Tiruvallur (2.49 tonnes/ha), capture smaller quantities of carbon. Mangrove forests are crucial for Tamil Nadu's ec-

ological stability, providing ecosystem services such as coastal protection, nutrient cycling, and serving as breeding grounds for marine life. These ecosystems also play a critical role in combating climate change by acting as carbon sinks. Invasive species However, the report highlighted the presence of the highly invasive *Prosopis juliflora* in mangrove forests across Thoothukudi, Ramanaipattanam, Thanjavur, Tiruvallur, and Karaikal. According to the 2021 State of Forest Report by the Forest Survey of India,

Fire at thermal power plant in Thoothukudi shuts down three units

The Hindu Bureau THOOTHUKUDI

A major fire broke out at the Tuticorin Thermal Power Station (TTPS) leading to the temporary shutdown of units I, II, and III, each having a capacity of 210 MW.

The fire broke out in the cable gallery of the power supply system late on Saturday and spread to Unit II.

The officials immediately alerted the Fire and Rescue Service team, which began the firefighting operation.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, J. Radhakrishnan, Chairman and Managing Director of the Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (TANGEDCO), confirmed the temporary shutdown of the three units in the power station. Rescue operations were progressing steadily despite the challenges caused by heavy smoke from the burning cables, he added. After inspecting the site on Sunday, Thoothukudi Collector K. Elambavath



Fire at Tuticorin Thermal Power Station led to temporary shutdown of Units I, II and III, on Sunday in Tamil Nadu. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



said around 50 fire safety personnel were involved in the operation to contain the fire, with 10 water tenders from Thoothukudi and neighbouring districts being deployed. Units I and II were affected by the fire and unit III was stopped as a precautionary measure. To completely extinguish the fire, some of the power station had to be broken open. Engineers of the power station and fire service personnel worked for over 12 hours to douse the fire.

SKM to march to Punjab Assembly on March 26

Press Trust of India CHANDIGARH

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha on Sunday announced it would take out a march to the Punjab Assembly on March 26, days after the police thwarted its attempt to go to Chandigarh for a week-long dharna.

A decision in this regard was taken in a meeting held here in which several SKM leaders, including Tarshan Pal, Jangveer Singh Chauhan and Binder Singh Golewala, were present.

Sharing details of the meeting, the SKM leaders said the farmers will gather at Sector 34 ground in Chandigarh and they will move towards the Punjab Assembly from there. The Punjab government will present the State Budget for 2025-26 to the Assembly on March 26. The Budget session has been convened from March 21 till 28. The SKM leaders on Sunday lashed out at Punjab Chief Minister Bhupendra Mann for allegedly misleading people. They slammed the AAP leaders, accusing them of spreading "false propaganda".



T.N.'s mangrove cover has doubled between 2021 and 2024: report

2x

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The mangrove forest cover in Tamil Nadu has almost doubled in the last few years, expanding from 4,500 ha in 2021 to 9,039 ha in 2024.

The increase can be attributed to both new mangrove plantations and the preservation of existing ones across several districts, according to a report by the Centre for Climate Change and Disaster Management, Anna University.

The report, titled 'Blue Carbon Monitoring for Mangroves of Tamil Nadu', says Tiruvarur district has the largest mangrove area, covering 2,142 ha. This includes 1,470 ha of existing mangroves and 672 ha of newly planted ones. Thanjavur closely follows with a total of 2,063 ha, consisting of 854 ha of plantations and 1,209 ha of natural mangroves. Together, these two districts account for almost half of Tamil Nadu's total mangrove and plantation area.

Other key districts contributing to the State's mangrove cover include Cuddalore and Nagapattinam, with 1,117 ha and 1,021 ha, respectively. The man-



Ecologically crucial: Some of the key districts contributing to the State's mangrove cover, include Cuddalore and Nagapattinam, with 1,117 ha and 1,021 ha, respectively. FILE PHOTO

grove cover in Cuddalore, Tiruvarur, and Thanjavur also have substantial carbon storage capacities, with total carbon stocks of 249 tonnes/ha, 145 tonnes/ha, and 77.5 tonnes/ha, respectively.

High carbon stocks are beneficial as they absorb carbon from the atmosphere and store it in carbon pools such as soil, organic matter, or biomass.

Mangrove areas with lower density, such as those in Villupuram (2.59 tonnes/ha) and Tiruvallur (13.1 tonnes/ha), capture smaller quantities of carbon.

Mangrove forests are crucial for Tamil Nadu's ec-

ological stability, providing ecosystem services such as coastal protection, nutrient cycling, and serving as breeding grounds for marine life.

These ecosystems also play a critical role in combating climate change by acting as carbon sinks.

Invasive species

However, the report highlighted the presence of the highly invasive *Prosopis juliflora* in mangrove forests across Thoothukudi, Ramnathapuram, Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, and Kattur in Tiruvallur.

According to the 2021 State of Forest Report by the Forest Survey of India,

the mangrove forest cover in Tamil Nadu stood at 4,500 ha. By 2024, this has more than doubled to 9,039 ha, with new plantations making up 40.1% (3,625 ha) of the total area and existing mangrove forests comprising 59.9% (5,414 ha).

To ensure the sustainability of these efforts, the report recommends the promotion of sustainable livelihoods like eco-tourism and carbon credit programmes.

Additionally, there is a focus on district-specific planning with conservation strategies tailored to preserve and expand mangrove ecosystems.



✓
Brazil

1) Indo

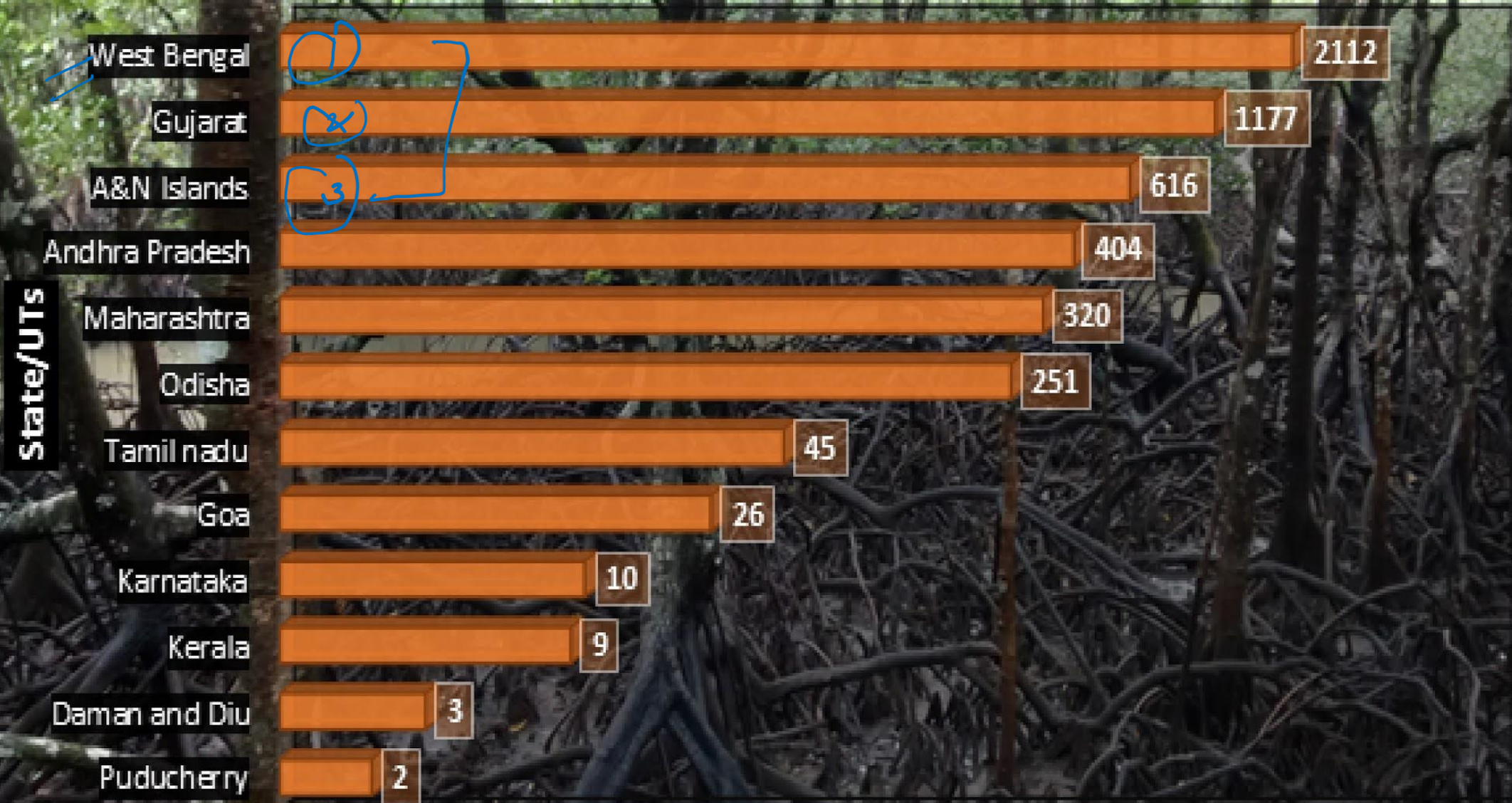
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Mangrove Forest Sites In India





INDIAN MANGROVES - STATEWISE AREA (2019)



Area of mangrove forest (square km)

Source - ISFR, 2019

Mangrove Cover in Tamil Nadu Doubles Between 2021 and 2024 | तमिलनाडु में मैंग्रोव वन क्षेत्र 2021 से 2024 के बीच दोगुना हुआ

- Tamil Nadu's mangrove forest cover has expanded from 4,500 hectares in 2021 to 9,039 hectares in 2024.
तमिलनाडु में मैंग्रोव वन क्षेत्र 2021 में 4,500 हेक्टेयर से बढ़कर 2024 में 9,039 हेक्टेयर हो गया है।

- **This increase is due to both new mangrove plantations and conservation of existing forests.**

यह वृद्धि नए मैंग्रोव वृक्षारोपण और मौजूदा वनों के संरक्षण के कारण हुई है।

- **The report was prepared by the Centre for Climate Change and Disaster Management, Anna University.**

यह रिपोर्ट अन्ना विश्वविद्यालय के सेंटर फॉर क्लाइमेट चेंज एंड डिजास्टर मैनेजमेंट द्वारा तैयार की गई है।

Key Districts with Major Mangrove Cover | प्रमुख जिलों में मैंग्रोव वन क्षेत्र

- Thiruvarur district has the largest mangrove area, covering 2,142 hectares.

तिरुवरूर जिला सबसे बड़ा मैंग्रोव क्षेत्र है, जो 2,142 हेक्टेयर में फैला है।



- **Thanjavur follows closely with 2,063 hectares, containing both natural and newly planted mangroves.**
तंजावुर 2,063 हेक्टेयर के साथ दूसरे स्थान पर है, जिसमें प्राकृतिक और नए लगाए गए मैंग्रोव शामिल हैं।
- **Cuddalore and Nagapattinam districts contribute significantly, with 1,117 ha and 1,021 ha, respectively.**
कड्डालोर और नागपट्टिनम जिलों का महत्वपूर्ण योगदान है, जिनमें क्रमशः 1,117 हेक्टेयर और 1,021 हेक्टेयर मैंग्रोव क्षेत्र हैं।

. Environmental Benefits of Mangroves | मैंग्रोव वनों के पर्यावरणीय लाभ

- Mangroves store high amounts of carbon, acting as carbon sinks to combat climate change.

मैंग्रोव बड़ी मात्रा में कार्बन संग्रहित करते हैं और जलवायु परिवर्तन से निपटने के लिए कार्बन सिंक के रूप में कार्य करते हैं।

- They provide ecosystem services such as coastal protection, nutrient cycling, and marine breeding grounds.

ये पारिस्थितिक तंत्र सेवाएं प्रदान करते हैं, जैसे कि तटीय सुरक्षा, पोषक तत्व चक्रण, और समुद्री जीवों के प्रजनन स्थल।

- Mangrove forests also help in maintaining ecological stability.

मैंग्रोव वन पारिस्थितिक स्थिरता बनाए रखने में मदद करते हैं।

Future Sustainability and Recommendations | भविष्य में स्थिरता और सिफारिशें

- **The report recommends promoting eco-tourism and carbon credit programs to ensure sustainability.**

रिपोर्ट में स्थिरता सुनिश्चित करने के लिए इको-टुरिज्म और कार्बन क्रेडिट कार्यक्रमों को बढ़ावा देने की सिफारिश की गई है।

- **District-specific conservation strategies should be implemented for further expansion.**

आगे विस्तार के लिए जिला-विशिष्ट संरक्षण रणनीतियों को लागू किया जाना चाहिए।

- **40.1% of the total increase in mangrove cover is due to new plantations, while 59.9% comes from preserved existing forests.**

मैंग्रोव क्षेत्र में कुल वृद्धि का 40.1% नए वृक्षारोपण से है, जबकि 59.9% मौजूदा वनों के संरक्षण से हुआ है।

Chandrayaan-5 has received Centre's approval, will carry 250-kg rover, says ISRO chief

3-4
25-kg
Prayagyan
M
Chandrayaan-5

Press Trust of India
CHENNAI

The Centre recently accorded approval for the ambitious Chandrayaan-5 mission to study the moon, Indian Space Research Organisation Chairman V. Narayanan said on Sunday.

At an event to felicitate him for taking over as the Chairman of the Bengaluru-headquartered ISRO, Mr. Narayanan said that unlike the Chandrayaan-3 mission which carried the 25-kilogram rover 'Prayagyan', the Chandrayaan-5 mission would carry a 250-kg rover to study the moon's surface.

The Chandrayaan mission consists of studying the lunar surface. Chandrayaan-1, successfully launched in 2008, took



A model of Chandrayaan-4.

chemical, mineralogical and photo-geologic mapping of the Moon.

The Chandrayaan-2 mission (2019) was 98% successful, but just two per cent of the Mission could not be achieved in the final stages.

Still, the onboard high-resolution camera on Chandrayaan-2 is sending hundreds of images, Narayanan, also the Secretary

of Department of Space, said. Chandrayaan-3 Mission is a follow-on mission to Chandrayaan-2 to demonstrate end-to-end capability in safe landing and roving on the lunar surface.

Chandrayaan-3 success
ISRO successfully launched the Chandrayaan-3 mission with the Lander Vikram successfully 'soft-landing' on the South pole of the Moon on August 23, 2023.

"Just three days back, we got the approval for Chandrayaan-5 Mission. We will be doing it in association with Japan," Narayanan said.

The Chandrayaan-4 Mission, expected to be launched in 2027, aims to bring samples collected from the moon.

3-4
25-kg
Prayagyan

Chandrayaan-5 Receives Centre's Approval | चंद्रयान-5 को केंद्र की मंजूरी मिली

- **The Indian government has approved ISRO's Chandrayaan-5 mission to study the Moon.**

भारत सरकार ने इसरो के चंद्रयान-5 मिशन को चंद्रमा का अध्ययन करने के लिए मंजूरी दे दी है।

- **ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan confirmed the approval at an event in Bengaluru.**

इसरो अध्यक्ष वी. नारायणन ने बेंगलुरु में एक कार्यक्रम में इस मंजूरी की पुष्टि की।

Key Features of Chandrayaan-5 | चंद्रयान-5 की प्रमुख विशेषताएँ

- Unlike Chandrayaan-3, which carried a 25-kg rover "Pragyan", Chandrayaan-5 will carry a much heavier 250-kg rover.
चंद्रयान-3 के 25 किलो के 'प्रज्ञान' रोवर के विपरीत, चंद्रयान-5 में 250 किलो का भारी रोवर होगा।
- The mission will focus on chemical, mineralogical, and photo-geologic mapping of the Moon.
यह मिशन चंद्रमा की रासायनिक, खनिज और फोटो-भूवैज्ञानिक मैपिंग पर केंद्रित होगा।
- The mission will be carried out in collaboration with Japan.
यह मिशन जापान के सहयोग से किया जाएगा।

Success of Previous Chandrayaan Missions | पिछले चंद्रयान मिशनों की सफलता

- Chandrayaan-1 (2008) successfully mapped the Moon's surface and detected water molecules.

चंद्रयान-1 (2008) ने सफलतापूर्वक चंद्रमा की सतह का नक्शा तैयार किया और जल अणुओं की खोज की।

- Chandrayaan-2 (2019) was 98% successful but faced minor setbacks in the final landing phase.

चंद्रयान-2 (2019) 98% सफल रहा, लेकिन अंतिम चरण में कुछ कठिनाइयों का सामना करना पड़ा।

- Chandrayaan-3 (2023) achieved a historic soft landing on the Moon's South Pole on August 23.

चंद्रयान-3 (2023) ने 23 अगस्त को चंद्रमा के दक्षिणी ध्रुव पर ऐतिहासिक साफ्ट लैंडिंग की।

Future Chandrayaan Missions | भविष्य के चंद्रयान मिशन

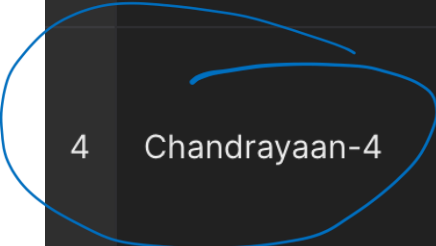
- Chandrayaan-4, expected to launch in 2027, aims to bring lunar samples back to Earth.

चंद्रयान-4, जिसे 2027 में लॉन्च किया जाएगा, चंद्रमा से नमूने पृथ्वी पर लाने का प्रयास करेगा।

- ~~Chandrayaan-5~~ will further enhance lunar exploration with a heavier and more advanced rover.

चंद्रयान-5 एक भारी और अधिक उन्नत रोवर के साथ चंद्र अन्वेषण को और बेहतर बनाएगा।

	Mission	Launch Year	Objective	Success/Failure	Key Features
1	Chandrayaan-1	2008	India's first lunar probe, aimed at mapping the Moon and detecting water	Successful in orbit; discovered water molecules on the Moon.	Carried Moon Impact Probe (MIP) and discovered water molecules.
2	Chandrayaan-2	2019	Orbiter, lander (Vikram), and rover (Pragyan) to explore the lunar south pole; lander	Orbiter successful, lander failed due to crash landing.	Included an orbiter, lander, and rover; first attempt to soft-land on the
3	Chandrayaan-3	2023	Lander (Vikram) and rover (Pragyan) successfully landed on the	Fully successful, with a smooth landing and rover exploration.	Focused only on lander and rover; successfully landed on the Moon's south
4	Chandrayaan-4	Planned Future Mission	Expected future mission, possibly a joint mission with international collaboration.	Planned mission, details not confirmed.	Potential future collaboration with NASA, ESA, or Russia.
5	Chandrayaan-5	Planned Future Mission	Likely to be an advanced lunar exploration or sample return mission in the	Planned mission, details not confirmed.	Expected to include new technology for deeper lunar exploration or

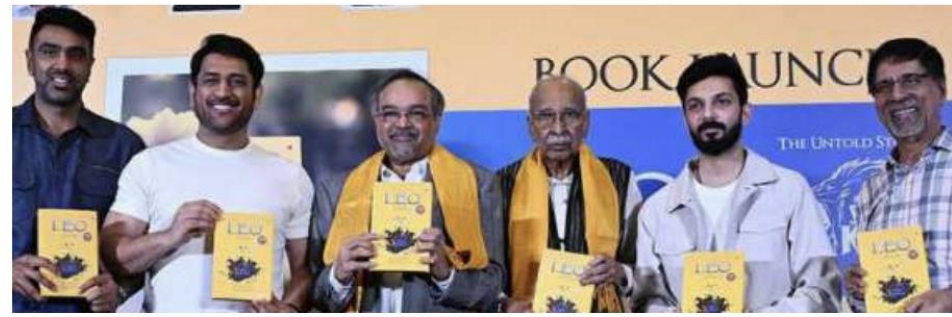


2023

2036

Leo Story

CSK
P.S. Raman



Grand occasion: Author P.S. Raman (third from left), with C.D. Gopinath (third from right), K. Srikanth (right), R. Ashwin, M.S. Dhoni and Anirudh Ravichander at the book release. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Leo — The Untold Story officially launched

BOOK ON CSK

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

A new book on Chennai Super Kings, *Leo – The Untold Story*, authored by senior advocate and former TNCA vice-president P.S. Raman, was officially launched in the presence of former CSK skipper M.S. Dhoni at a star-studded event on Sunday.

Former India cricketer C.D. Gopinath, a member of India's first Test-winning team, unveiled the book. Composer and playback singer Anirudh Ravichander received the first copy. R. Ashwin, who recently retired from international cricket, was felicitated by former India skipper K.

Srikanth.

Speaking on the occasion, Gopinath stressed the need to ensure the cricket remains a gentleman's game, played in the right spirit and credited Dhoni for his calm and composed nature on the field.

"My favourite IPL team is Chennai Super Kings. I pick CSK mainly because of MSD – not because of his cricketing brain but because of how he plays. He does not go strutting around the field jumping 10 feet high. He does not make obscene gestures. It makes me very uncomfortable when I see some of that," said Gopinath. "I think it's very unfair and very ungentlemanly. That's not the way it should be played. I know how successful he has been in lead-

ing his side and winning tournaments, but playing the game like cricket as it should be played matters to me more than the result. I hope the younger people emulate him."

Ashwin, who will be in CSK colours after a decade, recalled the club's impact on his journey and spoke about how the team still feels the same as it did when he last played for it and is cricket-oriented in its approach.

"I called M.S. (Dhoni) for my 100th Test (in Dharamshala) to hand over the memento. I wanted to make that my last Test. But he couldn't make it. However, I didn't think he would give me the gift of getting me back to CSK. It's a much better one. So thank you MS," he added.



SET TO RETURN

Sunita Williams and other astronauts greet each other after the SpaceX capsule docked with the International Space Station on Sunday. The mission paves the way for the return of Williams and her fellow US astronaut Butch Wilmore after nine months. *PTI REPORT, PAGE 14*

CHALLENGES THEY COULD FACE ON EARTH

① **BABY FEET:** Losing the thick part of the skin on the soles — they become soft like those of babies

② **GRAVITY SICKNESS:** Readjusting to Earth's gravity — which can cause trouble with standing, stabilising gaze & walking

③ **ORTHOSTATIC HYPOTENSION:** Difficulty

in delivering blood from the heart to the head due to changes in gravity. Other bodily fluids accumulate in the upper parts of the body, making them look bloated.

④ **BONE DENSITY LOSS:** For every month in space, ~~astronauts'~~ weight-bearing bones become roughly 1% less dense if they don't exercise. - PTI

Space

Carbon

4

Crew Swap and New Arrivals | क्रू की अदला-बदली और नए आगमन

- **The Crew-10 mission includes astronauts from the US, Japan, and Russia.**

क्रू-10 मिशन में अमेरिका, जापान और रूस के अंतरिक्ष यात्री शामिल हैं।

- **The four new astronauts will spend a few days learning the ISS systems before Wilmore and Williams depart.**

नए चार अंतरिक्ष यात्री कुछ दिन ISS की प्रणाली को सीखेंगे, उसके बाद विलमोर और विलियम्स वहां से रवाना होंगे।

- **NASA astronaut Nick Hague and Russian cosmonaut Aleksandr Gorbunov will accompany them during departure.**

नासा के अंतरिक्ष यात्री निक हेग और रूसी कॉस्मोनॉट अलेक्जेंडर गोरबुनोव उनके साथ वापसी करेंगे।

AMID US PRESSURE TO OPEN AGRI, DAIRY SECTORS

India, New Zealand to relaunch FTA talks after a gap of 10 years

RAVI DUTTA MISHRA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 16

INDIA AND New Zealand on Sunday announced the relaunch of free trade agreement (FTA) talks after a 10-year break, following a meeting between New Zealand's Trade Minister Todd McClay and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal here, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said.

The announcement of the talks comes as India has stated its aim to conclude trade negotiations with the US and the European Union this year. Trade talks with Australia for a comprehensive deal are also in progress along with renegotiation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) trade deal.

Trade experts said a major challenge in negotiations with New Zealand has been the country's demand for greater access to India's dairy market, which India has traditionally protected to support millions of farmers. However, US pressure on India to open its agriculture and dairy sectors could influence the nego-

EXPLAINED

E Disparity in tariff structures

A MAJOR challenge in the renewed talks will be the disparity in tariff structures. New Zealand's average import tariff is only 2.3 per cent, with over half of its tariff lines already duty-free, meaning Indian goods already have substantial access to its market.

tiations this time around, think tank Global Trade and Research Institute (GTRI) said.

The trade talks were announced as the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Christopher Luxon, began his four-day visit to India on Sunday, during which he is set to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Luxon will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, including ministers, senior officials, and business representatives. "This will be the first visit to

India by Prime Minister Rt Hon Luxon in his current capacity," the Ministry of External Affairs said.

"The India-New Zealand FTA negotiations aim to achieve balanced outcomes that enhance supply chain integration and improve market access. This milestone reflects a shared vision for a stronger economic partnership, fostering resilience and prosperity," the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said.

Another key issue during the previous round of talks was India's demand for easier movement of its skilled professionals and better access for its IT and services sector, GTRI said.

"India wanted New Zealand to grant work opportunities similar to those given to Australia and China, but New Zealand did not agree. The situation was further complicated by negotiations around the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which India eventually withdrew from in 2019 due to similar concerns about market access and protecting local industries," GTRI said.

A major challenge in the renewed talks will be the disparity in tariff structures. New Zealand's average import tariff is only 2.3 per cent, with over half of its tariff lines already duty-free, meaning Indian goods already have substantial access to its market. In contrast, India's average tariff stands at 17.8 per cent, meaning it would have to make significant reductions, making a traditional FTA less attractive for India.

India's key goods exports to New Zealand include clothing, fabrics, and home textiles, valued at \$72.8 million. Medicines and medical supplies followed closely at \$67.5 million, while refined petroleum exports totalled \$52.2 million. Other notable exports included automobiles and parts.

New Zealand's goods exports to India primarily consist of agricultural products, minerals, and scrap metals. Key items include apples worth \$22.6 million and kiwifruit valued at \$6.6 million. Meat products such as lamb, mutton, and beef contributed \$1.9 million, while dairy products totalled a modest \$0.57 million due to India's protective policies.

India and New Zealand Resume FTA Talks After 10 Years | भारत और न्यूजीलैंड 10 साल बाद मुक्त व्यापार समझौते (FTA) वार्ता फिर शुरू करेंगे

- India and New Zealand have relaunched Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations after a decade-long hiatus.

भारत और न्यूजीलैंड ने एक दशक के अंतराल के बाद मुक्त व्यापार समझौते (FTA) की वार्ता फिर से शुरू की है।

- The decision was announced following a meeting between NZ Trade Minister Todd McClay and Indian Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal.

यह निर्णय न्यूजीलैंड के व्यापार मंत्री टॉड मैक्ले और भारतीय वाणिज्य मंत्री पीयूष गोयल के बीच बैठक के बाद लिया गया।

- India aims to conclude trade talks with the US and the European Union as well, alongside FTA negotiations with Australia and ASEAN.

भारत अमेरिका और यूरोपीय संघ के साथ व्यापार वार्ता समाप्त करने के साथ-साथ ऑस्ट्रेलिया और ASEAN के साथ एफटीए वार्ता भी आगे बढ़ा रहा है।

Major Challenges in Negotiations | वार्ता में प्रमुख चुनौतियाँ

- **New Zealand demands greater access to India's dairy market, which India has traditionally protected.**

न्यूजीलैंड भारत के डेयरी बाजार में अधिक पहुंच की मांग कर रहा है, जिसे भारत ने पारंपरिक रूप से संरक्षित रखा है।

- **The US has been pressuring India to open its agriculture and dairy markets, adding complexity to the negotiations.**

अमेरिका भारत पर अपने कृषि और डेयरी बाजार खोलने का दबाव बना रहा है, जिससे वार्ता और जटिल हो रही है।

- **India's demand for better movement of skilled professionals and IT sector access remains a key issue.**
भारत के कशल पेशेवरों और आईटी क्षेत्र को अधिक पहुंच देने की मांग वार्ता का एक प्रमुख मुद्दा बनी हुई है।
- **Tariff disparity is another challenge—New Zealand's average import tariff is only 2.3%, while India's is 17.8%.**
टैरिफ में असमानता भी एक चुनौती है—न्यूजीलैंड का औसत आयात शुल्क केवल 2.3% है, जबकि भारत का 17.8% है।

India = 17.8%
New Zealand = 2.3%

Key Exports and Imports Between India and New Zealand | भारत और न्यूजीलैंड के बीच प्रमुख निर्यात और आयात

- India's top exports to New Zealand include clothing (\$72.8 million), medicines (\$67.5 million), and refined petroleum (\$52.2 million).
भारत का प्रमुख निर्यात न्यूजीलैंड को कपड़ा (\$72.8 मिलियन), दवाएं (\$67.5 मिलियन), और परिष्कृत पेट्रोलियम (\$52.2 मिलियन) हैं।

- **New Zealand's exports to India mainly include agricultural products, minerals, and scrap metals.**
न्यूजीलैंड के भारत को निर्यात में मुख्य रूप से कृषि उत्पाद, खनिज और स्कैप धातु शामिल हैं।
- **Key imports from New Zealand include apples (\$22.6 million), meat products like lamb and beef (\$19.1 million), and dairy (\$0.57 million).**
भारत के न्यूजीलैंड से प्रमुख आयातों में सेब (\$22.6 मिलियन), मांस उत्पाद जैसे भेड़ और गोमांस (\$19.1 मिलियन), और डेयरी (\$0.57 मिलियन) शामिल हैं।

Strategic and Economic Importance of the FTA | मुक्त व्यापार समझौते का रणनीतिक और आर्थिक महत्व

- The FTA aims to foster supply chain integration and improve market access for both nations.

यह एफटीए आपूर्ति श्रृंखला एकीकरण को बढ़ावा देने और दोनों देशों के लिए बाजार पहुंच में सुधार करने का लक्ष्य रखता है।

- **India wants a trade deal similar to those with Australia and China but has faced resistance from New Zealand.**
भारत ऑस्ट्रेलिया और चीन के साथ हुए समझौतों की तरह एक व्यापार समझौता चाहता है, लेकिन न्यूजीलैंड से विरोध का सामना कर रहा है।
- **The FTA is crucial for strengthening India-New Zealand economic ties and resilience in global trade.**
यह एफटीए भारत-न्यूजीलैंड आर्थिक संबंधों को मजबूत करने और वैश्विक व्यापार में लचीलापन बढ़ाने के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है।

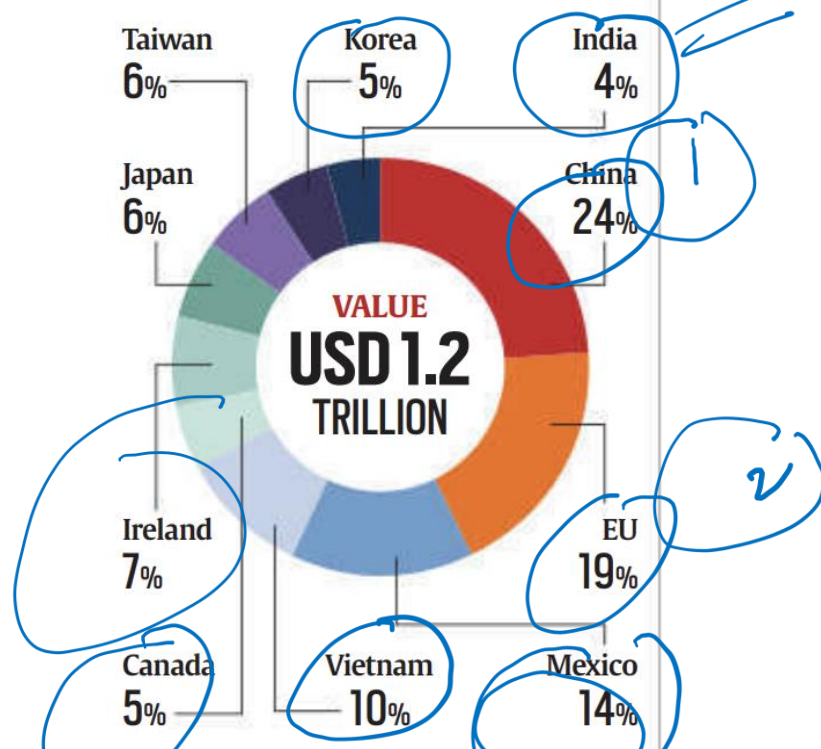
China 29%

10%

7%



US TRADE DEFICIT WITH MAJOR PARTNERS IN 2024



Source: BEA, US
Note: This Data is only from Trade in Goods perspective only



10 MCQ from the session

Word of the day

Cogent: 

powerfully persuasive

Synonyms: convincing, compelling,
forceful

Usage: *Her explanation was cogent, making it
easy for everyone to understand.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/cogentpro

International Phonetic

Alphabet: /kəʊdʒənt/



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A group of people are clapping in a dimly lit room. In the foreground, a hand is reaching out towards the center. The background is dark with some light coming from a window on the right. There are some small red and blue dots scattered in the dark area on the left.

Thank you
guys.
